COSMOS TO CHAOS – CHAOS TO COVENANT:
A RHETORICAL-CRITICAL READING OF
THE NOACHIC DELUGE NARRATIVE

BY

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A RHETORICAL-CRITICAL READING OF THE NOACHIC DELUGE NARRATIVE

by

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ABSTRACT

"Cosmos to Chaos—Chaos to Covenant:
A Rhetorical-Critical Reading of the Noachic Deluge Narrative"

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The Noachic Deluge is often portrayed within Scripture as being a disastrous, death-inducing, catastrophic event that had the power to forever shape and change the world that then was (Matt 24:36–44; Luke 17:26–27; 1 Pet 3:20–21; 2 Pet 3:6). Via "self-destructive lawlessness" (חמס), humanity had the effect of "corrupting" (שחת) the "good" (טוב) earth that God had created, thus leading the Creator to proclaim that he would "destroy" (שחת) and "blot/wipe" (מחה) it out, along with "all flesh" (כל בשר).

Fortunately, "Noah found favour in the eyes of the LORD" and God chose to "establish" or "confirm" (קום) his covenant with him and to preserve a remnant of humanity and all life (Gen 6:18–21; 7:1–3, 7–9, 13–16; 8:16–22; 9:1–17). As such, despite the vivid picture of devastation that the Noachic Deluge account depicts, this study will seek to demonstrate by means of rhetorical analysis that the emphasis of the narrative is on redemption, salvation, deliverance, renewal, and the upholding of life.

The Noachic Deluge event functions to recalibrate the kinship relationship of God and humanity that was lost in the Fall via the structure of covenant. In this way, the Noachic Deluge narrative is persuasive. As intellectual, world-view formative rhetoric,

the scribe convincingly communicates that God's intentions for creation, the establishment of order via covenant, will not be thwarted. This includes human beings—as his image-bearers—employing the principle of *lex talionis* (blood-for-blood).

Despite the present scholarship, a lacuna exists concerning the persuasive nature of the Noachic Deluge narrative, its rhetorical function, and a thorough, methodologically rigorous, description of the scribe's persuasiveness. As such, this work seeks to delineate the scribe's essential persuasive strategy—noting also his literary artistry—as it engages in a detailed reading of this specific portion of ancient Scripture (Gen 6:9—9:29).

This study leverages a form of George A. Kennedy's model of rhetorical criticism: (1) determining the rhetorical units, (2) determining the rhetorical situation, (3) determining the rhetorical strategy, and (4) determining the rhetorical effectiveness. A brief conclusion rounds out the analysis.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

CONTENTS

ILLUSTRATIONS

ABBREVIATIONS

AB	Anchor Bible
ASV	American Standard Version
AV	Authorized Version
BBE	Bible in Basic English
BBR	*Bulletin for Biblical Research*
BBRSup	Bulletin for Biblical Research, Supplements
BCE	Before Common Era
BDB	Brown, Francis, et al. *Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1907.
BHRG	Van der Merwe, Christo H. J., et al. *A Biblical Hebrew Reference Grammar*. 2nd ed. New York: Bloomsbury T. & T. Clark, 2017.
BHS	Elliger, Karl, and Wilhelm Rudolph. *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*. Edited by A. Schenker. 5th rev. ed. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1997.
BHQ	Tal, Abraham, ed. *Biblia Hebraica Quinta, Fascicle 1: Genesis*. BHQ 1. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2015.
BZAW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft
ca.	*circa*, around, approximately
CBQ	*Catholic Biblical Quarterly*
CEB	Common English Bible
cf.	*confer*, compare, see also
CSB	Christian Standard Bible

DBI	Ryken, Leland, et al., eds. *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery.* Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 1998.
DCH	Clines, David J. A., ed. *The Dictionary of Classical Hebrew.* 9 vols. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1993–2016.
EncJud	Roth, C., and G. Wigoder, eds. Encyclopedia Judaica. 16 vols. Jerusalem: Keter, 1971–1972.
ESV	English Standard Version
EVV	English Versions
GBHS	Arnold, Bill T., and John H. Choi. *A Guide to Biblical Hebrew Syntax.* 2nd ed. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2018.
GKC	Gesenius, Wilhelm, and E. Kautzsch. *Gesenius Hebrew Grammar.* 2nd ed. Translated by A. E. Cowley. Oxford: Clarendon, 1910.
GNB	Good News Bible
HALOT	Koehler, Ludwig, et al. *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament.* Study Edition. Translated by M. E. J. Richardson. 2 vols. Leiden: Brill, 2001.
HCSB	Holman Christian Standard Bible
IBHS	Waltke, Bruce K. and M. O'Connor. *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew Syntax.* Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1990.
ISBE	Bromiley, G. W. et al., eds., *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, 4 vols. Rev. ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979–88.
JAOS	*Journal of the American Oriental Society*
JBL	*Journal of Biblical Literature*
JBQ	*Jewish Biblical Quarterly*
JETS	*Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*
Joüon	Joüon, Paul, and Takamitsu Muraoka. *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew.* Rev. ed. Subsidia Biblica 27. Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 2006.

JPS	Jewish Publication Society
JSNTSup	Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series
JSOT	*Journal for the Study of the Old Testament*
JSOTSup	Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series
KJV	King James Version
LES	Penner, Ken M., ed. *The Lexham English Septuagint*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham, 2019.
LHBOTS	Library for the Study of the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Supplement Series
LXX	Old Greek translation/The Septuagint (LXX)
M	Masoretic Text as represented in *BHS* or *BHQ*
MSS	Manuscripts
MT	Masoretic Text as represented in *BHS* or *BHQ*
NAB	New American Bible
NASB	New American Standard Bible (1995 update)
NCB	New Century Bible
NCV	New Century Version
NEB	New English Bible
NETS	Pietersma, Albert, and Benjamin G. Wright III, eds. *A New English Translation of the Septuagint: And the Other Greek Translations Traditionally Included under That Title*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2007. Online: http://ccat.sas.upenn.edu/nets/edition/
NIB	Keck, L. E., et al., eds. *The New Interpreter's Bible*. 12 vols. Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1994.
NIDOTTE	VanGemeren, Willem A., ed. *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology and Exegesis*. 5 vols. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997.

NIV 1984	New International Version (1984)
NIV 2011	New International Version (2011)
NJB	New Jerusalem Bible
NJPS	New Jewish Publication Society
NKJV	New King James Version
NLT	New Living Translation
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version
OG	Old Greek translation/The Septuagint (LXX)
OT	Old Testament
REB	Revised English Bible
RSV	Revised Standard Version
SamPent	Samaritan Pentateuch
SBL	Society of Biblical Literature
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertations Series
TNIV	Today's New International Version
Vg	Vulgate
VT	*Vetus Testamentum*
VTSup	Supplements to Vetus Testamentum
WTJ	*Westminster Theological Journal*
ZAW	*Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschafte*

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

General Orientation

The Noachic Deluge narrative is primarily recounted in four chapters (Gen 6–9) of the book of Genesis.[1] Situated within the immediate context of Gen 1–11[2] and the cognitive environment of the ancient Near East,[3] the Noachic Deluge is often portrayed within Scripture as being a death-inducing, catastrophic event (Matt 24:36–44; Luke 17:26–27; 1 Pet 3:20–21) that had the power to forever shape and change the world that then was (2 Pet 3:6).[4] Scripture is also clear that the Noachic Deluge was directly related to the *in toto* self-destructive behaviour of humanity, חמס, i.e. "lawlessness"[5] (Gen 6:11, 13, cf. 6:5).[6]

Veritably, human beings had the effect of "corrupting" (שחת) the "good" (טוב) earth that God had created, thus leading the Creator to proclaim that he would "destroy" (שחת) and "blot/wipe" (מחה) it out, along with "all flesh," (כל בשר), i.e. every living thing (Gen 6:7, 11–13, 17; 7:4, 21–23, cf. 8:21; 9:11–16).[7]

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[1] Cohn, *Noah's Flood*, 11, and Chen, *The Primeval Flood Catastrophe*, 1.

[2] Not all scholars, however, agree with the schema of dividing the book of Genesis between Gen 1:1—11:26 and Gen 11:27—50:26. For instance, Sternberg, "The Genealogical Framework," 41–50, wishes to see the genealogy of Shem (Gen 11:10–26) included as part of the so-called 'ancestral period' while others contend that Gen 1–9 should be thought of as an individual unit, so Clark, "The Flood and the Structure of the Pre-Patriarchal History," 184–211. In addition, Hiebert, *The Yahwist's Landscape*, 80–82, believes that the Flood may have originally constituted the end of the primeval age. Cf. Rendtorff, "Gen 8:21," 69–78, and von Rad, *Genesis*, 122. For more details, see Boda, *Severe Mercy*, 1; Arnold, *Genesis*, 1; Kaminski, *Was Noah Good?*, 91; Longman and Walton, *Lost World of the Flood*, 122–42.

[3] See Walton, "Cognitive Environment," 333–39, and Walton, *Ancient Near East*, 3–30.

[4] France, *Matthew*, 943; Pao and Schnabel, "Luke," 348; Davids, *2 Peter and Jude*, 270–71.

[5] Swart and Van Dam ("חמס" 2:178) state that this term expresses "cold-blooded and unscrupulous infringement of the physical rights of others, motivated by greed and hate and often making use of physical violence and brutality." Another scholar asserts that "this is virtually a technical term for the violation of the weak by the strong, a breach of a just order, an order provided for by God." Konkel, "Promise and Covenant," 20. Cf. *DCH* 3:256; *HALOT* 1:329.

[6] For details on the *Nephilim* (Gen 6:1–4), see Wright, *Origin*, 5–55; Clines, "Sons of God," 33–46; Keiser, "The 'Sons of God,'" 103–20; Spero, "Sons of God," 15–18; Feinman, "Sons of God," 73–100; Day, *Creation to Babel*, 77–97; Marris, "Sons of God," 218–24; Huey Jr., "Yes," 184–209; Walton, "No," 184–209; Walton, "Sons of God," 793–98; Longman and Walton, *Lost World of the Flood*, 122–28; Collins, *Reading Genesis Well*, 187–90; VanGemeren, "Sons of God," 320–48; Stuckenbruck, *Angels*.

[7] Fretheim, *Creation Untamed*, 5, 37, 42, and Walton, *Genesis*, 307–8.

A pressing concern, however, with this course of action is that it seems to be in direct contrast to God's intentions at creation to bless humanity and to see them flourish, abound, and "subdue and have dominion" over the earth as his image-bearers (Gen 1:26–31).[8] If humanity is altogether removed from the earth via the Flood what happens next? Fortunately, "Noah found favour in the eyes of the LORD" and God chose to establish his covenant with him and to preserve a remnant of humanity and all life on earth (Gen 6:18–21; 7:1–3, 7–9, 13–16; 8:16–22; 9:1–17). As such, despite the vivid picture of devastation that the Noachic Deluge account depicts, this study will seek to demonstrate by means of rhetorical analysis that the emphasis of the narrative, as a whole, is on redemption, deliverance, salvation, renewal, restoration, and the upholding of life.[9]

In this way, the Noachic Deluge narrative is persuasive. As intellectual, world-view formative literature, the rhetoric of the scribe(s) of the Noachic Deluge narrative convincingly communicates that God's intentions for creation, the establishment of order via covenant, will not be thwarted and that the Creator is committed to his purposes for humanity as his image bearers.[10] Though this assertion is in keeping with both the "Spread-of-Sin, Spread-of-Grace"[11] and the "Creation–Un-creation–Re-Creation"[12] themes that have been traditionally agreed upon by many scholars to account for the

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[8] See Konkel, "In Defense of Human Values," 32–35, Brueggemann, "Kerygma," 400–13.

[9] Keiser (*Genesis 1–11*, 128) correctly notes the difference between deliverance (i.e. redemption) and salvation in that "redemption is deliverance while salvation is entrance into blessing." Cf. Fretheim (*God and World*, 10) who states: "the objective of God's work in *redemption* is to free people to be who they were created to be the effect of which is named salvation." Emphasis original.

[10] See Kaminski, *From Noah to Israel*, 1. This also involves the principle of 'blood for blood.'

[11] See Clines, *Pentateuch,* 70–80, and von Rad (*Genesis*, 153) who states: "we see, therefore (already in the primeval history!), that each time, in and after the judgment, God's preserving, forgiving will to save is revealed . . . What is described, therefore, is a story of God with man [sic], the story of a continually new punishment and at the same time gracious preservation, the story, to be sure, of a way that is distinguished by progressive divine judgment, but that, nevertheless, man [sic] could never have travelled without continued divine preservation." Cf. von Rad, *Theology*, 1:163–65.

[12] See Clines, "Flood," 128–42, and Clines, *Pentateuch*, 70–84. Cf. Kaminski, *Was Noah Good?*, 133–36.

shape, content, and development of the material of Gen 1–11, this study builds upon these rubrics by providing further data and specific evidence of such conclusions via an underutilized methodology, namely a rhetorical-critical "persuasive" approach.

Presenting Problems Concerning the Noachic Deluge Narrative

Though often portrayed as a source of great comfort to the postdiluvian world (see Isa 54:9), many aspects of the Noachic Deluge narrative are also something of a puzzle to the careful reader. Why is it, for example, that God twice announces the Flood (Gen 6:13; 7:4) and twice promises to never again send such a catastrophic type of Deluge upon the earth (Gen 8:21; 9:15)? How come Noah is initially told by God to take a pair of each kind of animal into the ark (Gen 6:19–20) but then, later, to take seven pairs of clean animals and one pair of unclean animals with him (see Gen 7:2–3)? Can one actually reconcile the chronology of the Flood? In what way should one account for the variations between the two divine names (*Elohim* and *Yahweh*) that occur within the narrative?[13]

Much debate also exists surrounding the exact import, meaning, and significance of the Piel verb "to curse" (קלל) in Gen 8:21a. Though it is generally acknowledged that the language that is used here is meant to be reminiscent of the Fall, that is to say, it stands to reason that this "promise is a reversal of the curse given to Adam in Genesis 3,"[14] the debate hinges on whether God is "revoking" the curse, i.e. is God cancelling the curse against the ground, entirely, or is Yahweh promising "not to *add* to it"?[15]

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[13] See Boadt et al., *Old Testament*, 99; Clifford, "Inundation or Interpretation?," 25; Campbell and O' Brien, *Pentateuch*, 214; Day, *From Creation to Babel*, 102–03. Cf. Tiemeyer, "Retelling," 223–24.

[14] Boda, *Severe Mercy*, 22. See too Hamilton, *Genesis 1–17*, 309–10.

[15] Kaminski, *Was Noah Good?*, 91. Emphasis original. Cf. Goldingay, *Theology*, 1:176, Rendtorff, "Gen 8:21," 69–78, Oates, "The Curse," 32–33, Fishbane, *Text*, 33–34, Turner, *Plot*, 38–41, and Wöller, "Zur Übersetzung von kî in Gen 8:21 und 9:6," 637–38.

Alongside the above, many theologically astute readers also pose the query about how, specifically, the kindness, goodness, and mercy of God the Creator intersect with and correlate or complement his judgment, wrath, and justice in light of the Flood.[16] Veritably, while it is reasonably clear from the onset of the Noachic Deluge account that it was always God's intention to provide something of a remnant of life, that is, to preserve the animals from the Flood and to "establish" or "confirm" (קום) his covenant with Noah, etc. (see Gen 6:18–20; 7:1–4, 16. Cf. Gen 6:7, 8), the conciliatory disposition of the Deity towards creation within the postdiluvian world is particularly vexing given the seeming contradiction or paradox that exists between the text of Gen 6:5–7 and Gen 8:20–22. To be clear, initially, just prior to the Flood, it is written (Gen 6:5–7):

> Now the LORD saw the wickedness of humanity on the earth—that every inclination of the thoughts of their mind was only evil continually. Then the LORD was remorseful that he made human beings on the earth. The LORD was grieved within his innermost being. So the LORD said: "I will remove humanity, whom I have created, from the face of the ground: human beings, beasts, creeping things, up to and including even the birds of the sky—for I am remorseful that I have made them." (my translation).

The language here suggests that the downward spiral of sin, evil, and disorder has reached its climax.[17] The account can be arranged in a "rough palistrophe" (see below).[18]

FIGURE ONE—THE PALISTROPHE OF GEN 6:5–8

A The LORD "sees" (ראה) humanity (Gen 6:5)
    B The LORD "regrets"/"is sorry" (נחם) that he made humanity (Gen 6:6a)
        C The LORD is "grieved" (עצב) within his innermost being (Gen 6:6b)
        C' The LORD says "I shall 'wipe out' (מחה) humanity" (Gen 6:7a)
    B' The LORD "regrets"/"is sorry" (נחם) that he made everything (Gen 6:7b)
A' The LORD "sees" (ראה) Noah (6:8)

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[16] See Fretheim, "God and Violence," 22, and Fretheim, "Wrath," 14–17.

[17] See Burlet, "Impassible Yet Impassioned," 116. Wenham (*Genesis 1–15*, 144) states: "few texts in the OT are so explicit and all-embracing as this in specifying the extent of human sinfulness and depravity." Cf. Jacobsen, "Eridu Genesis," 529.

[18] This schematic is a modified version of Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 136. For more information on chiasms, see Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry*, 32. Cf. Boda, "Chiasmus in Ubiquity," 55–70

Through the schematic above, it is evidenced that the immorality of humanity is of grave consequence to God and that it provides the impetus for the Flood itself.[19] Because of this, it is of special interest to note that immediately following the Flood, it is also written (Gen 8:20–21) that "the LORD smelled the 'soothing aroma'" (וירח יהוה את ריח הניחח) of the (clean) burnt animals that Noah sacrificed on the altar he built upon his initial departure from the ark and that the LORD resolved within himself (or said to himself) (ויאמר יהוה אל לבו) to "never again curse the ground because [כי] of humans, because/indeed [כי] the inclination [יצר] of the heart of humans is evil from its youth. I will never again destroy every living creature as I have done."[20] God then also states:

> For all the earth's days—
>
> Seed time and harvest,
>
> Cold and heat,
>
> Summer and winter,
>
> Day and night,
>
> Will not cease (Gen 8:22).[21]

The most critical elements that pertain to this specific dilemma may be seen below:

Gen 6:5b	Gen 8:21b
וכל יצר מחשבת לבו רק רע כל היום	כי יצר לב האדם רע מנעריו
That every inclination of the thoughts of their mind was only evil continually. (my translation)	For the inclination of humanity's mind is evil from their youth. (my translation)

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[19] See Wenham, "Genesis, Book of," 249. Cf. Brasnett, *The Suffering of the Impassible God*, 11, and Kaminski, "Beautiful Women or 'False Judgment'?," 457–73.

[20] Humphreys, *Character of God*, 69.

[21] The above translation (including style) is from Humphreys, *Character of God*, 69. Arnold (*Genesis*, 108) notes that the narrative and poem combined in Gen 8:20–22 can perhaps explain Israel's "customary sacrificial offerings, indicating the occasion for these recurrent offerings, especially the last couplet of the poem (8:22), 'day and night,' which may provide the etiology for the twice-daily sacrifice at the temple in Jerusalem (Exod 29:28–42 and Num 28:2–8)." To bolster his assessment, Arnold points to Cooper and Goldstein, "Priestly Calendars," 1–20. Cf. Walton, *Lost World of Genesis One*, 59.

Though the omission of the terms "all, everyone" (כל), "thought, device, plan" (מחשבת), "only" (רק), and "all the day, continually" (כל היום), may be thought by some individuals to display God's "more lenient attitude after the flood, in view of his mercy," the insertion of "from his youth" (מנעריו) in Gen 8:21b clearly functions as a clue to the scribe's "reapplication" of Gen 6:5b.[22] Alongside this, the LXX, which reads as follows, ὅτι ἔγκειται ἡ διάνοια τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐπιμελῶς ἐπὶ τὰ πονηρὰ ἐκ νεότητος, also highlights humanity's responsibility for the evil inclination of their own mind even more than the MT.[23] The NETS renders Gen 8:21 as "for the mind of humankind applies itself attentively to evil things from youth." The LES has "everyone was focused in his heart on evil things all their days." Another scholar translates it: "(because) the mind of mankind is studiously involved in evil matters from childhood."[24]

To summarize, with respect to humanity's incorrigible, prolific resolve towards egregious sin and death-inducing, self-destructive behavior, things were just as depraved after the Flood as they were before the devastation occurred. It is difficult, therefore, to discern the exact function of the conjunction in Gen 8:21b. Victor P. Hamilton notes:

> If we translate . . . *kî* as 'for, because,' instead of 'however, even though,' we are faced with a conundrum. God will never again destroy the earth because of man [sic], because from the start man's [sic] heart is evil. But according to 6:5, this is precisely the reason God sends the Flood in the first place. Here is the paradox: God inundates the earth because of man's [sic] sinfulness, and subsequently promises never again to destroy the earth because of man's [sic] sinfulness.[25]

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[22] Kaminski, *Was Noah Good?*, 88. Cf. Greenberger, "Noah's Survival," 30–31.

[23] See Peters, *Noah Traditions*, 16.

[24] Wevers, *Genesis*, 111.

[25] Hamilton, *Genesis 1–17*, 309. Cf. Kidner (*Genesis*, 93) who opines: "grammatically, the clause *for the imagination* . . . could be either an expression of *for man's sake* or else the reason for saying 'never again'. Theologically it must be the former: the Lord's resolve not to renew the judgment is based on the accepted sacrifice (*cf.* 1 Sa. 26:19; Col. 1:20), not on man's [sic] incorrigibility, which had been the very ground of the judgment (6:5–7) and still called for its renewal; it ever counts in the sinner's favour." Italics original. Note that Hamilton (*Genesis 1–17*, 309) also states: "It is possible to retain the causal nuance of *kî* and observe . . . not a contradiction but a . . . demonstration of God's grace." I will return to this point.

Given the remarkable damage that God had just unleashed upon the world via the

Noachic Deluge, an unnerving depiction of the undoing or reversal of creation—the

cosmos becoming chaos—one is not amiss to wonder why God's perspective towards his

created order, the works of his hands, seemed to have changed so suddenly.[26] Why would

the very thing that seems to have been the original source or impulse of God's decision to

first institute the Flood, namely humanity's insatiable bent towards all that which is

displeasing to him (Gen 6:5), now suddenly seem to prompt him to compassion and

fidelity (Gen 8:21)?[27] While the text does not linger over the motivation for the change, a

multiplicity of arguments and analogies exist to account for it, each with varying degrees

of exegetical (and methodological) rigor, nuance, and theological import. In the next few

sections we will examine various attempts to resolve some of the above matters both

diachronically and synchronically and argue why a new (rhetorical) approach is required.

Diachronic (Source-Critical) Approaches Concerning The Noachic Deluge Narrative

It is well known that the Noachic Deluge narrative was often dissected by scholars

throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, as it was usually regarded to

be the perfect specimen to test case the (source-critical) documentary hypothesis.[28]

This approach is predicated on the belief that the text "interweaves two versions," an

older one, 'J' (the Yahwistic account), and a later one, 'P' (the Priestly version), that

adapted the story in the sixth-century BCE for a new audience of exiles."[29]

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[26] See Clines, "Flood," 142, and Noort, "Flood," 36. Cf. Mettinger, *Eden Narrative*, 75.

[27] See Brodie, *Genesis as Dialogue*, 168.

[28] Wenham, "Pentateuch," 116–44; Alexander, *Paradise*, 3–81; Baker, "Source," 798–805. For contemporary trends, see Dozeman et al., eds., *Pentateuch*, 3–240, Gmirkin, *Genesis*, 22–33, Carr, *Genesis*, 41–98, Blenkinsopp, *Pentateuch*, 1–30, Campbell and O'Brien, *Pentateuch*, 1–10, Baden, *Pentateuch*, 13–33, Dozeman and Schmid, eds., *Farewell to the Yahwist?*, 1–27, Van Seters, *Yahwist*, 3–17, Blekinsopp, "Genesis," 1–15. Cf. Garrett, *Rethinking Genesis*, 13–90, and Garrett, "Hypothesis," 28–41.

[29] Clifford, "Inundation or Interpretation," 25. Cf. Kloppenborg, "Source Criticism," 342.

Unequivocally, the chronology of the final form of the book of Genesis is heavily disputed.[30] Even so, it is evident that the Pentateuch was addressed to a people who were already living "under the law . . . and failing at every opportunity."[31] Scripture also shows signs that the implied readers of the Pentateuch experienced the apostasy of Israel, the devastation of Jerusalem, and the deportation/exile to Babylon that began with Judah in 587 BC (Lev 26:27–44; Deut 4:25–31; 8:19–20; 28:36–37 and 45–68; 29:20–28; 30:1–20; cf. 1 Kgs 8:46–53; 9:6–9 and 2 Kgs 21:8–15). Alongside this, a close reading also reveals that the many parenthetical comments that are inserted within the book of Deuteronomy (Deut 1:2, 7; 2:10–12, 20–23, 34; 3:4–7, 9, 11, 13–14, 16–17; 4:9, 20, 23, 44–49; 11:30; 30:1; 31:6–8; 34:3) suggest not only a temporal distance from the events that transpired within the text but also some loss of memory, both geographical and historical, thus implying an audience that is spatially removed from Canaan and needed special prompting with respect to these matters.[32]

The exilic nature of the final form of the Pentateuch is also demonstrated by the revealing statement made at the end of the book of Deuteronomy where it is written that there was never again a prophet like Moses in Israel (Deut 34:10–12). "Clearly, the author who made this statement knows about the entire line of prophets who followed Moses . . . a huge jump is made here at the end of Pentateuch, taking us from the last days of Moses to the last days of the prophets."[33]

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[30] Wenham (*Story as Torah*, 41–42) states: "The Mosaic era certainly accounts for many of the key features in Genesis" yet [n]one of the observations that would pertain to a date in the fifth-century post-exilic era are "problems for a date in the united monarchy period." Provan (*Discovering Genesis*, 49–58), however, contends that Genesis reached its final form in the Persian Period. Cf. Dozeman, *Pentateuch*, 525–45, Hess *Old Testament*, 32–36, Alexander, *Paradise*, 85–98, Longman and Dillard, *Introduction*, 40–51, Arnold, *Genesis*, 12–18, Kawashima, "Sources," 52, Hendel and Joosten, *Hebrew Bible*, 127–30.

[31] Sailhamer, *Meaning of the Pentateuch*, 26. Cf. Fretheim, *Pentateuch*, 40–63.

[32] See Fretheim, *Pentateuch*, 41–42. Cf. Harper, *'I Will Walk Among You,'* 98–104.

[33] Sailhamer, *Meaning of the Pentateuch*, 31. See too Sailhamer, "Genesis 1–11," 89–106.

With respect to the Noachic Deluge narrative, specifically, it was usually understood that the first task of the exegete was to begin to "reconstruct these sources."[34] In point of fact, each of the major scholars of this time period, S. R. Driver (1904),[35] John Skinner (1910),[36] Hermann Gunkel (1910),[37] Gerhard von Rad (1961),[38] E. A. Speiser (1964),[39] and Claus Westermann (1974),[40] in effect, wrote commentaries on the 'J' and 'P' versions of the Noachic Deluge narrative rather than on the final form of the text itself.[41] Skinner's example of the distribution of sources is seen via the table below:[42]

FIGURE TWO—SOURCES IN THE NOACHIC DELUGE: SKINNER

J – Yahwist	Gen 6:5–8; 7:1–5, 7 (8, 9), 10, 12, 16b, 17b, 22, 23; 8:2b, 3a, 6–12, 13b, 20–22
P – Priestly	Gen 6:9–22; 7:6, 11, 13–16a, 17a, 18–21, 24; 8:1, 2a, 3b–5, 14–19; 9:1–17

Westermann, however, has a somewhat different division of the Flood narrative:[43]

FIGURE THREE—SOURCES IN THE NOACHIC DELUGE: WESTERMANN

Details Narrated Twice	J – Yahwist	P – Priestly
The corruption of humanity	Gen 6:5	Gen 6:11–12
The decision to destroy	Gen 6:7	Gen 6:13
Commission to enter the ark	Gen 7:1–3	Gen 6:18–21
Entering of the ark	Gen 7:7	Gen 7:13
Coming of the Flood	Gen 7:10	Gen 7:11
Death of all creatures	Gen 7:22–23	Gen 7:20–21
End of the Flood	Gen 8:2b–3a	Gen 8:3b–5
Promise that the Flood will not recur	Gen 8:21b–22	Gen 9:1–17

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[34] Kaminski, *Was Noah Good?*, 22. See too Chisholm, "Source Criticism," 181–90, and Garrett, "The Undead Hypothesis," 28–41.

[35] Driver, *Genesis*, 82–108.

[36] Skinner, *Genesis*, 150–58, 158–74.

[37] Gunkel, *Genesis*, 60–84, 138–51.

[38] von Rad, *Genesis*, 118–25, 125–34.

[39] Speiser, *Genesis*, 44–59.

[40] Westermann, *Genesis 1–11*, 384–480.

[41] See Evans (*Guide*, 78), from whom much of this sentence's wording has been derived.

[42] Skinner, *Genesis*, 148. Cf. Driver, *Genesis*, 85–86, and Gunkel, *Genesis*, 60, 138–46.

[43] Westermann, *Genesis 1–11*, 397–98. Cf. Campbell and O'Brien, *Sources*, 214.

Another, much more recent, chart of the sources in the Deluge may also be seen below.[44]

FIGURE FOUR— SOURCES IN THE NOACHIC DELUGE: BOADT

J Version	P Version
And the LORD said unto Noah, Come thou and all thy house in the ark; for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation.	And God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth. Make thee an ark of gopher wood; rooms shalt thou make in the ark, and shalt pitch it within and without with pitch.
Of every clean beast thou shalt take to thee seven and seven, the male and his female; and of the beasts that are not clean two, the male and his female;	
————————	And of every living thing of all flesh, two of every sort shalt thou bring into the ark.
And it came to pass after the seven days, that the waters of the flood were upon the earth....And the rain was upon the earth forty days and forty nights;	————————
————————	In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on the same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened.
And it came to pass at the end of forty days that Noah opened the window of the ark which he had made: and he sent forth a raven.	————————
————————	And the waters prevailed upon the earth a hundred and fifty days.
And he stayed yet another seven days; and again he sent forth the dove out of the ark;	————————
————————	And God made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters assuaged;
Noah removed the covering of the ark, and looked, and, behold, the face of the ground was dried.	————————
	And in the second month, on the seven and twentieth day of the month, was the earth dry.

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[44] Boadt et al., *Old Testament*, 101. Cf. Dozeman, *Pentateuch*, 106, Steinmann, *Genesis*, 113, Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 163–4, 167–68, Kawashima, "Sources," 51–70, Habel, "Two Flood Stories," 18–25, and Galambush, *Reading Genesis*, 42.

In short, this approach to the Noachic Deluge narrative often resulted in the conclusion that there are actually two distinct and often competing "theologies of the Flood," one from the 'J' version and the other from the 'P' version.[45] For instance, the anthropomorphism of God "smelling the pleasing odor" (Gen 8:21) was often taken as "a sure sign of the theological primitivism of the Yahwist, as opposed to the Priestly writer who is more like us."[46] As one scholar asserts: "the priestly narrative material tends to make God less human-like (anthropomorphic) than other narratives in Genesis."[47] Westermann's statements concerning Noah are also representative:

> The abrupt mention of him in 6:8 is meant to show that, in contrast to P's presentation, the motive for Noah's preservation lies with God and not in Noah's piety The *waw*-adversative at the beginning clearly refers this sentence to vv. 6–7 . . . there is an element of contradiction here. The corruption of humankind is portrayed in v. 5 as radical and all-embracing; in v. 8 however one among humankind can find favor with God. P on the contrary is rationalistic. He begins with Noah's righteousness in 6:9 so as to set in relief from the very beginning the reason for the exception. This is a typical difference between J and P.[48]

Though duly cognizant of what source-criticism brings to academia at large, not all supporters of source-critical analysis, however, wish to emphasize the Noachic Deluge text's potential discontinuity. Antony F. Campbell and Mark A. O'Brien, for example, maintain that in contrast to the creation accounts of Gen 1:1—2:4a and Gen 2:4b–25, where the "duality has been juxtaposed to form a quite different unity,"[49] in the Noachic Deluge narrative "the compiler of our composite final text has done marvelously well."[50] Campbell and O'Brien further state:

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[45] Kaminski, *Was Noah Good?*, 9. See also Mann, *Book of the Torah*, 30. Cf. Schwartz, "Documentary Hypothesis," 3–16.

[46] Kikawada and Quinn, *Before Abraham Was*, 105.

[47] Smith, *Priestly Vision*, 66.

[48] Westermann, *Genesis 1–11*, 411–12 (see too 596). Cf. Collins, *Reading Genesis Well*, 111.

[49] Campbell and O'Brien, *Pentateuch*, 214. Cf. Kawashima, "Sources," 54–55

[50] See Campbell and O'Brien, *Pentateuch*, 223. Cf. Kawashima, "Sources," 66.

> After reading closely a composite text such as the flood narrative, one thing is starling obvious yet seldom said: there is evidence of both duality and unity in the text, and both must have their place in its meaning . . . the duality might easily have been eliminated in favor of unity; the unity might have been subordinated by juxtaposing the dual texts. But neither has happened. The interweaving of threads within the fabric of a passage creates a different outcome from the joining of pieces of fabric to form a larger entity. The meaning of the text must therefore embrace both unity and duality.[51]

To clarify, though the authors maintain that "the duality has been interwoven within the single narrative," they also argue that the "unity" of the text is seen by "foregrounding the structure of the plot" while its "duality" is seen by "foregrounding the detail of the narrative: there is a dual chronology for the flood, a dual set of prescriptions about the animals to survive, a duel set of conceptions about the nature of the flood, a dual set of terms for God, and there is a dual account of most of the elements of the narrative."[52] What, then, is one to do with 'J' and 'P'? Robert S. Kawashima states: "To discern the complex meaning of the flood . . . begin with the two underlying sources, J and P. One can bring out their distinctive ideas most fully by comparing them on three key points: the motive for the flood, the function of the flood, and the conclusion of the flood."[53]

According to J, the source of the problem is the "lawlessness" (חמס) of humankind (Gen 6:5), while for P, the reason for the flood is "the 'corruption' of the 'earth' itself, due to the 'corruption' and 'violence' of 'all flesh'—that is, both humans and animals" (Gen 6:11–13).[54] Given such, the problem (for P) is not directly related to "that moral agency peculiar to humans."[55] In light of the above, it is thereby deduced by

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[51] Campbell and O'Brien, *Pentateuch*, 213–14. See too Campbell and O'Brien, *Rethinking the Pentateuch*, 123–24. Cf. Harland, *Value of Human Life*, 13–19.

[52] Campbell and O'Brien, *Pentateuch*, 214. See also pp. 215–16.

[53] Kawashima, "Sources," 66. Cf. Van Seters, *Yahwist*, 24–28, 192–214.

[54] Kawashima, "Sources," 66.

[55] Kawashima, "Sources," 67.

many source-critical scholars that (for J) the Flood functions as a type of "universal

punishment" for the sin(s) of humanity while, in contrast, "P's flood cleanses the earth

from pollution, apparently caused by bloodguilt."[56] Lastly, as noted above, within this

diachronic (source-critical) framework, the apex of the Noachic Deluge narrative is also

contingent upon (and varies between) one's understanding of both the 'J' and 'P' sources

that lay behind the text of the book of Genesis. To this end, Lawrence Boadt opines:

> The climax for the J version comes in Genesis 8:20–22, in which God's forgiveness extends even to lifting the curse upon the earth for what humans have done in their hearts. People may still choose to sin, but the goodness of God and his everlasting mercy will be seen in the bounty and the regularity of nature's seasons . . . (Gen 8:22). P's climax comes in Genesis 9:1–17 where God renews the blessing of Genesis 1 on human beings. P even enlarges the covenant conditions so that now people may eat meat as well as plants, thus removing the last restrictions on their rule over the creatures of the world. But with it comes an increased obligation to respect human life . . . (Gen 9:6).[57]

Campbell and O'Brien also assert:

> There are two stages to the ending of the story. In the first, Noah's sacrifice is followed by God's decision never again to destroy life because of human evil. What was intolerable before the flood (6:5) is now tolerated. While there is no reflection offered on this, the place of Gen 6:5 and 8:21b–22 in the same narrative can only imply that God has had a radical change of heart. In the second stage, much the same is said in different language. The world is blessed again, as at the start of creation. But it is a less-than-perfect world, a world in which there is to be fear and bloodshed. Yet God makes a covenant never again to destroy this world by flood, a covenant to which no condition is attached.[58]

With respect to this last point, it is of interest that the covenant is described as a "long-

lasting/everlasting" covenant (ברית עולם) in Gen 9:16 (cf. Sir 44:17–18).[59] In addition to

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[56] Kawashima, "Sources," 67. See too Frymer-Kensky, "Atrahasis Epic," 147–55, and Frymer-Kensky, "Pollution, Purification, and Purgation," 399–414.

[57] Boadt et al., *Old Testament*, 100.

[58] Campbell and O'Brien, *Pentateuch*, 215. Kawashima, "Sources," 68.

