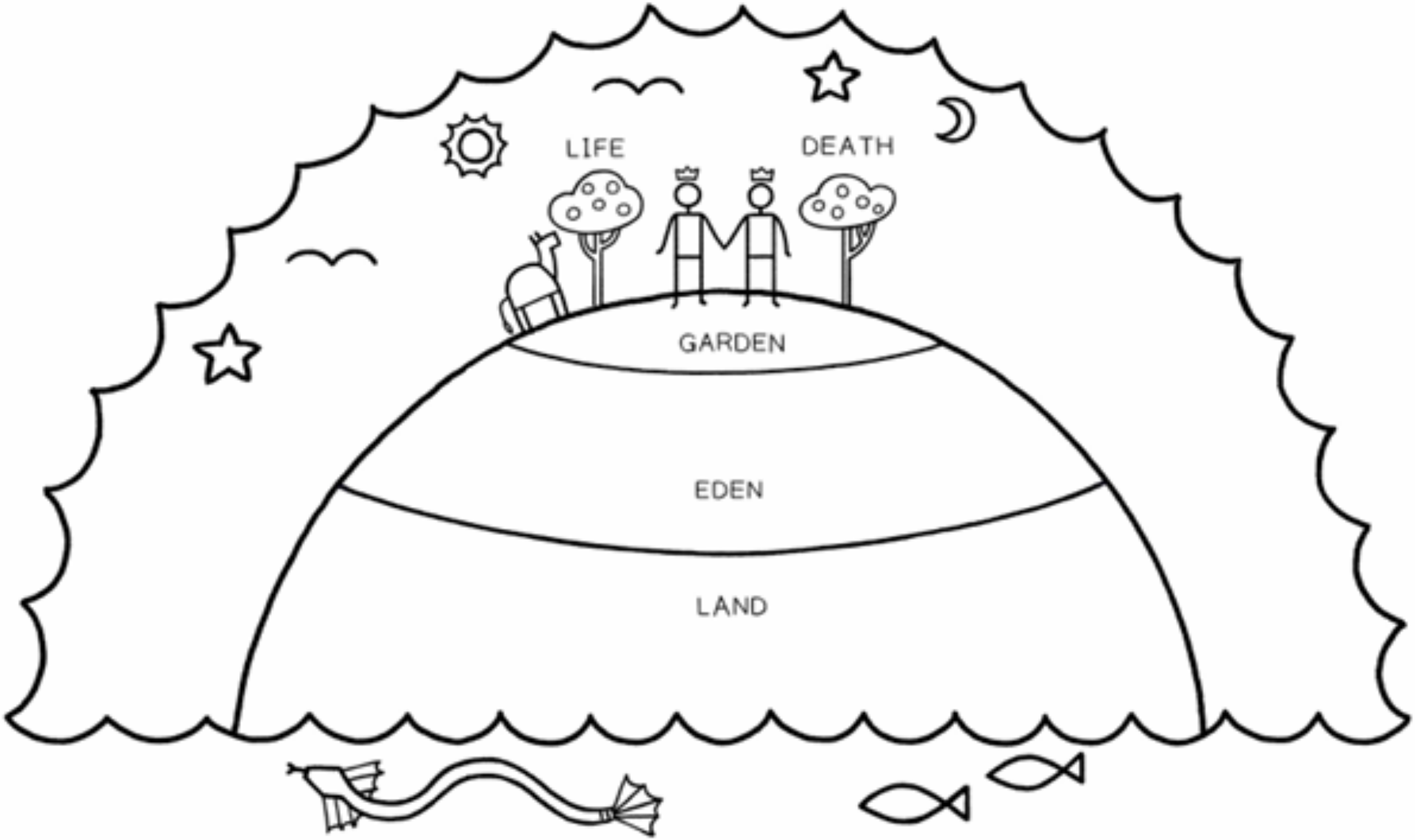
GENESIS
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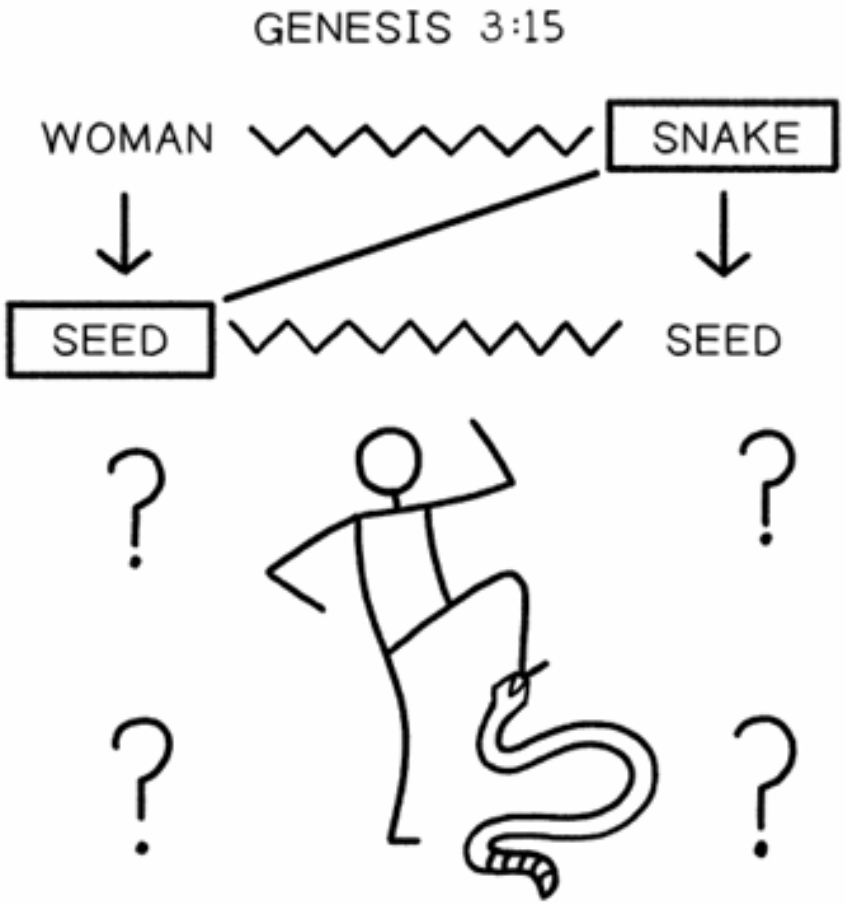
NOAH TO ABRAHAM