[59] See Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom Through Covenant*, 187; Mason, *Covenant*, 47–87; Mason, "Another Flood," 177–98. Cf. Walton, *Covenant*, 131–33.

this, it is also notable that the standard language for "covenant initiation" is lacking; that is to say, God does not "cut a covenant" (כרת ברית) with Noah (cf. Gen 15:18) but rather "gives," "affirms," or "establishes" his covenant (Gen 6:18, 9:9, 11, 17).[60] See below:

English Gloss	Hebrew	Stem	Verse(s)
'Establish'	קום	Hiphil	6:18
'Establish'	קום	Hiphil	9:9
'Establish'	קום	Hiphil	9:11
'Give'	נתן	Qal	9:12
'Establish'	קום	Hiphil	9:17

Given such, certain scholars posit there being an "implicit covenant between Creator and creature, in which the Creator promises abundant life in return for the creature's living according to the norms laid down at Creation."[61] With respect to the Noachic covenant, specifically (Gen 6:18; 9:9–17), C. John Collins states: "this covenant goes beyond humankind and embraces the animal kingdom as well. This may look like an advance on the arrangement with Adam but is more likely an explication of it. Even though the word 'covenant' is not used for God's relationship with Adam, it is a good and accurate word."[62] Peter J. Gentry and Stephen J. Wellum also state:

> The construction *hēqîm běrît* in Genesis 6 and 9 indicates that God is not initiating a covenant with Noah but is rather affirming for Noah and his descendants a commitment initiated previously. This language clearly denotes a covenant established earlier between God and creation, or between God and humans at creation. When God says that he is affirming or upholding his covenant with Noah, he is saying that his commitment to his creation—the care of the Creator to preserve, provide for, and rule over all that he has made, including the blessings and ordinances that he initiated through and with Adam and Eve and their family—are now to be with Noah and his descendants.[63]

From a source-critical perspective, however (as noted above), this type of phenomena has

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[60] See Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom Through Covenant*, 187–95.

[61] Oswalt, *Isaiah 1–39*, 446. Cf. Williamson, *Oath*, 69–76, and Mason, *Covenant*, 48–55.

[62] Collins, *Reading Genesis Well*, 191.

[63] Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom Through Covenant*, 188. See too Schreiner, *Covenant*, 19–29.

traditionally been explained through the differences between 'J' and 'P'; that is "while J

tells a story of fratricide, P proclaims the law that forbids murder. The language of P

stands apart from that of J both chronologically and in content by making use of a

theological, conceptual vocabulary for the stories of the primeval event."[64] Gerhard von

Rad asserts: "Going beyond the Yahwist's representation, the Priestly document now

speaks of a covenant, which God made with Noah and his descendants."[65]

To summarize, though there is, relatively speaking, a rather broad agreement

among diachronic (source-critical) scholars concerning the "demarcation of the sources in

the flood story, there is much less unanimity about their relationship."[66] In other words,

though many contemporary scholars agree that 'J' and 'P' should not be thought of as

independent sources, given the wide disparity that exist between these two sources, many

traditional source-critical explanations of the Noachic Deluge narrative tend to rely quite

heavily upon the work of a redactor in order to construct a "logically coherent

narrative."[67] Even so, there is little to no agreement about how these two stories have

been combined—has the 'J' source been worked into the "basic 'P' document"?[68] If one

assumes some type of 'J-type' redaction, i.e. a "reworking" of 'P' by 'J,' how does one

resolve the problem of 'J' antedating 'P'?[69] The situation becomes increasingly more

complex when one begins to notice the not insignificant Mesopotamian parallels—as one

 scholar astutely notes, "it is strange . . . that both J and P versions should lack features of

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[64] Westermann, *Introduction*, 104.

[65] von Rad, *Genesis*, 133. Cf. Driver, *Genesis*, 98, Batto, "Covenant of Peace," 187–211; Chisholm, "The 'Everlasting Covenant,'" 237–53; Gunn, "Deutero–Isaiah and the Flood," 493– 508; Streett, "Day's of Noah," 33–51. Cf. Dumbrell, *Covenant and Creation*, 13, 22, Waltke, "The Phenomenon of Conditionality," 126, 131, Dearman, *Hosea*, 197–98, Stuart, *Hosea*, 98–99, and *THAT* 2:640.

[66] Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 168.

[67] Kawashima, "Sources," 68. See too Halpern, "What they Don't Know," 16–34.

[68] Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 168. Cf. Kawashima, "Sources," 68.

[69] Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 168.

the common tradition, but when combined create an account which resembles it."[70]

Prior to offering a critique of traditional diachronic (source-critical) explanations of the Noachic Deluge narrative, it must, first of all, be recognized that from a rhetorical critical "rhetoric as persuasion" viewpoint, one need not concur with the criteria upon which source-criticism is built in order to appreciate the "artistry of the Hebrew narrative."[71] This is because the literary structure of the Noachic Deluge narrative is usually attributed to the work of a final redactor.[72] That being said, however, this study takes umbrage with traditional diachronic (source-critical) explanations of the Noachic Deluge narrative as they tend to unnecessarily complexify issues of plot in their accounting of the final redactor and often fail to adequately explain how two such divergent and competing theologies would remain in the final redaction of the text.[73] Although Kawashima asserts that the "more complicated and therefore conjectural the composition of a passage is . . . the more complicated and therefore conjectural must be its interpretation,"[74] this study argues that a rhetorical-critical approach that is based upon the final form of the text offers more effective and more compelling evidence concerning the strategy of the scribe(s) of the Noachic Deluge narrative since it chooses to engage with the text as it presently stands—not as it (perhaps) once stood. This is not a "false comfort" but a bold reality.[75]

Aspects of this discussion will continue in the next section which examines various synchronic (literary-critical) approaches to the Noachic Deluge narrative.

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[70] Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 168–69. Cf. Buth, "Methodological Collision," 138–54.

[71] Kaminski, *Was Noah Good?*, 21–22.

[72] See Walton, *Genesis*, 316, and Longman and Walton, *Lost World of the Flood*, 136–42.

[73] See the insightful comments to this end within Weeks, *Sources and Authors*, 53–64 and 67–72. Cf. Fretheim, *Creation, Fall and Flood*, 109–11, and Fretheim "Genesis," 322–23 and 384–97.

[74] Kawashima, "Sources," 69.

[75] Kawashima, "Sources," 70. Cf. Kaminski, *Was Noah Good?*, 22–23.

Synchronic (Literary-Critical) Approaches Concerning The Noachic Deluge Narrative

Unlike diachronic (source-critical) stances, literary-critical approaches argue for a

synchronic reading that is particularly aware of and especially sensitive to the final form

of the Noachic Deluge narrative.[76] As such, singular phenomenon that were once used by

source-critical scholars to bolster the so-called "patchwork quality" of the text, such as

variations of the divine name and certain twice repeated materials, for instance, are not

perceived as being "doublets" in the "classic source-critical interpretation" but rather as

part of the "careful construction" of the scribe(s) of Genesis.[77] This may involve (but not

require) "highly schematic" interpretations, such as an all-encompassing palistrophe.[78]

In this way, rather than attempting to reconstruct the disputed sources that lie

behind the Noachic Deluge narrative, the primary task of the literary-critical scholar is to

engage the "signals which give a wide variety of directives to the reader as to how to

actualize the text," discerning the text's literary and structural features.[79] Within this

synchronic, literary-critical framework, "the question of sources does not have to

dominate the interpretation of the text."[80] As Thomas Brodie states:

> The issue is not whether something can be divided in two (or three or four)
> but whether it is more intelligible when taken as a unit. When Genesis is
> taken as a unit it is indeed perplexing, but ultimately it is supremely
> intelligible—great literary art, with a magnificent vision of the struggle
> and richness of life and of a transcendent dimension surpassing human
> calculation . . . the text is complex, but it is orderly.[81]

To state again, within a synchronic, literary-critical, approach, the received text is not a

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[76] Kaminski, *Was Noah Good?*, 22–23; Hawk, "Literary," 536–44; Beal et al., "Literary," 159–67.

[77] Barton, "Literary Criticism," 527. Cf. Longacre, "Noah's Flood," 239, Rooker, "Genesis," 59.

[78] See Kaminski, *Was Noah Good?*, 23. Cf. Wenham, "Flood Narrative," 336–48, Wenham, "Method in Pentateuchal Criticism," 84–109, Emerton, "Part One," 401–20, "Part Two," 1–21, Anderson, "From Analysis to Synthesis," 23–29, Paynter, *God of Violence*, 93, and Patterson, *Plot Structure*, 74–89.

[79] Campbell and O'Brien, *Pentateuch*, 214.

[80] Brodie, *Genesis as Dialogue*, xiv. See too Anderson, *Creation*, 73.

[81] Brodie, *Genesis as Dialogue*, 500. See also Middleton, *Liberating Image*, 64–65.

[b]arrier beyond which one must—in order to do Biblical scholarship—necessarily press, nor an end product that should most properly be analyzed for evidences [sic] of its origins. True though it is that its literary history may at times encompass many centuries, several strata of tradition, and a variety of editorial influences, it is itself—the final text—susceptible of study as a system of meaningful and artistic wholes.[82]

In addition, most literary-critical, diachronic scholars also maintain that traditional, source critical interpretations of the Noachic Deluge narrative fail to account for the overarching literary structure of the book of Genesis that is implied by the scribes themselves, namely the *toledoth* (תולדת) structure.[83] That is, the unity of the Noachic Deluge narrative is, perhaps, most clearly seen through demonstrating that the book of Genesis is structured by a series of תולדת, which are usually rendered as either "this is the story (or history/account) of X" or "these are the descendants (or generations) of X."[84] Contra to many EVV, the trouble with rendering תולדת in this way is that "these narratives are not biographies; they are not novels concerning saints . . . [t]he Bible . . . contains no biographies; but it draws lines from a starting point to an end point."[85]

Within the book of Genesis, this line begins with the sum total of creation (Gen 2:4) and is narrowed by the place of humans within it (Gen 5:1).[86] As such, the "superscriptions" in which תולדת appears "serve to divide the text into blocks."[87] The "shift to one family within humanity, Noah's, is accomplished through a much more

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[82] Clines et al., eds., *Art and Meaning*, i.

[83] Kaminski, *Was Noah Good?*, 21–22. See too August, "Toledoth," 281–82.

[84] See Miller and Soden, *In the Beginning*, 60; Boda, *Severe Mercy*, 16; Hamilton, *Genesis 1–17*, 2; Steiner, "Literary Structure," 550. Cf. *DCH* 8:604–05, and *HALOT* 2:1699–70.

[85] Woudstra, "Toledot," 188. See also Thomas, *Generations*, 2. Boda (*Severe Mercy*, 17) notes: "Elsewhere in the Old Testament, the term refers to genealogical lists, that is, lists of people who were born within a family, clan, or tribal unit (Exod 6:16, 19; 28:10; Num 1:20–42; 3:1; Ruth 4:18; 1 Chr 1:29; 5:7; 7:2, 4, 9;8:28; 9:9, 34; 26:31)." Cf. Steinberg, "Genesis," 281–82, and Ska, *Pentateuch*, 24–25.

[86] See Boda, *Severe Mercy*, 17, and Thomas, *Generations*, 42–43.

[87] Turner, "Genesis," 350. See also Boda, *Severe Mercy*, 16. Cf. DeRouchie, "Toledoth," 219–47, Schwartz, "Narrative Toledot Formulae," 1–36, and Koch, "Die Toledot-Formeln," 183–91. For details as to why there is no *toledoth* for Abraham, see Thomas, *Generations*, 49–51.

dramatic event—the Flood. After the flood, Noah's family is all that is left of humanity.

This is the second narrowing."[88] The end point is the family of Jacob.[89] See below.[90]

FIGURE FIVE— THE TOLEDOTH STRUCTURE OF GENESIS

(Introduction) Gen 1:1—2:3	When God began to create . . . (or) In the beginning . . .
Gen 2:4—4:26	This is the *toledoth* of the Heavens and the Earth
Gen 5:1—6:8	This is the book of the *toledoth* of Adam
Gen 6:9—9:28	This is the *toledoth* of Noah
Gen 10:1—11:9	This is the *toledoth* of Shem, Ham, and Japeth (repeated in 10:32)
Gen 11:10–11:9	This is the *toledoth* of Shem
Gen 11:27–25:11	This is the *toledoth* of Terah
Gen 25:12–18	This is the *toledoth* of Ishmael
Gen 25:19—35:29	This is the *toledoth* of Isaac
Gen 36:1—37:1	This is the *toledoth* of Esau (repeated in 36:9)
Gen 37:2—50:26	This is the *toledoth* of Jacob

To summarize, within the final form of the book of Genesis, the Noachic Deluge

narrative has been intentionally "embedded into the Toledot of Noah (6:9—9:29); thus it

begins with him (6:9) and ends with him (9:29).[91] This suggests a different 'text' than the

text(s) suggested by a source critical approach."[92] As Hamilton argues, this feature of the

book of Genesis is "so distinctly woven into one tapestry as to constitute an unassailable

case for the unity of the section."[93] This assessment, albeit, with more nuance and certain

caveats, has been further bolstered by the more recent monograph of Thomas[94] and the

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[88] Thomas, *Generations*, 80. Cf. Waltke and Yu, *Old Testament Theology*, 285.

[89] This focus is even further narrowed by the *toledoth* of Num 3:1 "to the Aaronide priesthood and the civil leadership represented by Moses." Thomas, *Generations*, 2. See too Johnson, *Genealogies*, 22–23.

[90] This chart has been constructed from the templates of Miller and Soden, *In the Beginning,* 60, Boda, *Severe Mercy*, 16, Hamilton, *Genesis 1–17*, 2, Halton, ed., *Genesis*, 29, and Walton, *Genesis*, 35, 40. Cf. August, "Toledoth," 269, 280–81, and DeRouchie, "Toledoth," 219–47, esp. 246, .

[91] See Bauks, "Intratextual Exegesis," 184.

[92] Kaminski, *Was Noah Good?*, 21–22.

[93] Hamilton, *Genesis 1–17*, 29. Other individuals who highlight the import of the "Toledoth Structure" for the book of Genesis include Childs, *Introduction to the Old Testament*, 145–46, and Kaminski, *Was Noah Good?*, 40–41 (who also lists several other scholars).

[94] Thomas, *These Are the Generations.*

dissertation of S. W. Kempf[95] and the monograph of C. L. McDowell,[96] whose works

update P. J. Wiseman's colophon hypothesis[97] made popular by R. K. Harrison.[98] This

type of synchronic, literary-critical analysis is immensely helpful in assisting the reader

in ascertaining the overall emphasis and focus of the Noachic Deluge narrative.[99]

There remain, however, as will be seen below, certain problems concerning the

Noachic Deluge narrative with respect to God's conciliatoriness and covenant that still

exist within the account despite choosing to employ a synchronic vs. a diachronic

approach. Regrettably, some scholars have chosen to ignore or gloss over the problem.[100]

A key question is how best to reconcile the texts of Gen 6:5 and 8:21. Resolving

this tension is critical since much of the Noachic Deluge narrative hinges on this "change

in Yahweh's inclination."[101] As will be noted below, Gen 8:21, in particular, actually

heightens the 'drama' since the basic problem (or exigence) of the rhetorical situation is

not solved even though God has made a resolution here based on his mercy.[102]

By way of seeking to resolve some of these matters, many contemporary scholars

maintain that God's conciliation is primarily due to the sweet smell of the "bountiful

barbeque of slaughtered animals."[103] One scholar asserts: "like various Mesopotamian

flood heroes, Noah made an offering after disembarking and 'the LORD smelled the

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[95] Kempf, "A Discourse Analysis of Genesis 2:25—3:24," 912–95.

[96] McDowell, *The Image of God in the Garden of Eden*, 22–42.

[97] For a graphic depiction of the book of Genesis as mediated through this hypothesis, see Wiseman, *Ancient Records,* 79–80. Cf. Hamilton, *Genesis 1–17*, 8.

[98] Harrison, *Old Testament*, 63–64, 543–47, and Harrison, "Genesis," *ISBE*, 2:436–37.

[99] See Keiser, *Genesis*, 126–27. Cf. Peterson, *Genesis*, 62.

[100] Some examples of those who fail to explicate the Noachic Deluge narrative include Wilgus and Carroll, eds., *Violence of God*, Lamb, *God Behaving Badly*, and Kissileff, ed., *Reading Genesis*. Though Hamilton's work *(God's Glory in Salvation Through Judgment)* touches on it, his comments are minimal.

[101] Brueggemann, *Theology of the Old Testament*, 363. Cf. Humphreys, *Character of God*, 67; Boyd, *Crucifixion*, 1121–42.

[102] As will be noted at length below, full closure to the exigence is only found within God's decrees concerning humanity's relationships to creation (Gen 9:1–7) and the covenant (Gen 9:8–17).

[103] Whedbee, *Comic Vision*, 52. Cf. Wenham, "Genesis 1–11," 92.

pleasing aroma' (8:21), but there is no comical depiction of God being hungry and thirsty, craving human sustenance or buzzing around the offering like a famished fly!"[104] In a similar manner, Tremper Longman and John H. Walton also note that the gods of the ancient Near East Deluge accounts stand together, "chastened," as it were, at the fact that they actually do require humanity to offer sacrifices to them for food and sustenance; thus, they should have been much more judicious and "circumspect" with respect to their decision to wipe them out via the Flood.[105] Concerning Noah's sacrifice, specifically, and the Flood in general, Longman and Walton also state:

> The biblical account predictably correlates with what Israelites believed about Yahweh. He has no needs and has not become unaccountably angry such that he needs to be calmed down. The 'pleasing aroma' of Genesis 8:21 functions exactly as it does within the framework of the sacrificial system in the Torah. There is no sense that Noah is interacting with a needy god who easily loses his temper.[106]

It is, of course, recognized that the scribe here is not "explicitly arguing with the other views—he is simply offering his own view."[107] As such, his "opposition to other ancient views is tacit."[108] In other words, "[r]ather than true polemic . . . the Genesis accounts are inferentially undermining the philosophical basis for pagan myth. There are undertones of refutation in Genesis 1–11, but they are not disputations."[109] That being said, however, the above argument fails to address the issue(s) of why Noah could not simply have offered some type of placating sacrifice prior to the Flood event itself (cf. Gen 4:1–7) or how the tension of Gen 6:5 and 8:21 is reconciled by a single sacrifice by

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[104] Hoffmeier, "Genesis 1–11 As History And Theology," 53. See also Sarna, *Genesis*, 59, 356, and Mathews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, 392–94.

[105] Longman and Walton, *Lost World of the Flood*, 81.

[106] Longman and Walton, *Lost World of the Flood*, 81.

[107] Walton, *Lost World of Genesis One*, 103.

[108] Walton, *Lost World of Genesis One*, 103. Cf. Wenham, *Rethinking Genesis*, 51.

[109] Mathews, *Genesis 1—11:26*, 89. See too Peterson, *Genesis*, 63–64.

Noah. While the Creator may truly be unlike the ancient Near East gods in that he does not need humanity to sustain him, to say that he does not easily lose his temper is difficult to sustain if he is able to be so easily pacified after the Deluge. As comedian Bill Maher baldly states: "the thing that's really disturbing about Noah [is] that it's immoral. It's about a psychotic mass murder who gets away with it, and his name is God. What kind of tyrant punishes everyone just to get back at the few he's mad at?"[110]

In addition, it is also not insignificant that the purpose of Noah's sacrifice is not explicitly stated within the canon by either God or Noah himself. The narrator is silent:

> The text says he 'sacrificed burnt offerings,' which serve a broad function in the later sacrificial system of Israel. It is more important to note what the text does not call the sacrifice. It is not a sin offering, nor is it specifically designated a thank offering. The burnt offerings that Moses' audience were familiar with are usually associated with petitions or entreaties set before God.[111]

One of the more provocative suggestions that has been proposed to reconcile the tension is the idea that God is akin to a "mad scientist, trying to get things right in the laboratory, trying plan B after plan A fails."[112] Concerning some of this, John Goldingay opines:

> The Genesis flood story thus affirms that God has faced the monumental obstacle to the creation project constituted by the negative inclination of the human mind, has therefore thought of abandoning this creation project, but has determined not to do so . . . the significance of the Genesis flood story is to acknowledge that God could decide to destroy the whole world, for one reason or another, and to affirm that actually God will not do so. There is not such a balanced relationship between the capacity to give life and to take it away. Yhwh indeed has equally the power to do either, but not the will. Giving life is natural to Yhwh, whereas killing is not.[113]

Another analogy posits that the "cosmic ledgers" have now been brought into balance

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[110] Paynter, *God of Violence*, 90–91. I will return to this point later on.

[111] Walton, *Genesis*, 315. See also Walton, "Flood," 318, and Okoye, *Genesis 1–11*, 104–05.

[112] See Gentry and Wellum, *Kingdom Through Covenant*, 181 who characterize the work of Goldingay, *Theology*, 1:161–84. Cf. Borgman, *Genesis*, 35.

[113] Goldingay, *Theology*, 1:178–79.

after God "audited the accounts," and that explains why all is well.[114] Walton asserts:

> Yahweh is auditing the accounts because (Heb. *ki*) he had made
> humankind. His course of action entails wiping almost the entire
> population from the earth. This action of auditing the accounts is the first
> part of his ultimate intention to 'balance the ledger' that has been put out
> of balance by the wickedness of humankind. We can say, then, that God is
> enforcing a system of checks and balances as part of the equilibrium that
> he is maintaining in the world.[115]

Alongside this, many scholars also maintain that the text implies "second thoughts, reflections that suggest a change in God."[116] In light of the above, "one might ask whether God in the aftermath of the flood considers the flood a mistake. After all, he realizes that the flood does not resolve the problem of human sin, but 'even so' (v. 21) he will not replicate such a judgment."[117] In response, one scholar maintains: "God's ultimate purpose was 'to provide an appropriate historical demonstration of the ultimate destiny of a world under sin.' But now . . . God determines to maintain cosmic order until the end, thus creating room for his work of redemption as he seeks to reconcile wayward humanity with himself."[118] The question remains, however, as to whether or not God was "moved" by the Flood.[119] Walter Brueggemann asserts:

> The flood has effected no change in humankind. But it has effected an
> irreversible change in God, who now will approach his creation with an
> unlimited patience and forbearance. To be sure, God has been committed
> to his creation from the beginning. But this narrative traces a new decision
> on the part of God . . . the God-world relation is not simply that of a strong
> God and needy world. Now it is a tortured relation between a grieved God
> and a resistant world. And of the two, the real changes are in God.[120]

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[114] See Walton, *Genesis*, 309–11 for more information on the accounting analogy.
[115] See Walton, *Genesis*, 310.
[116] Humphreys, *Character of God*, 69.
[117] Longman, *Genesis*, 126.
[118] Longman, *Genesis*, 126 (citing Robertson, *The Christ of the Covenants*, 114). I will return to this point later on in this study.
[119] Weaver, *The Nonviolent God*, 107. Cf. Alexander, *Paradise*, 165, and Brown, *Ethos*, 60.
[120] Brueggemann, *Genesis*, 81. Brueggemann, *Theology*, 362–63. Cf. Maier, "Repent," 135–37.

To this end, one queries whether the Flood was some sort of 'cosmic flop.'[121] As W. Lee Humphreys declares: "for all God's apparent power and effectiveness in the story of the Great Flood, little is effected by God in the long haul. His authority, in contrast to his power, seems reduced or at least open to question. *The Great Flood is a demonstration of power and might, but in the end it is a wash.*"[122] Terence E. Fretheim too maintains that if the purpose of the Flood "was to cleanse, it was in some basic sense a failure. Perhaps the purging of the negative *effects* of human sin on the created order is what is in mind."[123]

In contrast to this, Mark J. Boda asserts that far from being a cosmic wipe-out, the Noachic Deluge event functions to make possible "a renewal of the kinship relationship" between humanity and God—something that was lost subsequent to the events that transpired after the primordial couple's eating of the forbidden fruit within the Garden of Eden (Gen 3).[124] In other words, though it is "obvious from Gen. 8:21 and the narratives that follow the covenantal agreement (Gen. 9:20–27; 11:1–9) that sin is not eradicated" by the Noachic Deluge event, the focus of the narrative is "the establishment of this relationship after producing a new creation."[125] It is thus understood that the Noachic Deluge functions to "recalibrate the relationship through the structure of covenant."[126]

This study will build upon this particular argument by offering further details concerning the specific "recalibration" that occurs within the postdiluvian context.

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[121] See Borgman, *Genesis*, 35–36, and Mann, *Book of the Torah*, 33.

[122] Humphreys, *Character of God*, 73. Emphasis original.

[123] Fretheim, *God and World*, 81. Emphasis original. Cf. Mathews (*Genesis 1–11:26*, 392) who states: "the mitigation of God's former policy is plain when read against his antediluvian changes (6:5–7). Both 6:5 and 8:21 have the words 'inclination,' 'his heart,' and 'evil,' but 6:5 has the inclusive "every,' 'only,' and 'all.' In 6:5 the emphasis is on the unprecedented pervasiveness of sin, which deserved divine retribution, and in 8:21 God acknowledges that sin is a given with humanity and has ruled the human heart from the outset (i.e. Adam's sin)."

[124] Boda, *Heartbeat of Old Testament Theology*, 100.

[125] Boda, *Heartbeat of Old Testament Theology*, 96.

[126] Boda, "Old Testament Foundations," 41. Cf. Collins, *Reading Genesis Well*, 191–92.

The Necessity of the Rhetorical-Critical Approach

As has been made clear in the above section(s), this study argues that Gen 8:20–21 does not resolve the primary exigence of the plot of the Noachic Deluge narrative (as a whole), since it does not reckon with humanity's self-destructive habits and inclinations. Instead, Gen 9:1–7 provides the interpretive key to understanding the scribe's rhetoric. As will be noted in the analysis portions below, Yahweh now "speaks of an accounting for the blood of humanity in 9:4–6; establishing the lex talionis, the retaliation law, applied here to murder."[127] This special provision enables mortals to act for God—as his image—to the extent of being able to take human life (cf. Exod 21:12–36; Josh 20:1–6), thereby granting human beings the capacity to curb and mitigate self-destructive violence, insufferable injustice, and blood-thirsty revenge, i.e. "lawlessness" (חמס), the very thing that provoked God to first institute the Flood (Gen 6:5–6, 11–13).

The affirmations and promises of the covenant that follows this passage (Gen 9:8–17) provide further clarity as to the scribe's rhetoric. As intellectual, world-view formative rhetoric, the scribe convincingly communicates that God's intentions to carry out his plans for creation, the establishment of order via covenant, will not be thwarted and that God is committed to his purposes for humanity as his image-bearers.[128] The scribe is persuasive in relaying that humanity must submit to God's authority or implode. The unique emphasis that is also placed on Noah's sons, notably Shem (Gen 6:10, 18; 7:1, 7, 13; 8:16, 18; 9:1, 8, 9,18–19, 20–29; cf. 5:32; 10:1) further underscores the necessity for godly progeniture within humanity's attempts to "repopulate" (Gen 9:19).

In this way, a critical component that is generally absent from the above

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[127] Boda, *Severe Mercy*, 22.
[128] Cf. Kaminski, *From Noah to Israel*, 1.

arguments and conclusions is a thorough description of the scribe's technique in constructing the rhetoric of the Noachic Deluge narrative. To put the matter differently, despite the veracity of many of the above claims, it is not necessarily a lack of exegetical care, theological acumen, or even an insufficiently rigorous methodological framework, *per se*, that makes it difficult to affirm or validate any of the thoughtful comments that have just been noted. Rather, what is crucially missing from these perspectives is the lack of emphasis upon the persuasive nature of the Noachic Deluge text, its rhetorical function, and a thorough, methodologically rigorous, description of the scribe's persuasiveness. In sum, though being sensitive to the text's literariness is of paramount importance, this study will seek to move beyond what is traditionally known as "the art of composition" to "the art of persuasion."[129] That is, this study seeks to examine the Noachic Deluge narrative through the lens of rhetorical criticism—a "discipline that delves deeply into the heart of the text and considers its persuasive intent and effect."[130] Rhetorical criticism effectively "fills the void" between diachronic and synchronic approaches such as form, source, and literary criticisms.[131] It considers the text "as we have it," how such a text would be received by an audience of "near contemporaries," and the effectual persuasive strategy of the scribe.[132] In this respect, the text has "'power' that influences institutions, societies, and cultures with each reading."[133]

Although much work has recently been done on the literary-theological message of Genesis (and primeval history) the same cannot be said of rhetorical criticism.[134]

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[129] Trible, *Rhetorical Criticism* 32. See also Stewart, "Ethos of the Cosmos," 43.
[130] Barker, *From the Depths of Despair*, 1.
[131] Barker, *From the Depths of Despair*, 32.
[132] Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation,* 3–4. Definitions of key terms will be discussed later.
[133] Donaldson, "New Rhetoric," 246.
[134] An up-to-date review of various monographs and edited volumes that have been published since 2015 on the book of Genesis may be found in Schneider, "In the Beginning and Still Today," 142–59.

Indeed, of all the works that have been published since 2015, only Harper's volume '*I Will Walk Among You': The Rhetorical Function of Allusion to Genesis 1–3 in the Book of Leviticus*, directly uses a rhetorical-critical, "rhetoric as persuasion" method.[135] Albeit, though Longman and Walton explicitly state that they are "seeking first and foremost the literary-theological interpretation offered by the text,"[136] they do also devote an entire chapter to the proposition that "Genesis 1–11 Uses Rhetorical Devices."[137] In addition to this, they also provide two other chapters that maintain "The Bible Uses Hyperbole to Describe Historical Events"[138] and "Genesis Appropriately Presents a Hyperbolic Account of the Flood."[139] In sum, Longman and Walton assert that "real events," such as the Noachic Deluge, were "rhetorically shaped for theological reasons," often using hyperbole.[140] Regrettably, however, no clear definition of "hyperbole," "rhetoric," or "persuasion" appear in their work, nor is there a clear "rhetorical-critical" method.[141]

Many of these deficiencies have been remedied by the work of C. John Collins who applies a special "Lewisian, critically intuitive approach" while also discussing

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[135] Harper, *'I Will Walk Among You.'* Cf. Harper, "Time for a New Diet?," 179–95. One notes that though Provan (*Discovering Genesis*, 40–41 and 43–44) discusses rhetorical criticism, his assessment is that "narrative criticism," i.e. literary criticism, is better suited for reading the book of Genesis since "rhetorical criticism is best suited for the study of poetic texts or perhaps NT letters." Some of the most pertinent works that pertain to the areas of "diachronic/historical-critical approaches" and "literary approaches" (see Schneider, "In the Beginning and Still Today," 152–54) include Evans et al., eds., *The Book of Genesis*—namely Kawashima, "Literary Analysis," 83–104, and Kaminsky, "Theology of Genesis," 635–56—Hayes and Vermeulen, eds., *Doubling and Duplicating*, Okoye, *Genesis 1–11,* Patterson, *Plot-Structure of Genesis*, and Wenham, *Rethinking Genesis 1–11*, alongside some of the more recent commentaries, such as Galambush, *Reading Genesis*, Longman, *Genesis*, O'Connor, *Genesis, 1–25,* Provan, *Discovering Genesis*, and Steinmann, *Genesis.*
[136] Longman and Walton, *Lost World of the Flood*, 15.
[137] Longman and Walton, *Lost World of the Flood*, 21–29.
[138] Longman and Walton, *Lost World of the Flood*, 30–35.
[139] Longman and Walton, *Lost World of the Flood*, 36–41. Some other recent volumes whose emphasis and focus somewhat overlap with that of Longman and Walton in some of these regards include Hill, *Worldview Approach*, Hill, *Grand Canyon*, Copan and Jacoby, *Origins*, and Greenwood, *Scripture and Cosmology*. See too Copan et al., eds., *Dictionary of Christianity and Science.*
[140] Longman and Walton, *Lost World of the Flood*, 29, 30–41.
[141] Cf. Longman, *Genesis*, 7–10, Longman, "Biblical Narrative," 69–79, and Walton, *Genesis*, 21.

"lexical semantics," "speech-act theory," and "sociolinguistics," alongside "rhetorical" and "literary" criticism.[142] To be specific, though Collins admits that many of the aforementioned disciplines can be "abstruse and sometimes counterintuitive, as well as contradictory between themselves . . . Lewis offers a model of someone who intuitively (albeit informally) steers a wise path through the difficulties."[143] In brief, Collins maintains that C. S. Lewis, by means of his varied academic work and other writings, is able to "help us to *formulate a critically rigorous reading strategy for Genesis 1–11.*"[144]

Concerning the art of persuasion, in particular, Collins maintains that the text of Gen 1—11 should best be understood as "rhetorical history."[145] The author also states that this text serves as "prehistory" and "protohistory," which, according to Collins, is a "*social function*, not a *literary form*. The main literary form . . . is prose narrative and that prose varies in its style and register and thus in its language level."[146] Irrespective, the "purpose of the stories is to lay the foundation for a worldview . . . Thus, Genesis aims to tell the story of beginnings the 'right' way, to counter the other stories; it professes to offer the divinely authorized way for its audience to picture the events."[147] From a "rhetoric as persuasion" perspective, however, the main issue with Collin's work is the dearth of particulars concerning the scribe's rhetorical strategies and techniques.[148]

In light of the above, it is evident that a new rhetorical-critical study is needed that is not just sensitive to the persuasive nature of the Noachic Deluge text as a rhetorical

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[142] Collins, *Reading Genesis Well*, 25–29.
[143] Collins, *Reading Genesis Well*, 25.
[144] Collins, *Reading Genesis Well*, 18. Emphasis original.
[145] Collins, *Reading Genesis Well*, 141. Cf. Halton ed., *Genesis*, 19–21, 155–59.
[146] Collins, *Reading Genesis Well*, 148. Italics original. Cf. Branson, "Paradigm," 141–56.
[147] Collins, *Reading Genesis Well*, 153.
[148] See Clifford, *Review of Reading Genesis Well*, 420, Collins, *Review of Reading Genesis Well*, 171–72, Allan, *Review of Reading Genesis Well*, 132, Docterman, *Review of Reading Genesis Well*, 288.

unit or its rhetorical function, in general, but also provides a thorough, methodologically rigorous, description and delineation of the scribe's persuasiveness in all of its facets. As will be noted below, the rhetorical-critical "rhetoric as persuasion" model of George A. Kennedy is particularly conducive to this end and will be utilized within this study.

Conclusion

This study will seek to demonstrate that despite the vivid picture of devastation that the Noachic Deluge account depicts, the overarching emphasis is on redemption, renewal, salvation, deliverance, and the upholding of life.[149] As intellectual, world-view formative rhetoric, the scribe's focus is bent towards God's "salvific rather than punitive" purposes.[150] That is, the scribe highlights what God did to "preserve the creation beyond the disaster."[151] The Noachic Deluge narrative is not, therefore, a catalog of "indescribable judgment" but "indescribable grace" and inexpressible redemption.[152]

The scribe's rhetoric convincingly communicates that God's intentions to carry out his plan for creation, the establishment of order via covenant, will not be thwarted.[153] The Noachic Deluge functions to recalibrate the kinship relationship of God and humanity that was lost in the Garden of Eden via the structure of covenant.[154] This also involves the human responsibility to mitigate self-destructive violence, insufferable injustice, and blood-thirsty revenge (חמס), through a provision that empowers mortals to act for God—as his image—to the extent of being able to take life (blood-for-blood).[155]

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[149] Keiser, *Genesis 1–11*, 128, Fretheim, *God and World*, 10.

[150] Boyd, *Crucifixion*, 1140.

[151] Fretheim, *Creation Untamed*, 46. Cf. Kaminski, *Was Noah Good?*, 13; Clines, *Pentateuch*, 83.

[152] Walton, *Genesis*, 331. Keil and Delitzsch (*Pentateuch*, 141) state that it is a "flood of grace."

[153] See Kaminski, *From Noah to Israel*, 1.

[154] See Boda, "Old Testament Foundations," 41, Boda, *Heartbeat of Old Testament Theology*, 100. Cf. Collins, *Reading Genesis Well*, 191–92.

[155] Wilson, "Blood," 271–72. See too Dumbrell, "Covenant With Noah," 9.

CHAPTER 2: METHODOLOGY—RHETORICAL CRITICISM

Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Rhetorical Criticism—Introduction

Within Hebrew Bible/Old Testament (hereafter HB/OT) studies specifically, the origin

of rhetorical criticism is agreed upon by most scholars to have stemmed from James

Muilenburg's presidential address to the Society of Biblical Literature (December 18,

1968) entitled "Form Criticism and Beyond."[1] Within this work, Muilenburg maintained

that the rhetorical critic should undertake a "responsible and proper articulation of the

words in their linguistic patterns and in their precise formulations" so as to uncover "the

texture and fabric of the writer's thought."[2] Alongside this, Muilenburg also states:

> What I am interested in . . . is . . . understanding the nature of Hebrew
> literary composition, in exhibiting the structural patterns that are
> employed for the fashioning of a literary unit . . . and in discerning the
> many and various devices by which the predications are formulated and
> ordered into a unified whole. Such an enterprise I should describe as
> rhetoric and the methodology as rhetorical criticism.[3]

Rhetorical criticism, at least as construed by Muilenburg, thus encourages a "close

reading" of the text.[4] In such a reading, one pays careful attention to those things that

"constitute the artistry of the text."[5] That is, one seeks to discern "structural patterns,

verbal sequences, and stylistic devices that make a coherent whole."[6] While Muilenburg

portrayed his method as being a supplement to form criticism, it has since become "a

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[1] Donaldson, "New Rhetoric," 246; Barker, *From the Depths of Despair*, 26; Ahn, *Persuasive Portrayal*, 17–19; Trible, *Rhetorical Criticism*, 5; Barton, *Reading*, 199, Black, "Rhetorical Criticism," 170, Anderson, "Rhetorical Criticism," ix. This lecture was published by *Journal of Biblical Literature* (1969). See Muilenburg, "Form Criticism," 1–18. For a list of scholars doing work that was similar to Muilenburg (though not necessarily calling it rhetorical criticism), see Lundbom, *Jeremiah*, xxvii–xxviii.

[2] Muilenburg, "Form Criticism," 7.

[3] Muilenburg, "Form Criticism," 8.

[4] Evans, *Invasion of Sennacherib*, 31; Fitzgerald, "Rhetorical Analysis," iv–vi.