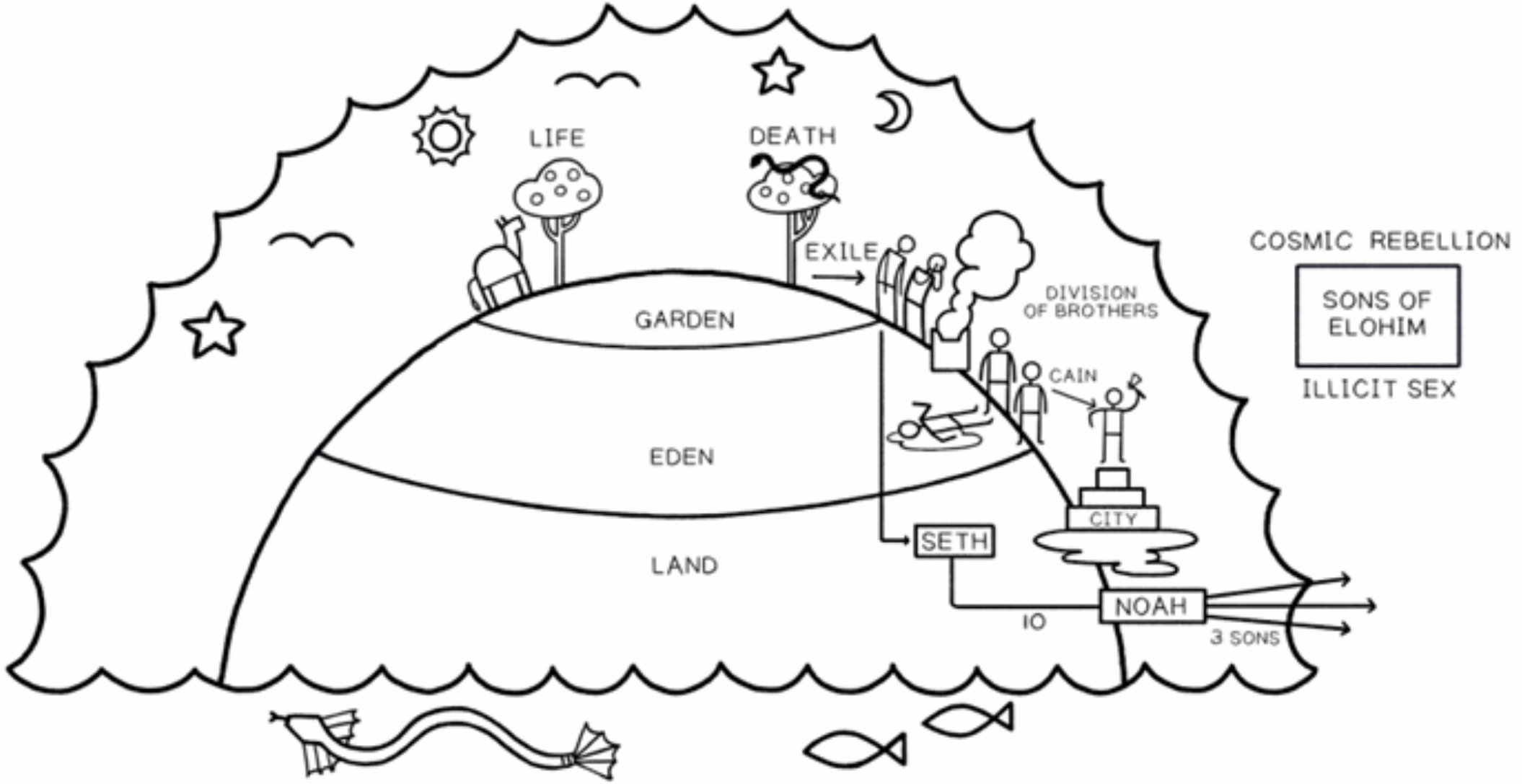
INTRODUCTION TO THE FLOOD NARRATIVE

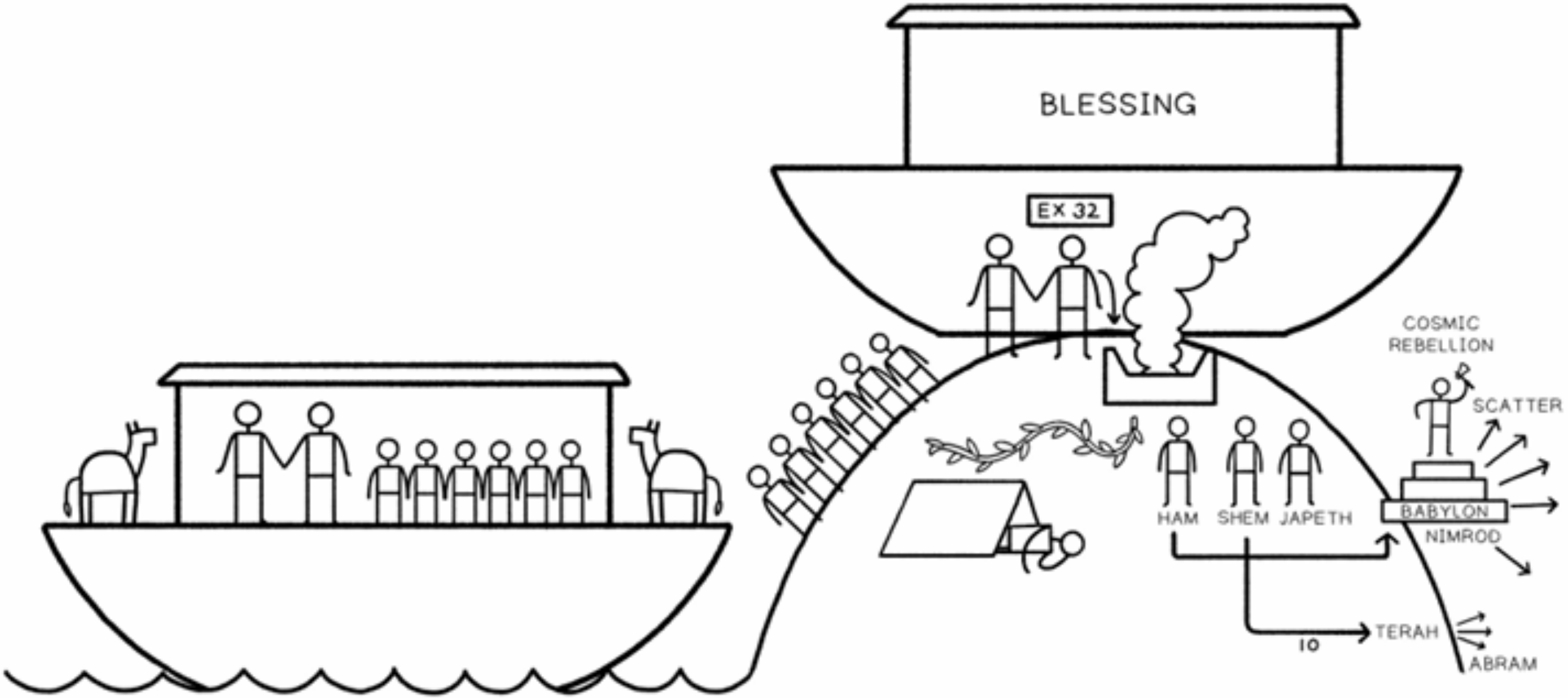
Unit				Theme
A1	1:1-2:3 Creation of sacred cosmos from chaos waters / human image of God / blessing / fruitful and multiply			Creation and Blessing
	B1	2:4-3:24 Mountain-garden temple / sin, nakedness, curse, exile		Failure
	B2	4:1-16 Next generation sins / brothers divide / firstborn not chosen / curse, exile		Failure of Next Generation
		C1	4:17-26 Adam to Lemek: 7 generations + 3 sons / city of Cain / murder / 70 x 7	Non-Chosen
		C2	5:1-32 Adam to Noah: 10 generations + 3 sons / promise of comfort	Chosen
	B3	6:1-8 Cosmic rebellion in Heaven and Earth: sons of God invade the land, leading to the flood		Cosmic Rebellion

Unit				Theme
A2	6:9-9:19 De-creation by chaos waters and recreation / Noah as new humanity / blessing / fruitful and multiply			Re-Creation and Blessing
	B1	9:20-21 Garden vineyard / sin, nakedness		Failure
	B2	9:22-27 Next generation sins / brothers divide / firstborn not chosen / curse, scattering		Failure of Next Generation
		C1	10:1-32 Noah + 3 sons / 7 generations to Peleg / City of Babylon and Assyria / 70 nations	Non-Chosen
	B3	11:1-9 Cosmic rebellion in Babylon: sons of Adam invade the heavens, leading to the scattering		Cosmic Rebellion
		C2	11:10-26 Shem to Abram: 10 generations / 3 sons	Chosen
A3	12:1-9 Abram as new humanity / blessing / fruitful and multiply			Re-Creation and Blessing


LIFE
DEATH
GARDEN
EDEN
LAND


GENESIS 3:15
WOMAN
SNAKE
SEED
SEED
?
?
?
?


LIFE
DEATH
EXILE
GARDEN
EDEN
LAND
DIVISION
OF BROTHERS
CAIN
CITY
SETH
NOAH
IO
3 SONS
COSMIC REBELLION
SONS OF
ELOHIM
ILLICIT SEX


BLESSING
EX 32
COSMIC
REBELLION
SCATTER
HAM
SHEM
JAPETH
BABYLON
NIMROD
10
TERAH
ABRAM

REFLECTION QUESTION

- What event from earlier in Genesis does the flood undo?
- It is a decreation/ recreation story.

GENESIS 5:1-32: TEN GENERATIONS FROM ADAM TO NOAH

- 5 This is the written account of Adam’s line.
- When God created man, he made him in the likeness of God. 2 He created them male and female and blessed them. And when they were created, he called them “man.” 3 When Adam had lived 130 years, he had a son in his own likeness, in his own image; and he named him Seth. 4 After Seth was born, Adam lived 800 years and had other sons and daughters. 5 Altogether, Adam lived 930 years, and then he died.