[5] Barker, *From the Depths of Despair*, 26. See too Muilenburg, "Form Criticism," 12–13.

[6] Trible, *Rhetorical Criticism*, 26. Cf. Muilenburg, "Form Criticism," 17.

full-fledged discipline practiced in different ways."[7] Much to the chagrin of many

scholars, however, there is no one model that is agreed upon by all adherents of

rhetorical criticism.[8] This is because much depends on how one defines the terms

"rhetoric" and "rhetorical."[9] Stanley E. Porter opines: "for some rhetoric means the

categories used by the ancients, as reflected in the classical orators or in the handbooks

on rhetoric, or in some combination of both. For others, rhetoric means rhetorical

strategies developed in subsequent times and places."[10] In sum, "rhetoric is not a single

thing and neither can it be defined simply."[11] Within HB/OT studies, in particular, there

are two different branches of "rhetorical criticism" that are now being practiced: (1)

rhetoric as "the art of composition" and (2) "rhetoric as persuasion."[12]

Rhetoric as "The Art of Composition"

The first branch of rhetorical criticism focuses on the literary and stylistic (aesthetic)

features of the text, something that Phyllis Trible labels "the art of composition."[13] This

branch of rhetorical criticism generally follows Muilenburg's primary proposal "that

rhetorical criticism should be the study of stylistics of composition in Hebrew prose and

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[7] Trible, *Rhetorical Criticism*, 32. Cf. Muilenburg, "Form Criticism," 4; Lundbom, *Jeremiah*, xxvi–xvii; Fitzgerald, "Rhetorical Analysis," 24.

[8] Porter, "London Introduction," 20.

[9] For an overview of rhetoric, see Herrick, *Rhetoric*, 1–62, Walker, *Rhetoric*, 3–138, and Stamps, "Rhetoric," 953–55, Fitzgerald, "Rhetorical Analysis," 25. Cf. Collins, *Reading Genesis Well*, 43.

[10] Porter, "Heidelberg Introduction," 21, 25. The key is "whether a great deal of the discourse is common to all human communication, and whether some modern aspects could not be more adequate in describing it," or, to put the matter differently, whether "ancient theories of argumentation are an ideal, or even the most adequate, way of studying argumentation." Thurén, *Argument and Theology*, 32.

[11] Porter, "Heidelberg Introduction," 21. Cf. Hwang, *Rhetoric of Remembrance*, 9–11.

[12] Barker, *From the Depths of Despair*, 28. It is understood that various "ideological," "post-modern," or "liberation" forms of literary criticism, such as feminist criticism, reader-response criticism, postcolonial biblical interpretation, or deconstructionist criticism, for example, are not usually subsumed under HB/OT "rhetorical criticism." See Evans, *Invasion of Sennacherib*, 31; Walsh, *Old Testament Narrative*, 5; Stewart, "Cosmos," 43.

[13] Trible, *Rhetorical Criticism*, 28, 32–40.

poetry, and that a study of stylistics will underscore the unity of biblical texts."[14]

Though termed "rhetorical," this approach is much more "a form of literary criticism

which uses our knowledge of the conventions of literary composition practiced in

ancient Israel and its environment to discover and analyze the particular literary artistry

found in a specific unit of Old Testament text."[15] In the words of Muilenburg himself:

> The basic contention of Gunkel is that the ancient men [sic] of Israel, like
> their Near Eastern neighbors, were influenced in their speech and their
> literary compositions by convention and custom. We therefore encounter
> in a particular genre or *Gattung* the same structural forms, the same
> terminology and style, and the same *Sitz im Leben*.[16]

"Poetics" also describes many elements of this specific branch of rhetorical criticism.[17]

Adele Berlin defines poetics as "the science of literature," which inductively "seeks to

abstract the general principles of literature from many different manifestations of those

principles as they occur in actual literary texts."[18] To put the matter another way,

"poetics helps us to know *how* texts mean so that we can better understand *what* they

mean."[19] Indisputably, the biblical authors were "artists of language. Through their

verbal artistry—their rhetoric—they have created their meaning. So meaning is

ultimately inseparable from art, and those who seek to understand the biblical literature

must be sensitive to the writer's craft."[20] Many contemporary HB/OT studies continue

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[14] Dozeman, "Rhetorical Criticism," 714. Scholars who adhere to this method often consider the "primary task of rhetorical criticism as finding 'integrating devices' to determine the limits of the literary unit of the text . . . these devices 'bind the unit together and help set its boundaries.'" Ahn, *Persuasive Portrayal*, 19. Cf. Fitzgerald, "Rhetorical Analysis," 26–33.

[15] Watson and Hauser, *Rhetorical Criticism*, 4. See too Wuellner, "Rhetorical Criticism," 453.

[16] Muilenburg, "Form Criticism," 4.

[17] See Evans, *Invasion of Sennacherib*, 29–31, and Möller, *Prophet in Debate*, 29.

[18] Berlin, *Poetics*, 15. Cf. Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis*, 33. See also Sternberg, *Poetics*.

[19] Lowery, *Towards a Poetics*, 2. All emphases original. Osborne (*Spiral*, 203) states: the "interpretation of narrative has two aspects: poetics, which studies the artistic dimension or the way the text is constructed by the author; and meaning, which recreates the message that the author is communicating. The 'how' (poetics) leads to the 'what' (meaning)."

[20] Clines et al., eds. *Art and Meaning*, i.

to adhere to Muilenburg's principles with respect to these matters and continue to apply and leverage this specific model of rhetorical criticism, i.e. "the art of composition."[21]

<div style="text-align:center">Rhetoric as "The Art of Persuasion"</div>

It is quite interesting that the same year that Muilenburg's programmatic article was published, another key work on rhetorical criticism, namely *The New Rhetoric: A Treatise on Argumentation* by Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, also came to print.[22] While Muilenburg and his "school" continued to focus on "stylistics," that is, "the art of composition," Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (among others) were influential in shaping what would become the second main branch of rhetorical criticism, something that Trible calls "the art of persuasion."[23] Such scholars took a keen interest in "rhetoric as argumentation," that is, analyzing texts in terms of their persuasive capacity, thus reverting to rhetoric's "classical Aristotelian conception."[24] This "alternative conception" of rhetoric came to be known as "rhetoric reinvented" or "rhetoric reevaluated."[25] To restate, this model "fills the void" between diachronic and synchronic approaches by considering the text "as we have it'" and how such a text would be received by an audience of "near contemporaries."[26]

Many scholars who adhere to this branch of rhetorical criticism believe that Muilenburg (and his followers) do not pay enough attention to "the suasive . . .

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[21] For a list of such scholars, see Trible, *Rhetorical Criticism*, 32–40, Hwang, *The Rhetoric of Remembrance*, 9–11, and Ahn, *Persuasive Portrayal*, 21–22. As noted by Barker (*From the Depths of Despair*, 27), "the monographs of scholars such as Bar-Efrat, Berlin, Alter, and Sternberg on Old Testament narrative and poetry reflect arguably the fullest articulation of this sort of approach."

[22] Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, *New Rhetoric*. Cf. Möller, *Prophet in Debate*, 23.

[23] Trible, *Rhetorical Criticism*, 32, 41–52. For more details, including bibliographic information pertaining to the historical development of such matters as a whole, see Möller, *Prophet in Debate*, 24–25.

[24] Möller, *Prophet in Debate*, 24.

[25] Möller, *Prophet in Debate*, 25. See too Trible, *Rhetorical Criticism*, 55–56.

[26] Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation,* 3–4. Cf. Barker, *From the Depths of Despair*, 32, 37.

aspects of biblical literature."[27] Wilhelm Wuellner, for instance, famously wrote in 1987 of the "Babylonian captivity of rhetoric reduced to stylistics" and "the ghetto of an estheticizing preoccupation with biblical stylistics."[28] That being said, however, though united against the "rhetoric as composition" branch, a schism exists between the "rhetoric as persuasion" group that turns on whether or not to keep the categories of classical Greco-Roman rhetoric or to appropriate something that is more modern.[29] The following chart encapsulates the major features of classical rhetoric.[30]

FIGURE SIX—MAJOR FEATURES OF CLASSICAL RHETORIC

	Judicial (*forensic*)	Deliberative (*hortatory*)	Demonstrative (*epideictic*)
THREE ELEMENTS OF COMMUNICATION • speaker or author • speech or text • audience or reader			
THREE TYPES OF COMMUNICATION • focus: • setting: • purpose: • time: • emphasis:	justice law court to persuade past speech	expediency public assembly to persuade future audience	adulation/denunciation public ceremony to please or to inspire present speaker
THREE GOALS OF COMMUNICATION • intellectual goal of teaching • emotional goal of touching the feelings • aesthetic goal of pleasing so as to hold attention			
FIVE PARTS OF RHETORIC • Invention (*inventio*): • Structure (*dispositio*): • Style (*elocutio*): • Memory (*memoria*): • Delivery (*pronunciatio/actio*):	discovery arrangement choice formulation features	of material of material of appropriate of mnemonic of oral	suitable to the occasion in an organized whole words; use of tropes systems/preparations presentations

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[27] Howard, "Rhetorical Criticism," 102. See also Ahn, *Persuasive Portrayal*, 19.

[28] Wuellner, "Rhetorical Criticism," 457 and 462.

[29] For more information on classical rhetoric, see Porter, ed., *Handbook of Classical Rhetoric*.

[30] See Trible, *Rhetorical Criticism*, 9.

Despite there being much debate in the guild concerning this matter, it is reasonable to conclude that due to the lack of a direct correspondence between the two languages, the differing function(s) of both their literary and oral texts, and the potential to inadvertently impose an "Occidental paradigm on an Oriental work,"[31] relying on Greco-Roman rhetorical theory is not the ideal way of studying suasive Hebrew narrative.[32] It remains, still, a useful "heuristic device for identifying and analyzing patterns of argumentation."[33]

To summarize, it is, of course, agreed that the benefits of examining the literary nature of the biblical text and the unique qualities that lend it "esthetic power and appeal" should not be understated and that such insights are welcome and appreciated.[34] Albeit, "the art of persuasion" rhetorical method intends to build on rhetorical criticism as "the art of composition" and to take it a step further. This study argues that the role of the "rhetorical critic is both to analyze the literary features of the text but further to articulate the impact of the given unit upon its audience."[35] As Burton L. Mack states:

> By linking the persuasive power of a speech not only to its logic of argumentation, but to the manner in which it addresses the social and cultural history of its audience and speaker, Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca demonstrated the rhetorical coefficient that belongs to every human exchange involving speech, including common conversation and the daily discourse of a working society. This takes rhetoric out of the sphere of mere ornamentation, embellished literary style, and the extravagances of public oratory, and places it at the center of a social theory of language.[36]

Such statements have a number of implications for an effective rhetorical analysis of the Noachic Deluge narrative, the specifics of which will be delineated below.

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[31] See Hwang, *Rhetoric of Remembrance*, 10. Cf. Sonnet, *Review of Choose Life!*, 93–98.

[32] Hwang, *Rhetoric of Remembrance*, 10. See too Wuellner, "Jesus' Sermon," 97–99.

[33] Stamps, "Rhetorical and Narratological Criticism," 233. Cf. Donaldson, "New Rhetoric," 246.

[34] Barker, *From the Depths of Despair*, 33.

[35] Barker, *From the Depths of Despair*, 29. See also Watson and Hauser, *Rhetorical Criticism,* 14, and Howard, "Rhetorical Criticism," 103.

[36] Mack, *Rhetoric*, 16. For more details, see Möller, *Prophet in Debate*, 23–27, esp. 24–25.

A Rhetorical-Critical Model For Studying Hebrew Narrative

This study concerns itself with the biblical account of the Noachic Deluge narrative. It situates itself within the "rhetoric as persuasion" branch of rhetorical criticism. As such, this work seeks to make clear the scribe's essential persuasive strategy—noting also his literary artistry—as it engages in a detailed reading of this portion of ancient Scripture (Gen 6:9—9:29). Its textual basis will be the standard critical editions of the Hebrew Bible (*BHQ, BHS*) and other versions as is deemed necessary.[37] The plethora of literary strategies and poignant imagery make it a worthy text to examine.[38] A rhetorical-critical approach for this pericope is also appropriate as it allows the interpreter to enter the world of the text and thoroughly examine a discrete literary unit; alongside this, certain issues surrounding the compositional unity of the Noachic Deluge narrative also make it a valuable field of inquiry for determining the flow of argumentation.

The 'Kennedy' Style Rhetorical-Critical Model

The following section functions as a sort of 'road map' to the specific type of rhetorical critical model that this study leverages, the particulars of which find their origins within George A. Kennedy's most prominent volume *New Testament Interpretation Through Rhetorical Criticism*. The broad contours of the model will first be given prior to offering the details of how this study will adapt Kennedy's approach so as to better handle the unique challenges that are inherent to studying Hebrew narrative—including the features of divine speeches. The sum of these modifications have been derived from

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[37] See Hendel, *Genesis 1–11*, 3–5, and Thomas, *Generations*, 3–5. For details on Noah, the Flood, and the Dead Sea Scrolls, see Lyon, *Qumran Interpretation*, and Peters, *Noah Traditions*. Cf. Stone, et al., eds., *Noah and His Book(s)*.

[38] Cf. Barker, *From the Depths of Despair*, 33.

the judicious work of a number of HB/OT rhetorical-critical scholars.[39] To be specific,

the work of Karl Möller (Amos),[40] Joel Barker (Joel),[41] Suk-il Ahn (Chronicles),[42] and

G. Harper (Genesis/Leviticus),[43] stand out due to their leveraging of a "rhetoric-as-

persuasion" form of rhetorical criticism and the oft-employment of Kennedy's method.

It is worth noting that "Kennedy's proposal incorporates an articulated

procedure. His is truly a method, not merely an interpretive perspective."[44] The high

degree of specificity that Kennedy's method employs makes it particularly apt for doing

accurate analyses of literary texts. According to Kennedy, the goal of rhetorical analysis

is "the discovery of the author's intent and of how that is transmitted through a text to an

audience."[45] In this way, rhetorical analysis focuses on what the scribe's intention is and

how the scribe achieves his goal.[46] As noted above, the nature of rhetorical criticism

requires a so-called 'close' reading of the text (but not an atomistic reading) in order to

discern and delineate how its form, structure, and use of imagery points towards its

persuasive intent.[47] A rhetorical-critical approach also invites the interpreter to consider

how the text's "literary artistry" shapes and affects the respondent and to discover the

sundry ways in which it seeks to effect, persuade, and influence its audience to respond

in the manner that it invites or to adopt a particular point of view.[48]

Aside from providing clear definitions of argumentation and rhetoric, the

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[39] See Ahn, *Persuasive Portrayal*, 21–22 for a listing of scholars who leverage Kennedy's model.
[40] Möller, *Prophet in Debate*.
[41] Barker, *From the Depths of Despair*.
[42] Ahn, *Persuasive Portrayal*.
[43] Harper, *'I Will Walk Among You.'*
[44] Black, "Biblical Interpretation," 256. See too Black, "New Testament," 77–92.
[45] Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation*, 12.
[46] Ahn *Persuasive Portrayal*, 21.
[47] See Walsh, *Old Testament Narrative*, 5, Barker, *From the Depths of Despair*, 25, and Barker, "Rhetorical Criticism," 676 from whom much of the wording of this sentence has been derived.
[48] See Barker, *From the Depths of Despair*, 1. See too Harper, *'I Will Walk Among You,'* 58–61.

Kennedy model consists of five stages: (1) the rhetorical critic must identify the *rhetorical unit(s)* in the text, (2) the rhetorical critic must identify the *rhetorical situation* and determine the *rhetorical problem* (exigence) that occasioned the need for a rhetorical response, (3) the rhetorical critic must offer a thorough delineation of the *rhetorical species* of the discourse at hand, (4) the rhetorical critic must examine the *arrangement of material* in the text, including devices of style; that is, the *rhetorical strategy* of the text must be examined, and, finally (5) the rhetorical critic must conduct a review as to what implications the discourse has for the audience and whether the discourse fits the rhetorical exigence. To reiterate step five, the rhetorical critic must assess the *rhetorical effectiveness* of the text, i.e. did it meet the demand to which it was first fashioned?[49] A brief *conclusion* rounds out the analysis and provides closure.

Clifton Black helpfully defends the broad utility of Kennedy's model for biblical studies, stating that it represents "the most comprehensive understanding of rhetoric . . . into which the concerns of competing definitions may be fairly subsumed."[50] Both Witherington and Myers say much the same thing as Black with respect to the effective, constructive nature of Kennedy's model and the usefulness of his overarching method of analysis (rhetorical criticism).[51] Albeit, one should not "slavishly" follow this model.[52] As such, certain modifications to the 'five steps' will be delineated at length below.

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[49] These five steps are an amalgamation of the procedure outlined by Kennedy, *Rhetorical Criticism,* 33–38, and a somewhat different five-step system delineated by Mitchell, "Rhetorical Criticism," 622. See also Stamps, "Rhetorical and Narratological Criticism," 224–25, Ahn, *Persuasive Portrayal*, 22–23, Möller, *Prophet in Debate*, 37–43, and Barker, *From the Depths of Despair*, 37–65.

[50] Black, "Biblical Interpretation," 256.

[51] See Witherington, "Almost Thou Persuadest Me," 63–88, esp. 63 and 67, and Myers and Witherington, "Response to Stanley Porter," 547–49. Cf. Porter and Dyer, "Oral Texts?" 323–41; Porter, "Unproven Claims," 533–45, esp. 534; Porter "Ben Witherington on Rhetoric," 551–52.

[52] Barker, "From the Depths of Despair," 50. See also Bovard, "Rhetorical Questions," 20, and Walton, "Rhetorical Criticism," 6. Cf. Hwang, *Rhetoric of Remembrance*, 10–11.

Step One: Determining the Rhetorical Units

The first step of rhetorical analysis is to determine the boundaries or parameters of the *rhetorical units* that exist within the text.[53] The goal is to divide the text into "discrete passages in order to see both how they communicate their message and how they fit into the broader shape" of the rest of the narrative.[54] A rhetorical unit must have within itself a "discernible beginning and ending, connected by some action or argument."[55]

According to Wuellner, these subunits are "argumentative" by virtue of the fact that they contain attempts to persuade or to affect some sort of change in reasoning or imagination within the intended or implied audience.[56] The range of a rhetorical unit varies from a single verse (such as a *toledoth* notation or superscription), to an entire book (such as Genesis, Joel, or Ruth, for example), or a series of books (such as the Pentateuch or the Book of the Twelve).[57] Naturally, one rhetorical unit may also be enclosed or embedded within another.[58] In any case, the interpreter always seeks to clearly delineate the interrelationship of the different subunits "with an eye towards articulating their function in building the argument of the larger rhetorical unit."[59]

The primary difficulty of this step is in properly identifying the units of text that the biblical scribes themselves actually designed and intended as units rather than imposing an artificial or alien scheme onto the narrative.[60] As Muilenburg states: "the

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[53] As one scholar asserts: "Um einen Text verstehen zu können, sollte man wissen, wo/wie er anfängt und wo/wie er aufhört." Blum, "Pentateuch," 67. Cf. Harper, *'I Will Walk Among You,'* 65–66.

[54] Barker, *From the Depths of Despair*, 66.

[55] Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation*, 34. See too Ahn, *Persuasive Portrayal*, 23.

[56] Wuellner, "Rhetorical Criticism," 455. The focus upon persuasion distinguishes 'rhetorical' units from 'literary' units. See Hester, "Re-discovering," 7, and Barker, *From the Depths of Despair*, 38.

[57] See Ahn, *Persuasive Portrayal*, 23, and Wuellner, "Rhetorical Criticism," 455.

[58] Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation*, 34.

[59] Barker, *From the Depths of Despair*, 31. See too Wuellner, "Rhetorical Criticism," 455.

[60] See Dorsey, *Literary Structure*, 21.

first concern of the rhetorical critic . . . is to define the limits or scope of the literary unit, to recognize precisely where and how it begins and where and how it ends . . . [a]n examination of the commentaries will reveal that there is great disagreement on this matter, and . . . more often than not, no defense is offered for the isolation of the pericope."[61] To this end, John Callow writes: "the progression of the author's thought is best seen in the light of his own grouping of his material. As the author moves towards his communicative goal, he does not do so in an undifferentiated string of clauses. The clauses will be grouped and that grouping will be controlled by the author's purpose."[62]

There are three main ways for a scribe to set off a literary unit: (1) mark the unit's beginning, (2) mark the unit's end, and (3) shape the unit into a cohesive whole so that it "hangs together," that is, arrange the text so that each of the specific parts of the rhetorical unit are bound together so as to form an independent, complete, self-contained "package" that creates internal cohesion.[63] By coherence is "meant that the constituents of a unit will be semantically compatible with one another. Corresponding to the three subclasses of constituents of a unit, it is expected that a well-formed unit will have referential coherence, situational coherence, and structural (relational) coherence."[64]

Some examples of the various techniques that are often employed throughout the HB/OT in order to create this type of internal cohesion include sameness of time, place, participants, genre or literary form, topic or theme, narratival speed of action—rapid (spanning a number of years) or slow (covering a single conversation or incident), and sameness of grammatical or syntactic forms, including verbal form patterns, but also

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[61] Muilenburg, "Form Criticism," 8–9.
[62] Callow, "Units and Flow," 464.
[63] Dorsey, *Literary Structure*, 21–24, Wendland, *Discourse Analysis,* 24–70.
[64] Beekman et al., *Semantic Structure*, 21.

include frequent repetition of the same word throughout the unit (keyword/*Leitwort*),

patterned repetition of information, arranging the material in an inclusio, arranging the

material using chiasmus, and employing a recurring motif.[65] A summary of the above

(along with some other examples) may be seen in the chart below.[66]

FIGURE SEVEN: BEGINNING AND ENDING MARKERS

Beginning Markers (BM)	Ending Markers (EM)
Title or Superscription	Poetic Refrain
Introductory Formula e.g. "these are the generations of *x*" "there are three things . . . four things"	Concluding Formula e.g. "and the land had peace for x years" "and it was evening . . . the *n*th day"
Common Beginning Word or Phrases e.g. "behold!" "woe!" "therefore" "in that day/in these days" "the days are coming" "hear!" "for" "surely"	Conclusion (a) resolution of tension, (b) completion of action, (c) death of central character, (e) final outcome, (f) end of reign
Vocative	Summary
Rhetorical Question	Flashback
Imperative	Closing Prophetic Speech
Orientation (one or more clauses setting the stage for the upcoming narrative or instructions to a prophet about the delivery of the message that follows)	Association with Audience's Own Time (a concluding story with a statement about the significance or consequences of the story in the audience's own time, often including the phrase "to this day")
Abstract (one or more narrative clauses that summarize the whole upcoming story)	Poetic Climactic Lines or Concluding Exclamation
First Part of an *Inclusio* or *Chiasmus*	Last Part of an *Inclusio* or *Chiasmus*
Various Shifts: (a) time, (b) place, (c) characters or speakers, (d) theme/topic/mood, (e) genre, (f) narrative technique (speed)	Various Shifts: (a) time, (b) place, (c) characters or speakers, (d) theme/topic/mood, (e) genre, (f) narrative technique (speed))
Grammatical/Syntactical Signals (a) person of the verbs, (b) use of *waws*— (conjunctive/disjunctive), (c) verbal forms (*wayyiqtol*/non-*wayyiqtol* verbs)	Grammatical/Syntactical Signals (a) person of the verbs, (b) use of *waws*— (conjunctive/disjunctive), (c) verbal forms (*wayyitqtol*/non-*wayyiqtol* verbs)

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[65] Dorsey, *Literary Structure*, 23–24.

[66] Most of the information within this chart has been derived from Dorsey, *Literary Structure*, 21–23, and Ahn, *Persuasive Portrayal*, 65. For more details, see Muilenburg, "Linguistic and Rhetorical Usages," 135–60, Muilenburg, "Form Criticism," 1–18, esp. 14–15, Pickering, *Framework for Discourse Analysis*, 279–80, Bar-Efrat, "Some Observations," 154–73, Berlin, *Poetics,* 101–10, Fokkelman, *Biblical Narrative*, 208–09, Fitzgerald, "Rhetorical Analysis," 26–27, Longacre, *Grammar of Discourse*, 18–21, Longacre, "Noah's Flood," 240, and Heller, *Narrative Structure*.

Concerning grammatical and syntactical signals, specifically, it is understood that "grammar is the architectural blueprint of communication."[67] More recent works on linguistics further suggest that "the exegesis of any narrative depends not only on questions of grammar and syntax, but also on questions of textuality, and particularly on the identification of text structure and thematic net."[68] While additional comments about this topic fall outside the scope of this paper, one may discern the scribe's "signals of aperture and closure" via certain shifts that occur in the narrative with respect to the person of the verbs, whether the speaker him/herself or a primary/secondary character.[69]

Unlike the rather 'straightforward' shift of the person of the verb, however, the meaning of the clause-level *waw* is "nuanced" and requires more analysis.[70] "Although Hebrew relies heavily on *waw*, other indicators in the text's surface grammar sometimes mark out more precise logical values. Morever, the patterns of the use of the *waw* allow for precision."[71] Thomas Lambdin provides a good starting point to this end:

> (1) conjunctive-sequential, in which the second clause is temporally or logically posterior or consequent to the first, and (2) disjunctive, in which the second clause may be in various relations, all non-sequential, with the first. The major device in Hebrew for signalling the difference between conjunctive and disjunctive clauses is the type of word which stands immediately after the wə-:wə- (or wa-) + verb is conjunctive[-sequential] wə- + non-verb is disjunctive.[72]

It is unnecessary to rehearse in any great detail at this time the defining characteristics of each of the basic functions of the *waw* except to say that "disjunctive clauses are

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[67] Osborne, *Hermeneutical Spiral*, 63.
[68] Cotterell, "Linguistics," 1:155. See too Cotterell and Turner, *Linguistics*, 11–36. The clearest exposé on linguistics that is currently available now is Noonan, *Advances in the Study of Biblical Hebrew*.
[69] See Van Pelt, ed., *Basics of Hebrew Discourse*, 84, 108–112.
[70] I am indebted to Tyler J. Patty for these insights via private communiqué.
[71] See *IBHS* §39.2.1c.
[72] Lambdin, *Biblical Hebrew*, 162. Cf. *BHRG* §40.23; *IBHS* §39.2.1.d; *GBHS* §3.54.3.3; Joüon §176/177; Van Pelt, ed., *Basics of Hebrew Discourse*, 59–60.

distinguished by function as contrastive and scene-shift disjunctive *waw* clauses."[73] As

noted by Bruce K. Waltke and Michael O'Connor: "there are two common types of

disjunction. One type involves a continuity of scene and participants, but a change of

action, while the other is used where the scene or participants shift."[74] In this case:

> If the disjunctive *waw* is used in a situation with *continuity of setting*, the
> clause it introduces may *contrast* with the preceding . . . specify
> contemporary *circumstances* . . . or causes . . . or provide a *comparison*
> . . . [a] disjunctive-*waw* clause may also shift the scene . . . refer to new
> participants [or] indicate 'either the completion of one episode or the
> beginning of another.'[75]

Given the above, it is clear that by paying close attention to the scribe's use of the *waw*,

one is able to better discern various signals of aperture/closure, thus demarcating the

rhetorical units of the text. Much the same thing applies to verbal forms.

In brief, it is understood that "the basic narrative story line of a text is based

upon chains of *WAYYIQTOL* clauses."[76] That is to say, the *wayyiqtol* moves the

narrative action forward. The two primary modes of progression with the *wayyitqol* are

temporal and logical.[77] As such, whenever non-verbal clauses, such as participial,

verbless, and incomplete, or any other additional verbal clauses that are governed by

qaṭal, *yiqṭol*, or *wĕqaṭol* "appear in the *narrative story line of a text*, these verbal and

non-verbal clauses provide either nonsequential, 'background' information or mark

episode boundaries."[78] To conclude, rhetorical units are discerned through paying close

attention to the text's shape, i.e. (1) persons of verbs, (2) *waws*, (3) and verbal forms.

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[73] This information comes from Tyler J. Patty via private communiqué.

[74] *IBHS* §39.2.3a. See also Longacre, "Noah's Flood," 237–40.

[75] *IBHS* §39.2.3b, c. Italics original.

[76] Heller, *Narrative Structure*, 26.

[77] See *IBHS* §33.2.1a. I am indebted Tyler J. Patty for these insights via private communiqué.

[78] Heller, *Narrative Structure*, 26. Emphasis original. See too *IBHS* §33.2.1c, alongside Van Pelt
ed., *Basics of Hebrew Discourse*, 68–83. Cf. Jouön §118.g.

Step Two: Determining the Rhetorical Situation

The second step of rhetorical-criticism is to determine the *rhetorical situation* of the text

at hand. It is important to note that 'rhetorical situation' is to be distinguished from both

the 'rhetorical act' and the 'persuasive situation.' That is, a persuasive situation exists

"*whenever* an audience can be changed in belief or action by means of speech" while a

rhetorical situation is "a specific situation that determines and controls the rhetorical

utterance it occasions" and is characterized by an "'exigency which amount[s] to *an*

imperative stimulus' and which the rhetorical discourse is designed to address with the

aim of modifying it."[79] The use of this nomenclature, however, requires some

explanation since 'situation' is not a typical term within the vocabulary of rhetorical

theory. As Lloyd F. Bitzer states: "'audience' is standard; so also are 'speaker,'

'subject,' 'occasion,' and 'speech.' If I were to ask, 'What is a rhetorical audience?' or

'What is a rhetorical subject?' — the reader would catch the meaning of my question."[80]

Given such, Bitzer defines the term 'rhetorical situation' at length, stating:

> Rhetorical situation may be defined as a complex of persons, events,
> objects, and relations presenting an actual or potential exigence which
> can be completely or partially removed if discourse, introduced into the
> situation, can so constrain human decision or action as to bring about the
> significant modification of the exigence . . . Any *exigence* is an
> imperfection marked by an urgency; it is a defect, an obstacle, something
> waiting to be done, a thing which is other than it should be.[81]

Kennedy describes the rhetorical situation as roughly corresponding to the *Sitz im Leben*

of form criticism.[82] In this way, the purpose of determining a text's rhetorical situation is

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[79] Möller, *Prophet in Debate*, 26, italics original. Möller is referencing here Bitzer "Rhetorical Situation," 249, 250–52. For more information on the relationship between "rhetorical act" and "rhetorical situation," see Brinton, "Situation," 234–36, and Ahn, *Persuasive Portrayal*, 33.

[80] Bitzer, "Rhetorical Situation," 1. Cf. Consigny, "Rhetoric," 182.

[81] Bitzer, "Rhetorical Situation," 6. Italics original. See also Bitzer "Functional Communication," 21–38, and VanOsdel, "Rhetorical Situation," 1–6.

[82] Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation*, 34. See too Muilenburg, "Form Criticism," 4.

to "look behind the text and examine the society, circumstances, and historical era that produced it."[83] In this way, one of the great strengths of this specific model of rhetorical criticism, i.e. "rhetoric as persuasion," is its "potential to examine the three primary foci of interpretation which are the author ('the world behind the text'), the discourse ('the world of the text'), and the reader ('the world in front of the text')."[84] Of course, "while not all rhetorical-critical studies will attempt a project of such ambition, the history of rhetorical-critical interpretation suggests that all of these levels of interpretation are appropriate to consider. A[n effective] rhetorical-critical study will need to establish its orientation towards these levels of interpretation when it studies particular texts."[85]

Regrettably, it is often not possible to precisely recognize the actual situation of an ancient text by "conventional historical analysis, since in most cases we do not know enough about the original circumstances of the author or the audience—and even if *we* knew, it is not certain the author shared our knowledge."[86] For this reason, it is often more useful to look at the type of situation in which the text appears to be aimed to "function as appeal or argument, that is, its *rhetorical situation*."[87] The rhetorical situation of a text thus functions as a sort of "backdrop" to explain "why and how the rhetor composed the text."[88] As one scholar notes, rhetorical situation consists of "the author's picture of the audience and . . . the intended effects of the texts."[89] In other words, both the *Sitz im Leben* and the historical situation of a text differ from the text's rhetorical situation in that the rhetorical critic looks "foremost for the premises of a text

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[83] Barker, *From the Depths of Despair*, 39. Cf. Harper, *'I Will Walk Among You,'* 62–104.
[84] Barker, "From the Depths of Despair," 44. Cf. Möller, "Rhetorical Criticism," 689.
[85] Barker, "From the Depths of Despair," 44.
[86] Thurén, *Argument and Theology*, 32. Emphasis original.
[87] Thurén, *Argument and Theology*, 32. Emphasis original.
[88] Barker, *From the Depths of Despair*, 39. See too Möller, *Prophet in Debate*, 27.
[89] Thurén, *Argument and Theology*, 32.

as appeal or argument."[90] Kennedy generally employed Bitzer's understanding of rhetorical situation who notes three main components: (1) exigence, (2), audience, and (3) constraints.[91] Each of these components are essential to the construction of a rhetorical situation and require further explanation.[92]

Rhetorical Situation: Exigence

As stated above, the term exigence relates to any problem, obstacle, conflict, or defect that requires a solution or something to be done about it.[93] Exigencies are required components for all cogent rhetorical communication to occur. Veritably, "if there are no problems in the present environment, no questions needing answers, no objects or ideas awaiting discovery, then there is no need for rhetorical tasks such as persuasion, advocacy, or mediation."[94] According to Bitzer, every rhetorical situation has "at least one controlling exigence which functions as the organizing principle: it specifies the audience to be addressed and the change to be effected."[95]

In this way, Bitzer ties the rhetorical situation to a specific problem that exists in a specific time and place (space) that the rhetor believes requires addressing.[96]

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[90] Wuellner, "Rhetorical Criticism," 456. Concerns about applying a particular type of rhetorical model that was originally intended for public discourse to texts are keenly addressed by Eagleton (*Literary Theory*, 179) who writes: "rhetoric . . . examined the way discourses are constructed in order to achieve certain effects . . . its horizon was nothing less than the field of discursive practices in society as a whole, and its particular interest lay in grasping such practices as forms of power and performance." For further information, see Möller, *Prophet in Debate*, 26–27.

[91] See Bitzer, "Rhetorical Situation," 8 and Bitzer, "Functional Communication," 23. Bitzer indicates that "the second and third are elements of the complex, namely the *audience* to be constrained in decision and action, and the *constraints* which influence the rhetor and can be brought to bear upon the audience." Bitzer, "Rhetorical Situation," 6. Italics original.

[92] Though these criteria "provide the framework for rhetorical communication, Bitzer attempts to leave space for the creativity of the rhetor by asserting that the situation does not predetermine the discourse." Barker, *From the Depths of Despair*, 39.

[93] Bitzer, "Rhetorical Situation," 6.

[94] Barker, *From the Depths of Despair*, 39. See also Bitzer, "Functional Communication," 25–26.

[95] Bitzer, "Rhetorical Situation," 6. Thus, "the antecedent of every rhetorical situation is the exigence from which the situation derives its significance." Miller, "Rhetorical Exigence," 118.

[96] See Ahn, *Persuasive Portrayal*, 26, and Barker, *From the Depths of Despair*, 40. Problems with this approach will be addressed later on.

Rhetorical Situation: Audience

Concerning Bitzer's second component, audience, it may safely be assumed that every discourse presumes an audience; for if an audience does not exist, the speaker does not have to make discourse.[97] Alongside this, persuasion, by its very nature, always necessitates an audience since it is always "*addressed* discourse."[98] An audience thus becomes the "necessary condition" for performing any kind of argumentation.[99] Though this term will be discussed more at length below, Bitzer maintains that the audience consists of those individuals "capable of being influenced by the discourse and of being mediators."[100] To put it differently, for Bitzer, "the audience is involved in a rhetorical situation only to the extent that it is 'capable of being constrained in thought or action in order to effect positive modification of the exigence.'"[101]

There are, however, several factors that also come into play here. These include the facticity (or existence) of the exigence itself and the interest that it may possibly generate among the audience. Bitzer proposes four scenarios concerning these matters: (i) the audience and the rhetor can agree about the facticity of the exigence and the level of interest in the exigence, (ii) the audience and the rhetor can agree about the facticity of the exigence but disagree about the level of interest in it, (iii) the audience and the rhetor can disagree about the facticity of the exigence but agree concerning the level of interest in the exigence, and (iv) the audience and the rhetor can disagree about both the facticity of the exigence and the level of interest it should generate.[102]

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[97] Ahn, *Persuasive Portrayal*, 27.

[98] See Burke, *Rhetoric of Motives*, 38. Emphasis original.

[99] Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, *New Rhetoric*, 18. See too Ahn, *Persuasive Portrayal*, 27.

[100] Bitzer, "Rhetorical Situation," 8.

[101] Ahn, *Persuasive Portrayal*, 27, quoting Bitzer, "Functional Communication," 23.

[102] Bitzer, "Functional Communication," 29–30, and Barker, *From the Depths of Despair*, 40.

It is clear that the most optimal scenario is one where the audience and the rhetor agree about both the factity of the exigence and the level of interest in the exigence while a moderately optimal scenario is where disagreement arises concerning only the level of interest in the exigence *or* its factity. Lastly, the most suboptimal scenario is where disagreement arises about *both* the level of interest in the exigence and its factity.