GENESIS 5:1-32: TEN GENERATIONS FROM ADAM TO NOAH

- 6 When Seth had lived 105 years, he became the father of Enosh.
  7 And after he became the father of Enosh, Seth lived 807 years
  and had other sons and daughters. 8 Altogether, Seth lived 912
  years, and then he died. 9 When Enosh had lived 90 years, he
  became the father of Kenan. 10 And after he became the father of
  Kenan, Enosh lived 815 years and had other sons and daughters.
  11 Altogether, Enosh lived 905 years, and then he died.

GENESIS 5:1-32: TEN GENERATIONS FROM ADAM TO NOAH

- 12 When Kenan had lived 70 years, he became the father of Mahalalel. 13 And after he became the father of Mahalalel, Kenan lived 840 years and had other sons and daughters. 14 Altogether, Kenan lived 910 years, and then he died. 15 When Mahalalel had lived 65 years, he became the father of Jared. 16 And after he became the father of Jared, Mahalalel lived 830 years and had other sons and daughters. 17 Altogether, Mahalalel lived 895 years, and then he died.

GENESIS 5:1-32: TEN GENERATIONS FROM ADAM TO NOAH

- 18 When Jared had lived 162 years, he became the father of Enoch. 19 And after he became the father of Enoch, Jared lived 800 years and had other sons and daughters. 20 Altogether, Jared lived 962 years, and then he died.

GENESIS 5:1-32: TEN GENERATIONS FROM ADAM TO NOAH

- 21 When Enoch had lived 65 years, he became the father of Methuselah. 22 And after he became the father of Methuselah, Enoch walked with God 300 years and had other sons and daughters. 23 Altogether, Enoch lived 365 years. 24 Enoch walked with God; then he was no more, because God took him away. 25 When Methuselah had lived 187 years, he became the father of Lamech. 26 And after he became the father of Lamech, Methuselah lived 782 years and had other sons and daughters. 27 Altogether, Methuselah lived 969 years, and then he died.

GENESIS 5:1-32: TEN GENERATIONS FROM ADAM TO NOAH

- 28 When Lamech had lived 182 years, he had a son. 29 He named him Noah and said, “He will comfort us in the labor and painful toil of our hands caused by the ground the LORD has cursed.” 30 After Noah was born, Lamech lived 595 years and had other sons and daughters. 31 Altogether, Lamech lived 777 years, and then he died. 32 After Noah was 500 years old, he became the father of Shem, Ham and Japheth.

GENESIS 5:1-32: TEN GENERATIONS FROM ADAM TO NOAH

- After the humans are exiled from Eden, and after the drama that splits Adam and Eve's family into two lines, the narrative reboots and begins again.
- This time, the genealogy follows the line of Seth, Cain's line having been concluded with Lemek and sons. This genealogy has a highly schematic form, which makes the three "narrative inserts" stick out.

LITERARY DESIGN OF EACH GENERATION

This genealogy lists ten generations from Adam to Noah. Each one is given in an identical literary form:

And ___ lived ____ years, and he caused the birth of [son's name].
And ___ lived ____ years after he caused the birth of [sons' name], and he caused the birth of sons and daughters,
and all the days of ___ were ____ years,
and he died.

THREE SPECIAL PEOPLE IN GENESIS 5

- There are three figures whose genealogical entry deviates from this form, and at these three points we find narrative inserts that highlight important themes of Genesis.
- Pay special attention to Adam, Enoch, and Lemek/Noah.

1 This is the scroll of the generations of Adam;
In the day when Elohim created humanity,
he made him as the likeness of Elohim,
male and female he created them,
and he blessed them
and he named them 'human'
in the day when they were created.

Adam

3 And Adam had lived one hundred and thirty years,
and he caused the birth of one
in his own likeness,
according to his image,
and named him Seth.
4 And the days of Adam after he caused the birth of Seth were eight hundred years,
and he caused the birth of sons and daughters.
5 And all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred and thirty years,
and he died.

Enoch

21 And Enoch lived sixty-five years,
and he caused the birth of Methuselah,
22 and Enoch **walked with God three hundred years**
after he became the father of Methuselah,
and he caused the birth of sons and daughters,
23 and all the days of Enoch were three hundred and sixty-five years,
24 **and Enoch walked with God**;
and he was not, for God took him.

Lemek

28 And Lemek lived one hundred and eighty-two years,
and he caused the birth of a son,
29 and he called his name “Noah," saying,
"This one will give us rest from our work
and from the toil of our hands from the ground
which the Lord has cursed."
20 And Lemek lived five hundred and ninety-five years after he became the father of Noah,

WHY ENOCH, THE SEVENTH FROM ADAM?

- Of the three characters with a special narrative insert in the genealogy of Genesis 5, we have the least information about Enoch.
- But the information we do have connects him to significant themes within the early chapters of Genesis.

WHY ENOCH, THE SEVENTH FROM ADAM?

- “Enoch” (חנוך) means “dedicated” in Hebrew. The word is used as a verb in Deuteronomy 20:5 and 1 Kings 8:63, which are both about dedicating a house or temple.
- Enoch’s total age surely has symbolic significance: 365 years is the same as a solar calendar year. Enoch’s piety is linked to that of Adam and Eve’s in the garden of Eden and sets a pattern for later characters to attain.

Genesis 3:6, 8 NASB*

... and [Eve] took (לקח) from its fruit and she ate ...

... and [Adam and Eve] heard the voice of Yahweh walking (מתהלך) in the garden.

*Key Words Adapted by Teacher

Genesis 5:22, 24 NASB*

... and Enoch walked (ויתהלך) with the-*Elohim* ...

... and Enoch walked (ויתהלך) with the-*Elohim*, and he was not, because *Elohim* took (לקח) him.

*Key Words Adapted by Teacher

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO "WALK WITH GOD?"

- The phrase "walk with God" is used of Noah in Genesis 6:8-9.
- In 1 Samuel 25:15-16, the phrase is used to refer to friendly and close contact between people.

GENESIS 6:8-9NASB

- 8 But Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD. 9 These are the records of the generations of Noah. **Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his time**; Noah **walked with God.**

1 SAMUEL 25:14-16NASB

- 14 But one of the young men told Abigail, Nabal's wife, saying, "Behold, David sent messengers from the wilderness to greet our master, and he scorned them. 15 Yet the men were very good to us, and we were not insulted, nor did we miss anything as long as **we walked with them**, while we were in the fields. 16 They were a wall to us both by night and by day, all the time we were with them tending the sheep."

“WITH THE-ELOHIM”

- Although it is not reflected in English, the word elohim in 5:22 and 5:24 has the definite article “the” in front of it (האלהים).
- The phrase “the-elohim” can be used to refer to the single deity Yahweh, but it can also refer to spiritual beings, members of the divine council, or angels (see Ps. 8:6; 82:1, 6; 97:7; 138:1).

“WITH THE-ELOHIM”

- Notice also that in the phrase “for God took him,” the word Elohim does not have the definite article (כי לקח אתו אלהים) In other words, Enoch walks with the-elohim and so Elohim takes him.
- This distinction seems like an intended and meaningful one: Enoch’s life was marked by his friendly and intimate relations with the beings of the spiritual realm (the-elohim), and so the chief Elohim (named “Yahweh” later in the story) takes him.

“WITH THE-ELOHIM”

- This was how the story was universally understood in ancient Judaism (see 1 Enoch, or 2 Enoch).

“AND HE WAS NOT, BECAUSE GOD TOOK HIM.”

- In the middle of a genealogy that focuses on death as the sad curtain closer on God’s blessing for life, Enoch’s evasion of death in the seventh generation stands out. He is marked as the seventh (complete) human whose allegiance and union with God results in eternal life.

“AND HE WAS NOT, BECAUSE GOD TOOK HIM.”

- The word “took” (לקח) is a reference to Genesis 2:15, where God “took” the human he had created and “rested” (wordplay on Noah’s name: וינחה ו) him in the garden. Enoch is analogous to the human of Genesis 2, that is, Enoch is transferred to the garden of Eden, the realm of eternal life.
- This is how the earliest interpretation of the Enoch story goes as preserved in 1 Enoch chapters 24-32, where Enoch is taken up in the Spirit and tours the cosmos until he arrives in Eden, the mountain of God.

“AND HE WAS NOT, BECAUSE GOD TOOK HIM.”

- Notice that the phrase is repeated in 5:22 and in 5:24, which speaks of his “removal.” This indicates that Enoch’s intimacy with the-elohim marked both his 365 years and his translation to another realm.
- In a later story modeled after Enoch’s divine disappearance, Elijah’s departure happens in a similar way and with similar vocabulary.

NOAH AS THE PROMISED COMFORTER OF HUMANITY IN GENESIS 5

- Every line of Lemek's words have significant hyperlinks back to various texts in Genesis 1-3.
- Lemek's anticipation of a future descendant who will bring an end to the curse picks up the macro themes of
- (1) humanity's exile from Eden and the curse of death and
- (2) the promise of a coming "seed" who will overcome the snake.

NOAH AS THE PROMISED COMFORTER OF HUMANITY IN GENESIS 5

- ”Noah“ (נח) / “rest” (נוח) / “comfort” (נחם)
- Noah’s name is spelled like the word “rest,” and it rhymes with the first two letters of the word “comfort.”

The Naming of Noah	Hyperlinks to Earlier Verses in Genesis
Genesis 5:29: And he called his name "**Noah** (נח)," saying, "This one will give us **comfort** (נחם) from our work (מעשה) and from the painful toil (מעצבון) of our hands, from the ground (האדמה) which the Lord has cursed (אררה)."	Genesis 2:15: And Yahweh *Elohim* took the human and he rested him (וינחהו) in the garden of Eden, to work it (עבד) and to keep it. Genesis 3:17-19: Cursed is the ground (ארורה האדמה) because of you, with painful toil (עצבון) you will eat from it ... until you return to the ground (האדמה), for from it you were taken ... Genesis 3:23: And Yahweh *Elohim* sent him out from the garden of Eden to work (עבד) the ground (האדמה) from which he was taken ...

The Naming of Noah. Created by Tim Mackie for BibleProject Classroom: Noah to Abraham (2020).

NOAH AS THE PROMISED COMFORTER OF HUMANITY IN GENESIS 5

- Through this connection to rest, Noah's role in the story is previewed and given a theological interpretation. God brings rest and comfort to his world through Noah's obedient actions and role as the surviving remnant in the flood generation.

NOAH AS THE PROMISED COMFORTER OF HUMANITY IN GENESIS 5

- **Rest** (נוח) is a major theological theme in the TaNaK for describing the restoration of Eden conditions on Earth as in Heaven.
- When God brings rest, it involves restoring a realm of order and sacred space where God can dwell with his people (see Deut. 3:20, 12:10; Josh. 1:13, 21:44; 2 Sam. 7:1, 11; 1 Kgs. 5:18).