FIGURE EIGHT—EXIGENCE AND AUDIENCE

Suboptimal ➔ Moderately Optimal ➔ Most Optimal

Single Scenario	Scenario 'A'	Scenario 'B'	Single Scenario
Disagree FE	Disagree FE	Agree FE	Agree FE
Disagree IE	Agree IE	Disagree IE	Agree IE
Legend: FE = facticity of exigence IE = interest exigence			

With respect to prophetic literature, alongside, perhaps, certain other biblical examples, it is often the case that the prophets tend to have a much more vested degree of interest in the topic than what the audience usually has.[103] Given such "[p]rophetic literature often derives its exigence from the gap between the audience's understanding and the divinely mediated message that the prophet presents."[104] Given the numerous challenges that are thus inherent to situations where the audience and the rhetor disagree, either with respect to the facticity of the exigence or concerning the level of interest in the exigence itself, successful persuasive discourse usually requires at least some sort of "adaptation to the audience."[105] In this way, effective rhetorical discourse is comparable to "a feast . . . at which the dishes are made to please the guests . . . and not

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[103] See Kennedy, *Comparative Rhetoric*, 137.
[104] Barker, *From the Depths of Despair*, 41. See too Sandy, *Plowshares*, 73.
[105] Perelman, *New Rhetoric and Humanities*, 57. See also Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, *New Rhetoric*, 23–26, and Arnold, "Oral Rhetoric," 194.

the cooks."[106]

In point of fact, certain authors go so far as to state: "the speaker should depart from his premises only when he knows that they are adequately accepted: if they are not, the speaker's first concern should be to reinforce them with all the means at his disposal."[107] If such is true, then it may also be argued that at least one element of the rhetorician's role should be to guide an audience towards recognizing the presence of an exigence and the proper response to it.[108] Alongside this, it may also be argued that the rhetor usually or customarily begins with certain premises that are already approved by the audience and often seeks to reinforce these premises through their rhetoric.[109]

With respect to situations where the audience and the rhetor strongly disagree on the exigence, either with respect to its facticity or the level of interest that it should generate, such as in prophetic literature (as noted above), it becomes practically impossible to persuade them to respond.[110] In some ways, though, perhaps, this is the only situation that could 'truly' be called 'persuasive' for only then do the audience and the speaker actually agree that a given discourse could actually modify the situation.[111] Given such, "the creation of a shared interest in a given exigence is one of the first requirements of successful rhetorical communication."[112]

Interestingly, some even use this understanding to distinguish a "rhetorical situation" from a historical situation. James D. Hester, for instance, states:

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[106] Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, *New Rhetoric*, 24.
[107] Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, *New Rhetoric*, 21.
[108] See Barker, *From the Depths of Despair*, 40.
[109] Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, *New Rhetoric*, 286; Booth, *Rhetoric of Fiction*, 124; Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation*, 45; Ahn, *Persuasive Portrayal*, 27.
[110] Garret and Ziao, "Rhetorical Situation Revisited," 38.
[111] See Barker, *From the Depths of Despair*, 37–38.
[112] Barker, *From the Depths of Despair*, 41.

It is important to maintain a clear distinction between an historical situation, or event, and the rhetorical situation, which may emerge as a pragmatic response to that event. The rhetorical situation is historically grounded and its constituents are 'real,' that is, the components of the situation can be examined by interested persons. However, the situation becomes rhetorical, not simply historical, when audience and speaker both perceive the exigence, that the interests of the speaker and audience are related, and that discourse can be pragmatic, in other words, that the audience is capable of modifying the exigence.[113]

It is worth noting, however, in this discussion of audience that Bitzer's formulations of the rhetorical situation only include those persons that existed within the context of the original discourse; he does not take into account any individuals who may also be moved or stimulated by the persuasive appeal of the rhetor outside of the first exigence (which may or may not even exist or be "operational" in the world of the new audience).[114] As Joel Barker puts it: "this merits consideration when one studies the biblical text since the text derives much of its significance from its ability to speak persuasively to audiences in situations far removed from its original exigence."[115]

Kennedy adeptly handled this anomaly by changing Bitzer's definition to include the fact that "there may be both an immediate and a universal audience, especially in a written work."[116] That is, though an argument may originally be based on a specific audience in a specific context, the term "audience" need not be limited to those persons or individuals to whom the speaker addressed initially but may also be extended to include the so-called "text world audience," i.e. a "universal audience."[117] In this way, the audience of a discourse can extend far beyond the initial "ensemble" of those whom

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[113] Hester, "Speaker, Audience, and Situations," 79.
[114] See Barker, *From the Depths of Despair*, 40.
[115] See Barker, *From the Depths of Despair*, 40. See too Ahn, *Persuasive Portrayal*, 33.
[116] Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation*, 35. Cf. Barker, *From the Depths of Despair*, 55–56.
[117] See Ahn, *Persuasive Portrayal*, 28.

the rhetor initially wished to influence (the immediate audience) to include anyone who comes into contact with the rhetorician's work at a future time (universal audience).[118]

To be clear, the "rhetorical" and "situational" audiences are those persons who share a "common interest" in a given exigence and who may act on the rhetor's appeals, even though they were not a member of the "actual audience" of the discourse.[119] In other words, a "situational audience" may be defined as a *witness* to the rhetorical situation: knowledge of the rhetorical exigence is direct."[120] The "universal audience" is "the complex of readers or hearers upon whom the text may have persuasive appeal."[121]

Notably, some rhetoricians thus consider the audience as the "active center" of the rhetorical situation and that the audience, as the "pivotal element," links "the rhetorical exigency (the audience's unsolved questions), the constraints (the audience's expectations), and the rhetor (as a member of the audience)."[122] One understands that by placing emphasis upon the audience "the debate over the facticity of the exigency loses much of its force since the important question becomes whether the audience accepts that an exigency exists."[123] To this end, some contend that "the ultimate character of an exigence is a conclusion in the mind of its perceiver," i.e. the audience, developing "the proposition that within the limits specified by each exigence, the *ultimate* or *perceived* nature of the exigence depends upon the constraints *of the perceiver*."[124] This is one

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[118] See Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, *New Rhetoric*, 19, 31–34, alongside Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation*, 35, and Ahn, *Persuasive Portrayal*, 28.

[119] See Barker, *From the Depths of Despair*, 58–59.

[120] Hunsaker and Smith, "Issues," 148. Emphasis original.

[121] Barker, *From the Depths of Despair*, 59. Cf. Patrick and Scult, "Rhetoric and Ideology," 80, Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, *New Rhetoric*, 31, Ahn, *Persuasive Portrayal*, 31, Powell, *What is Narrative Criticism?*, 20, and Gitay, "Rhetorical Criticism," 124. I will return to these points later on.

[122] Garret and Xiao, "Rhetorical Situation Revisited," 39.

[123] Garret and Xiao, "Rhetorical Situation Revisited," 39.

[124] Miller "Rhetorical Exigence," 111–12. Emphasis original.

way, at least, that Aristotle's statement: "no analysis of communication can be complete

without a thorough study of the role of the receptors of a message," cannot, it would

seem, be overstated.[125] Details concerning the relationship that can exist between the

rhetor and the audience and how they can serve to demonstrate the subjective nature of

determining exigence need not be given.[126]

With the above in mind, since this study deals with biblical narrative as rhetoric,

(specifically 'rhetoric as persuasion,') two literary concepts—the implied author and the

implied reader—must also be noted.[127] Narratologist Seymour Chatman explains:

> A narrative is a communication; hence, it presupposes two parties, a
> sender and a receiver. Each party entails three different personages. On
> the sending end are the real author, the implied author, and the
> narrator…; on the receiving end, the real audience (listener, reader,
> viewer), the implied audience, and the narratee.[128]

The following diagram functions as a 'primer' of sorts to communicate the diverse

elements of the communication situation of a narrative text that have just been noted.[129]

FIGURE NINE—COMMUNICATION SITUATION OF A NARRATIVE TEXT

Narrative text

Real author ‑ ‑ ‑► | Implied author →(Narrator)→(Narratee)→ Implied reader | ‑ ‑ ‑► Real reader
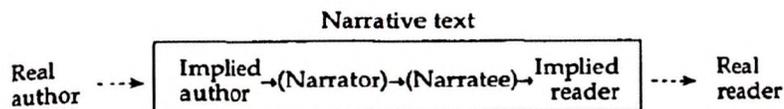
Chatman explains: "the box indicates that only the implied author and implied reader are

immanent to a narrative, the narrator and narratee are optional (parentheses). The real

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[125] Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, 1.9.1257b as mediated through Ahn, *Persuasive Portrayal*, 28.

[126] For further information on this point, see Barker, *From the Depths of Despair*, 41.

[127] See Ahn, *Persuasive Portrayal*, 16. For an up-to-date, clear definition of these terms, see Nelles, "Historical and Implied Authors and Readers," 22–46, esp. 26–30 and 33–35.

[128] Chatman, *Story and Discourse*, 28.

[129] The following image comes from Chatman, *Story and Discourse*, 151. While Ahn (*Persuasive Portrayal*, 17) has a similar diagram, it is, quite regrettably, missing certain critical components to it (such as the box and parentheses). Cf. Phelan, *Somebody Telling Somebody*, 13, 18. For similar work that does not directly relate to Chatman, see Sailhamer, *Pentateuch*, 11, and Longman, *Literary Approaches*, 145.

author and real reader are outside the narrative transactions as such, though, of course, indispensable to it in an ultimate practical sense."[130] As such, both the implied author and the implied reader are to be separated from and distinguished from the real author and real reader.[131] It is also recognized (though Chatman does not make this explicit) that "the direction of the arrows gives a primacy to the sender in narrative communication."[132]

There are, therefore, three levels of sender and receiver: (1) the narrator and the narrative audience (narratee), (2) the implied author and the implied audience, and (3) the real author and the real audience; alongside this, there are also two levels of rhetoric: (1) the implied author and the implied audience and (2) the narrator and the narrative audience.[133] Consequently, "the implied author conveys messages to the implied audience through the narrator and narrative audience as part of the narrative itself" and, "in general, the narrator delivers the messages of the implied author."[134] This means that the implied author speaks through the narrator in a narrative and that, as the narrative advances, the narrative audience is further extended to the implied audience.[135]

That being said, some scholars maintain that the narrator and narratee are actually "optional" and thus choose to place the stress or emphasis upon the implied author and the implied reader.[136] Others, however, maintain that the narrator and the

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[130] Chatman, *Story and Discourse*, 151.
[131] Booth, *Rhetoric of Fiction*, 73. Cf. Ahn, *Persuasive Portrayal*, 16, and Nelles, "Historical and Implied Authors and Readers," 22.
[132] Ahn, *Persuasive Portrayal*, 17. It is understood that detractors of this approach tend to find meaning other than the sending end of the narrative translation. See Iser, "The Reading Process," 279–99. For further information, see Walsh, *Old Testament Narrative*, 1–9.
[133] See Ahn, *Persuasive Portrayal*, 34 from whom much of this sentence's wording is derived.
[134] Ahn, *Persuasive Portrayal*, 34. Cf. Rimmon-Kenan, *Narrative Fiction*, 90–92.
[135] See Ahn, *Persuasive Portrayal*, 34.
[136] Chatman, *Story and Discourse*, 151. See also Shen, "What is the Implied Author," 80–98, and Stefanescu, "Revisiting the Implied Author Yet Again," 48–66.

narratee are "constitutive, not just optional, factors in narrative communication."[137]

Walsh clears the air in his portrayal of the structure of narrative. See below:[138]

FIGURE TEN—THE STRUCTURE OF NARRATIVE
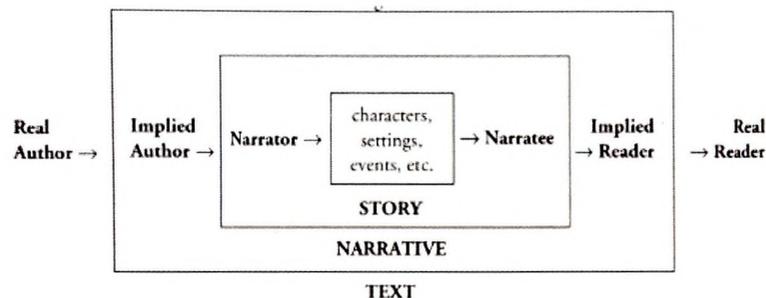
On the outermost edge is the 'real author' and the 'real reader' that exist in the "primary world" while the innermost box (story) is a "secondary world" where "individuals live (characters) and things happen (events) in particular circumstances (settings)."[139] Of course, the narrator tells the story to the narratee via a particular form/genre (literature). Concerning those "two oddly named figures," namely the "implied author" and the "implied reader," Walsh states, with respect to the fact that each of them occur within the box (narrative) that encompasses 'story,' "the implied author and implied reader are not entities like the narrator and narratee; they are essentially *constructs made by the (real) reader*. In other words they are the names for parts of the process by which the reader makes sense of the text."[140] Given such, the implied author relates to "the core of norms and choices" of the narrative itself.[141] The implied reader "designates the norms and values necessary for an interpretation of a narrative guided by the author."[142]

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[137] Rimmon-Kenan, *Narrative Fiction*, 91.

[138] This diagram has been reproduced from Walsh, *Old Testament Narrative*, 6 who credits its origins (with slight modifications) to Keegan, *Interpreting the Bible*, 94. Cf. Sailhamer, *Pentateuch*, 14.

[139] Walsh, *Old Testament Narrative*, 7. See too Clines, "Many Voices," 121.

[140] Walsh, *Old Testament Narrative*, 8. See too Westfall, "Narrative Criticism," 238.

[141] Booth, *Rhetoric of Fiction*, 74–75.

[142] Ahn, *Persuasive Portrayal*," 16, drawing from Booth, *Rhetoric of Fiction*, 138.

Even though most scholarship indicates that the text's real author is a composite, in order to read biblical narrative as a "coherent unity, the reader must *posit* a single authorial mind to explain that coherence."[143] Walsch expounds:

> This author, presupposed by the reader's readiness to accept the narrative as coherent, and constructed by the reader out of clues selected as meaningful is the 'implied author.' The 'implied reader' (some critics speak of the 'ideal reader') is the reader who understands perfectly and precisely what the implied author is saying, and brings nothing extraneous to that understanding . . . the implied reader has all and only those capacities that the implied author expects. This reader . . . is constructed by the real reader out of clues implied in the text.[144]

Another scholar likewise asserts that from the point of view of the real author, a "successful reading of his book must eliminate all distance between the essential norms of his implied author and the norms of the postulated [implied] reader."[145] As such, both the implied author and reader are to be distinguished from the real author/reader in the "primary" or real world.[146] Notably, 'implied author' relates to "the core of norms and choices" of the narrative itself, while 'implied reader' "designates the norms and values necessary for an interpretation of a narrative guided by the author."[147] Walsh asserts:

> This gap between the implied reader and us is why incorporating reader-response awareness into our interpretation is almost inescapable. Our differences *will* affect us. Attention to those differences gives us some limited control over the ways in which they individualize our interpretations and shape the meanings we realize; it will also enable us to celebrate the diversity of different readings of a text not as a contest to see who can find the 'right' meaning but as a measure of the rich potential inherent in any great text.[148]

At this time, it behooves us to remember that much as discourse has two levels of

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[143] Walsh, *Old Testament Narrative*, 8. Italics original.
[144] Walsh, *Old Testament Narrative*, 8. See too Clines, "Many Voices," 121.
[145] Booth, *Rhetoric of Fiction*, 157.
[146] Booth, *Rhetoric of Fiction*, 73. Cf. Ahn, *Persuasive Portrayal*, 16.
[147] Booth, *Rhetoric of Fiction*, 74–75, 138. Cf. Ahn, *Persuasive Portrayal*, 16.
[148] Walsh, *Old Testament Narrative*, 9. Italics original.

rhetorical situation (the text-world rhetorical situation and the author's real world rhetorical situation), there are also "two layers of audience in relation to a narrative discourse," namely the implied audience and the narrative audience.[149]

To reiterate, if one differentiates between the narrator and the implied author, that is to say, the former relays what is going on (events), where it is taking place (settings), and to whom the events are happening (characters), while the latter "conveys its intention through the narrator's telling," the difference between the implied audience and the narrative audience is that "in a narrative, the implied audience is the addressee(s) of the implied author . . . and the narrative audience is the hearer(s) of the narrator. Both the implied audience and the narrative audience constitute two kinds of audiences within a narrative world."[150] See below:[151]

FIGURE ELEVEN—LAYERS OF AUDIENCE

the implied author ----------------------------------the implied audience

the narrator-----------the narrative audience
(characters)   (characters' audience)
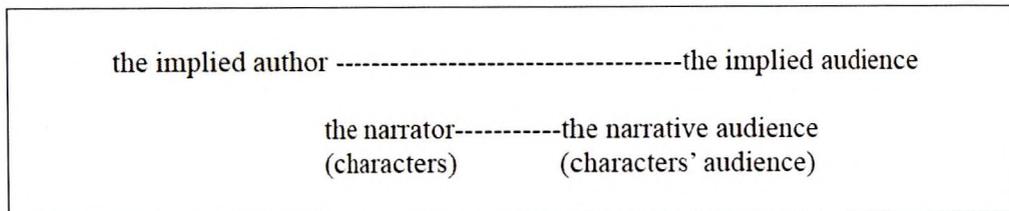
These two layers of audience relate to the study of the Noachic Deluge narrative in that the scribe(s) of Genesis conveys the message of the text to the implied audience through the narrative discourse (via the implied author) while the narrator "deploys the story through the character's speeches and acts."[152] The implied audience is thus the

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[149] See Ahn, *Persuasive Portrayal*, 33.

[150] Ahn, *Persuasive Portrayal*, 34.

[151] This diagram has been reproduced from Ahn, *Persuasive Portrayal*, 34.

[152] Ahn, *Persuasive Portrayal*, 34. Cf. Schmid, *Narratology*, 118, 121. For more details on God as a "character" within Genesis, see Cotter, *Genesis*, 171–79, and Humphreys, *Character of God*.

addressee of the implied author's retelling of so-called 'primeval history,' events that transpired within space and time prior to the 'patriarchal era,' while the narrative audience is the addressee(s) of the narrator (or characters).[153] In this way, "the implied audience cannot always be separated from the narrator because in some cases the implied author speaks as the narrator. Thus, we need to recognize two levels of author, audience, and situation in the narrative discourse."[154] To this end, the implied audience remains the ideal audience for reception of the material presented by the implied author. The next section will detail the final component of rhetorical situation—constraints.

Rhetorical Situation: Constraints

The third component of Bitzer's rhetorical situation are the constraints that surround a rhetorical situation.[155] These constraints are made up of "persons, events, objects, and relations which are parts of the situation because they have the power to constrain decision and action needed to modify the exigence."[156] They involve such things as "beliefs, attitudes, documents, facts, traditions, images, interests, [and] motives."[157] Alongside this, constraints include "the degree of interest in the topic that the speaker and audience possess, the capacity for modification of the situation, the risk incurred in responding, the obligation and expectation of a response, the familiarity with a topic, and the immediacy of the situation."[158]

According to Bitzer, there are two main classes of constraints: (1) those originated or managed by the rhetor and the rhetor's methods, something which

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[153] Cf. Ahn, *Persuasive Portrayal*, 34–35.
[154] Ahn, *Persuasive Portrayal*, 35.
[155] Bitzer, "Rhetorical Situation," 8.
[156] Bitzer, "Rhetorical Situation," 8.
[157] Bitzer, "Rhetorical Situation," 8, and Bitzer, "Functional Communication," 31–33.
[157] Ahn, *Persuasive Portrayal*, 28, quoting Bitzer, "Rhetorical Situation," 8.
[158] Barker, *From the Depths of Despair*, 41. See too Bitzer, "Functional Communication," 31–33.

Aristotle called "artistic proofs," and (2) other constraints which may be operative within the situation, i.e. Aristotle's "inartistic proofs."[159] Each of these things must be taken into account by the rhetor in order to effectively determine the scope and nature of the rhetoric that is to be employed so as to persuade the audience in a judicious fashion; given such, though rhetors may work hard to help establish a particular rhetorical situation, there remain limitations as to what they can actually construct.[160]

Rhetorical Situation: Critiques and Modifications

Since its inception, Bitzer's definition of rhetorical situation has been critiqued by other scholars—primarily Richard E. Vatz, Scott Consigny, and Alan Brinton.[161] Given the importance of these matters, we will elaborate on a number of these critiques and note some of the modifications that these scholars have made to Bitzer and Kennedy's model.

To begin, in contrast to Bitzer's concern for objectivity, Vatz argues for a thoroughly subjective understanding of situation. He maintains that "meaning is not discovered in situations . . . but *created* by rhetors" and that rhetoric is "a *cause* not an *effect* of meaning. It is antecedent, not subsequent to a situation's impact."[162] Cosigny, however, takes more of a "middle approach" between Bitzer and Vaz.

> Consigny deftly moves between the poles of situational particularities and rhetorical creativity, noting that the job of the rhetor includes both articulating specific problems out of indeterminate rhetorical situations, and being receptive and engaged in the given situation so that the problems that the rhetor address remain relevant. He finds a middle ground between Bitzer's assertion that the rhetorical situation governs the rhetor's choices and Vatz's understanding of the rhetor's freedom to create a variety of exigences out of a given situation.[163]

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[159] Bitzer, "Rhetorical Situation," 8.
[160] See Barker, *From the Depths of Despair*, 40–41.
[161] The work of Stamps, "Rethinking," will be considered elsewhere.
[162] Vatz, "The Myth of the Rhetorical Situation," 157, 160. All emphases original.
[163] Barker, *From the Depths of Despair*, 42.

In other words, Cosigny believes the rhetorical situation to be "an indeterminate context marked by troublesome disorder which the rhetor must structure so as to disclose and formulate problems" and thus claims that Bitzer "errs in construing the situation as determinate and predetermining a 'fitting' response."[164]

At the same time, however, Cosigny also believes that the rhetorical situation is not created "solely through the imagination and discourse of the rhetor. It involves particularities of persons, actions, and agencies in a certain place and time; and the rhetor cannot ignore these constraints if he is to function effectively."[165]

Cosigny also believes that Vatz errs in "construing the rhetor as completely free to create his own exigences at will and select his subject matter in a manner of 'pure arbitration.'"[166] To solve this quandary of "integrity" (Bitzer) and "receptivity" (Vatz), Cosigny calls for rhetoric to be construed as "an art of topics or commonplaces."[167] That is, the topic "functions both as instrument and situation; the instrument with which the rhetor thinks and the realm in and about which he thinks."[168] In brief: "the art of using the topics allows the rhetor both the integrity that he sees missing in Bitzer's paradigm and the receptivity that he sees missing in Vatz's. Bitzer's rhetor enters problem; Vatz's rhetor invents problems; Cosigny's rhetor solves problems."[169]

Perhaps the most significant contribution that Brinton makes with respect to rhetorical situation, in general, relates to the objectivity of exigence.[170] Brinton states:

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[164] Consigny, "Rhetoric," 178.
[165] Consigny, "Rhetoric," 178.
[166] Consigny, "Rhetoric," 178.
[167] Consigny, "Rhetoric," 181.
[168] Consigny, "Rhetoric," 182.
[169] Gorrell, "Rhetorical Situation," 398.
[170] Young, "Bitzer," 288.

> Rhetorical action aims at changing the facts, not simply at changing the relation between the facts and the rhetor's interests. The relation could be changed by changing either term. But from the rhetor's point of view the locus of deficiency is in the set of facts which Bitzer calls 'the factual component.' The deficiency is not the discrepancy between his interests and those facts. If the deficiency, the exigence, were the gap between facts and interests, modification of interests would count equally as removal of the exigence. It is the facts which the rhetor aims to change.[171]

In addition to this, Brinton further maintains: "exigence is objective in the sense that it is composed of phenomena, some of which may be subjective, but all of which are objectively phenomena."[172] This argument is noteworthy for this particular study since it "entails the concept of definition from the perspective of the rhetor."[173] Alongside this, Brinton also states that "as rhetors, Brutus and Mark Antony may confront the same factual circumstances, but each speaks to and attempts to modify (through his hearers) a different exigence."[174] The difference in exigence is thus "accounted for by the rhetor's interests; the factual component is the same for both."[175] Given such, rather than engaging in *reductio ad absurdum* here, as some scholars suggest,[176] Brinton is, instead, astutely aware of Bitzer's distinctions between "the factual component" and "the interest component" of a rhetorical situation and effectively modifies his approach and model.

Rhetorical Situation: Concluding Thoughts

In light of the above, it is evident that there is much for the biblical scholar to consider whenever they attempt to adequately define the term "rhetorical situation." Alongside this, it is reasonable to argue that a not in significant factor for an effective rhetorical-

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[171] Brinton, "Situation in the Theory of Rhetoric," 246.
[172] Brinton, "Situation in the Theory of Rhetoric," 244.
[173] Young, "Bitzer," 288.
[174] Brinton, "Situation in the Theory of Rhetoric," 244.
[175] Young, "Bitzer," 288.
[176] See Barker, *From the Depths of Despair*, 41.

critical study of the Noachic Deluge narrative involves the unfortunate reality that "the chronological distance and paucity of supporting evidence" means that it is exceptionally difficult to "establish the 'world behind the text' with [any high degree of] certainty. At the very least, it is precarious to use this idea of rhetorical situation for texts in which theories about the date of composition may span centuries."[177]

Given that Kennedy's goal is the "discovery of the author's intent and . . . how that is transmitted through a text to an audience,"[178] something that is "predicated on the assumption that it is possible to recover the original author and the historical-cultural situation about which he is writing," it is evident that some time must be spent in finding a way through this impasse.[179] Several ideas to this end have been posited.

One author states that "the close connection between the rhetorical situation and the discourse makes it inevitable that the major elements of the rhetorical situation are reflected in the discourse itself."[180] In response, while one may, perhaps, attempt to look for clues within the discourse itself, there is a "certain circularity to the process: the historical reality of the book's composition is derived from the text and the text is then interpreted in view of those conclusions."[181] The inevitable frustrations that would result from this process given the range of rhetorical strategies that are found within the text itself, among other matters, precludes this as a suitable course of action.[182]

Another approach is to continue to concentrate on the "world-behind-the-text" and seek to determine the book of Genesis' composition and redactional history so that

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[177] Barker, *From the Depths of Despair*, 50.
[178] Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation*, 12.
[179] Barker, *From the Depths of Despair*, 43.
[180] See Shaw, *Speeches of Micah*, 25.
[181] Linville, "Looking Glass," 286. Cf. Barker, *From the Depths of Despair*, 44–45.
[182] See Barker, *From the Depths of Despair*, 44–45.

one can find a *terminus ad quem* for the book's compilation.[183] Albeit, this method

remains somewhat hypothetical and is subject to challenge from those who have

different theories regarding the text's transmission history.[184] Constructing a viable

'world-behind-the-text' understanding of the rhetorical situation of the Noachic Deluge

narrative turns on "whether it is possible to modify this concept so that it can work with

a text . . . which effectively camouflages its historical situation."[185] This point will be

addressed in more detail below after further discussion of an "entextualized" approach.

A third position is to nuance the concept of rhetorical situation by using it

"synchronically." Dennis L. Stamps defines a synchronic approach to rhetorical

situation as "the situation embedded in the text and created by the text which contributes

to the rhetorical effects of the text."[186] The "entextualization" process involves viewing

the rhetorical situation as a "phenomenon that occurs on the level of the 'world of the

text' and examining the situation or exigences that the text appears to create and to

which it responds."[187] Regarding this approach, one notes that though Bitzer was

predominantly concerned with historically locatable situations, he does acknowledge

certain "persisting" situations that evoke texts which "exist as rhetorical responses *for us*

precisely because they speak to situations which persist—which are in some measure

universal."[188] Bitzer's concession of these "persisting situations," and literature that

seeks to respond to them (his examples include the Gettysburg Address and Socrates'

Apology), thus helps the rhetorical critic in considering rhetorical situation differently—

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[183] This was the approach of Möller in his analysis of Amos in *Prophet in Debate*.

[184] See Barker, *From the Depths of Despair*, 46.

[185] Barker, *From the Depths of Despair*, 47. See too Anderson, "Rhetorical Criticism," xv–xvi.

[186] Stamps, "Rethinking," 199.

[187] Barker, *From the Depths of Despair*, 47.

[188] Bitzer, "Rhetorical Situation," 259. Emphasis original.

namely synchronically.[189]

To summarize, the synchronic, entextualized approach attempts to separate the "rhetorical situation" from a "historical situation" by means of a "narrative story world."[190] It is this "entextualized world" that gives rise to the persuasive capacity of the text with respect to its hearers and readers.[191] This attempts to justify, hermeneutically, some of the circular problems that were noted in the first approach above.[192] The predominant need for this approach is as follows: (1) it is often not possible to precisely recognize the actual situation of an ancient text by "conventional historical analysis, since in most cases we do not know enough about the original circumstances of the author or the audience—and even if *we* knew, it is not certain the author shared our knowledge,"[193] and (2) "even if the interpreter can objectively determine the situation of the addressees, there is no guarantee that that the text's author understood their situation in the same way."[194] In brief, the synchronic, entextualized understanding of rhetorical situation is a particularly adept solution whenever it is inordinately difficult to establish the "world behind the text" since this approach offers a way forward through the frustration of locking the text into a indeterminable historical context. As Barker states:

> The persuasiveness of the argument is linked tightly to the literary presentation of the situation; if there is correspondence, then the text may be capable of eliciting a fitting response from its audience. The textual presentation of the situation becomes the basis for the argument of the whole communication and its individual rhetorical units. In positing its own rhetorical situation, the text conditions the speaker and the audience to accept a new reality in which the discourse operates. This new reality should provoke the audience to response.[195]

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[189] Some of the phrasing of this sentence came from Barker, *From the Depths of Despair*, 48.

[190] Wuellner, "Jesus' Sermon," 92–118, esp. 99–100.

[191] See Barker, *From the Depths of Despair*, 49–50. Cf. Gitay, "Jeremiah," 42.

[192] I am indebted to Mark J. Boda for this insight via private communiqué.

[193] Thurén, *Argument and Theology*, 32. Emphasis original.

[194] Barker, *From the Depths of Despair*, 47, citing Thurén, *Rhetorical Strategy of 1 Peter*, 71.

[195] Barker, *From the Depths of Despair*, 49. Cf. Stamps, "Rethinking," 199–200, 210.

Given the number of favorable reviews that Barker's handling of this specific step has

received, it would seem that an entextualized, synchronic approach to rhetorical

situation offers the "rhetoric as persuasion" rhetorical critic the best opportunity to

leverage the text and to permit its persuasive power to have influence beyond the time

and place of its original utterance.[196] Indeed, one reviewer goes so far as to state:

> Barker provides a sensitive and convincing rhetorical analysis of the book
> of Joel . . . His reworking of this particular rhetorical critical method
> may end up providing a valuable step away from the past circularity
> between scholarly rhetorical analysis and historical-critical arguments.
> The book is worth its price for that theoretical move alone.[197]

That being said, however, this approach is not without its critics. One reviewer states:

> Barker's methodology exhibits a certain subjectivity, especially as
> applied to Joel's prophecy with its uncertain date and provenance.
> Barker's rhetorical reading of Joel places everything within the 'world of
> the text.' The historicity of a real situation is replaced by the exigencies
> implied by the text. A real audience is replaced by an 'implied audience.'
> It would seem that to measure effectiveness, some interaction between
> the text and the real world would be necessary . . . [h]as this book
> persuaded real people in real time?[198]

In light of the above, the "world-behind-the-text" approach that has been espoused by

Möller seems to merit some further consideration. Since a good portion of this step

pertains to and is interrelated with "determining rhetorical effectiveness," see step five

below, further details concerning these matters will be offered at that time.

Step Three: Determining the Rhetorical Species

The third step of the model is to consider the *rhetorical genre* (or *rhetorical species*) of

the text. Kennedy's method has three possible rhetorical genres: (1) judicial (or forensic)

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[196] See, for instance, Knight, Review of *From the Depths of Despair*, 74, and Jones, Review of *From the Depths of Despair*, 92–94, alongside Kelle and Purcell (who are listed below).

[197] Kelle, Review of *From the Depths of Despair*, 188. Purcell (Review of *From the Depths of Despair*, 115) also states that move is "probably one of the most insightful gains of the book."

[198] Jungels, Review of *From the Depths of Despair*, 568.

rhetoric, *genus iudiciale*, (2) deliberative (or hortatory) rhetoric, *genus deliberativum*, and (3) demonstrative (or epideictic), *genus demonstrativum*.[199] These categories were formulated by Aristotle and possibly derive from civic oratory.[200] Irrespective, these genres of rhetoric have an almost universal applicability. They are differentiated by the type of response demanded from the audience.[201] Kennedy notes that "in a single discourse there is sometimes utilization of more than one species," and that even though "the definition of the species as a whole can become very difficult" a discourse "usually has one dominant species which reflects the author's major purpose."[202]

Judicial rhetoric requires that one render a judgment about a past event; the basic argument here involves the question of "truth or justice"[203] or "guilt and innocence."[204] Deliberative rhetoric aims at effecting a decision about what would be the best course of action at a later time (whether it is in the immediate or long-term future); it generally concerns itself thus with the question of "self-interest and future benefit."[205] Lastly, while Kennedy maintains that epideictic rhetoric celebrates or condemns someone or something and seeks to reinforce or undermine assent to some value or belief that is shared by both audience and speaker, with a specific view towards harmonization, others view it as being "basically educational in nature."[206]

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[199] Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation*, 19, 36, and Möller, *Prophet in Debate*, 39.
[200] See Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation*, 19, and Ahn, *Persuasive Portrayal*, 25. Cf. Collins, *Reading Genesis Well*, 43.
[201] Black, "Biblical Interpretation," 254, and Barker, *From the Depths of Despair*, 51. One notes that a fourth genre (the spiritual speech or sermon, *genus praedicandi*) appeared under the influence of Christianity. See Müller, *Prophet in Debate*, 39, and Siegert, "Homily and Panegyrical Sermon," 421–43.
[202] Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation*, 19.
[203] Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation*, 19–20.
[204] See Collins, *Reading Genesis Well*, 43.
[205] Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation*, 20.
[206] Ahn, *Persuasive Portrayal*, 25. See too Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, *New Rhetoric*, 47–54, Barker, *From the Depths of Despair*, 51, and Möller, *Prophet in Debate*, 39. Cf. Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation*, 20.

Each of these species of rhetoric contains its own features and exists in both positive and negative forms: *prosecution* and *defense/apology* (judicial), *exhortation* and *dissuasion* (deliberative), and *encomium* and *invective* (demonstrative).[207] It is important to understand, however, that "the selection of genre is itself an inventional choice and has to be set into the context of the interaction between and among speaker, audience, and situation."[208] Alongside this, it may also be argued that "a text's dominant genre is indicative of its principal rhetorical strategy rather than its major purpose."[209]

Regrettably, however, though a plethora of HB/OT rhetorical-critical scholars have attempted to do so, there seems to be no clear way to successfully define and delineate the rhetorical species of a given biblical text at this point in time. That being said, however, given the historical precedent of including this step, it seems imprudent to simply ignore this process altogether (passé Shaw's discussion of Micah).[210]

In addition to the above, while a number of scholars have also considered how rhetorical species (genre) relates to the rhetorical situation of a text, both Möller (Amos)[211] and Renz (Ezekiel),[212] for instance, do not readily employ the categories of rhetorical genre in their discussion of specific texts or rhetorical units in the same methodologically precise way that Kennedy's model typifies.[213] Barker (Joel) is also cautious (but open) to the benefits of leveraging Aristotelian schematics. After a

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[207] Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation*, 20, 36. Cf. Walton, "Rhetorical Criticism," 4.

[208] Hester, "Speaker, Audience, and Situations," 91–92.

[209] Möller, *Prophet in Debate*, 40. With respect to this point, specifically, the author also states: "the distinction made here between the employment of a certain genre and the resultant effects, it should be noted, reflects the classic 'speech-at-theoretical differentiation' between illocution and perlocution." Möller *Prophet in Debate*, 40. For further information, see Stewart, "Cosmos," 44–45, and Harper, *'I Will Walk Among You,'* 63-65.

[210] Shaw, *Speeches of Micah*, 23. Cf. Barker, "From the Depths of Despair," 73.

[211] Möller, *Prophet in Debate*, 39–40 and 104–53.

[212] Renz, *Rhetorical Function*, 23–24 and 57–61.

[213] See Barker, "From the Depths of Despair," 73.

thorough discussion, Barker concludes that it is "unclear" whether determining the rhetorical genre (species) of the various subunits of the discourse will "definitively improve our understanding of the text's persuasive strategies and effects."[214] Another scholar is much more forthright: "Such identification is often inconclusive and controverted and in the end not especially efficacious in providing new insights."[215]

The problem of discerning what, precisely, it is that one should do in step three of Kennedy's rhetorical-critical method is not isolated to prophetic texts alone, however. Though Duke (Chronicles) does an excellent job of surveying Aristotle's types of rhetorical speech, including a thorough delineation of his forms of proof, it is uncertain how helpful the genre classification of the book of Chronicles as "deliberative rhetoric"[216] actually is in discerning the overarching rhetorical import of the text itself.[217] Ahn's work (Chronicles) seems to be equally unfruitful concerning this step.[218]

If one, were, however, to employ such terminology within an analysis of the Noachic Deluge narrative, it would seem that the text is dynamic in its nature, employing a mix of epideictic rhetoric (laudatory), often with respect to the person of Noah (Gen 6:9b–10, 18–22; 7:1, 5, 7–9, 13–16, 23; 8:1, 18–19, 20, 21–22; 9:1–3, 9–17), judicial rhetoric, often with respect to the account of the Deluge itself (Gen 6:11–12; 7:4, 10–12, 17–24; 9:2, 4–6), and deliberative rhetoric, often concerning choices and a

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[214] Barker, "From the Depths of Despair," 73–74.

[215] Olbricht, "Rhetorical Criticism," 326.

[216] See Duke, *Persuasive Appeal*, 39–46 and 74–77, esp. 75.