NOAH AS THE PROMISED COMFORTER OF HUMANITY IN GENESIS 5

- **Comfort** (נחם) is a major theme in the Prophets, especially in Isaiah, and it describes the era of restoration when the failure of God's people is forgiven, their exile is over, and God renews his covenant with them in a restored Eden.

NOAH AS THE PROMISED COMFORTER OF HUMANITY IN GENESIS 5

- This points forward to Noah's crucial act of worship and obedience as he emerges from the ark in Genesis 8:20-22.
- In the narrative arc of Genesis 2-9, Noah is placed before the reader as an image of the promised seed of Genesis 3:15.

NOAH AS THE PROMISED COMFORTER OF HUMANITY IN GENESIS 5

- Noah is the righteous seed who passes the test through obedience to God's will, and he survives as a remnant through the waters of death to offer a precious sacrifice.
- This qualifies him to become the new humanity at the helm of a renewed creation that lives in a new covenant relationship with its creator.

INTRODUCTION TO THE FLOOD NARRATIVE IN GENESIS 6:1-9:27

- The flood narrative spans from Genesis 6:1 to Genesis 9:27, and it consists of 15 large literary units made of narrative and poetic materials. The flood narrative has been spliced into the end of Noah's genealogy, which is now split into two parts in 5:32 and 9:28-29.
- It also seems likely that 6:9-10 and 7:6 are a continuation of the genealogy in 5:32 and the natural bridge to the information in 9:28-29, which presents Noah's total age at 958 years.

Topic	Verses
Genealogy Begins	**Genesis 5:21-31** [28] And Lemek lived one hundred and eighty-two years, and became the father of a son. [29] Now he called his name Noah, saying, **"This one will give us rest from our work and from the toil of our hands arising from the ground which the LORD has cursed."** [30] And Lemek lived five hundred and ninety-five years after he became the father of Noah, and he had other sons and daughters. [31] So all the days of Lemek were seven hundred and seventy-seven years, and he died.

Topic	Verses
	And Noah was five hundred years old, and Noah became the father of Shem, Ham, and Japheth …
Flood Narrative Begins	**Genesis 6:1-8** [1] When human beings began to increase in number on the earth and daughters were born to them …
Genealogy Inserted	**Genesis 6:9-10** [9] These are the birth-generations of Noah; Noah was a righteous one, blameless in his generation; Noah walked with *Elohim*; …

Flood Narrative Continues	**Genesis 6:11-7:5** 11 Now the earth was corrupt in the sight of God, and the earth was filled with violence ...
Genealogy Inserted	**Genesis 7:6** ... and Noah was six hundred years old when the flood of water came upon the earth ...

Flood Narrative Ends	**Genesis 7:7-9:27** 9:27 ... May God enlarge Japheth, and may he live in the tents of Shem; and may Canaan be his servant."
Genealogy Ends	**Genesis 9:28-29** 28 ... And Noah lived after the flood, three hundred and fifty years after the flood. 29 And all the days of Noah were nine hundred and fifty years, and he died.

FLOOD NARRATIVE PLACEMENT

- The arrangement of the text gives a clue to its meaning. The flood narrative is a long exposition of Lemek’s promise in Genesis 5:29, which itself recalls God's promise in Genesis 3:15-17.
- Noah is presented as the promised seed of the woman who will undo the curse. The question is, How? The flood narrative is designed to provide the answer.

REFLECTION QUESTION

- Since Adam and Eve had already sinned, do you think the sins of their children, such as Cain murdering Abel, were unavoidable?

THE FLOOD NARRATIVE IN ANCIENT NEAR EASTERN CONTEXT

- Genesis 8:1 is a pivot from de-creation to new creation.
- The biblical flood story is designed to be in dialogue with the other ancient Near Eastern flood stories.
- The differences between the biblical account and other flood stories outline rival portraits of God.

THE FLOOD NARRATIVE IN ANCIENT NEAR EASTERN CONTEXT

- The composition of the flood narrative has also been presented as an act of de-creation and re-creation modeled on Genesis 1, and so it has 10 divine speech acts just as in Genesis 1:1-2:3.

Genesis 6-9	Divine Speeches
6:1-4: The Heavenly Rebellion (Take 1)	#1 - 6:3
6:5-12: The Earthly Rebellion (Take 2)	#2 - 6:7
6:13-22: Divine Speech of *Elohim*: 1st Warning of Flood (Take 1)	#3 - 6:13
7:1-5: Divine Speech of Yahweh: 2nd Warning of Flood (Take 2)	#4 - 7:1
7:6-10: Flood Begins and Noah Enters the Ark (Take 1)	
7:11-16: Flood Begins and Noah Enters the Ark (Take 2)	
7:17-24: The Flood Overwhelms the Land	
8:1: The Pivot: God Remembers Noah	
8:2-5: The Flood Recedes from the Land	
8:6-14: Noah Sends Out Birds To See if the Waters Have Dried Up	
8:15-19: Divine Speech: Noah to Leave the Ark	#5 - 8:15
8:20-22: Noah's Sacrifice Deals with the Earthly Rebellion	#6 - 8:21
9:1-7: Divine Speech: Blessing and Provision of Food	#7 - 9:1
9:8-17: Divine Speech: The Covenant for the Preservation of Life	#8 - 9:8 #9 - 9:12 #10 - 9:17
9:18-27: The Rebellion of Ham and Noah's Blessing and Curse	

MAJOR FEATURES OF THE DESIGN OF THE FLOOD NARRATIVE

- The story begins with a paired unit (6:1-4 and 6:5-12) about the crisis in Heaven and Earth that necessitates the flood.
- These two units are connected by vocabulary and theme: The inhabitants of Heaven and Earth disrupt cosmic order by violating the boundaries placed on them in Genesis 1-2.

MAJOR FEATURES OF THE DESIGN OF THE FLOOD NARRATIVE - TWO REBELLIONS

- **The earthly rebellion** (6:5-12) describes the ruin of the land and the corrupt condition of humanity that drives God to purify the land with a flood.
- This language is adopted in the story of Noah's sacrifice after the flood (8:20-22). God decides to change his strategy with corrupt humans by sustaining the cosmic order despite humanity's evil.

MAJOR FEATURES OF THE DESIGN OF THE FLOOD NARRATIVE - TWO REBELLIONS

- The heavenly rebellion (6:1-4) remains in the background of the flood narrative, but its language and themes are picked up in the concluding narrative of Ham's rebellion (9:18-27).
- Illicit sex and violation of boundaries bind the rebellious sons of Elohim to the sons of Ham, that is, the Canaanites.

TWO DIVINE SPEECHES

- The first divine speech warning Noah about the flood (6:13-22) introduces the themes of (1) the construction of the ark, (2) the call to enter it along with all the animals, (3) the promise of a covenant between God and Noah, and (4) the provision of food. The first two themes are developed immediately in following units (building and entering the ark with the animals), but the remaining two themes are not picked up until we come to the symmetrical pairs in 9:1-7 (the provision of food) and 9:8-17 (the covenant).

TWO DIVINE SPEECHES

- The second divine speech to enter the ark (7:1-5) corresponds to the first speech (6:13-22), but it differs in that Noah is called to take pure and impure animals into the ark and a timeline is given for the flood.
- “In seven more days the flood will come, and it will rain for 40 days.” This speech is paired with its symmetrical partner in 8:15-19, where Noah and the animals are called to leave the ark in precisely the language of their invitation to enter it.

AWAITING AND WAITING OUT THE FLOOD

- The narrative about Noah and the animals entering the ark (7:6-16) happens in two parallel panels, 7:6-10 and 7:11-16. Each unit begins by noting the age of Noah (600 years in 7:6 and 7:11) and how he entered the ark with the animals (the pure ones in 7:8 and the Gen. 1 list in 7:14). These two units match the narrative of Noah's patient waiting for the waters of the flood to dry up (8:6-14). Noah's age is noted again (601 years in 8:13). He employs two birds (one pure and one impure) and waits through multiple stages of seven days.

FLOOD DESCRIPTION

- The description of the flood's arrival and overwhelming power in 7:17-24 leads to the climactic statement that only Noah and those with him in the ark "remained" (7:23).
- The waters surge until they cover the mountains (7:19-20). Corresponding to this is the multistage recession of the waters in 8:2-5 as the mountains become visible again.

THE CENTER OF THE STORY

- Genesis 8:1 is at the center of the entire unit. God remembers Noah and causes his wind to blow upon the flood waters so they recede.
- Here is a more detailed chart highlighting repeated phrases that link symmetrical units in Genesis 6:1-9:27.

Genesis 6-9

6:1-4: The Heavenly Rebellion (Take 1)
- Sons of *Elohim* take daughters of humanity = illicit sex

6:5-12: The Earthly Rebellion (Take 2)
- Human heart is bad / the land is ruined

6:13-22: Divine Speech of *Elohim*: 1st Warning of Flood (Take 1)
- Noah to build the ark
- God is sending flood, but will set up a covenant with Noah
- Noah to enter ark with family and animals, 2 of each kind
- Noah to gather food
- "Noah did all that *Elohim* commanded him" (6:22)

7:1-5: Divine Speech of Yahweh: 2nd Warning of Flood (Take 2)
- Noah to enter ark with his household
- Noah to take pure animals (7 each) and impure animals (2 each)
- In 7 days, rain will come for 40 days
- "Noah did all that Yahweh commanded him" (7:5)

7:6-10: Flood Begins and Noah Enters the Ark (Take 1)

- Noah is 600 years old
- Flood of waters comes upon the land
- Noah and family enter the ark
- Animals come two by two to Noah, into the ark
- "just as *Elohim* commanded Noah" (7:9)

7:11-16: Flood Begins and Noah Enters the Ark (Take 2)

- Noah is 600 years old
- Heaven and deep burst open, rain upon the land
- Noah and family enter the ark
- Pure and impure animals come two by two to Noah, into the ark
- "just as Yahweh commanded him" (7:16a)
- "and Yahweh closed behind him" (7:16b)

7:17-24: The Flood Overwhelms the Land

- 7:17-20: The waters are great and mighty over the land and mountains
- 7:21-22: Everything dies (Take 1)
- 7:23-24: Everything dies (Take 2)
- Noah in the ark is left as a remnant

8:1: The Pivot: God Remembers Noah

- God causes a wind to blow upon the waters

8:2-5: The Flood Recedes from the Land

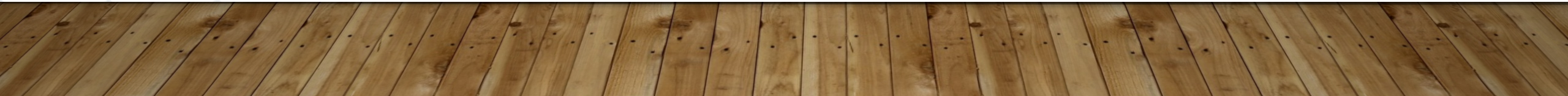
- The waters above and below are restrained
- The ark rests upon the mountains