[217] As one reviewer states, "[h]is effort to read a biblical work in accordance with Aristotelian categories is suggestive, and his attempt to assess the Chronicler's purpose offers a useful contribution to the ongoing discussion of what the book is trying to say. In the end, however, his results, like those of many recent literary treatments, seem more convincing when presented than when one reads the biblical work they purport to describe. Duke makes a game try, but the Chronicler keeps getting in the way." Greenspahn, Review of *Persuasive Appeal*, 110. Cf. Throntveit, Review of *Persuasive Appeal*, 314.

[218] See Quine, Review of *Persuasive Appeal*, 102–03.

proper course of action (Gen 6:13–21; 7:1–4, 23; 8:6–12, 13, 21–22; 9:1–7, 9–11, 12–16). Even within this broad schematic, however, "one cannot make hard and fast distinctions since the text may contain features of multiple genres in a given passage."[219]

Given such, rather than follow Möller and Barker's lead in subordinating this discussion to the rhetorical strategies that the text employs to make its persuasive appeal,[220] this study proposes that this specific step should be altogether disposed of and that a discussion of intellectual, worldview-view rhetoric should take its place instead.

Hebrew Narrative as Intellectual or Worldview Formative Rhetoric

Though there is no consensus within the HB/OT guild concerning such, it is reasonable to argue that due to the differing function(s) of their literary and oral texts, the languages themselves, the potential to inadvertently impose an "Occidental paradigm on an Oriental work,"[221] and the general lack of efficacious results of leveraging such terminology, in general, relying on Greco-Roman rhetorical terms and theory is not the ideal way of studying suasive Hebrew narrative.[222] They remain, however, useful "heuristic device[s] for identifying and analyzing patterns of argumentation."[223] As such, it seems prudent that rather than belabor the individual nuances of judicial, epideictic, and deliberative rhetoric, one should instead re-classify the biblical text as being intellectual or "worldview formative rhetoric."[224] After this has been achieved, one may abandon any further delineation of the species entirely, thus eliminating 'step

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[219] Barker, *From the Depths of Despair*, 54.

[220] See Barker, *From the Depths of Despair*, 54 from whom much of this wording is indebted.

[221] See Hwang, *Rhetoric of Remembrance*, 10. Cf. Stamps, "Rhetorical Device," 25.

[222] Hwang, *Rhetoric of Remembrance*, 10. See too Wuellner, "Jesus' Sermon," 97–99.

[223] Stamps, "Rhetorical and Narratological Criticism," 233. Cf. Donaldson, "New Rhetoric," 246.

[224] For distinctions between "worldview" and "world-picture" and their significance for biblical interpretation, see Collins, *Reading Genesis Well*, 243–64, and Simkins, *Creation*, 15–40. Cf. Greenwood, *Scripture and Cosmology*, 24–29; Enns, *Inspiration*, 41–45, Walton, *Ancient Cosmology*, 86–100, Walton, "Cosmology," 116–20, Soden, "Cosmology," 120–24.

three' of the Kennedy model entirely. The remainder of this section will be spent defining rhetoric, worldview, and the particulars of Hebrew narrative as intellectual or worldview formative rhetoric.[225]

Rhetoric may be broadly defined as "the process by which people influence others for good through the use of language, images, symbols, and metaphors."[226] Within this study, however, rhetoric shall be defined as "the means by which a text establishes and manages its relationship to its audience in order to achieve a particular effect."[227] This does not mean, however, that "stylistics" is unimportant but that consideration of these matters should not be undertaken "independently of the purpose they must achieve in the argumentation."[228] Rhetoric thus "includes stylistic devices, but goes beyond style to encompass the whole range of linguistic instrumentalities by which a discourse constructs a particular relationship with an audience in order to communicate a message."[229] As Gordon J. Wenham states:

> Rhetorical criticism . . . uses the insights of literary criticism to shed light, not simply on the writer's literary genius and artistic skills, but on the argument that a writer is developing in a work. What kind of work are we dealing with? How does one section of the work lead logically into the next? How does each part contribute to the argument of the whole work? These are the primary questions asked by the rhetorical critic. But they lead into a second set of questions . . . Who are the implied readers? For what audience is the book intended? What was their point of view? What were their attitudes and assumptions? How does the book address the audience's concerns? When is it likely to have been written, i.e. when is the implied readership likely to have existed? Rhetorical criticism attempts to integrate these two types of questions, the message of the book on the one hand and the intended readership on the other.[230]

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[225] Cf. Hill, *Worldview Approach*, 2–15.

[226] Longman, ed., "Rhetoric," 1427–28.

[227] Patrick, *Rhetoric of Revelation*, xvii, citing Patrick and Scult, *Rhetoric*, 12. Cf. Westfall, "Resurrection," 112; Mack, *Rhetoric*, 15–16; Thurén, *Argument and Theology*, 50–51; Stewart, "Cosmos," 44; Stamps, "Rhetorical Device," 25.

[228] Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, *New Rhetoric*, 142.

[229] Patrick and Scult, *Rhetoric*, 12.

[230] Wenham, *Story as Torah*, 18. Cf. Harper, *'I Will Walk Among You,'* 60.

The above definition of rhetoric takes seriously the idea that all literature is "*social* discourse."[231] As Eagleton notes, speech and writing are "largely unintelligible outside the social purposes and conditions in which they were embedded."[232] For this reason, they should not be understood "merely as textual objects" to be "aesthetically contemplated or endlessly deconstructed" but taken seriously as "forms of *activity* . . . inseparable from the wider social relations between writers and readers, orators, and audiences."[233] In this way, establishing the context of a narrative (including noting the varied audiences) is critical to a proper interpretation of its rhetoric (see step two).

One must bear in mind, however, that "authors cannot be exhaustive in their telling of the event . . . they choose what is important or, better stated, what they think is important about the event. Thus, authors provide the perspective through which we hear or read about the event."[234] Alongside this, with respect to narrative, in particular, "the reading of narrative has multiple dimensions in that when we read a narrative, we use our intellects, emotions, ideologies, and ethics."[235] In this sense, one of the key objectives of this type of persuasive text is to "bring about changes in the readers, to create persons different from what they were before the reading took place."[236]

Narratives also help humanity to map reality.[237] They facilitate effectual, positive changes to our values, behaviours, and our perceptions of morality and ethics. Kevin J.

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[231] Wuellner, "Rhetorical Criticism," 462–63. Emphasis original.

[232] Eagleton, *Literary Theory*, 179. Emphasis original.

[233] Eagleton, *Literary Theory*, 179. Emphasis original.

[234] Longman and Walton, *The Lost World of the Flood*, 21.

[235] Ahn *Persuasive Portrayal*, 16.

[236] Fretheim, *Pentateuch*, 40. See too Wenham, *Story as Torah*, 17–43, and Harper, *'I Will Walk Among You,'* 98–104.

[237] A narrative is defined within this study as a "selective record of a series of events that uses shared conventions to convey the author's communicative intention in an engaging manner." Vogt, *Pentateuch*, 48. Cf. Ryken, *Words of Delight*, 515, and Robinson, "Narrative," 236.

Vanhoozer asserts: "a narrative displays a worldview, an interpreted world. In addition to relating a series of events, authors take up an attitude towards it . . . narratives are powerful instruments for shaping the way we see, imagine and think about the world."[238] In this general way, all narrative is "rhetorically shaped" and contains argumentation (rhetoric).[239] Given such, it is not a stretch to suggest that Hebrew narrative, specifically, should be thought of, ultimately, as being rhetorical (or persuasive) compositions.[240] With respect to worldview, by this term is meant:

> The basic way of interpreting things and events that pervades a culture so thoroughly that it becomes a culture's concept of reality – what is good, what is important, what is sacred, what is real. Worldview is more than culture, even though the distinction between the two can sometimes be subtle. It extends to perception of time and space, of happiness and well-being. The beliefs, values, and behaviors of a culture stem directly from its worldview.[241]

Another scholar states: "[a] worldview is a set of presuppositions (assumptions which may be true, partially true or entirely false) which we hold (consciously or subconsciously, consistently or inconsistently) about the basic make up of our world."[242]

More precisely, though, Hebrew narrative is predicated on "worldview formation" and is inculcated via a particular meta-narrative that stretches across the sum of the text of the canon.[243] Indisputably, one of the primary aims of Scripture is to positively shape, impact, and influence the sum total of a person's character and being, including the affective, cognitive, and volitional elements of what it means to be

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[238] Vanhoozer, "Exegesis and Hermeneutics," 59.
[239] Longman and Walton, *The Lost World of the Flood*, 21.
[240] Mack, *Rhetoric*, 10; Kitchen, *Old Testament*, 17; Collins, *Reading Genesis Well*, 114–23;
[241] Hill, "Worldview Approach," 129. See too Hill, *Worldview Approach*, 3–15, Wolters, *Creation Regained*, 1–12, Middleton, *Liberating Image*, 202, and Middleton and Walsh, *Transforming Vision*. Details concerning the differences between world-view and world-picture will be offered below.
[242] Sire, *Naming the Elephant*, 19. See also Sire, *The Universe Next Door*, 18–24.
[243] See Collins, *Reading Genesis Well*, 119–20, 134–38; Peterson, *Working the Angles*, 121.

human.[244] Concerning the Torah, specifically, one clear objective of the scribes was to "bring about changes in the readers, to create persons different from what they were before the reading took place."[245] As G. Geoffrey Harper maintains:

> At its heart, the Pentateuch aims to transform reality at a microcosmic level by both *describing* creation ideals and *demanding* conformity to them. Thus, the Torah is not just a history of Israel or an extended aetiology; rather it becomes a means for addressing a distorted divine-human relationship and for restoring creation's purpose. Finally, with its forward-looking momentum the Pentateuch also *promises* that such a transformation will in fact occur, based on the inviolable character of YHWH.[246]

In this way, the function of the text of Genesis, of which the Noachic Deluge narrative is a part, was to effect the Hebrew worldview or meta-narrative.[247] Genesis also facilitates the answers to some "big" questions, such as: "Where did we come from? What has gone wrong? What has been done about it? Where are we now in the whole process?"[248] This cultivates the principles that underlay one's understanding of proper relationships: (1) God to the universe; (2) humanity to God; (3) humanity to God's creation; (4) humanity to humanity; and (5) humanity to self.[249] It is also of interest to note, as will be done later on in this study, that each of these components are addressed within the divine soliloquy of Gen 9:1–7. Via the above processes, the larger question of "how does this text function to shape the beliefs, practices, and dispositions

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[244] See Combrink, "Rhetoric," 112–13, 115–18. Of course, some of these categories of what it means to be human are somewhat anachronistic within an ancient Hebrew worldview. As such, these "distinctions are more heuristic than essential." Brown, ed., *Character and Scripture*, xii.

[245] Fretheim, *Pentateuch*, 40. Cf. Howard, "Rhetorical Criticism," 103.

[246] Harper, *'I Will Walk Among You,'* 103. All emphases original.

[247] Carlson and Longman, *Science, Creation and the Bible*, 14; Carson, "Genesis," 145–46.

[248] See Collins, *Reading Genesis Well*, 89, 119, 135, and 243–64 from whom these questions have been derived. As another scholar states with respect to Gen 1–11, in general, these particular narratives were "the beginnings of theology and philosophy. It is no wonder that special emphasis has been placed on these passages in post-biblical times." Gunkel, "Legends," xiv

[249] Carlson and Longman, *Science, Creation, and the Bible*, 14. See too Collins, *Reading Genesis Well*, 134–36, and Simkins, *Creation*, 168–72. Cf. Lowery, *Toward a Poetics,* 1–2.

of the target communities to enable what Lewis called 'the transition from thinking to doing'" also receives the attention that it duly deserves. [250]

Step Four: Assessing the Rhetorical Strategy

The fourth step of the model is to assess the rhetorical strategy of the text. It is at this stage that "the art of persuasion" most resembles "the art of composition."[251] Within this step, the rhetorical critic looks for literary (stylistic) devices, structural patterns, and the like so as to better ascertain how the scribe(s) sought to communicate their message.[252] This study's approach differs from the Muilenburg "rhetoric as composition" school, however, in that the goal of the analysis is to move beyond aesthetics or an appreciation of the literary quality of the text, to capturing the way in which the text's construction reveals the scribe's "persuasive force."[253] As noted above, rhetorical situation also plays a greater role here than Muilenburg's method allows in describing the passage's communicative, persuasive (rhetorical) intent.

It is this concerted attention to describing the text's persuasive appeal, therefore, that distinguishes "the art of persuasion" from "the art of composition."[254] This does not mean, however, that "stylistics" is unimportant but that consideration of these matters should not be undertaken apart from the purposes that they achieve in argumentation.[255] In other words, "rhetoric as persuasion" views stylistic features as "instruments" of the rhetor that are used intentionally to affect and persuade the audience and not simply as

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[250] Collins, *Reading Genesis Well*, 44. Cf. Barker, "From the Depths of Despair," 72.

[251] See Barker, *From the Depths of Despair*, 54, 75.

[252] See Trible, *Rhetorical Criticism*, 26. Cf. Patrick and Scult, *Rhetoric*, 12.

[253] Barker, *From the Depths of Despair*, 75.

[254] With respect to this point, some scholars also argue that the ability to move from describing what the argument looks like to delineating and explaining why the text retains its persuasive appeal is actually what moves this approach from rhetorical *analysis* to rhetorical *criticism*, specifically. See Barker, *From the Depths*, 75, and Hester, "Kennedy and the Reading of Paul," 154.

[255] Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca, *New Rhetoric*, 142.

"embellishments of discourse."[256] To re-state, a "rhetoric as persuasion" rhetorical critic does analyze certain literary features of the text but also articulates their potential persuasive impact.[257] Consequently, any study of a text's rhetorical strategies must keep its persuasive (rhetorical) potential at the center (versus the periphery) of the analysis.[258]

Given the frequency of their use in HB/OT studies, one should also be aware of the five canons of ancient or classical Greco-Roman rhetoric, namely: (1) invention (*inventio*), (2) arrangement (*dispositio*), (3) style (*elecutio*), (4) memory (*memoria*), and (5) delivery (*actio* or *pronuntiatio*), and, especially, *inventio*, *dispositio*, and *elecutio* since both *memoria* and *actio/pronuntiatio* relate to oral presentations.[259]

First, *inventio* involves seeking "potent arguments."[260] It includes *materia*, "the discovery of material that is suitable to the occasion,"[261] *status*, the determination of the issue at stake, and *topoi*, the selection of techniques deemed suitable to supporting the position of the rhetorician.[262] Of course, rhetoricians are intentionally selective in their strategy, seeking to leverage and employ specifically those things that will persuade their audience to their own point and dissuade them from alternative viewpoints.[263]

Aristotle also discusses certain 'proofs," of which *ethos* (the moral character of the rhetorician), *pathos* (the ability to put the audience into a particular frame of mind via the text), and *logos* (the details of the text or the speech itself) are the most

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[256] Ahn *Persuasive Portrayal*, 24–25; Barker, *From the Depths of Despair*, 54.

[257] Barker, *From the Depths of Despair,* 29. See also Watson and Hauser, *Rhetorical Criticism,* 14, and Howard, "Rhetorical Criticism," 103.

[258] See Barker, *From the Depths of Despair*, 75 from whom this sentence's wording was derived.

[259] See Olbricht, "Delivery and Memory," 159–67; Möller, *Prophet in Debate*, 41; Trible, *Rhetorical Criticism*, 8; Ahn, *Persuasive Portrayal*, 23. One need not rehearse the caveats noted above.

[260] Ahn, *Persuasive Portrayal*, 23.

[261] Trible, *Rhetorical Criticism*, 8.

[262] Much of the phrasing of the above sentences comes from Möller, *Prophet in Debate*, 41.

[263] See Lenchak, "Choose Life!" 57, and Brandt, *Rhetoric of Argumentation*, 14.

pertinent.[264] Through noting and leveraging these three categories, in general, one becomes more astutely aware of the wide range and breadth of persuasive appeals—from the rational and cognitive types to the emotive and imaginative ones—thus garnering greater insight into the different ways that a rhetor can construct a persuasive appeal within a text.[265] As such, "the driving force behind the assertive discourse of one speaking for God is authority, which substitutes for ethos in classical rhetoric."[266] Each of the three work together (think Venn diagram). To this end, one scholar states: "intellect of itself 'moves nothing': the transition from thinking to doing, in nearly all men [sic] at nearly all moments, needs to be assisted by appropriate states of feeling."[267]

Second, *dispositio* attempts to "determine the rhetorically effective composition of the speech and mold its elements into a unified structure."[268] This usually involves line-by-line/verse-by-verse analysis of the argument (including assumptions, topics, and rhetorical features) in order to determine "what subdivisions it falls into, what the persuasive effect of these parts seems to be, and how they work together to some unified purpose in meeting the rhetorical situation."[269] Möller defines *dispositio*, stating:

> [I]nterest in a text's dispositio, its structure or the organization of its argument, goes beyond the mere delineation of its rhetorical units referred to as the first step of rhetorical-critical enquiry. The focus at this point is on the persuasive effect of the textual units. To uncover this effect, the critic asks whether and how these units work together to achieve some unified purpose, or indeed fail to do so.[270]

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[264] See Möller, *Prophet in Debate*, 41, and Barker, *From the Depths of Despair*, 55. Notably, one HB/OT rhetorical critical scholar schematizes the majority of his monograph under these self-same rubrics, namely Duke, *Persuasive Appeal*, 81–147. See above for different critiques of Duke's approach.

[265] Wuellner, "Rhetorical Criticisms," 461. See too Möller, *Prophet in Debate*, 42, and Barker, *From the Depths of Despair*, 55.

[266] Lundbom, *Hebrew Prophets*, 189.

[267] Collins, *Reading Genesis Well*, quoting Lewis, *Preface to Paradise Lost*, 51–53.

[268] Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation*, 23.

[269] Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation*, 37.

[270] Möller, *Prophet in Debate*, 42. For more details see Wuellner, "Arrangement," 31–87.

Third, *elocutio* pertains to the style of a text.[271] As noted above, the "rhetoric as persuasion" branch of rhetorical criticism regards stylistic features not simply as mere "embellishments" but recognizes that rhetoricians leverage such things so as to "amplify certain parts of his or her discourse."[272] As such, many rhetorical critics examine these features to "elucidate their role for the argumentative development of the rhetorical discourse."[273] It is understood that Hebrew narrative, in particular, provides the "implied audience with information about the past and forces it to make decisions. The degree to which the implied audience accepts the story depends on the rhetorical effectiveness of the narrator."[274] Although this particular study will not necessarily leverage any of these particular terms within its analysis of the Noachic Deluge narrative, so long as they are used circumspectly, these terms remain useful heuristic categories that can be beneficially employed by the "rhetoric as persuasion" rhetorical critic.

On a different note, though we lack an "ancient Hebrew manual on narratology," some key features of Hebrew narrative do include the following: (a) the narrator is reliable and omniscient, often serving as the voice and perspective of God if no divine speech occurs within the text itself, (b) the narration is scenic, that is, the emphasis is on direct action and interaction of the characters rather than on descriptive details of the environs, (c) narratives are sparsely written, focusing only on what is essential for the narrative, (d) scribes often use *Leitwortstil*, i.e. they will repeat key words or phrases so

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[271] Möller, *Prophet in Debate*, 42. See also Ahn, *Persuasive Portrayal*, 24. Throughout this study, "style" is understood as being the "choice of proper language and figures of speech to best express the argument." Webb, "Petrine Epistles," 376. Cf. Kennedy, *Rhetorical Criticism*, 25–30. It is understood that stylistic devices "hook" and "grab" audience's attention alongside helping to facilitate information retention, thus aiding in the art of persuasion. Ryken, et al., eds., *DBI*, xiii–xxi.

[272] Möller, *Prophet in Debate*, 42.

[273] Möller, *Prophet in Debate*, 42.

[274] Ahn, *Persuasive Portrayal*, 9.

as to draw attention to thematic issues,[275] (e) scribes often employ wordplays, generally for ironic contrasts, (f) scribes often used heighted speech using poetic diction: elevated diction of a speech is evidence of its significance; often oracular, it may even be divine speech, (g) scribes often use repetition, such as similar kinds of events and scenes in different circumstances, (h) scribes usually employ analogy and contrast, where the characters and scenes are like and unlike one another.[276] In sum, biblical writers often communicate their point of view via "indirect and laconic means" with the emphasis on "*showing* (displaying the heart by action and speech) versus *telling* (explicitly stating what kind of person the character is)."[277] As Collins explicates: "the biblical material . . . is highly pictorial; this is not a weakness, it is a strength. It does not prevent the Bible writers from speaking truly; it actually enables them to achieve their rhetorical goals."[278]

Aside from assessing the physical, temporal, and cultural settings in a story,[279] there are also not a few basic factors of narrative technique which shape the rhetoric of the text (and, as such, will be noted and addressed in my analysis): (a) variations in the narrative point of view, (b) norms of judgment (criteria of right and wrong as implied on the basis of the narrator's attitudes towards certain characters and actions),[280] (c) dynamics of distance in the characterizations (the degree of sympathy or alienation,

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[275] By *Leitwort* is meant: "Through abundant repletion, the semantic range of the root-word is explored, different forms of the root are deployed, branching off at times into phonetic relatives (that is, word-play), synonymity, and anonymity; by virtue of its verbal status, the *Leitwort* refers immediately to meaning and thus to theme as well." Alter, *Biblical Narrative*, 95. Cf. Beldman, *Judges*, 78.

[276] This material (including generous amounts of exact phrasing and wording) has been derived from Collins, *Reading Genesis Well*, 45–46 and 47. See also Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis*, 33–43, Ryken, *The Bible as Literature*, 68–69, Buchanan, "Literary Devices," 202–03, Beldman, "Literary Approaches," 67–95, and Beldman, *Judges*, 12–18.

[277] Collins, *Reading Genesis Well*, 46. All emphases original. See too Long, *King Saul*, 31.

[278] Collins, *Reading Genesis Well*, 76–77. See too Longman, *How to Read the Psalms*, 117.

[279] On these specific elements, see Ryken, *Words of Delight*, 54–62.

[280] The narrator is always deemed as "reliable." See Phelan, *Somebody Telling Somebody*, 231–34, Beldman, *Judges*, 14–16.

involvement or detachment between narrator, audience, and characters of the story), and (d) the plot (including conflict, suspense, resolution, and the establishment and reversal of expectations).[281] The plot of a biblical story can be depicted as follows:[282]

FIGURE TWELVE—THE STRUCTURE OF BIBLICAL NARRATIVE
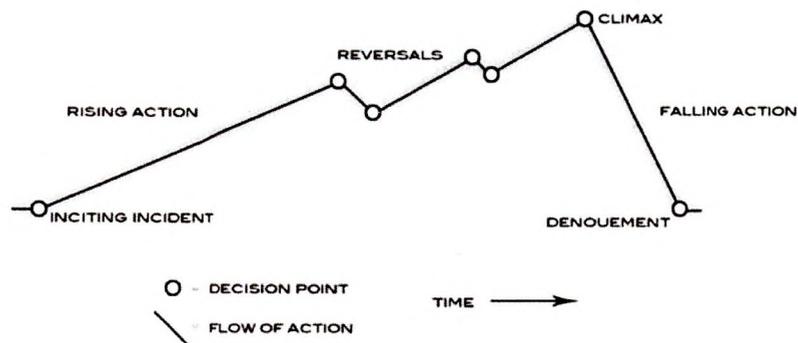
As seen above, plots can usually be traced by means of some type of conflict (inciting incident) between characters in the story.[283] As Leland Ryken notes: "the essence of plot is a central conflict or set of conflicts moving toward a resolution."[284]

Dialogue and speech (whether indirect, direct, or a quotative frame) are important elements of narrative plot.[285] In effect, the narrator employs such things to control "the pace of the plot, at times delaying the advancement of the action and/or focusing on a particular character to accentuate the narrative moment or character."[286] Dialogue, speech, and the like thus emphasizes the 'core' of story, indicating "key turning points or climaxes in the structural framework of a narrative."[287] Pointedly,

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[281] Boomershine, "Narrative Rhetoric," 115; Ryken et al., eds., *DBI*, 720–27; Ryken, *The Bible As Literature*, 68–69; Longman, "Biblical Narrative," 71–78, Long, *King Saul*, 21–42.

[282] Chestnut, "Don't Forget the Basics 1" (blog), June 1, 2012. A comparable diagram may also be found in Longman, *Literary Approaches*, 151, and Longman and Dillard, *Introduction*, 33.

[283] Longman, *Literary Approaches*, 159.

[284] Ryken, *The Bible As Literature*, 40. See also Ryken, *Words of Delight*, 62–71.

[285] Miller, *Speech*, 1–2.

[286] Boda, "Prayer as Rhetoric," 286.

[287] Boda, "Prayer as Rhetoric," 286. Cf. Sternberg, *Poetics*, 168.

Robert Alter refers to Hebrew narrative as "narration-through-dialogue."[288] The narrator (or implied author) also utilizes dialogue and/or speech to contribute to the "liveliness of the passage and to provide information in an artistic way"[289] Alongside this, "the representation of speech extends beyond dialogue to perform a variety of narrative functions. It may introduce characters, recount their inner character, index relationships, and provide background information for the narrative." [290] Speeches and/or dialogue can "legitimate the actions of a character by providing the reason for those actions," revealing "the ideological message of the narrator."[291] In this way, the narrator conveys "the inner psychology and ideology of a character" by means of someone's words.[292]

In addition to the above, hyperbole was also pervasive throughout the ancient Near East in art and culture, i.e. iconography, wall-paintings, reliefs, speech, and writing.[293] Hyperbole may be defined as a "rhetorical trope which carries emotive and valuative meaning."[294] To put it differently, hyperbole is a "deliberate exaggeration for the sake of effect."[295] So-called "academic arithmetic" was also not uncommon—one scholar comments that "the E-sangil Tablet, formerly understood as offering an accurate physical description of Babylon's ziggurat, has been characterized as a document more interested in abstract ideas than real buildings, and in consequence the question has been

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[288] Alter, *Art of Biblical Narrative*, 69.

[289] Boda, "Prayer as Rhetoric," 286.

[290] Miller, *Speech*, 2. See also Bar-Efrat, *Narrative Art in the Bible*, 64–77, and Hodge, *Days of Genesis*, 154–55.

[291] Boda, "Prayer as Rhetoric," 286. See too Ryken et al., eds., *DBI*, 727.

[292] Boda, "Prayer as Rhetoric," 286. Ahn (*Persuasive Portrayal*, 10) states that a character's speeches "express thoughts, motives, desires and beliefs." Cf. Bitzer, "Rhetorical Situation," 5.

[293] Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry*, 316–20; Longman and Walton, *Lost World of the Flood*, 76; Collins, *Reading Genesis Well*, 57. These matters also pertain to Hebrew culture.

[294] Silverman, "Yes We Can (Hyperbolize)!," 268.

[295] Cruise, "Detecting and Mitigating Hyperbole," 88. See also Burgers et al., "HIP," 163–78. Another scholar defines hyperbole as a "way of expressing exaggeration of some kind (regarding size, numbers, danger, prowess, fertility and the like) using common expression. By this means the idea stands out." Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry*, 316–17. Cf. Ryken, *Words of Delight*, 515.

raised as to whether a ziggurat like the one described by it was ever really built."[296]

Even when a medium allowed for more "realistic" depictions, "conventions and rhetorical objectives" determined the representation.[297] To illustrate these challenges, some scholars compare narrative historiography writing to portraiture.[298] Adele Berlin uses the following graphic of an ancient Assyrian *Lamassu* to illustrate:[299]

FIGURE THIRTEEN—ASSYRIAN LAMASSU

Berlin states:

> What appears . . . is actually a representation of a representation. It is a picture (two-dimensional) of a statue (three-dimensional). The statue is a representation of an object that does not exist in real life, but that can nevertheless be represented as if it did . . . It is a creature with the legs and body of a lion, a human head, and wings. All three of its components exist independently in real life, but here are combined. But look again. Do lions have five legs? Was it the intent of the artist to represent a five legged lion? No! Five legs are there, but they represent only four legs. Ancient convention demanded that a side view contain four legs and a front view contain two legs. Even though the two views are combined, each must remain 'true' to itself, and so the sum of the legs of the parts is more than the sum of the legs of the real object . . . Even though we are not ancient Assyrians, and no longer use this same artistic convention, we naturalize this statue without difficulty, scarcely noticing the number of legs until it is pointed out. But the legs of the lion should remind us that *representations of reality do not always correspond in every detail to reality.*[300]

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[296] George, "The Tower of Babel," 92.
[297] Longman and Walton, *Lost World of the Flood*, 76.
[298] Long, *Art of Biblical History*, 329–30, and Provan et al., *Biblical History*, 110–18, esp. 111.
[299] Berlin, *Poetics*, 14.
[300] Berlin, *Poetics*, 14. All emphases original.

Thus, strict "realism is not the objective."[301] Given the pervasiveness of "universalistic rhetoric" throughout the Noachic Deluge narrative, an effective analysis of the text must be able to take into account ways to detect and interpret hyperbole as part of the rhetorical stratagem of the scribe(s).[302] This concludes each of the particulars that the interpreter must take into account in order to assess the scribe's rhetorical strategy.

Step Five: Determining the Rhetorical Effectiveness

The final step of the 'Kennedy model' is to determine the text's rhetorical effectiveness. Rhetorical effectiveness deeply intersects with two things: (1) rhetorical situation, (2) audience.[303] In Kennedy's words, rhetorical effectiveness reviews the text's "success in meeting the rhetorical exigence and what its implications may be for the speaker or audience."[304] In this way, rhetorical effectiveness essentially allowed Kennedy the opportunity to summarize each of the previous steps of the model and to "expand its implications beyond the narrow boundaries of the text in question."[305] This step also allows the rhetorical critic to escape the "ghetto" of stylistics that "imprisons" persuasive rhetoricians in a "functionless, context-less approach to the biblical text."[306]

While this step could potentially be done by asking whether or not the rhetoric successfully modified the exigence, one often lacks the evidence to evaluate a discourse's historical effectiveness because we "rarely have a record of the response of the audience that heard the message."[307] Given such, Möller maintains that one's focus

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[301] Longman and Walton, *Lost World of The Flood*, 76.
[302] See Collins, *Reading Genesis Well*, 57–58, 193, and Longman and Walton, *Lost World of The Flood*, 30–41, esp. 36–41.
[303] Ahn, *Persuasive Portrayal*, 31; Barker, *From the Depths of Despair*, 58.
[304] Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation*, 38. Cf. Barker, *From the Depths of Despair*, 55–56.
[305] Barker, *From the Depths of Despair*, 56.
[306] Barker, *From the Depths of Despair*, 57. Cf. Wuellner, "Rhetorical Criticism," 462.
[307] Barker, *From the Depths of Despair*, 56. See also the preceding discussion above.

should be on whether or not the rhetorical utterance had the *potential* to successfully modify the exigence.[308] This involves evaluating the discourse's "internal logic" and "persuasive thrust."[309] Though not without its detractors, this approach is commendable.

Stamp's synchronic, entextualized rhetorical situation also has much to offer. In Stamps' approach, rhetorical critics seek to answer the question of whether or not (or, more precisely, to what degree) the discourse or rhetorical unit "could function as effective persuasion within the situation to which it is being applied."[310]

In sum, it is clear that, as Barker states: "rhetorical effectiveness remains a nebulous concept . . . the need to develop a more nuanced approach . . . cuts to the core of rhetorical criticism as a discipline."[311] As such, this study will therefore seek to leverage a "both/and" schema for determining rhetorical effectiveness.[312] That is to say, this study will initially examine each of the main units of the Noachic Deluge narrative from within the text itself, i.e. a synchronic, entextualized rhetorical situation. Then, based upon the evidence that is provided by means of the final form of the Pentateuch, it will comment on the rhetorical effectiveness of the text on the basis of that information.

To reiterate, Scripture insinuates that the implied first audience of the Torah were those persons who survived the wilderness wanderings and crossed the Jordan River under Joshua's leadership (see Lev 14:34; Num 34:2; Deut 18:9; 19:1; 26:1; 27:2; 31:1–9). That being said, due to the lack of historical specificity concerning the Noachic Deluge narrative, it is difficult to determine the audience to whom it was originally

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[308] Möller, *Prophet in Debate*, 42–43. Cf. Ahn, *Persuasive Portrayal*, 31.
[309] Barker, *From the Depths of Despair*, 56.
[310] Barker, *From the Depths of Despair*, 55.
[311] Barker, *From the Depths of Despair*, 55–56. Cf. Anderson, "Rhetorical Criticism," xvii–xviii.
[312] Cf. Ahn, *Persuasive Portrayal*, 31.

addressed or what impact it could have had.[313] Alongside this, while it is clear that the

Torah would be pertinent to Israelites living before the exile, the shape of the final form

of the Pentateuch does not speak as clearly to a preexilic life-setting.[314] This study will

therefore seek to determine the rhetorical effectiveness of the Noachic Deluge narrative

based upon an late-exilic final form of the Pentateuch (cf. Deut 34:10–12).[315]

In addition to the above, step five of the 'Kennedy model,' i.e. rhetorical

effectiveness, also involves "assessing the impact of the constituent parts as they work

together to create the broader message of the whole discourse."[316] To put the matter

differently, once the interpreter has properly determined the rhetorical units of the texts

(step one), diligently constructed the rhetorical situation, including its exigencies,

implied author(s), audience(s), etc. (step two), set aside the discussion of rhetorical

species (step three), and judiciously assessed the various rhetorical strategies that are

employed within the text (step four), it is reasonable to assume that the last thing that

must be done is to assess in what manner the text achieves its objectives, i.e. to assess its

rhetorical effectiveness (step five). Of course, this final step is clearly dependent upon

each of the steps that came before it and the results that one offers in this final step are

often conditioned by the results of the previous steps. In this way, each of the steps of

the Kennedy model work together, synergistically, and are interdependent on each other.

In sum, rather than ask "does the text 'hang together?,'" the rhetorical-critical critic

demonstrates: (a) that it does and (b) how?[317] Step five is critical in that demonstration.

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[313] Cf. Collins, *Reading Genesis Well*, 125.

[314] Cf. Collins, *Reading Genesis Well*, 125–30; Harper, *'I Will Walk Among You,'* 98–104.

[315] Sailhamer, *Meaning of the Pentateuch*, 26. See too Sailhamer, "Genesis 1–11," 89–106. Cf. Provan, *Discovering Genesis*, 53–55, and Collins, *Reading Genesis Well*, 125–30.

[316] Barker, *From the Depths of Despair*, 65.

[317] See Barton, *Reading the Old Testament*, 201. Cf. Boadt et al., *Old Testament*, 67.

Conclusion

This study of the Noachic Deluge narrative leverages the basic framework of Kennedy's step-by-step method of rhetorical criticism (with some modifications). In this way, it joins other scholars by employing the "rhetoric-as-persuasion" branch of rhetorical criticism, a number of whom also explicitly leverage Kennedy's method for analyzing HB/OT texts, such as Möller (Amos) and Barker (Joel), including the particulars of Hebrew narrative and speech, such as Ahn (Chronicles). The high degree of specificity that Kennedy's method employs makes it particularly apt for doing an effective analysis of literary texts, such as the Noachic Deluge narrative.

Aside from providing a brief history of the discipline and offering clear definitions of argumentation, rhetoric and the like, this chapter also discussed Hebrew narrative as being intellectual, worldview rhetoric. Alongside this, it also delineated what precisely, constitutes each of the five steps of Kennedy's method. This involved a thorough discussion of the explicit procedures that are involved in: (1) ascertaining the *rhetorical unit(s)* in the text, (2) identifying the *rhetorical situation* and discerning the *rhetorical problem* that precipitated or occasioned the need for a rhetorical response, (3) determining the *rhetorical species* of the discourse at hand—further discussion on this point also revealed that this step is not necessary to an study of suasive Hebrew narrative, (4) delineating the procedure for highlighting and noting the specific *arrangement of material* in the text, including devices of style; that is, examining the specifics of how the *rhetorical strategy* of the text must be examined, and, (5) underscoring the procedure for how the rhetorical critic would conduct a review as to

what implications the discourse has for the audience and whether or not the discourse fits the rhetorical exigence, i.e. did it meet the demand to which it was first fashioned?

To restate the primary argument of this study, although the scribe(s) of the book of Genesis superbly depict the death-inducing nature of the Flood that God unleashed on the world—the cosmos becoming chaos—God is not just the 'Great Destroyer' but the 'Great Deliverer, Redeemer, and Sustainer.'[318] The Creator brings restoration, renewal, hope, healing, and new life to a world that was riddled with self-destruction and disorder (חמס), thereby offering a chance for humanity to start over again via "re-creation."[319] As such, despite the vivid picture of devastation that the Noachic Deluge account depicts, the overarching emphasis is on redemption, renewal, salvation, deliverance, and the upholding of life.[320] The scribe's focus is bent towards God's "salvific rather than punitive" purposes.[321] The Noachic Deluge narrative is not, therefore, a catalog of "indescribable judgment" but "indescribable grace" and inexpressible redemption.[322]

As intellectual, world-view rhetoric, the Noachic Deluge narrative is persuasive. The scribe(s) of the book of Genesis convincingly communicates the argument that God's intentions to carry out his plans for creation, the establishment of order via covenant, will not be thwarted and that God is committed to his purpose for humanity.[323] The Noachic Deluge event functions to recalibrate the kinship relationship of God and humanity that was lost in the Fall via the structure of covenant. [324]

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[318] Cf. Humphreys, *Character of God*, 64–72, and Shaviv, "Flood," 531.

[319] Walton, *Genesis*, 337. Cf. Wenham, *Old Testament*, 29.

[320] Keiser, *Genesis 1–11*, 128, Fretheim, *God and World*, 10.

[321] Boyd, *Crucifixion*, 1140.

[322] Walton, *Genesis*, 331.

[323] See Kaminski, *From Noah to Israel*, 1.

[324] Boda, "Old Testament Foundations," 41, Boda, *Heartbeat of Old Testament Theology*, 100. As noted above, this includes human beings—as his image-bearers—employing the principle of *lex talionis* (blood-for-blood). These concepts will be elaborated on in more depth later on in this study.

CHAPTER 3: THE CORRUPTION OF HUMANITY
HOPE AND COVENANT (GEN 6:9–22)

Introduction

Since the Noachic Deluge narrative involves chronology and a distinct plot-line, an effective rhetorical-critical study must be done in stages, with each of the shorter 'scenes' of the main account receiving its own treatment prior to final analysis.[1] Given the rubric that was presented in chapter 1 of this study to explain the literary structure of the book of Genesis as a whole, that is, the *toledoths*, it is understood that this chapter's analysis will begin at Gen 6:9a. It is necessary, therefore, to offer a brief rationale concerning the exclusion of Gen 6:1–4 and 5–8 in a formal analysis of the Noachic Deluge narrative.

With respect to Gen 6:1–4, although the majority of the scholarly world had once generally decided that this pericope circulated as an "independent and fragmentary story . . . having few connections with the preceding and following chapters," new analysis has determined that "while 6:1–4 may have originally been an independent story, in its present form it takes up the themes of the Toledot of Adam, and is well-connected to the primeval history."[2] Regarding the Noachic Deluge narrative, specifically, however, whatever role the *Nephilim* played and whatever their connections to the "sons of God" (בני האלהים), it is evident from the text itself, as noted above, that the Flood was directly related to the *in toto* self-destructive behaviour of humanity, חמס, i.e. "lawlessness" (Gen 6:11, 13, cf. 6:5).[3] As such, further analyses concerning these matters need not detain us.[4]

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[1] For a graphic depiction of the Deluge plotline, see Mathews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, 354. A precedent for the use of 'scene,' a term borrowed from the realm of cinematography, with respect to the Noachic Deluge narrative may be found in Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 169, and Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis*, 133.

[2] Kaminski, *Was Noah Good?*, 36 and 48. Cf. Longacre, "Noah's Flood," 238.

[3] Cf. Okoye, *Genesis 1–11*, 91–95, Hendel, "Demigods," 13–26, Hendel, "Sons of God," 8–13, 37.

[4] For further information concerning these matters, aside from what has already been mentioned above, see Kaminski, "Beautiful Women or 'False Judgment?,'"457–73.

With respect to Gen 6:5–8, it is clear that these verses fall outside the *toledoth* of Noah. As such, they function as a conclusion to the *toledoth* of Adam (Gen 5:1—6:8).[5] They may also be thought of as the narrative sequel to the account of Cain and Abel (Gen 4:1–26).[6] While Yahweh's soliloquy within Gen 6:5–8 does form a critical component to the rhetorical strategy of the scribe(s) of the Noachic Deluge narrative, one notes that Gen 6:5 is recalled after the Flood itself (Gen 8:21), the priority of the *toledoth* structure has already been argued at length via the schematics delineated above.[7] In this way, it is clear that, according to the scribe(s) themselves, Gen 6:5–8 functions as the trailer to the Noachic Deluge narrative, or, as some have chosen to call it: "The Prelude to Disaster."[8]

In sum, this chapter will demonstrate that the scribe's rhetoric convincingly communicates that despite the prevalence of "death-inducing sin" (חמס) within the created order, God provided a way for all life to be preserved: God commanded Noah to build, victual, and enter an ark (Gen 6:13–21). Alongside this, God demonstrated his redemptive, merciful nature and his plan and purpose to redeem creation by establishing his covenant with Noah (Gen 6:18).[9] Noah was "just" (צדיק) and "blameless" (תמים) with respect to his contemporaries (בדרתיו).[10] That is, Noah's conduct and behavior were the inverse of the "lawlessness" (חמס) that plagued the world (Gen 6:9). Lastly, Noah has the notable distinction of being the father of Shem, Ham, and Japheth who would come to repopulated the earth after the Flood—thus being a fountainhead for the renewal of life.

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[5] See Kaminski, *Was Noah Good?*, 40–63. Cf. Wallace, "Toledoth of Adam," 17–33.

[6] Longman and Walton, *Lost World of the Flood*, 122–28, especially 124.

[7] Longman and Walton, *Lost World of the Flood*, 126. Cf. Kaminski, *Was Noah Good?*, 36–63.

[8] Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 136 and 143, and Wenham, *Rethinking Genesis*, 58. Cf. Hamilton, *Genesis 1–17*, 20, Waltke and Yu, *Old Testament Theology*, 285, Longman and Walton, *Lost World of the Flood*, 122, and Sailhamer, *Genesis*, 117. Cf. Kaminski, *Was Noah Good?*, 36–63, especially 40–63.

[9] See Longman and Walton, *Lost World of the Flood*, 178.

[10] Matthews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, 358. An exposé of these terms will be offered later on.

Step One: Determining the Rhetorical Units

The first step of this study is to determine the boundaries of the rhetorical units. For the sake of clarity, the rhetorical subunits (or sections) that are labeled as "main" correspond to the first level of an outline and are schematized by upper-case Roman numerals. "Primary" rhetorical subunits correspond to the second level of an outline (schematized by Arabic numerals). "Secondary" rhetorical subunits correspond to the third level of an outline (schematized by lower-case Roman numerals). "Lower level" subunits correspond to the fourth level of an outline (schematized by lower-case letters of the English alphabet). Anything below this level is simply rendered as being "marked."

The analysis will begin with a fresh, English translation, alongside a commentary of certain grammatical and syntactical features (including text criticism issues).[11] Each portion of text will be divided according to the "main" subunits that will be delineated at length within the rhetorical analysis itself (step one). As noted above, this portion of text has been named "The Corruption of Humanity: Hope and Covenant" (Gen 6:9–22). The main units within it are: (I) "*Toledoth* Formula" (Gen 6:9a), (II), "Additional Narratival Comments Concerning Noah" (Gen 6:9b–10), (III) "Narratival and Divine Comments Concerning Humanity" (Gen 6:11–12), (IV) "Divine Speech 'Make Ready!' (Gen 6:13–21), and, lastly, (V) "Final Narratival Comments Concerning Noah" (Gen 6:22).

I.   *Toledoth Formula (Gen 6:9a)*

אלה תולדת נח

This is the *toledoth* of Noah.

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[11] For details concerning these matters see Collins, *Reading Genesis Well*, 29, Shaw, *Speeches of Micah*, 23, Bovard, "Rhetorical Questions," 20, Stewart, "Cosmos," 100, Okoye, *Genesis 1–11*, 18–19.

The formulaic *toledoth* of Gen 6:9a, i.e. "this is the *toledoth* of Noah" (אלה תולדת נח), constitutes the first rhetorical unit.[12] While this introductory formula structurally stands independent from the rest of the text, it connects thematically to all that follows (Gen 6:9—9:29) since the *toledoth* concerns itself with the life, lineage, and person of Noah (cf. Gen 10:1). Even so, as a 'superscription' it stands alone.

II.   *Additional Narratival Comments Concerning Noah (Gen 6:9b–10)*

נח איש צדיק ªתמים היה בדרתיו ᵇאת האלהים התהלך נח

ᶜויולד נח שלשה בנים את שם את חם ואת יפת

Noah was a just man, blameless among his contemporaries.

Noah walked with God.

Also, Noah fathered three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japeth.

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a. Note: certain versions, such as the Samaritan Pentatuch and some manuscripts of G, tended to reject the asyndetic apposition of two predicative adjectives. Tal, *BHQ*, 94.
b. This is an instance of a "*fronted* constituent," which is used to "indicate the topic or focus of the sentence that follows." *BHRG* §34.5.1. Details concerning word order are given below.
c. Adjunctive *waw*. Williams, *Hebrew Syntax*, §319. See also *BHRG* §40.23.4.2.1#a.

After the "*Toledoth* Formula" (Gen 6:9a), the next main rhetorical subunit has been labeled "Narratival and Divine Comments Concerning Noah" (Gen 6:9b–10).[13] This section is identified as a unit by virtue of its referential, situational, and structural (relational) coherence, signified by there being: (a) sameness of participants, namely Noah (Gen 6:9, 10) and his three sons (Gen 6:10), (b) sameness of topic, theme,

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[12] There is general consensus among the scholars of Gen 6:9a being a unit in and of itself. So Dorsey, *Literary Structure*, 51, Longacre, "Noah's Flood," 238, Longman, *Genesis*, 116, Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 157, and Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis*, 121. For more details, see also Kempf, "Analysis of Genesis 2:25—3:24," 912–95, and Beckerleg, "The 'Image of God' in Eden," 28–45. Cf. Hamilton, *Genesis 1–17*, 272, who proposes that the unit should be Gen 6:5–10, and Mathews, Genesis 1:1—11:26, 349, who proposes that it should be Gen 6:9–10. For more details, see the analysis portion below.

[13] There is partial consensus among scholars concerning the boundaries of this unit. See McKeown, *Genesis*, 52, and Mathews, *Genesis 1:1—11:26*, 349. Albeit, Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis*, 121, make the claim that Gen 6:9b–12 could also be construed as a single unit that introduces the audience to the characters of the text (with further subunits therein). Wenham's proposal, *Genesis 1–15*, 157, to extend the unit, Gen 6:9b–21, is problematic. See the rationale below. Cf. Sailhamer, *Pentateuch*, 124.

orientation, and mood, i.e. the moral integrity and uprightness of Noah, which includes

his right standing with God (Gen 6:9) and some of his life context (Gen 6:9–10), and (c)

sameness of narratival time, place, and speed of action/pacing (see below for more

details). Noah is also the subject of each of the three verbs of this pericope, namely the

qaṭal (Qal) verb "to be" (היה), see Gen 6:9b, the wayyiqṭol (Hithpael) verb "to walk"

(הלך), see Gen 6:9, and the wayyiqṭol (Hiphil) verb "to father" (יול), see Gen 6:10.

This rhetorical unit (Gen 6:9b–10), may be divided into two primary subunits: (1)

Noah's "spirituality" (Gen 6:9b–c) and (2) Noah's progeny (Gen 6:10). Noah's

"spirituality," i.e. his character and conduct, is comprised of two secondary phrases: (i)

he was a just man—blameless among his contemporaries (Gen 6:9b), and (ii) Noah

walked with God (Gen 6:9c). Noah's progeny is comprised of two secondary phrases: (i)

the introductory comment by the narrator that Noah fathered three sons (Gen 6:10a), and

(ii) the specification that their names are Shem, Ham, and Japeth (Gen 6:10b).

III.   *Narratival and Divine Comments Concerning Humanity (Gen 6:11–12)*

ⁿ ותשחת הארץ לפני האלהים ᵇותמלא הארץ חמס ᶜוירא אלהים את הארץ

ᵈוהנה נשחתה ᵉכי השחית כל בשר את דרכו על הארץ

>Now the earth was ruined in the sight of God:
>
>>the earth was filled with death-inducing lawlessness.
>
>And God saw the earth—it was ruined!
>
>>For every creature had ruined its way upon the earth.

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a.   Introductory *waw*. Chisholm, *Exegesis*, 120.
b.   Epexegetical (specification) *waw*. *GBHS* §3.5.4.b. See also *BHRG* §40.23.4.2.6.
c.   Specifying (focusing) *waw*. Chisholm, *Exegesis*, 122. Cf. *GBHS* §3.5.1.c (epexegetical *waw*).
d.   Dramatic (deictic) *waw*. Chisholm, *Exegesis*, 126. Concerning הנה, see below (step three).
e.   Causal conjunction. *GBHS* §4.3.4.a.

The text turns now from Noah himself (and his sons) to those who fall outside of Noah's

immediate family. This main section has been labeled "Narratival and Divine Comments

Concerning Humanity" (Gen 6:11–12).[14] It may be differentiated from the units that

come before it as evidenced by: (a) the dramatic change in topic, theme, orientation, and

mood, i.e. the *in toto*, negative portrayal of the earth and its corruption (Gen 6:11–12) as

compared to the positive portrayal surrounding the person of Noah (Gen 6:9–10), (b) the

shift in narratival time and place that occurs (cf. Gen 6:11–12 with Gen 6:13), and (c) the

shift in participants from Noah and his sons (Gen 6:9–10) to the earth (Gen 6:11–12) and

God himself (Gen 6:11–12). Concerning this last point, one also notes the change that

occurs in the person of the verbs from Noah (Gen 6:9–10) to God himself (Gen 6:12) and

the earth and its inhabitants (Gen 6:11–12). The end of this particular unit is also

delimited by the divine speech that immediately follows it (see the details below).

This section (Gen 6:11–12), is comprised of two primary subsections: (1) remarks

concerning humanity's depravity as mediated through the narrator (Gen 6:11), and (2)

God's direct adjudications concerning humanity's depravity (Gen 6:12). The narrator

divides his comments (Gen 6:11) into two secondary parts: (i) an initial declarative

statement that the earth was ruined in the sight of God (Gen 6:11a), and (ii) further

clarification that the earth was filled with חמס, i.e. "lawlessness" (Gen 6:11b). God's

direct assessment of humanity (Gen 6:12) is subdivided as follows: (i) an initial statement

that God saw the earth (Gen 6:12a), (ii) an emphatic comment concerning the utter

depravity of the earth, "it was ruined" (נשחתה והנה), Gen 6:12b, and (iii) further

comments underscoring that every creature ruined its way upon the earth (Gen 6:12c).

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[14] There is a general consensus among scholars concerning the boundaries of this unit. See
Mathews, *Genesis 1:1—11:26*, 349, Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis*, 121, and Hamilton, *Genesis 1–17*, 278.
Contra McKeown, *Genesis*, 53, there is no reason to extend the unit, i.e. Gen 6:11–13. See details below.

The next main rhetorical subunit is entitled "Divine Speech I: Make Ready" (Gen 6:13–21).[15] It 'hangs together' as a divine speech. In this way, its internal coherence is demonstrated by the introductory formula "then God said to Noah."[16] This is not to mention the refrain at the end (Gen 6:22, cf. Gen 7:1–4 and Gen 7:5).[17]

IV.   *Divine Speech "Make Ready:" Part A—Problem 'lawlessness' (Gen 6:13)*

ויאמר אלהים לנח[a]

קץ כל בשר בא[b] לפני[c] כי[c] מלאה הארץ חמס[d] מפניהם

והנני משחיתם[f] את הארץ[e]

Then God said to Noah:

"The end of all flesh has come before me for the earth is filled with death-

inducing lawlessness through them.

So now I will surely ruin them with the earth!

---

a.   Sequential *waw*. See *GBHS* §3.5.1.a, and Chisholm, *Exegesis*, 120.
b.   Note: the LXX renders this as καιρός παντός ανθρώπου ήκει εναντίον μου, i.e. "The time of all humankind has come before me" (NETS). The LES renders it: "The time of all humanity has come before me." This indicates that the opportune moment (καιρός) for judgment and destruction had come. See Wevers, *Greek Text of Genesis*, 82–83.
c.   Evidential conjunction. *GBHS* §4.3.4.b.
d.   The preposition may be either causal or source. Williams, *Hebrew Syntax*, §319, 322. *GBHS* §4.1.13.a, d. Thus, the translation may be rendered as "by," "through," or "because of them."
e.   Consequential *waw*. *GBHS* §3.5.1.b. With respect to הנה, though the function is often to point an addressee to something in the speech situation that is newsworthy, thus emphasizing the immediacy of the events that are pointed out (see *BHRG* §40.22.4.1.1), the context of Gen 6:13 seems to indicate that the function here is also to indicate time. See category six, "time," within McCarthy, "Uses of *wᵉhinnēh*," 337–39. Cf. Lambdin, *Biblical Hebrew*, §135.2.
f.   Note: most versions understand this term to be a preposition (not an accusative particle). Tal, *BHQ*, 94; Hamilton *Genesis 1–17*, 279; Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 152. Coordinate or accompaniment preposition. Williams, *Hebrew Syntax*, §343; *GBHS* §4.1.4.a; *IBHS* §11.2.4.a.

The first portion of this unit has been labelled "Part A—Problem 'lawlessness'"

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[15] There is a general consensus concerning the unit's boundaries, albeit the majority of them also include the refrain (Gen 6:22). See Mathews, *Genesis 1:1—11:26*, 349, Longacre, "Noah's Flood," 238, Sailhamer, *Genesis*, 116, Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis*, 122, Hamilton, *Genesis 1–17*, 278, McKeown, *Genesis*, 55, and Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 157. See the analysis section below for more details.

[16] See Dorsey, *Literary Structure*, 23. Cf. Meier, *Speaking*, 59, and Miller, *Speech*, 400.

[17] See Mathews, *Genesis 1—11:26*, 361 and Sailhamer, *Pentateuch*, 124.

(Gen 6:13). It makes clear via direct discourse the overarching plans of God concerning the earth and its various forms of life. This unit has coherence as evidenced by there being: (a) sameness of topic, theme, orientation, and mood, namely the destruction of all life on earth (Gen 6:13), (b) sameness in narratival time and place (cf. Gen 6:13 with Gen 6:14–16), and (c) sameness of participants—one notes that this once again includes Noah (Gen 6:13). The first primary rhetorical unit of this section is, of course, the introduction which makes clear the fact that God is the speaker and that Noah is the recipient of the elocution (Gen 6:13a).[18] The second primary rhetorical unit underscores the destruction and devastation that God will bring upon the earth via a colossal amount of water (Gen 6:13b–d). This unit is comprised of three secondary subunits: (i) the initial proclamation that God himself decreed to make an end to every creature (Gen 6:13b), (ii) an explanatory comment as to why God chose to do so, namely that the earth was filled with "lawlessness" (חמס) through the creatures of the created order (Gen 6:13c), and (iii) the summative statement that God will surely ruin such with the earth (Gen 6:13d).

IV. *Divine Speech 'Make Ready:" Part B—Solution 'the ark' (Gen 6:14–16)*

עשה לך תבת עצי ᵃגפר ᵇקנים ᶜתעשה את התבה ᵈוכפרת אתה מבית ᵉומחוץ בכפר ᶠוזה אשר תעשה אתה

שלש מאות אמה ארך התבה חמשים אמה רחבה ושלשים אמה קומתה ᵍצהר תעשה לתבה ʰואל אמה תכלנה מלמעלה

ⁱופתח התבה בצדה תשים תחתים שנים ושלשים תעשה

Make for yourself an ark of gopher wood. Use reeds in its construction. Then caulk it inside and out with pitch. This is how you are to make it: The ark is to be three hundred cubits in length, fifty cubits in breadth, and thirty cubits in height. Make a vaulted roof for the ark.

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[18] Dorsey, *Literary Structure*, 23. Cf. Meier, *Speaking*, 59, and Miller, *Speech*, 400.

Then to a cubit finish it from above.

Then set the door of the ark in her side—make it lower, second, and third.[j]

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a. Note: the versions construe this term either as an adjective (describing the way that the wood was to be shaped/treated) or the material from which the ark itself was actually constructed. "It is therefore a case of establishing the meaning of an unknown word, rather than of textual divergence." Tal, *BHQ*, 94. See step three below for more details.
b. Further discussion of this term and its translation is offered in the extended analysis below.
c. "Verbs which express making, preparing, forming into anything, along with the object proper, take a second accusative of the product." GKC §371.ii. Italics removed.
d. Sequential *waw*. *GBHS* §3.5.1.a, and Chisholm, *Exegesis*, 120. The Qal verb is a "denominative from *kōper*; thus the expression smear . . . with pitch (*kāpartā . . . bakkōpher*) is analogous to the expression "season with salt" (*bammerlaḥ timlāḥ,* Lev. 2:13)." Hamilton, *Genesis 1–17*, 281. The idea is that Noah is to cover the ark with pitch (that is, caulking).
e. Accompaniment *waw*. Williams, *Hebrew Syntax*, §436.
f. Explicative *waw*. *BHRG* §40.23.4.2.10, and Williams, *Hebrew Syntax*, §434. Not translated.
g. Note: the versions have difficulty translating the *hapax legomenon*. The OG took this term as a verb denoting the way in which the ark is to be finished while the Syriac understood it to mean the base of the ark. All the other versions translate this term as "light" or "window" (cf. Gen 8:6), apparently from an etymological basis of צהרים "noon." See Tal, *BHQ*, 94.
h. Explicative *waw*. *BHRG* §40.23.4.2.10, and Williams, *Hebrew Syntax*, §434.
i. Sequential *waw*. See *GBHS* §3.5.1.a, and Chisholm, *Exegesis*, 120.
j. The clear meaning here is of the three decks of the ark. See Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 174.

This section has been labelled "Part B—Solution 'the ark'" (Gen 6:14–16). The change of topic and theme from destruction (Gen 6:13) to deliverance (Gen 6:14–16), as well as the shift of Noah becoming one of the primary participants (alongside God), rather than someone who is being addressed (cf. Gen 6:13 with Gen 6:14–16), provide evidence of the cohesion of this section and differentiates it from the section(s) that surround it (cf. Gen 6:14–16 with Gen 6:17).[19]

This portion of the divine speech (Gen 6:14–16) may be subdivided into two primary sections: (1) the general imperative to fabricate an ark (Gen 6:14a), and (2) more specific instructions on how to do so (Gen 6:14b–16d). This set of instructions may also be broken down into various secondary subunits: (i) build the ark with compartments

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[19] See Mathews, *Genesis 1—11:26*, 365.

(Gen 6:14b), (ii) caulk it with pitch (Gen 6:14c), (iii) ensure that the ark is built to certain dimensions with respect to its length, breadth, and height (Gen 6:15), (iv) ensure that the ark has a vaulted roof (Gen 6:16a), (v) finish it to a cubit from above (Gen 6:16b), (vi) set a door in the ark's side (Gen 6:16c), and (viii) construct it with three decks (Gen 6:16d). Secondary subunit 'iii' here may also be divided into several lower-level subunits, namely: (a) the initial statement that "this is how you are to make it" (Gen 6:15:a), (b) specificities concerning the length of the ark—three hundred cubits (Gen 6:15b), (c) specificities concerning the breadth of the ark—fifty cubits (Gen 6:15c), and (d) specificities concerning the height of the ark—thirty cubits (Gen 6:15d).

The referential, situational, and structural (relational) coherence of the next section, which is entitled "Divine Speech I 'Make Ready:' Part C—Problem 'the flood'" (Gen 6:17), is evident via the sameness of topic/theme (note the shift from deliverance to destruction) and the fact that God becomes the main recipient of many of the verb forms (cf. Gen 6:13). Alongside this point, Noah exits the stage.

IV.   Divine Speech "Make Ready:" Part C—Problem 'the flood' (Gen 6:17)

ואני^a הנני^b מביא את המבול מים על הארץ ^cלשחת כל בשר אשר בו רוח חיים^dמתחת ^eהשמים

כל אשר בארץ יגוע

> But I am surely bringing the Flood waters upon the earth, soon, in order to
> ruin every creature that has the breath of life in it under the sky.
> Everything that is on the earth shall perish.

---

a.   Dramatic (disjunctive) *waw*. Chisholm, *Exegesis*, 126–27. The separate pronoun serves to give "strong emphasis." See GKC §135.d. See note 'b' below for further details.

b.   The function here is to introduce a fact upon which a following statement is based. Lambdin, *Biblical Hebrew*, 168–70. See also category three, "occasion," in McCarthy, "Uses of *wᵉhinnēh*," 334–36. In addition, one notes that the use of an independent pronoun before הנה and the pronominal suffix "is especially emphatic." Muraoka, *Emphatic Words*, 140.

c.   Note: for text-critical details on the *piel*, see Tal, *BHQ*, 95.

d.   The compound is locative carrying the force of only one of the particles (vertical relationship). See *GBHS* §4.1.18.a and §4.1.13.i., alongside Williams, *Hebrew Syntax*, §349.

e.   The syntax of the total construction of the sentence here conveys an imminent future nuance, see GKC §116p, Joüon §119n, and Lambdin, *Biblical Hebrew*, 168–70.

The first primary rhetorical subunit of Gen 6:17 showcases the mechanism by which God will undertake his ruining of the earth—a cataclysmic Flood (Gen 6:17a–b). This initial announcement is comprised of three secondary parts: (i) an emphatic declaration that God is going to bring floodwaters (the Flood) on the earth (Gen 6:17a), (ii) a statement that the Flood's function is to ruin every creature that has the breath of life in it under the sky (Gen 6:17b). The second primary rhetorical subunit is the empathic reiteration that everything that is on the earth will perish (Gen 6:17c).

IV.   Divine Speech "Make Ready:" Part D—Solution 'covenant' (Gen 6:18–21)

אוהקמתי את בריתי bאתך cובאת אל התבה אתה dובניך ואשתך ונשי בניך אתך

eומכל החי מכל בשר שנים מכל תביא אל התבה להחית אתך זכר fונקבה יהיו

מהעוף למינהו gומן הבהמה למינה מכל רמש האדמה למינהו

שנים מכל יבאו אליך להחיות

hואתה קח לך מכל מאכל אשר יאכל iואספת אליך jוהיה לך kולהם לאכלה

But I am establishing my covenant with you.

> Thus you shall come into the ark—you, and your sons, and your wife,
>> and the wives of your sons with you.

> Also, from all living things, from every creature, bring two from every
>> [kind] into the ark in order to keep (them) alive with you—male
>> and female they shall be: from the birds according to their kinds,
>> and from beasts according to their kinds, from every creeping thing
>> of the ground, according to their kinds.

> Two from every [kind] shall come to you in order to keep [them] alive.

> Alongside this, you must take for yourself from every [kind] of food
>> which is edible and gather it to you. Thus it shall be for you and for
>> them for food."

a. Climactic *waw*. Chisholm, *Exegesis*, 132.
b. The preposition could have the nuance of advantage. See Williams, *Hebrew Syntax*, §341.
c. Consequential *waw*. *GBHS* §3.5.1.b.
d. This *waw* (and the two that follow) signify accompaniment. Williams, *Hebrew Syntax*, §436.
e. Synchronic *waw* (displaying simultaneous action). Chisholm, *Exegesis*, 126, *GBHS* §3.5.4.b.
f. This coordinative *waw* joins opposites. Williams, *Hebrew Syntax*, §430a and §431.
g. Coordinative *waw*. Williams, *Hebrew Syntax*, §430a.
h. Synchronic *waw* (displaying simultaneous action). Chisholm, *Exegesis*, 126, *GBHS* §3.5.4.b. The adverb (in compound form with the waw) indicates a "logical . . . shift in the argument or flow of the discourse without a break in the theme." *GBHS* §4.2.14.b.
i. Synchronic *waw* (displaying simultaneous action). Chisholm, *Exegesis*, 126, *GBHS* §3.5.4.b.
j. Consequential *waw*. *GBHS* §3.5.1.b.
k. Accompaniment *waw*. Williams, *Hebrew Syntax*, §436.

The internal coherence of the two primary subsections that comprise the next main unit, which is labelled "Divine Speech I 'Make Ready:' Part D-Solution 'covenant/victual the ark'" (Gen 6:18–21), is evidenced through sameness of topic/theme (deliverance, salvation, and redemption as opposed to annihilation, destruction, and doom). There is also the same narratival time and place. Lastly, Noah is reintroduced to the scene as are some new participants, such as his wife, his sons, and his son's wives—alongside the animals. Hamilton notes that the use of the "resumptive pronoun establishes Noah as the person of supreme significance in this paragraph."[20]

The first subsection of this unit is entitled "Plans for Preservation: part one" (Gen 6:18–20). It is a series of announcements that make clear God's plans to establish a covenant with Noah and to preserve and sustain life via having Noah's immediate family and sundry animals come aboard the ark with him (Gen 6:18–20). This section is comprised of several secondary subunits: (i) God's explicit covenant with Noah (Gen 6:18a), (ii) specific confirmation that Noah will enter the ark (6:18b), (iii) further details that Noah will not be alone but that he will be accompanied with his sons, his wife, and

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[20] See Hamilton, *Genesis 1–17*, 283–84.

his son's wives together with him (Gen 6:18c), (iv) specific confirmation that some of each of the different forms of animal life (birds, beasts, and creeping things—male and female—by pairs) will survive via being brought into the ark (Gen 6:19–20). This particular secondary subsection is also comprised of several lower-level rhetorical units, some of which are marked by extended comments: (a) God's directive to bring two of every kind of creature from all living things into the ark (Gen 6:19a), (b) explanatory specification that doing so will keep them alive (Gen 6:19b), (c) clarification that there should be a representative of each gender of animal, male and female (Gen 6:19c)— marked by a further delineation that these animals must be; (d) from the birds according to their kinds (Gen 6:19d), (e) from the beasts according to their kinds (Gen 6:19e), and (f) from every creeping thing of the ground according to their kinds (Gen 6:19f). Lastly, (g) there is a restatement that two from every kind of animal will come to Noah in order to keep them alive (Gen 6:20g).

The second primary subsection is entitled "Plans for Preservation: part two" (Gen 6:21). It focuses on foodstuff for the occupants of the ark (sameness of topic). It is comprised of three secondary subunits: (i) the divine command to Noah to take for himself from every kind of food which is edible (Gen 6:21a), (ii) the imperative to gather it to himself for all on board (Gen 6:21b), and (iii) a clarifying comment that everything Noah gathered would be for food for all those that are within the ark (Gen 6:21c).

V.   Final Narratival Comments Concerning Noah (Gen 6:22)

ויעש נח [b]ככל אשר צוה אתו אלהים כן עשה[a]

So Noah did according to all that God commanded him—thus he did.

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a.   Summarizing or concluding *waw*. Chisholm, *Exegesis*, 123.
b.   The preposition denotes "agreement between trajector x and landmark y." *BHRG* §39.10.

The last main rhetorical unit of this particular portion of text is labelled "Final Narratival Comments Concerning Noah" (Gen 6:22). Since the following second divine speech (Gen 7:1–4) ends with a similar refrain (Gen 7:5), a pattern is established for helping to delimit the boundaries of this unit (Gen 6:13–21, 22).[21] One also notes that the activities of Noah are recorded via the narrator (Gen 6:22). This rhetorical unit is divided into two primary subsections: (1) the initial comment that Noah did exactly what God commanded him (Gen 6:22a), and (2) a re-stating of the matter that emphasizes Noah's complete obedience and underscores the fact that Noah faithfully executed all of the Lord's commands (Gen 6:22b).

At this time, it is also necessary to argue that Gen 6:9–22 together constitutes a rhetorical unit, in and of itself, that ought to be differentiated from the rest of the narrative that follows (Gen 7:1ff). The referential, situational, and structural (relational) coherence of these verses is, perhaps, best demonstrated through drawing attention to the fact that each of the events that transpired within the pericope all occurred (temporally) before the actual presence of the Flood. To say it differently, within Gen 6:9–22 the destruction of all life is always, relatively speaking, spoken of in future terms (Gen 6:13, 17. Cf. Gen 6:7). This stands in marked contrast to the numerous details that are provided in Gen 7:1–24 pertaining to time or calendar and the destruction of all life due to the pronounced and immediate presence of the Flood (see Gen 7:4, 6, 7, 10, 11, 12, 13, 17–24). Alongside this, one also notes the distinct shift that occurs with respect to place. To be clear, in Gen 6:9–22, Noah and company remain outside the ark. In contrast to this, in Gen 7:1–24, the surviving inhabitants of the land all enter the ark, something that is

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[21] See Mathews, *Genesis 1—11:26*, 360–61. Cf. Anderson, *Sentence in Biblical Hebrew*, 42, Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 153, and Longacre, "Noah's Flood," 238.

underscored a great deal within this pericope (Gen 7:1–3, 5, 7–9, 13–16, 18, 23).

Further details concerning these matters will also be offered in the discussion below.

Each of the rhetorical subunits of the above section are depicted below:

The Corruption of Humanity: Hope and Covenant (Gen 6:9–22)

I.   Toledoth Formula (Gen 6:9a)

II.   Additional Narratival Comments Concerning Noah (Gen 6:9b–10)
- 1. Description of Noah's character, conduct, and spirituality (Gen 6:9b–c)
    - i.   Noah was just—blameless among his contemporaries (Gen 6:9b)
    - ii.   Noah walked with God (Gen 6:9c)
- 2. Description of Noah's progeny
    - i.   Noah fathered three sons (Gen 6:10a)
    - ii.   The three sons' names were Shem, Ham, and Japeth (Gen 6:10b)

III.   Narratival and Divine Comments Concerning Humanity (Gen 6:11–12)
- 1. Humanity's Depravity—mediated via the narrator (Gen 6:11)
    - i.   The earth was ruined in the sight of God (Gen 6:11a)
    - ii.   The earth was filled with lawlessness (Gen 6:11b)
- 2. Humanity's Depravity—God's direct adjudications (Gen 6:12)
    - i.   God looked on the earth (Gen 6:12a)
    - ii.   Indeed—it was ruined! (Gen 6:12b)
    - iii.   Every creature had ruined its way upon the earth (Gen 6:12c)

IV.   Divine Speech I "Make Ready" (Gen 6:13–21)

Part A: Problem 'lawlessness' (Gen 6:13)
- 1. Introduction: "God said to Noah" (Gen 6:13a)
- 2. Destruction and Devastation (Gen 6:13b–d)
    - i.   Declaration that now is the end (Gen 6:13b)
    - ii.   Declaration that the earth is filled with lawlessness (Gen 6:13c)
    - iii.   Declaration that God will ruin every creature (Gen 6:13d)

Part B: Solution 'the ark' (Gen 6:14–16)
- 1. General Imperative: fabricate an ark (Gen 6:14a)
- 2. More Specific Directives (Gen 6:14b–16d)
    - i.   Build the ark with compartments (Gen 6:14b)
    - ii.   Caulk the ark with pitch (Gen 6:14c)
    - iii.   Build the ark to specific dimensions (Gen 6:15)
        - a. initiatory statement (Gen 6:15a)
        - b. specificities about the ark's dimensions (Gen 6:15b–d)
    - iv.   Ensure the ark has a vaulted roof (Gen 6:16a)
    - v.   Finish the ark to a cubit from above (Gen 6:16b)
    - vi.   Set a door in the side of the ark (Gen 6:16c)
    - vii. Construct the ark with three decks (Gen 6:16d)

Part C: Problem 'the flood' (Gen 6:17)
- 1. The Mechanism of Destruction: The Flood (Gen 6:17a–b)
    - i.   Declaration that the Flood will come upon the earth (Gen 6:17a)
    - ii.   Declaration that the Flood will ruin every creature (Gen 6:17b)

2. Re-Statement of the Extent of the Destruction (Gen 6:17c)

Part D: Solution 'covenant/ark' (Gen 6:18–21)

1. Plans for Preservation: Part One (Gen 6:18–20)
   - i. God's covenant with Noah (Gen 6:18a)
   - ii. Confirmation that Noah will enter the ark (Gen 6:18b)
   - iii. Confirmation that Noah's family will also enter (Gen 6:18c)
   - iv. Confirmation that sundry chosen animals will enter (Gen 6:19–20)
     - a. directives to bring two of every creature (Gen 6:19a)
     - b. reiteration of function: 'to keep them alive' (Gen 6:19b)
     - c. clarification of gender: 'male and female' (Gen 6:19c)
     - d. 'from the birds according to their kinds' (Gen 6:19d)
     - e. 'from the beasts according to their kinds' (Gen 6:19e)
     - f. 'from creeping things according to kind' (Gen 6:19f)
     - g. summative statement (Gen 6:20g)

2. Plans for Preservation: Part Two (Gen 6:21)
   - i. General imperative to Noah to take food (Gen 6:21a)
   - ii. General imperative for Noah to gather it to him (Gen 6:21b)
   - iii. Final clarifying comment (Gen 6:21c)

V. Final Narratival Comments Concerning Noah (Gen 6:22)

Step Two: Determining the Rhetorical Situation

The second step that this model of rhetorical criticism employs involves determining the

rhetorical situation. As noted in the methodology section, this study proposes to use the

category of rhetorical situation in a way that is somewhat different from the majority of

rhetorical critical studies; that is, the inability to effectively determine the situation of the

world "behind the text" of the book of Genesis and the Noachic Deluge narrative,

specifically, requires the interpreter to develop the rhetorical situation from criteria that is

internal to the text. While scholars have recognized that this approach is unsatisfactory

for placing the text in a specific historical situation, a synchronic, "entextualized"

understanding of rhetorical situation can successfully locate the passage in the situation

that its words describe and reveal the concerns that the rhetor intends to address. This

makes it possible to commence considering how the scribe's rhetorical strategy would

affect the situation that the text describes.[22] In sum, the proposal of an entextualized rhetorical situation offers a way forward through the inevitable frustration of trying to lock the text into a specific historical context, thus permitting the text's persuasive power to have influence beyond the time and place of its original utterance. That being said, however, one notes that in step four, determining rhetorical effectiveness, this study will also seek to consider how the text may rhetorically relate to exilic Israel.[23]

By necessity, the entextualized rhetorical situation will mature, evolve, and develop as the plot unfolds from scene to scene. This is true even if one primary exigence give clues to other exigences and forms the "backdrop" to the Noachic Deluge narrative as a whole. Said otherwise, Scripture makes clear that the primary exigence of the Noachic Deluge narrative (as a whole) is how to deal with the fundamental problem of humanity's "lawlessness" (חמס), i.e. uncurbed and unmitigated sin (Gen 6:5, 11 and 13. Cf. Gen 8:21–22; 9:1–7). Without rectifying this issue, humanity will implode. This exigence, however, is not at the forefront of each of the specific rhetorical units.