8:6-14: Noah Sends out Birds to See if the Waters Have Dried Up

- Noah sends out the raven (impure)
- Noah sends out the dove 3 times (pure)
- Noah removes the cover and sees the dry land

8:15-19: Divine Speech: Noah to Leave the Ark

- Divine command: Noah, his family, and animals to go out from the ark
- Fulfillment: Noah, his family, and animals all go out from the ark



8:20-22: Noah's Sacrifice Deals With the Earthly Rebellion

- Noah builds an altar and offers a sacrifice
- Yahweh speaks to his heart
- The heart of humanity is bad
- But never again will Yahweh curse or strike the land

9:1-7: Divine Speech: Blessing and Provision of Food

- God blesses Noah: Be fruitful and multiply
- Animals are food for humanity
- No eating the blood, no bloodshed among humans

9:8-17: Divine Speech: The Covenant for the Preservation of Life

- God's covenant with Noah, all humanity, and all living creatures
- Never again ruin the earth by flood
- Sign of the covenant: rainbow in the cloud

9:18-27: The Rebellion of Ham and Noah's Blessing and Curse

- Ham "sees the nakedness of his father" = illicit sex
- Shem and Japheth cover and do not see the nakedness
- Ham is cursed, Shem and Japheth are blessed

THE FLOOD NARRATIVE IN ANCIENT NEAR EASTERN CONTEXT

- In 1847, Austin Henry Layard discovered near Mosul the first of thousands of cuneiform tablets that belonged to the library of Ashurbanipal (King of Assyria, 7th century B.C.E.).
- In 1872, George Smith presented his careful work of bringing together many tablets called the Epic of Gilgamesh (“The Chaldean Account of the Deluge”).

THE COMMON FRAMEWORK BETWEEN ALL THREE ACCOUNTS

- A divine decision is made to send a punishing flood
- One chosen man is told to save himself, his family, and creatures by building a boat
- The boat's proportions and design imitate a sacred temple
- A great flood destroys the rest of the people

THE COMMON FRAMEWORK BETWEEN ALL THREE ACCOUNTS

- The boat runs aground on a mountain
- Birds are sent out to determine the availability of habitable land
- The hero offers a sacrifice to the gods
- Humanity is renewed on the land

KEY DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE MESOPOTAMIAN ACCOUNTS AND GENESIS

Mesopotamian Flood Stories	Genesis Flood Story
The gods grow tired of the noise and disorder of humanity, and make a rash decision (that some gods regret!) to destroy them with the flood	God hears the outcry that results from humanity's moral corruption and violence, and sees their inclination to ruin his world
The assembly of gods tries to conceal the flood plan from the humans	Absent
The chief god decrees total human destruction; only one hero is saved by a rebel deity who secretly informs him about the coming threat *Eridu Genesis: Ziusudra* *Atrahasis: Atrahasis* *Gilgamesh Epic: Uta-napishti*	God views Noah as the only faithful human and initiates in warning him and instructing for his safety

Mesopotamian Flood Stories	Genesis Flood Story
The duration of the flood is either 7 days (Atrahasis, Babylonian) or 6 days and nights (Gilgamesh Epic).	God offers 7 days' warning, followed by 40 days of storm, followed by 150 days of recession, followed by multiple stages of 7 days until the flood is over 1 year and 10 days from its beginning (Gen. 7:11; 8:14).
The scope of destruction varies in the accounts: • Atrahasis: total destruction is ordered by the gods • Gilgamesh: all people turn back into clay, though the tops of the mountains are still visible	All the high mountains were covered (Gen. 7:19-20), there was water over all the surface of the land.
The inhabitants of the boat include a pilot and craftsmen, and lots of animals	Noah and his family and pairs of animals

The gods are hungry after 7 days of no food, and swarm around the sacrifice	Noah's sacrifice is pleasing to God but not to satisfy divine hunger; rather it is an act of thanks
The gods establish a "sign": a female goddess dons a shiny blue necklace that reminds the gods to never bring the flood again	God establishes a sign of the covenant (rainbow) to remind humans of God's promise: the humans are obligated to not shed blood (Gen. 9:4-6)
The flood hero is given divine life and becomes a demi-god king (Ziusudra), or is invited to Mt. Dilmun, the eternal realm of the gods (Uta-napishti)	Noah receives the new-humanity commission, but he immediately fails in his own garden

Key Differences Between Flood Stories. Created by Tim Mackie for BibleProject Classroom: Noah to Abraham (2020).

FLOOD ACCOUNTS FROM THE ANCIENT MESOPOTAMIAN WORLD

- Gordon Wenham outlines three basic approaches to explaining these connections in Word Biblical Commentary, Volume 1: Genesis 1-15 (Wenham, 1987).
- **Minimalists:** The differences are too great to suppose direct dependence of the Genesis account on the Mesopotamian. Both are independent developments of an earlier common tradition.
- **Maximalists:** The author of Genesis was familiar with and dependent upon Mesopotamian traditions in something like their present form. The writer is therefore deliberately opposing, subverting, or expanding on them.
- **Moderates:** The truth lies somewhere between the minimalist and maximalist, depending on the specific motif or textual detail.