As such, alongside the primary exigence of humanity's self-destructive behaviour, two secondary exigences also exist within this specific passage (Gen 6:5–22). The first is between God and the Flood. God must act in such a way as to exercise sovereign control over the Flood so as to ensure that he does not destroy that which he has purposed to save.[24] The second exigence is between Noah and God. God elected Noah to enter into a covenant relationship with himself (Gen 6:18) thereby obligating him to "keep self-imposed commitments either on condition of the favored recipients continued faithfulness

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[22] See Barker, *From the Depths*, 68.
[23] See McKeown, *Genesis*, 10. Cf. Collins, *Reading Genesis Well*, 125.
[24] See Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis*, 122.

or as repayment (Josh. 9:11, 15–16)."[25] Given that it is the former rather than the latter

arrangement that is in view here, Bruce K. Waltke and Cathi J. Fredricks delineate this

aspect of the exigence (God and Noah) as follows:

> Can God count on Noah? To be sure, God authors the covenant, but it
> cannot be effected without Noah's fidelity (see 7:1). If Noah does not
> build the ark and enter it, not only Noah and all life will perish, but so will
> God's purpose to rule the earth through Adam and his promise to crush the
> Serpent through the woman's seed. The future of salvation history rides on
> Noah's faithfulness.[26]

The next component of the exigence (Noah and God) is thus as follows:

> On the other hand, can Noah count on God? God calls upon Noah to trust
> him to keep his threat to wipe out the earth and his promise to preserve
> him, his family, and the life of all that breathes. If the Lord does not send
> the threatened Flood, Noah will have wasted years of his life, and of his
> three sons building the ark, and "Noah's folly" will become the
> laughingstock of history. And if God does not keep his promise to preserve
> Noah and his family through the Flood, their faithful service is in vain.
> [In sum,] the plot develops as the divine and human covenant partners
> commit themselves to one another.[27]

Related to this is the idea that God seeing the ruination of the earth expresses estimation,

i.e. God "appraised" the earth—and found it wanting (Gen 6:5–6).[28] As such, God speaks

first to himself (Gen 6:7; cf. Gen 6:3) then to Noah on four occasions: (1) the first

occurrence concerns the devastation of the Flood and the imperative to build an ark (Gen

6:13–21), (2) to command Noah to enter the ark (Gen 7:1–4), (3) to command Noah to

leave the ark (Gen 8:15–17), and (4) to bless Noah and his family (Gen 9:1–7) including

a reiteration of the Noachic covenant (Gen 9:8–11) and its sign (Gen 9:12–7).[29]

Clearly, it is the Flood itself and these two covenant characters (Noah and God)

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[25] Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis*, 123.
[26] Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis*, 123.
[27] Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis*, 123.
[28] Knafl, *Forming God*, 239 and 240. See also Speiser, *Genesis*, 51.
[29] Knafl, *Forming God*, 240.

that drive the plot of this particular portion of text and the two secondary rhetorical exigences of Gen 6:5–22.[30] Interestingly, the narrator feels no need to explicate or comment on what Noah might be thinking or feeling with respect to the sizable task that is placed before him (not to mention what would also seem to be the immense challenge of processing the fact that the then known world will soon perish). Alongside this, unlike, for instance, Abraham (see Gen 18:16–33), there is no mention from within the text of Genesis itself that Noah had any scruples concerning what was to occur. Noah obeys without question or protest—down to the last cubit (see Gen 6:22).[31] Together, the immanent Flood and subsequent ruin of the earth creates a powerful scenario of doom.

To summarize, the clues derived from the text of Gen 6:5–8 and 9–22 suggests that aside from the overarching primary tension between humanity's "self-destructive lawlessness" (חמס) and God's merciful, benevolent character, there exists at least two secondary exigences. The first secondary exigence is between God and the Flood (destruction and deliverance). That is to say, the text clearly presupposes the utter annihilation of all life forms on the earth (destruction). This is demonstrated through the all encompassing, "universalistic" rhetoric that is often employed by the scribe (see step three below). At the same time, however, the text also makes clear that God intends to redeem Noah, certain members of his family, and select beasts from the animal kingdom (deliverance). As such, God must demonstrate complete and sovereign control over the Deluge so as to ensure that he: (a) destroys all those whom he wishes to annihilate, and (b) saves and delivers all those aboard the ark. The second tension is between Noah and

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[30] See Humphreys, *Character of God*, 66–67.

[31] See Humphreys, *Character of God*, 66–67. Cf. Greenberger, "Noah's Survival," 27–28. See also Dershowitz, "Man of the Land," 364–65, and Keiter, "Noah and the Dove," 264.

God. Much like the first exigence, both destruction and deliverance hang in the balance. Noah and God must each employ covenant fidelity in order to preserve and redeem life.

With respect to audience, the second main component of a rhetorical situation, the insistence in Gen 6:9–22 on obeying the directives of God (see especially Gen 6:22) suggests a way of appropriately understanding the Deluge threat in the context of a relationship with God. The commands of God for Noah to build the ark (Gen 6:14) and victual it (Gen 6:22) also have the purpose of reminding the Israelite community of the central role that obedience to God and faith in their Creator have in their own lives (cf. Gen 6:8–9). The third and final component of Bitzer's formulations are constraints. It is understood that constraints can include such things as "the degree of interest in the topic that the speaker and audience possess, the capacity for modification of the situation, the risk incurred in responding, the obligation and expectation of a response, the familiarity with a topic, and the immediacy of the situation."[32] There are, thus, many things that could impede or limit the effectiveness of the discourse.

That being said, the primary obstacle that faces the reader seems to be authority. The question that is posed is this: who will chart the course for your life: you or God?[33] Throughout the Noachic Deluge narrative, as a whole, but, perhaps, most clearly within Gen 6:5–7, it is evident that humanity's "appetite for destruction" knows no limits. As such, apart from the Creator's merciful and benevolent intervention, humanity will simply cease to exist. Given such, the scribe implores the reader to carefully ponder and circumspectly consider how one might live their life in such a way as to not grieve God (Gen 6:6) and to walk in obedient faithfulness and divine favour (Gen 6:8, 18, 22).

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[32] Barker, *From the Depths of Despair*, 41. See too Bitzer, "Functional Communication," 31–33.
[33] McDougall, *Models for Disciple-Making*, A-1:1.

Step Three: Determining the Rhetorical Strategy

The third step of this study is to determine and assess the rhetorical strategies that govern

the rhetorical units. Since this study leverages a "rhetoric as persuasion" methodology of

rhetorical criticism, this step includes commenting on the persuasive nature of the scribe.

The analysis will be divided according to the main subunits delineated above within step

one of the rhetorical analysis. The English translation used above will also be leveraged.

To reiterate, the five main units are: (I) "*Toledoth* Formula" (Gen 6:9a), (II), "Additional

Narratival Comments Concerning Noah" (Gen 6:9b–10), (III) "Narratival and Divine

Comments Concerning Humanity" (Gen 6:11–12), (IV) "Divine Speech 'Make Ready!'

(Gen 6:13–21), and, (V) "Final Narratival Comments Concerning Noah" (Gen 6:22).

The Corruption of Humanity: Hope and Covenant (Gen 6:9–22)

I.   *Toledoth Formula (Gen 6:9a)*

         This is the *toledoth* of Noah.

Extended Analysis:

The narrator "slows the action to a standstill" within the *toledoth* of Noah (Gen 6:9—

9:28), devoting a considerable amount of space and comment to a short span of time,

namely the six-hundredth year of Noah's life (see Gen 6:6 and 11).[34] This is in direct

contrast to the millennia between Adam and Noah that are delineated within the *toledoth*

of Adam that immediately precedes the Noachic Deluge narrative proper (Gen 5:1—6:8),

a time frame that is roughly 1600 years or so (see below). It also stands in contrast to the

400 year time period that exists between Noah and Abraham within the *toledoth* of Shem,

Ham, and Japeth (Gen 10:1—11:9) and the *toledoth* of Shem, in particular (Gen 11:10–

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[34] Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis*, 121.

11:26), that immediately follow the Noachic Deluge narrative.[35]

It is well understood, however, that ancient, biblical genealogies "do not intend to be exhaustive, so we cannot just 'do the math' to get back from Abram to Noah to Adam."[36] That being said, there is still good reason to believe that the genealogies within Gen 5 and 11, specifically, are closed and that the above chronology is to be considered accurate in light of the calendar of the Flood.[37] Irrespective of these things, the function of this literary device (pacing) is to enable the recipient(s) of the scribe's message to appreciate the gravity of the narrative and to absorb its significance as pace communicates emphasis.[38] More text per unit time shows "the importance of the material that the genealogical list is connecting together."[39]

In addition to this, though the *toledoth* of Adam (Gen 5:1—6:8) does focus the narrative of the book of Genesis from creation generally (see Gen 2:4—4:26) to humanity specifically, the *toledoth* of Noah (Gen 6:9—9:29) is even more narrowed—a single individual and his most immediate kin.[40] The reason (or mechanism) for this focusing is that Noah and his three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, represent "all of living humanity in their families" in the post-Deluge world.[41] Functionally, the linear genealogies (those

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[35] These calculations have mostly been derived from Seely, "Noah," 292–93.

[36] Longman and Walton, *Lost World of the Flood*, 108.

[37] For further information about linear vs. segmented genealogies (and genealogies in general), see Thomas, *Generations*, 87–89, Wright, "Genealogies," 345–50, Hill, "Genealogy," 242–46, and Walton, "Genealogies," 309–16. Concerning this passage specifically, see Collins, *Reading Genesis Well*, 181, Levin, "Understanding Biblical Genealogies," 11–46, Sexton, "Evangelicalism's Search for Chronological Gaps," 5–25, Steinmann, "A Reply to Jeremy Sexton Regarding the Genealogies in Genesis," 27–37, Sexton, "Search for Chronological Gaps: A Rejoinder," 39–45, and Steinmann, *Genesis*, 20–22. For more details see Hoopen, "Genesis 5," 177–93, White, "Revisting Genesis 5 and 11," 253–77, White, "Schematized or Non-Schematized," 205–35, Heinzerling, "'Einweihung' durch Henoch?," 581–89.

[38] See Gravett et al., eds., *Hebrew Bible*, 70. For more information on pacing, in general, see Genette, *Narrative Discourse*, 87–96, and Genette, *Narrative Discourse Revisited*, 33–37.

[39] Thomas, *Generations*, 88.

[40] See Thomas, *Generations*, 127, and Mathews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, 44–45.

[41] Thomas, *Generations*, 43–44.

that focus on only one offspring per generation, as opposed to segmented genealogies),

not only move the reader's attention to the following material but also highlight and draw

attention to key figures and persons within the narrative.[42] In this instance, it is easily

demonstrable that Noah is the key person on whom the *toledoth* centers (Gen 6:9). The

scribe's rhetoric convincingly communicates that Noah is a figure of great significance.

> II.   *Additional Narratival Comments Concerning Noah (Gen 6:9b–10)*
> Noah was a just man, blameless among his contemporaries.
> Noah walked with God.
> Also, Noah fathered three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japeth.

Extended Analysis:

According to Scripture (Gen 6:9), Noah was "just" (צדיק)[43] and "blameless" (תמים)[44] with

respect to his contiguous contemporaries (בדרתיו).[45] That is, Noah's conduct and behavior

were the inverse of the "death-inducing lawlessness" (חמס) that plagued the world.[46]

Given the biblical text's penchant for conciseness, the few details that the narrator

provides concerning Noah require one to get "maximum mileage" out of the scribe's

decision to include them.[47] It seems that at least one function of these comments is to

foster rapport and to create empathy, i.e. we should take Noah's side in the narrative.

Noah is an exemplar (cf. Ezek 14:14, 20).[48] He did not behave as the wicked of his

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[42] Thomas, *Generations*, 88–89. See too Long, *King Saul*, 23–25.

[43] *DCH* 7:75; *HALOT* 2:1003.

[44] Hamilton (*Genesis 1–17*, 277) proposes such terms as "wholesome," "sound," and "candid." Cf. *DCH* 8:643–44, and *HALOT* 2:1745.

[45] Matthews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, 358, and BDB, 190. Temporal preposition. *GBHS* §4.1.5.b.

[46] As noted above, this term "carries the overtones of lawlessness (cf. LXX *adikia*)." Goldingay, *Old Testament Theology* 1:164. von Rad (*Theology*, 2:157) suggests "a violent breach of a just order." Clines ("Flood," 514) states that it is "virtually a technical term for the oppression of the weak by the strong." Cf. Fretheim, "God and Violence," 20.

[47] Ryken, *Words of Delight*, 42. See also Alter, *Narrative*, 126.

[48] Block, *Ezekiel*, 446–47. Cf. Davidson "Noah," 135–37, and Kaminski, *Was Noah Good?*, 1–3.

time.[49]

For this reason, it is quite notable that in the text immediately preceding this verse (Gen 6:5–8), the scribe does not simply record the fact that "the LORD saw the wickedness of humanity on the earth" but makes explicit the situation's severity by adding the term "great" (רבה) to the Creator's assessment—the same word that will also be used within the Noachic Deluge narrative to describe the subterranean waters that were cast upon the earth in the Flood as God brought his divine judgment upon human sin (Gen 7:11).[50] In other words, the text could not be any more explicit as to the utter degradation of humanity. As noted above, the language of Gen 6:5 suggests that the downward spiral of disorder, sin, and evil has reached its climax. As one scholar states: "few texts in the OT are so explicit and all-embracing as this in specifying the extent of human sinfulness and depravity."[51]

Hamilton also detects a subtle nuance in the wording of Gen 6:5, stating that the Hebrew term, יצר, rendered above as "inclination," is "a nominal form of the word used in 2:7, 19 to describe the 'formation' of man and animal from the soil. There God was the potter, fashioning man. Now man himself has become the potter, fashioning his thoughts. What God forms is beautiful; what man forms is repulsive."[52] It must be noted, however, that God is not a stoic when it comes to bearing witness to such things; indeed, it "broke his heart" (NLT, MSG) or, as the CEB puts it: "he was heartbroken" (Gen 6:6).[53] That is to say, "the LORD was grieved within his innermost being." The scribe's rhetoric

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[49] Mathews, *Genesis 1:11–26*, 358.
[50] See *DCH* 7:395–401.
[51] Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 144.
[52] Hamilton, *Genesis 1–17*, 273. See too Kidner, *Genesis*, 85. Cf. *DCH* 4:270–71; *HALOT* 1:249.
[53] See too Brueggemann, *Genesis*, 78–79. Cf. Burlet "Impassible Yet Impassioned," 116–28, Moberly, *Old Testament Theology*, 107–43, Mann, *Book of the Torah*, 32, Fretheim, *Suffering*, 111.

convincingly communicates that the LORD pays careful (and 'heartfelt') attention to his creation. He is not so far removed (nor indifferent) as to not "see."

Indeed, the devastating consequences of sin are clearly evident for it is not just humanity that suffers but all living creatures. This includes "beasts" (בהמה),[54] "creeping things" (רמש),[55] and "birds" (עוֹף)[56] (Gen 6:7). The language that is used here functions to describe the totality of all of creation.[57] The scribe convincingly communicates God's desire to wipe out all life on earth. One also notes the assonance and wordplay that exists between God's decision to remove humanity, האדם, from the האדמה, i.e. "the ground" (cf. Gen 2:7; 3:19).[58] The scribe's rhetoric convincingly communicates: (1) the import of sin upon this world and how it impugns the mind of God, and (2) the severity of God's judgment for "God not only erases sins, but he erases sinners—he judges them by drowning them."[59]

For this reason, it is all the more significant that "Noah found favour in the eyes of the LORD" (ונח מצא חן בעיני יהוה).[60] God's awareness of sin does not just lead to chaos and destruction (Gen 6:5–7) but also to grace and hope (Gen 6:8). This assertion is the first of many linchpins that provide the foundation for the main assertion of this

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[54] Though this term refers mostly to domestic quadruped animals, the nuance here is of all the different varieties of land creatures. *DCH* 2:98–100; *HALOT* 1:111–12.

[55] Though this term includes insects, it primarily identifies small creeping rodents and reptiles, i.e. creatures that move on the ground. *DCH* 7:500–01; *HALOT* 2:1246.

[56] One notes that though is a generic term for all creatures that fly, including various flying insects, such as bees, and such, the nuance here seems to refer, generally, to birds. *DCH* 6:312–13; *HALOT* 1:800.

[57] Hamilton, *Genesis 1–17*, 276. As such (contra Mathews, *Genesis 1:1—11:26*, 345), it is an over-reading of the text to state that the "omission of 'fish' . . . is due transparently to their innate properties to survive the imminent waters." Alongside this, the text does not delineate some type of three-fold division of life or a "hierarchy" within the animal order. This is "universalistic rhetoric." See Longman and Walton, *Lost World of the Flood*, 70.

[58] See Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry*, 237–50 for more information on this rhetorical device.

[59] Hamilton, *Genesis 1–17*, 275.

[60] For more information on this concept, see Kaminski, *Was Noah Good?*

study—namely that God desires life—not death—for all of his creation. As one scholar astutely notes: "When we think about it, perhaps the most surprising element of this story is that he refrains from completely destroying us. Verse 8 is the turning point of the story when it informs the reader of God's token of grace in the light of human sin and his declared intention to judge that sin by the flood."[61] The scribe's rhetoric convincingly communicates that Noah is a figure of no small importance in addition to the Creator's desire to promote and sustain life by showing grace to Noah.[62]

In addition to the above, it is also written that Noah walked (Hitphael) with God (Gen 6:9), something that only Enoch (Gen 5:22, 24—Hithpael), Abraham (Gen 17:1; 24:40; 48:15—Hithpael), and Jacob (Gen 48:15—Hitpahel) are said to have done (cf. Gen Mic 6:8).[63] The appearance of "God" at the head of this sentence, an inverted construction that is more usual in poetry and other figurative usages (cf. Gen 5:22, 24), is also understood to, perhaps, emphasize "Noah's dependence on the Lord."[64] Whether this is true or not, these scribal comments do highlight the "consistent intimacy of Noah's relationship with God and exemplifies the Old Testament ideal of piety. Noah is a character to be admired and emulated, especially in light of the extreme wickedness of his generation, with which he is contrasted."[65] In addition, these epithets "surely make it likely that the final editor of the flood story saw Noah as good."[66]

Although details concerning whether or not God showed favour to Noah because

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[61] Longman, *Genesis*, 116.
[62] Concerning whether or not God showed favour to Noah because of his righteousness, see below.
[63] Kidner, *Genesis*, 87. I am also indebted to Carol M. Kaminski and Josh Chalmers for further insight concerning some of these matters via private communiqué.
[64] See Mathews, *Genesis 1:11–26*, 358. Cf. Sasson, "Word-Play," 165–66, and *BHRG* §34.5.1.
[65] Arnold, *Genesis*, 98.
[66] Wenham, Review of *Was Noah Good?*, 173. Cf. Kaminski, *Was Noah Good?*, and Keiser, "Nuancing Kaminski's *Was Noah Good?*,"195–204.

of his righteousness fall out of a strict, purview of this study, it warrants mentioning that:

> Noah's survival and role was not earned by his righteousness but was a
> manifestation of God's grace . . . when we hear that Noah was righteous,
> blameless, and that he walked faithfully, we are to understand that he was
> a repentant sinner who sought to be holy . . . God graciously restored his
> relationship with him. He then lived in obedience to his God.[67]

The fact that nothing is said about the spiritual condition or conduct of Noah's wife, his three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japeth, or his son's wives, is insignificant. Walton states that the eight of them probably "enjoy God's protection as a corporate group either because Noah's righteousness has been duplicated and imitated by the members of his family, or because the reward of his righteousness includes the deliverance of his loved ones (cf. Lot in Gen. 18–19; Rahab in Josh. 2:12–13)."[68] Walton further states that family was considered "an extension of the individual" and that it "hardly constitutes deliverance for Noah alone to be saved if he has no means of propagating the race."[69]

The structure of the *toledoths* within the book of Genesis, however, seems to give the clue as to why the scribe chose to name Shem, Ham, and Japheth at this particular time. Since the *toledoth* of Noah (Gen 6:9a) is immediately followed by the *toledoth* of his three sons (Gen 10:1) including such information at this time (Gen 6:9a) makes good sense logically, literarily, and rhetorically. While it remains true that throughout the rest of the Noachic Deluge narrative, Shem, Ham, and Japheth are majorly noted as Noah's sons, with no further attention being given to their specific names (see Gen 6:18 alongside 7:1, 7, 8:16 18, 9:8), it is clear that the scribe drew attention to their names here

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[67] Longman, *Genesis*, 116–17. For more information on this point, i.e. Noah's righteousness in relation to divine favor, see Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 176, Harland, *Value of Human Life*, 52–53, Hamilton, *Genesis 1–17*, 286–87, Clark, "Righteousness of Noah," 262–80, Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis*, 137, Sailhamer, *Genesis*, 118, McKeown, *Genesis*, 56, and Kaminski, *Was Noah Good?*, 194–98.

[68] Walton, *Genesis*, 311.

[69] Walton, *Genesis*, 311. Cf. Steinberg, "Genesis," 279–300.

because they would become important characters later on (see Gen 9:18–27). As such, the scribe understood that these three figures would need a certain amount of introduction prior to that time. Their inclusion also helps to retain the literary structure of the text. This does not, however, explain the repetition of the three names in the same order again at Gen 7:13 (cf. Gen 10:1–31). Further analysis will be offered in the next chapter.

Though the *toledoth* structure does indicate why Shem is placed in the most prominent position of the three sons (first), there is also much discussion concerning chronology, birth order, and the positioning of the three names, in total, within the text.[70] Unquestionably, Shem is the oldest.[71] At the same time, though, the ordering of the three sons also seems to be euphonic. That is to say, the specific order of the names "Shem, Ham, and Japheth," sounded the most pleasant to the scribes, who tended to put the shorter words first.[72] Though the "disqualified son" always takes the second place (Gen 5:32, 6:10, 7:13, 10:1 1 Chr 1:4), its significance is uncertain.[73]

It is also difficult to construe any significance from the meaning of the three sons' names. Clearly, Shem means "name" and, by extension, perhaps, renown.[74] Aside from the blessing that Noah bestows upon him later on (Gen 9:26–27), the few remarks concerning his lineage (Gen 10:21–31), and the fact that he will become the father of the Hebrew people, no other comments of great significance can be made.[75] Much the same can be said concerning Ham and Japeth.[76] Even so, the scribe's rhetoric convincingly

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[70] See Ron, "Jubilees," 103–04, and Mathews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, 461.

[71] Sarna, *Genesis*, 78. Cf. Ron, "Jubilees," 103–04, and Wilson, *Genealogy*, 160.

[72] So Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 201. Cf. Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis*, 31–32.

[73] Mathews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, 461. Cf. Kaminsky, *Yet I Loved Jacob*, 29.

[74] See *HALOT* 2:1548.

[75] Ron, "Jubilees," 103–04, and Mathews, *Genesis*, 460–61.

[76] See Aaron, "Ham and the So-Called 'Hamitic Myth,'" 732–33, Meiring, "Shem, Ham, Japheth," 223–40. Cf. Horowitz, "Genesis x," 35–43.

communicates that Noah was an upstanding patriarch of his family (cf. Gen 7:1).

Alongside this, the scribe also convincingly communicates that these three persons are of

great import via their association with Noah—a person of solid pedigree and status.

III.   *Narratival and Divine Comments Concerning Humanity (Gen 6:11–12)*
            Now the earth was ruined in the sight of God:
                    the earth was filled with death-inducing lawlessness.
            And God saw the earth—it was ruined!
                    For every creature had ruined its way upon the earth.

Extended Analysis:

Within this pericope, the narrator makes clear God's viewpoint on the matter.[77] The

three-fold repetition of "ruined" (שחת) underscores the severity of the situation.[78] In

brief, the scribe's rhetoric communicates a state of total depravity.[79] The repetition of

"the earth" (הארץ) three times indicates that "the fortunes of humanity and the earth are

intertwined."[80] One author states: "God responds measure for measure: they [humanity]

hishḥītu (ruin, pervert, corrupt) the earth; behold me *mashhitam* (ruining, corrupting)

them along with the earth."[81] Given such, there is a "stark quality" to God's decision to

ruin his creation that allows for no middle ground.[82] The usage of "all flesh" (כל בשר)

also marks another instance of the scribe's "universalistic rhetoric."[83]

The shift from the narrator's perspective (Gen 6:11) to God's direct adjudications

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[77] The compound preposition (לפני) is perceptual (evaluative discernment). Williams, *Hebrew Syntax*, §372, and *GBHS* §4.1.11.c. See also Knafl, *Forming God*, 239–40, and Speiser, *Genesis*, 51.

[78] "Ruin" conveys the sense of both "destroy" and "spoilt." Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 170. See too *DCH* 8:327, and *HALOT* 2:1469–72.

[79] Humphreys, *Character of God*, 65.

[80] Mathews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, 359.

[81] Okoye, *Genesis 1–11*, 103.

[82] Humphreys, *Character of God*, 65.

[83] See Longman and Walton, *Lost World of the Flood*, 70.

(Gen 6:12) serves a specific function—namely to slow the movement and to focus one's attention on the dramatic "scene" that is about to unfold, namely the "end of all flesh."[84] The key use of הנה underscores the significance of said pronouncements and draws attention and emphasis to the depraved state of affairs.[85] Undeniably, "this kind of malaise is a chronic condition, not just a spasmodic lapse."[86]

Interestingly, "all flesh" (כל בשר) is consistently used of both humans and animals within the Noachic Deluge narrative (Gen 6:17, 19; 7:15–16, 21; 8:17; 9:11, 15–17). This suggests that the scribe intends to picture all living creatures—humans and animals alike—as guilty of moral failure.[87] The specifics of their failure is that each creature had "ruined their own way," a concept that often refer to not just one's experience, behaviour, or "way of life" (Ps 1:1; 1:6; 146:9; Prov 4:19; 14:2; 15:9; 16:25; Isa 30:21; Jer 12:1) but also the essence of one's moral character (see Job 31:7; Mal 2:8).[88] Fundamental to this meaning is its "covenant overtone. One's path in life . . . finds its source and orientation in reference to one's relationship with Yahweh, the God of the covenant" (see Ps 32:8; 143:8; Isa 48:17; Jer 42:3).[89] All life is in pilgrimage to either life or death. The

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[84] Ryken, *Words of Delight*, 43. See also Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis*, 121.

[85] Grammatically, though some scholars tend to classify this term as an interjection, see *DCH* 2:572–53, or an adverb, see Joüon §105.d, who labels it as a "presentative adverb," it "does not really fit in either of these classes. As opposed to interjections and most ordinary adverbs, it can take a pronominal suffix and, as opposed to ordinary adverbs, it may have scope over a clause or multiple clauses. In fact, it always precedes the clause upon which it has a bearing. Semantically it also differs from the class modal adverbs . . . it does involve the speaker in the content of the clause, but it does not necessarily refer to his or her opinion on the degree of probability of the events or state of affairs." *BHRG* §40.22.1. Although the precise import of the term is often disputed, given the context of Gen 6:12, the function seems to be to introduce the object of perception in such a manner as to "color" it with "emotionality." *GBHS* §4.5.2.b. See also category one, "excited perception," within McCarthy, "The Uses of *wᵉhinnēh* in Biblical Hebrew," 332–33. Cf. *IBHS* §40.2, and Lamdbin, *Biblical Hebrew*, §135. In addition to this, within this context, the function also seems to put the addressee in the perspective of the observing character. That is to say, God is not surprised by what he sees; it is a confirmation of that which was expected. See *BHRG* §40.22.4.1.2.b.

[86] Hamilton, *Genesis 1–17*, 273.

[87] See Hamilton, *Genesis 1–17*, 279. Cf. Habel and Trudinger, eds., *Ecological Reading*, 86.

[88] See *DCH* 2:465.

[89] Merrill, "דרך." 1:989–93. Cf. McComiskey, *Covenants of Promise*.

difference of outcome lies strictly in how one chooses to align oneself with the authority

of the Creator. The scribe's rhetoric convincingly argues for a totally depraved situation.

IV.   *Divine Speech "Make Ready:" Part A—Problem 'lawlessness' (Gen 6:13)*

> Then God said to Noah:
>
> "The end of all flesh has come before me for the earth is filled with death-
>   inducing lawlessness through them.
>
> So now I will surely ruin them with the earth!

Extended Analysis:

There is a high concentration of divine speeches that are contained within the Noachic

Deluge narrative (Gen 6:13–21; 7:1–4; 8:15–17, 21–22; 9:1–7, 8–11, 12–16, 17; cf. 6:7).

It is significant that it is the Deity who speaks. Concerning this, one scholar states:

> Divine monologues lead us directly into Yahweh's mind . . . This indeed is
> the value conventionally ascribed to the monologue: it imprints on a
> speech the mark of *utmost sincerity* and of *absolute truthfulness* . . .
> Moreover, what the speaker says will always express faithfully what he
> thinks, since he is supposed to 'think' the very words of the text.[90]

God's initial announcement to Noah of the carnage to come employs several of the same

key terms that were noted above, including "ruin" (שחת), a double usage of "the earth"

(הארץ), and "all flesh" (בשר כל), another instance of the scribe's "universalistic

rhetoric."[91] Alongside this, Gen 6:13 marks the second time (cf. Gen 6:11) that the pre-

Deluge era is characterized by "death-inducing lawlessness" (חמס).

It is understood that the rendering of Gen 6:13b could be construed as either a

perfect form or a participle, i.e. "the end of all flesh is coming [or, "has come"] before

me;" this raises the question whether this is "a past fact, or a scene that passes in front of

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[90] Lapointe, "Monologue," 179–80. All emphases original. Cf. Hamilton, *Genesis 1–17*, 280.
[91] See Longman and Walton, *Lost World of the Flood*, 70.

God."[92] It is also possible that "end" (קץ) may be a metonymy for that which has prompted it, namely "death-inducing lawlessness" (חמס).[93] Whatever the actual specifics, the contrast between the man Noah and the world at large could not be more stark. When Gen 6:11–13 is coupled with Gen 6:5–7, it becomes evident that the Flood is portrayed as a "great act of destruction" and a "universal act of judgment."[94]

The use of repetition by God within the first announcement "the end of all flesh has come before me . . . I will surely ruin them from the earth!" (Gen 6:13) slows down the movement and draws attention to the severity of the indictment.[95] Notably, הנה is also used, here, perhaps for dramatic effect, so as to garner attention, convey emphasis, and focus the addressee. The scribe's rhetoric convincingly communicates God's awareness of the depraved nature of life on earth and that the Creator has carefully weighed his decision to ruin the earth via a severe, all-encompassing, cataclysmic Deluge.

IV. *Divine Speech 'Make Ready:" Part B—Solution 'the ark' (Gen 6:14–16)*
Make for yourself an ark of gopher wood. Use reeds in its construction.
Then caulk it inside and out with pitch. This is how you are to make it:
The ark is to be three hundred cubits in length, fifty cubits in breadth,
    and thirty cubits in height. Make a vaulted roof for the ark.
Then to a cubit finish it from above.
Then set the door of the ark in her side—make it lower, second, and third.

Extended Analysis:

The first series of instructions (Gen 6:14–16) concern the construction of Noah's ark, a

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[92] Hamilton *Genesis 1–17*, 279. Cf. Speiser (*Genesis*, 47) "I have decided," and Skinner (*Genesis*, 160) "it has entered into my purpose." See also Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 152, and Shaviv, "Flood," 534–35.

[93] Sarna, *Genesis*, 51.

[94] Wenham, "Genesis, Book of," 249. Cf. Mathews, "Genesis," 140–56.

[95] Ryken, *Words of Delight*, 43.

topic that has caught the imagination of countless people throughout time—both ancient and modern.[96] Though the exact shape of the ark is unknown, the term itself seems to refer to a "chest or boxlike vessel."[97] A transliteration of the Hebrew, גפר, yields "*gopher*" hence the rendering of "gopher wood" in many EVV (KJV, NKJV NAB, NASB, ESV, BBE, RSV, and CSB). While the exact nature of the wood is uncertain,[98] some English translations render it as "pine" (see HCSB) or "cypress" (so NEB, NIV 1984, 2011, NRSV). Others opt for "teak wood" (*Message*) or "resinous wood" (NLT).

It has traditionally been understood that Noah was to make "rooms," or "compartments" for the ark.[99] More recent linguistic evidence, however, strongly suggests that Noah was to use "reeds" (קנים) in the ark's construction (so NJB, NEB, and REB), which were then "fastened to the wooden beams of the ark rather than being used for matting or caulking (the latter role being played by the pitch)."[100] Noah is then to "caulk" (כפר) it inside and out with "asphalt," i.e. "bitumen," or "pitch" (כפר).[101]

This word is a *hapax legomenon* that has a remarkable parallel with an Akkadian term for "bitumen" or "pitch" (*kupru*) that (similarly) only occurs in connection with "the flood hero's boat in both Atrahasis 3.2.51 and Gilgamesh 11.44, [65], 66."[102]

The ark was to be three hundred cubits in length, fifty cubits in breadth, and thirty

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[96] McKeown, *Genesis*, 55; Patai, *Children of Noah*, 9; Bailey, *Noah*, 53–115; Longman and Walton, *Lost World of the Flood*, 165–66; Teeple, *Noah's Ark*, 1, 78–122.

[97] *DCH* 8:484; *HALOT* 2:1677–78; BDB, 1061. See too Sarna, *Understanding Genesis*, 49; Sarna, *Genesis*, 52.

[98] See Patai, *Children of Noah*, 6. Cf. *DCH* 2:372; *HALOT* 1:200.

[99] Sarna (*Genesis*, 52) notes: "since the singular *ken* means 'a nest,' the plural is used here in the sense of 'cubicles' for the animals." Cf. NLT "decks and stalls" among other EVV. See discussion below.

[100] Day, *From Creation to Babel*, 122. For more details, see McCann, "Woven of Reeds," 113–40, Longman and Walton, *Lost World of the Flood*, 77–78, and Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 173. Cf. *DCH* 7:263.

[101] *DCH* 4:455, *HALOT* 1:495.

[102] Day, *From Creation to Babel*, 118. Cf. Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 173, Cohen, *Hapax*, 33–34.

cubits in height.[103] Noah was also to make a "vaulted roof" (תעשה).[104] He was also to

finish the ark from above "to a cubit" (Gen 6:16).[105] From the onset, that "no rudder or

sail is mentioned" makes evident that Noah's ark "was not designed to be navigated.

Consequently, the fate of the company aboard was left in the hands of God."[106]

Given such, the scribe's rhetoric convincingly communicates not only the sovereignty of

God but also the necessity of complete trust in God—obeying oneself wholly to him.

Many scholars have noted that the ark is described as being in the shape of

something that would often be considered as a seaworthy vessel.[107] To say it differently,

the relations between the height, length, and width of the ark are usually understood to

pertain to something reckoned to be "shipshape" for sea-faring, that is, "a type of vessel

characterized by a comparatively narrow beam combined with considerable length of hull

and shallowness of draught."[108] This would make the ark extremely capable of

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[103] This is roughly 134 meters (440 feet) long, 22 meters (73 feet) broad, and 13 meters (44 feet) high given the 18" (45.7 cm) cubit, i.e. the standard construction formula found in Exod 25:10, 17, 23. See Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 173. The displacement of the vessel is about 43, 000 tons. See Hamilton, *Genesis 1–17*, 282. Some scholars, however, reckon that the ark should be measured by the large (medium) cubit, 17.52" (44.5 cm). See *DCH* 1:310–11. Cf. Mathews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, 364.

[104] This unique word has been variously rendered as "light" (ASV), "window" (AV), "course of windows" (Knox), "opening" (NAB, NJPS), and "casement" (see Driver, *Genesis*, 8). Given that the ark was intended to withstand a torrential downpour, coupled with the fact that the common word for roof, גג, refers to a flat surface, it is possible that this term refers to a pitched roof, which is much more appropriate for a sea-worthy vessel. That the boat of Utnapishtim has also been conceived as having a vaulted construction lends further credence to this rendering. See *DCH* 7:90. Cf. Hamilton, *Genesis 1–17*, 282–83, and "Armstrong, "Short Notes," 328–33.

[105] According to one scholar, "if . . . a gable-type roof be postulated, the 'one cubit upward' can refer to the elevation of the crease of the roof above the level of the tops of the walls. In modern architectural terms, the 'one cubit' would be the height of the kingposts between which the ridgepiece is laid. It is not necessary to assume that when the ancients did construct gable-type roofs they used exactly the same components as are employed in the present day. All that is required is that such roofs were elevated along the center-line, gradually sloping down to meet the tops of the walls. According to the argument that has been presented, the roof of Noah's ark was conceived as having a four per-cent pitch (1 cubit elevation — 25 cubits from wall to ridge), quite adequate to permit the water of the rains to flow off." Armstrong, "Short Notes," 333. See also Hamilton, *Genesis 1–17*, 283. Cf. Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 173–74, and Sarna, *Genesis*, 52 and 356.

[106] Walton, *Genesis*, 312.

[107] See Hamilton, *Genesis 1–17*, 282; Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis*, 135; Mathews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, 363. Cf. Cohn, *Noah's Flood*, 38–133, and Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 173.

[108] Patai, *Children of Noah*, 4. See also Longman and Walton, *Lost World of the Flood*, 77.

withstanding inclement weather with respect to pitch, yaw, and roll (list and heel).[109]

Hamilton, for instance, states: "the size of Noah's ark possibly suggests that it was large

enough and strong enough to weather the Flood, and that it contained enough space (an

approximate total deck area of 95, 700 sq. ft.) to accommodate all the animals."[110] Great

effort has also been expended by certain members of the academic community to help

bolster the assertion that the biblical ark was an effective nautical vessel that was also

able to accommodate each of the biblical kinds of animals.[111] If understood in this way,

the scribe's rhetoric convincingly communicates the wisdom and knowledge of God.

It is also quite interesting that the Deluge vessel constructed by Utnapishtim in the

Gilgamesh Epic was unsuitable for sea travel by virtue of it being quadrangular, one

hundred twenty cubits by one hundred twenty cubits by one hundred twenty cubits, i.e. a

perfect cube or ziggurat-shape (dimensions that recapitulate sacred space).[112] Since an

acute awareness of the ancient Near East text(s) is not altogether inconceivable given the

unique terminology that they both share, it is thought-provoking to consider that "there is

no evidence to suggest that the ark in Genesis recapitulates sacred space. The rectangular

dimensions suggest instead that it recapitulates the standard shape of boats."[113] Given

such, it may once again be argued that the scribe's rhetoric convincingly communicates

the wisdom of God among certain other attributes—such as sovereignty and compassion.

Even so, the dimensions of the ark describe "a boat like no other boat ever built

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[109] See Ramm, *Christian View of Science and Scripture*, 157 and Filby, *Flood Reconsidered*, 93.
[110] Hamilton, *Genesis 1–17*, 282.
[111] See, for example, Woodmorappe, *Noah's Ark*, and Ross, *Navigating Genesis*, 173–75.
[112] Crawford, "Noah's Architecture," 1–22, Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 173, Walton *Genesis*, 312, Mathews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, 363, Longman and Walton, *Lost World of The Flood*, 77, Blenkinsopp, *Creation*, 138, Holloway "What Ship Goes There," 328–55, Bailey, "Noah's Ark," 1131, and Baily, *Noah*, 19, and Hendel, "Ark," 128–29. This point will be returned to later on within this section.
[113] Longman and Walton, *Lost World of the Flood*, 77.

in antiquity."[114] That is to say, "no seagoing ships even approaching such large

dimensions were built by either the Greeks or the Romans even at the most advanced

stage of their technical development of shipbuilding, when magnificent triremes were

being constructed in Attic shipyards."[115] In this way, though the sea-worthy proportions

of Noah's ark may "incite admiration" in the minds of certain individuals, it remains

reasonable to infer that something other than one hundred percent, referential exactitude

is being used to describe the dimensions of the ark since the vessel's massive size

"staggers the imagination."[116] Given such, both the nuances of hyperbole and ancient

Near East rhetorical conventions concerning such matters will need to be elaborated on.

To reiterate, given that the ark was something that was seemingly designed to withstand

the most colossal of storms with nary a care, it is very peculiar that Noah's incredible

contribution to nautical engineering "vanished without a trace, and the seafarers returned

to their hollow logs and reed rafts. Like a passing mirage, the ark was here one day and

gone the next, leaving not a ripple in the long saga of shipbuilding."[117] As Walton notes:

> Prior to the invention of sea-worthy vessels which could carry sailors and
> cargo through the heavy seas of the Mediterranean, most boats were made
> of skin or reeds and were designed to sail through marshes or along the
> river bank. They were used for fishing or hunting and would not have been
> more than 10 feet in length. True sailing ships, with a length of 170 feet,
> are first depicted in Old Kingdom Egyptian art (ca. 2500 BC) and are
> described in Ugaritic (1600–1200 BC) and Phoenician (1000–500 BC)
> texts. Even this late they generally navigated within sight of land, with
> trips to Crete and Cyprus as well as the ports along the coasts of Egypt, the
> Persian Gulf, and Asia Minor.[118]

This aspect of the Brobdingnag structure defies naturalistic explanation since ship

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[114] See Longman, *Genesis*, 117. See also, Stein, ed., *The Sea*, 5–52.

[115] Patai, *Children of Noah*, 5. See also Casson, *Ships and Seafaring*, 60–77.

[116] See Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis*, 135–36.

[117] Moore, "Impossible Voyage," 3. That Noah began farming (not fishing!) perhaps bespeaks much with respect to the specifics concerning the construction of the ark.

[118] Walton et al., eds., *IVP Background*, 36–37. See also Patai, *Children of Noah*, 5.

building was a long, expensive process.[119] This provides sufficient rationale against a
conventional, straight-forward understanding of the ark's dimensions.[120]

But if the numbers themselves are not to be understood as being "literal," i.e. if
Noah's ark was not actually the size that the text seems to indicate, what does the math
mean? Where did the dimensions come from? What do they signify or represent? What
function do they serve? By what criteria are readers to adjudicate these matters? One
intriguing idea for reducing the size of Noah's ark centers on changing the actual unit of
measurement from a "cubit" (אמה), that is, the distance from the elbow to the fingertips,
to a "hand span" (זרת), i.e. the distance between the tips of one's thumb and their little
finger when the fingers are spread apart. Robert M. Best begins his analysis by noting
that numerous cargo ships have an inside clearance of about 6 feet (tall enough for the
vast majority of standing animals and many adult workers), a number that is less than half
of what the dimensions of the ark seems to be recorded as being.[121] He then states:

> If the meaning of cubit changed or was mistranslated or if cubits was an
> editorial gloss, the size of Noah's barge could have been much smaller . . .
> [t]he source text used by an editor of Genesis 6:15 may have omitted the
> unit of measurement, just as we omit inches in the expression 'two by
> four.' A story teller or editor may have added cubits to the story.
> Alternatively, an archaic sign or pictograph for hand spans may have been
> used that was unfamiliar to an ancient translator who assumed it meant
> cubits. A barge measuring 300 hand spans in length would be about 200
> feet (61 m) long.[122]

Though it is true that Best's calculations would produce a boat that is much more in

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[119] One is not unaware that the art of building large hydrologic vessels was acquired through
millennia of apprentice and experience. See Casson, *Ships and Seafaring*, 17. Alongside this, the number of
disasters that were experienced due to poor quality design and craftsmanship were (evidently) persistent
enough that the impetus was strong for a more thoroughly scientific approach. See Rawson and Tupper,
Ship Theory, 2, and Unger, *Medieval Technology*, 50–61. Cf. Moore, "Impossible Voyage," 1–43.

[120] Sarna, *Understanding Genesis*, 38.

[121] See Best, *Noah's Ark*, 81.

[122] Best, *Noah's Ark*, 81. Italics original.

alignment with our knowledge of wooden boat making and early engineering, the lack of

textual evidence among the ancient versions render speculation on this matter fruitless.

Another idea that has been suggested to account for the grandiose dimensions of the ark

is that the scribe(s) employed a "fanciful exaggeration" in their accounting.[123] Raphael

Patai asserts that such extensive hyperbole would have "appeared necessary when telling

about a ship that played a crucial role in the ancient mythical history of the world."[124]

This is especially so, Patai maintains, when one considers that the ark was designed to

hold at least two members of every kind of animal that was found on earth.[125]

Patai delineates his argument more at length by claiming that a number of scribes

would have observed various ships at port, the largest of which, at least within Talmudic

times, have usually been described as "having had a capacity of 10, 000 talents or

amphorae, which is equal in burden to about 250 tons."[126] Given these things, Patai states:

> It would therefore appear as probable that the author of the passage about
> the ark of Noah, after observing the proportions of the ships available to
> his inspection, solved rather simply the difficulty of having to describe a
> vessel that could carry a great magnitude of animals: he multiplied the
> measurements of the ships he saw by a round number, such as seven, or
> ten; then, ignoring the units under ten, he arrived at the arbitrary sizes of
> 300, 50, and 30 cubits for the length, breadth, and height of Noah's ark.
> From the fact that the ratio of beam to length is one to six we can infer that
> the basis of the calculation was the dimensions of a slender galley
> propelled by oars, rather than the average measurements of tubby
> merchantmen such as the grain ships that ran from Alexandria to Rome
> during the period when Rome held Egypt in her grip.[127]

By way of critique, it must, first of all, be mentioned that Patai's time periods concerning

these matters cannot be reconciled with the evidence of the text itself (as noted above),

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[123] Patai, *Children of Noah*, 5.
[124] Patai, *Children of Noah*, 5.
[125] Patai, *Children of Noah*, 5.
[126] Patai, *Children of Noah*, 5 (see also 39–46).
[127] Patai, *Children of Noah*, 5.

since the Pentateuch shows numerous signs (in its final form) that the implied readers experienced the apostasy of Israel, the devastation of Jerusalem, and the deportation/exile to Babylon that began with Judah in 587 BC.

Patai's argument is also unconvincing in that it fails to argue why a scribe would have chosen to make his calculations from a vessel (the slender galley) so dissimilar from the type of craft that he was actually attempting to comment on (the ark) when he had available to him something that was much more in keeping with its cargo-preserving function (the grain ship). The problem becomes even more acute when one considers that the "blueprints" of the ark intimate that it was not designed to be navigated (hence the absence of any rudder/sail system) or physically maneuvered by personnel; "the fate of the company aboard was [entirely] left in the hands of God."[128] Alongside this, Patai also fails to determine how a scribe would have chosen between the two round numbers that he offers, seven and ten, or why a scribe would have selected those figures, in particular, from among any other number, such as three, five, twelve, or even forty (!) that are also known to contain symbolic meanings.[129] In sum, Patai's work is founded on a construct that does not account for the literary features of the text or make much logical sense.

Despite these shortcomings, Patai's suggestion that the ark's dimensions may be due to "fanciful exaggeration" is quite *a propos* when the biblical narrative is brought into close conversation with various ancient Near East accounts that involve hyperbole. As noted above, this discussion is appropriate since the rhetorical-critical scholar is required to thoroughly examine all literary devices, including hyperbole, that are used within the text so as to best understand their persuasive effects. More details from the

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[128] Walton, *Genesis*, 312.
[129] See Ryken et al., eds., *DBI*, 599.

ancient Near East culture, however, are needed to better 'crack the code' of the Ark.

It is traditionally been understood that the vessel constructed by Utnapishtim was completely unsuitable for sea travel by virtue of it being a quadrangular (120 cubits by 120 cubits by 120 cubits), i.e. a perfect cube or ziggurat-shape; dimensions that recapitulate sacred space (possibly the seven-stepped ziggurat shrine in Babylon); the base itself measured one *ikū* (equivalent to about 3, 600 square meters) and the vessel was divided into nine parts.[130] Lloyd R. Bailey understands that these dimensions reflect a preoccupation with the "idealized number" given the Mesopotamian penchant for the sexagesimal system and the fact that the ship's length, width, and height are all multiples of sixty.[131] Though the vessel is said to be covered with pitch and equipped with punting poles there is no actual concern for "realism and verisimilitude" in the descriptions of the ship.[132] It is fitting to remember that the Gilgamesh scribe was "a poet not a carpenter."[133]

The numbers are not meant to communicate the vessel's construction but are rhetorical edifices that have been erected to convey the import of the craft itself.[134] In much the same way, when Enlil urged Atrahasis to tear down his house of reeds and to build a boat that was covered with a roof and slimed with pitch, the fact that it is physically impossible to build a coracle the size that the text requires (the floor area of the boat equalled 3, 600 square meters, the diameter nearly 70 meters, and the walls roughly 6 meters high) is irrelevant.[135] As Irving Finkel states:

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[130] As noted above, see Crawford, "Noah's Architecture," 1–22, Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 173, Walton, *Genesis*, 312, Mathews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, 363, Longman and Walton, *Lost World of The Flood*, 77, Blenkinsopp, *Creation*, 138, Holloway, "What Ship Goes There," 328–55, Bailey, "Noah's Ark," 1131.

[131] Bailey, *Noah*, 19.

[132] Blenkinsopp, *Creation*, 138.

[133] Best, *Noah's Ark*, 82.

[134] Blenkinsopp, *Creation*, 138.

[135] Finkel, *The Ark Before Noah*, 126, 161.

This is a god speaking . . . who is not concerned with the theoretical nature of circles but with reinforcing the image of a round boat; unlike any other boat, it has neither prow nor stern but is the same width—or as we would say, diameter—in all directions. Enki's instructions to build a coracle were very specific . . . and his servant Atra-hasīs had to be clear on this.[136]

It is reasonable, therefore, to argue that the dimensions are, perhaps, "hyperbolic numbers . . . purposefully exaggerated for rhetorical effect to make a (theological) point."[137]

Longman and Walton add further nuance to this position stating:

In light of the recognition of academic arithmetic in the ancient world and the practice noted in iconography to supersize that which is important, we suggest that in the dimensions . . . more than hyperbole is going on. That is, we are not suggesting that the boat was actually only half the stated size and they doubled it to aggrandize the size of the vessel. The dimensions are not relative to the actual size. Alternatively, the dimensions can be viewed as devised with a rhetorical effect in mind.[138]

That being said, however, though the biblical ark may appear to be monstrous in size, its scope is nothing when compared to the Armenian account of Eusebius' *Chronicles*, where the length of the vessel that survived the Deluge is given as fifteen furlongs (nearly two miles!) or Berosus's claims that it was five stadia long and two stadia broad.[139]

In sum, as a salvific vehicle *par excellence, sui genersis*, the Ark's presence within the Noachic Deluge narrative communicates the grandeur, majesty, wisdom, and sovereignty of God since the massive size of this "handmade wooden craft staggers the imagination, and its seaworthy proportions incite admiration."[140] The scribe's rhetoric convincingly communicates the Creator's compassion, sensitivity, and care for the preservation and redemption of all life on earth via this impressive nautical vessel.

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[136] Finkel, *The Ark Before Noah*, 126.
[137] Longman and Walton, *Lost World of the Flood*, 38.
[138] Longman and Walton, *Lost World of the Flood*, 76.
[139] This is about 914 m (3000 feet) long and 366 m (1200 feet) broad. Patai, *Children of Noah*, 5. For more information, see Day, *From Creation to Babel*, 61–76.
[140] Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis*, 135.

IV.   *Divine Speech "Make Ready:" Part C—Problem 'the flood' (Gen 6:17)*

> But I am surely bringing the Flood waters upon the earth, soon, in order to
> ruin every creature that has the breath of life in it under the sky.
> Everything that is on the earth shall perish.

Extended Analysis:

While the first series of instructions pertain to the construction of Noah's ark (Gen 6:14–16), this verse marks a shift in the speech to the destruction of all life (Gen 6:17). It is also the second occurrence of הנה that exists within the divine locution (Gen 6:13–21). It is of interest to note that a contrast exists here "between what God is doing and what Noah must do, vv 14–16, 21)."[141] As one scholar asserts: "the sense is, 'When you, Noah, have built the ark, I, God, will act.'"[142] The scribe's rhetoric convincingly communicates God's sovereignty over all of his creation—both to give life and to take it away.[143]

Markedly, this is the first time that the term for "the Flood" (מבול) is used.[144] The context of the passage makes clear that the Flood that is about to occur is no mere force of nature but a "cosmic water-weapon wielded by deity."[145] The scribe's withholding of the actual means of devastation until now could be part of the literary art of tension-building.[146] The scribe's rhetoric convincingly communicates the immanence of the Flood event and its severe consequences for all life on earth—absolute and certain death.

The language that is used for the devastation is brutal. "The Flood" (מבול) will come upon the "land" (ארץ) effectively "ruining" (שחת) "all flesh" (כל בשר).[147]

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[141] Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 152.
[142] Sarna, *Genesis*, 52.
[143] Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 174.
[144] *DCH* 5:124–25; *HALOT* 1:541. Cf. Sarna, *Genesis*, 53.
[145] Walton, *Genesis 1–15*, 313.
[146] Matthews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, 355.
[147] See further discussion in Mathews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, 366.

Indeed, "all life on earth will perish" (כל אשר בארץ יגוע).[148] Wenham states that

"beneath the heaven" (מתחת השמים) may be a poetic alternative to upon the earth and

thus a contrast to "'beneath the waters' . . . thereby excluding fishes [sic] and other water

creatures from destruction."[149] This seems to be an unnecessary over-reading of the text

since the scribe seems to be utilizing or using *merismus*; that is, "under heaven" and "on

earth" means everything—all creatures.[150] This is "universalistic rhetoric."[151]

Given that the scribe has yet to reveal God's intentions to save anything other

than Noah himself (see Gen 6:14; cf. Gen 6:8), the mood of the text is pensive and grim.

The scribe's rhetoric convincingly communicates the severity of God's judgment on

earth. The devastating effects of the Flood for all things on earth is total and absolute.

IV. Divine Speech "Make Ready:" Part D—Solution 'covenant' (Gen 6:18–21)
But I am establishing my covenant with you.

> Thus you shall come into the ark—you, and your sons, and your wife,
>> and the wives of your sons with you.

> Also, from all living things, from every creature, bring two from every
>> [kind] into the ark in order to keep (them) alive with you—male
>> and female they shall be: from the birds according to their kinds,
>> and from beasts according to their kinds, from every creeping thing
>> of the ground, according to their kinds.

> Two from every [kind] shall come to you in order to keep [them] alive.
> Alongside this, you must take for yourself from every [kind] of food
>> which is edible and gather it to you. Thus it shall be for you and for
>> them for food."

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[148] One notes that the term "perish" that is used here is "essentially equivalent in meaning to the common word 'die' (*mût*, Num 20:29), but it often is associated with the departure of a person's vital 'breath' (e.g. Gen 25:8, 17; 35:39), hence translated at times 'expire.'" Mathews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, 366. For more details see *DCH* 2:335, *HALOT* 1:184.

[149] Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 174. See too Okoye, *Genesis 1–11*, 103.

[150] For more information on *merismus*, see Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry*, 31.

[151] See Longman and Walton, *Lost World of the Flood*, 70.

Extended Analysis:

While it may have been safely assumed that Noah was building the ark so as to be delivered from the much water that was to come (see Gen 6:14), it is now made clear that certain other members are also exempt from the cataclysm (Gen 6:18–21). Although no emotions or response are provided within the text, the Creator's words would likely give "the fearful band" the "security" it needs "for the disaster unfolding before them."[152] The scribe's rhetoric convincingly communicates God's care, attention, and sensitivity.

The phrase "you, your sons, your wife, and your sons' wives" (Gen 6:18), seems to illustrate that the "basic unit of biblical society consisted of a man, his wife, his married sons and daughters-in-law and their children, rather than the modern nuclear family."[153] Chronologically, the fact that the wives of Noah's sons are mentioned (Gen 6:18) seems to imply that they are already married when God gave Noah the command to build the ark; this means that Noah had roughly seventy years to finish the task.[154] The scribe's rhetoric convincingly communicates the Creator's wisdom and understanding.

Further comments concerning the specific enumeration of the ark's human inhabitants will be made in those sections that repeat the order (Gen 7:7, 13; 8:16, 18). With respect to the Noachic covenant, specifically, further comments will also be given in conjunction with those texts that relate to the time after the Flood (Gen 8:20—9:17).[155]

As noted above, while the first series of instructions pertain to the construction of Noah's ark (Gen 6:14–16), within the second series of instructions (Gen 6:19–21), Noah

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[152] Mathews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, 367.

[153] Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 175.

[154] This calculation is assuming that Noah was five hundred years old when Japeth was born (Gen 5:32) and that Noah was six hundred years old when the Flood came (Gen 7:6). LaHaye and Morris (*Ark on Ararat*, 248) calculate it as being eighty-one years. Cf. Wilson, *Genealogy*, 160, and Hordes, "Noah," 217.

[155] See Day, *From Creation To Babel*, 123–36.

must bring the pairs of animals (male and female) into the life-saving vessel (Gen 6:19–
20) and victual it (Gen 6:21). The imperative for Noah to bring sustenance could,
perhaps, be an echo of the giving of food for all living creatures at creation (Gen 1).[156]
To speculate, however, on the absence of an imperative to bring aboard fresh water to
drink is unproductive. Though some scholars presume that the reason for this is because
it is not in short supply, but questions arise concerning contamination and other issues.[157]
In brief, the scribe's rhetoric convincingly communicates the fact that God knows what is
needed without necessitating the inclusion of such minutia.

The list of animals that are to come on board develops from being more general
(two of every creature—male and female) to somewhat more specific (birds, beasts, and
creeping things). As noted above, however, there is no "hierarchy" or particular ranking
of life. The scribe is persuasive in arguing that all of the animal kinds are of value and
precious to God, the Creator, who has chosen to save some from every form of life.

Lastly, it is interesting that the Hebrew term for the "ark" (תבה) occurs seven
times, in total, within the divine speech (Gen 6:14–2x, Gen 6:15–1x, Gen 6:16–2x, Gen
6:18–1x, Gen 6:19–1x).[158] The scribe's rhetoric convincingly communicates the mercies
of God for within the ark the inhabitants find comfort, strength, refuge, and protection.

V.   Final Narratival Comments Concerning Noah (Gen 6:22)
So Noah did according to all that God commanded him—thus he did.

Extended Analysis:

This portion of text concludes with the refrain that Noah did according to all that God

commanded (Gen 6:22). This is the first of two refrains that occur in connection with two

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[156] I am indebted to Rick Wadholm Jr. for this insight via private communiqué.
[157] Cf. McKeown, *Genesis*, 55, Okoye, *Genesis 1–11*, 103.
[158] Sarna, *Genesis*, 52.

critical acts: (1) building the ark (Gen 6:22), and (2) entering it (Gen 7:5).[159] Meier

Sternberg notes this as a *forecast → enactment* sequence.[160] This rhetorical device

functions as an "indirect means of characterizing the giver or the addressee of an order or

their relations."[161] Here, the characterization of all parties is wholly positive. Given such,

the scribe's rhetoric convincingly communicates that Noah is worthy of empathy and

facilitates further support for Noah as a character within the narrative.

Summary

There are two main emphases within this pericope: judgment and deliverance. The

scribe's rhetoric convincingly communicated the need for God to do something about the

depraved state of affairs on the earth. Evil had grown to such an extent that sin was

pervasive throughout creation (Gen 6:11–12, 13). As such, God decided to start the world

anew—the cosmos becoming chaos—by means of a catastrophic Flood like none other

(Gen 6:11–12, 13, 17). At the same time, however, the scribe's rhetoric also convincingly

communicated God's decision to spare life and to redeem creation. The scribe generated

support for Noah by stating that he was an exemplary individual in the eyes of God (Gen

6:9–10) and by noting God's decision to spare his life by commanding him to build an

ark (Gen 6:14). He also drew attention to the covenant that God made with Noah (Gen

6:18) and marked his obedience to God (Gen 6:22). The fact that God also chose to spare

Noah's immediate family, along with representatives of all the different kinds of animals,

also underscores the Lord's desire to preserve and redeem life (Gen 6:18–21). The ark

too magnifies and extolls the wisdom, goodness, mercy, and grace of God (Gen 6:14–16).

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[159] Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis*, 123.
[160] Sternberg, *Poetics*, 388.
[161] Sternberg, *Poetics*, 388.

Step Four: Determining the Rhetorical Effectiveness

The final step of the rhetorical critical model that this study leverages is to determine the rhetorical effectiveness of the text. Within this stage, the rhetorical critic seeks to answer to what degree the discourse was a "fitting response to the exigency that occasioned it."[162] As noted above, the primary exigence of the entextualized rhetorical situation pertains to the "death-inducing lawlessness" (חמס) of humanity and how to mitigate and address their self-destructive, death-inducing sinfulness. Alongside this, there is also the secondary exigence of potential covenant infidelity on the part of God and Noah alongside the exigence of the Deluge water that must be controlled and stabilized so as to permit life aboard the ark to exist. Concerning the latter, it is not evident at this time that God displayed his sovereignty over this situation. With respect to the other exigences, however, though the text does provide some inklings concerning these matters, we will have to await future chapters in order to bring complete resolution to these problems. That being said, however, it is clearly evident by means of both the salvation of Noah and company and the destruction of all things outside the ark that the Creator is not only all-powerful and all-wise but also kind and merciful. God is portrayed as being worthy of fear and awe as well as concerted devotion and faithful obedience. In sum, God's resolve to save only a remnant of his creation and to establish his covenant with Noah rather than obliterate all that he has made is both celebratory and solemn.

On a related note, those persons who were privy to the Noachic Deluge narrative within the exilic/postexilic period would have identified with many of the sentiments that are found within this pericope (Gen 6:5–8 and 9–22).[163] As James McKeown notes:

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[162] Möller, *Prophet in Debate*, 42. See also Ahn, *Persuasive Portrayal*, 31.
[163] McKeown, *Genesis*, 52. Cf. Peterson, *Genesis*, 65–67.

"They too had suffered, not the destruction of a flood, but the brutality of an expansionist regime."[164] This passage thereby offers the consolation that "God is not unfeeling or uncaring but actually shares the suffering of his recalcitrant creation."[165] In addition, though God did, indeed, send the Flood and drive the Israelites out of the Promised Land (a severe judgment) he also chose to restore and redeem creation via the Noachic covenant and to empower his treasured, beloved people to return to their home country (a mighty act of deliverance, salvation, and redemption). These things would prove to be a continual source of hope and encouragement for a downcast Israel (see Isa 54:9). As John Oswalt states:

> There is no discontinuity between the God of Noah and the God of the postexilic era. Just as his compassion prevented him from completely destroying the world then and led him to bind himself from that sort of destruction in the future, so here it is his compassion that leads him to bring an exile to an end and to swear not to pour out his anger on them.[166]

Further comments on these matters will also be noted in the following chapters.

Conclusion

This chapter analyzed the text of Gen 6:5–8 and 9–22 via the four steps of rhetorical criticism that were delineated within the methodology section (chapter 2). Step one was *determining the rhetorical units*. It was demonstrated that Gen 6:5–8 was constructed of several main rhetorical subsections, namely initial divine comments concerning humanity (Gen 6:5–6), a divine speech "The Great Purge" (Gen 6:7), and initial divine comments concerning Noah (Gen 6:8). It was also demonstrated that Gen 6:9–22 was constructed of several rhetorical subsections: the *toledoth* formula (Gen 6:9a), initial narratival

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[164] McKeown, *Genesis*, 52.
[165] McKeown, *Genesis*, 52.
[166] Oswalt, *Isaiah 40–66*, 422. Cf. Smith, *Isaiah 40–66*, 484–85.

comments concerning Noah (Gen 6:9b–10), narratival and divine comments concerning humanity (Gen 6:11–12), a divine speech (Gen 6:13–21), and final narratival comments concerning Noah (Gen 6:22). The analysis also determined that each of these subsections are capable of being subdivided into smaller rhetorical units, the details of which are given above and need not concern us here at this time.

Following this, in step two, *determining the rhetorical situation*, it was made clear that the primary exigence of the Noachic Deluge narrative (as a rhetorical unit) pertains to humanity's inability to effectively relate to God, one another, and creation (in general). A secondary exigence also exists, namely the potential risk of covenant infidelity on the part of God and Noah. Lastly, a third (but lesser), exigence also exists that pertains to the colossal amount of Flood water that must soon be controlled and stabilized so as to permit all life aboard the ark to exist. In step three, *determining the rhetorical strategy*, it was shown that the scribe employed a great variety of (literary) devices that had aesthetic appeal. Alongside this, the scribe's rhetoric convincingly communicated both God's judgment and his deliverance. With respect to step four, *determining the rhetorical effectiveness*, it was understood that though the text underscores Noah's fidelity to the covenant bonds initiated by God it was also indeterminate to what degree God himself would remain true to his word (within the confines and plot of the narrative itself) and to what capacity he would display his sovereignty over the much water he had decreed. It also noted that this text had a marked effect upon an exilic/post-exilic audience.

Concerning our main argument that the Noachic Deluge narrative is focused, *in toto*, on redemption and salvation, namely God's deliverance and what God did to preserve and uphold life, the above analysis provides evidence that a far greater portion

of text was devoted to either: (a) salvific aspects, i.e. details concerning the ark itself or the Noachic covenant (Gen 6:14–16, 18–21), or (b) delineating a positive characterization of Noah (Gen 6:9–10, 22), than on (c) providing the specifics of the imminent destruction (Gen 6:17) or (d) the reason(s) for its existence (Gen 6:11–13). Alongside this, though the text does not shy away from using "universalistic language" to detail both the severity of the sinful situation leading up to the Deluge or the catastrophe that will ensue by means of the Flood itself (Gen 6:11–13, 17), a comparable use of "totalic" language is also involved in depicting the various kinds of animals that will enter the ark (Gen 6:19–20). While statistics alone will not solve this matter, these points, alongside the fact that God did indeed choose to save some of each of the representatives of both human and animal life rather than obliterate every single living thing entirely, serves to further bolster the main proposition of this study, namely that the Noachic Deluge narrative is best understood as part of redemption through which God fulfills his salvific purposes for his creation. To conclude, the argument that the Noachic Deluge narrative functions as intellectual, world-view formative rhetoric demonstrating that God's intentions to carry out his plans and purpose for creation, the establishment of order via covenant, will not be thwarted, has been both bolstered and strengthened by means of the above analysis.

CHAPTER 4: IT COMETH!
GEN 7:1–24

Introduction

Within the previous chapter, it was made clear that though God's intention was to make

an end to his creation by means of a catastrophic Flood of epic proportions (the cosmos

becoming chaos), God was also resolute in his endeavor to redeem creation by means of

saving Noah, his immediate family, and certain representatives of the animal kingdom via

the ark—a colossal vessel of salvation. That the ark was to be the salvific vehicle from

the Deluge was first made clear via divine speech (Gen 6:18–21) and is reaffirmed here

(Gen 7:1–3, 7–9, 13–16, and 23). The scribe's comment that "the LORD closed it behind

him" (Gen 7:16), namely the door of the ark, provides assurance that despite the epic

catastrophe to come, God's hand of favour would rest upon everyone inside. As such,

though Gen 7:17–24 places the most emphasis within the entire Noachic Deluge narrative

upon the totality of the devastation that was involved in the Flood, it behooves us to

remember that all those together with Noah in the ark were spared via the Lord's great

mercy and love (Gen 7:23). The scribe's rhetoric thus convincingly communicates that

nothing is able to thwart God's plans to save, redeem, and restore his beloved creation.

Step One: Determining the Rhetorical Units

The first step of the rhetorical-critical "rhetoric as persuasion" model that this study

utilizes is to determine the boundaries of each of the rhetorical units of the text. This is

done by looking at various signals that demarcate the distinct discourse unit (aperture and

closing). The procedures for doing so have been noted above. The same vocabulary and

schematics for rhetorical units that were used in the previous chapter are also used here.

As in the previous chapter, the analysis itself will begin with a fresh, English translation, alongside a commentary of certain grammatical and syntactical features (including text criticism issues). Each portion of text will be divided according to the "main" subunits that will be delineated at length within the rhetorical analysis itself (step one). As noted above, this portion of text has been named "It Cometh!" (Gen 7:1–24). The six main units within it are: (I) "Divine Speech: Enter!" (Gen 7:1–4), (II), "Noah's Obedient Faithfulness" (Gen 7:5), (III) "Initial Recounting of the Entry into the Ark" (Gen 7:6–9), (IV) "Narration of the Flood: PartA 'It Cometh!'" (Gen 7:10–12), (V) "Second Recounting of the Boarding of the Ark" (Gen 7:13–16), and, finally, (VI) "Narration of the Flood: Part B 'The Waters Prevail'" (Gen 7:17–24).

I.   *Divine Speech "Enter!" (Gen 7:1–4)*

[a]ויאמר [b]יהוה לנח

בא [c]אתה [d]וכל ביתך אל התבה [e]כי [f]אתך ראיתי צדיק [g]לפני בדור הזה

מכל הבהמה הטהורה תקח לך שבעה [h]שבעה איש [i]ואשתו

[j]ומן הבהמה אשר לא טהרה [k]הוא [l]שנים איש [m]ואשתו

[n]גם מעוף השמים שבעה שבעה זכר ונקבה

לחיות זרע על פני כל הארץ

[o]כי לימים עוד שבעה אנכי ממטיר על הארץ ארבעים יום וארבעים לילה

[p]ומחיתי את כל [q]היקום אשר עשיתי מעל פני האדמה

Then the LORD said to Noah:

"Go—you and all your house—into the ark!

For you have I seen as just before me in this generation.

From all the clean beasts, take with you seven pairs—a male and his mate.

Also, from the beast which is not clean, (take) a pair—a male and his mate.

Even from the birds of the sky, (take) a pair—male and female—in order

    to keep seed alive upon the face of the earth.

For in seven days I will cause it to rain upon the earth forty and forty nights.

Thus I will blot out every living thing that I have made from upon the face of the ground."

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a. Narratival *waw*. See *GBHS* §3.5.1.c. Cf. Chisholm, *Exegesis*, 120 (introductory *waw*).
b. Note: the Smr reads "God" while the LXX reads "LORD God." See Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 153. Wevers (*Greek Text of Genesis*, 89) states: "in view of Gen's apparent indifference with respect to the divine name its double name is text critically of little use."
c. The use of the personal pronoun here "is not pleonastic or emphatic; it serves merely to represent the referent of the pronoun as the chief actor among other actors." *IBHS* §16.3.2.c.
d. Synchronic *waw*. Chisholm, *Exegesis*, 126.
e. Causal conjunction. *GBHS* §4.3.4.a, and Williams, *Hebrew Syntax*, §444.
f. The direct object is placed first in the clause to give it prominence for emphasis. See Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 153, and Muraoka, *Emphatic Words*, 38–39, 146–58. For more details concerning the use of fronting here (constituent focus) consult *BHRG* §47.2.2.a.
g. The compound preposition is perceptual (evaluative discernment). Williams, *Hebrew Syntax*, §372, and *GBHS* §4.1.11.c. Cf. *IBHS* §11.3.1.a (referential).
h. On the distributive use of numbers here, see *IBHS* §7.2.3, 16.6c, 39.3.2a, Joüon §142p, and Bandstra (*Handbook*, 384) who states: "[s]even seven . . . presumably means seven pairs."
i. This coordinative *waw* joins opposites. Williams, *Hebrew Syntax*, §430a and §431. Note: given that these terms usually here to human beings, "the versions rejected the isolated metaphorical terms in favor of the discriminatory ones." Tal, *BHQ* 95.
j. Synchronic *waw* (Chisholm, *Exegesis*, 126) with partitive preposition. *GBHS* §4.1.13.f.
k. The retrospective pronoun is usually added in negative sentences. GKC §138b.
l. Note: "the versions repeat the number . . . in order to stress the distributive." Tal, *BHQ*, 95.
m. This coordinative *waw* joins opposites. Williams, *Hebrew Syntax*, §430a and §431.
n. Note: the Syriac and LXX discriminate between "clean" and "unclean" birds. Tal, *BHQ*, 95, and Wevers, *Notes on the Greek Text of Genesis*, 90.
o. Causal conjunction. *GBHS* §4.3.4.a, and Williams, *Hebrew Syntax*, §444.
p. Consequential *waw*. Chisholm, *Exegesis*, 132, *GBHS* §3.5.1.b. See also *IBHS* §37.7.2.a.
q. This is a rare word that occurs only here and two other places (Gen 7:23; Deut 11:6). It indicates "living form," "substance," or "existence." *DCH* 4:273, *HALOT* 1:430.

The first main rhetorical unit is entitled "Divine Speech: 'Enter!'" (Gen 7:1–4).[1]

The unit 'hangs together' as a divine speech. Its referential, situational, and structural

(relational) coherence is, therefore, best demonstrated by means of the introductory

formula (Gen 7:1) "then the LORD said to Noah," and the refrain that delimits the end of

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[1] While a number of scholars (Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis*, 138, McKeown, *Genesis*, 56, Sailhamer, *Genesis*, 116, and Keiser, *Genesis 1–11*, 129) place Gen 7:1–4 together with Gen 7:5 as one unit, i.e. Gen 7:1–5, this construct does not adequately reckon with the "divine speech + refrain" pattern that the scribe employs. Other scholars place Gen 7:1–4 within the same unit as Gen 7:5–10 (see Mathews, *Genesis 1—11:26*, 370, Longacre, "Noah's Flood," 238, and Hamilton, *Genesis 1–17*, 288), or extend the unit, i.e. Gen 7:5–16 (Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 157). See the analysis portion below for more details.

the speech (Gen 7:5). As such, Gen 7:1–5 follows a similar pattern and structure as Gen 6:13–22, i.e. a divine speech (Gen 7:1–4, cf. Gen 6:13–21) followed by the scribe's affirmation of Noah's obedience to God (Gen 7:5, cf. Gen 6:22).[2]

Alongside this, the text's coherence is also signified through: (a) sameness of narratival time (cf. Gen 7:1–4 with vv. 6, 10), (b) sameness of place (cf. Gen 7:1–5 with vv. 6–9), (c) sameness of participants, including God (Gen 7:1, 4), Noah (Gen 7:1–2), and the inhabitants of the ark (Gen 7:1–3), (d) sameness of speed of action and a frequent repetition of the same words throughout the unit, two and seven (Gen 7:2–4), and (e) sameness of topic/theme, i.e. the preservation of life for all those aboard the ark and the imminent death for all those outside. The LORD is also the subject of each of the verbs.

This divine speech (Gen 7:1–4) is comprised of three primary sections: (1) a preface that delineates both the interlocutor and the recipient of the message, "the LORD said to Noah" (Gen 7:1a), (2) explicit directives to enter the ark (Gen 7:1b–3), and (3) certain comments that concern the Flood (Gen 7:4). The directives portion (Gen 7:1b–3) is comprised of two secondary subunits: (i) those that concern human beings (Gen 7:1b–c), and (ii) those that concern animals (Gen 7:2–3). Each of these sections may also be divided into lower subunits. Concerning the former section (human beings), there are three lower subunits: (a) the divine imperative for Noah to enter the ark, Gen 7:1b, (b) the inclusion of all of Noah's household within the injunction, Gen 7:1b, and (c) clarification "for you have I seen as just before me in this generation" (Gen 7:1c).

With respect to the latter section (animals), there are four lower subunits: (a) specifics that pertain to clean animals, Gen 7:2a, (b) specifics pertaining to animals that

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[2] Hamilton, *Genesis 1–17*, 288.

are not clean, Gen 7:2b, (c) specifics that pertain to birds, Gen 7:3a, and (d) an explanatory comment as to why this is to be so, namely "in order to keep seed alive upon the earth" (Gen 7:3b). Lower level subunits a–c of secondary section two (the animals) are also each marked by two further comments: the first marker pertains to specific groupings (the clean animals are to come in pairs of seven, alongside the birds, while the animals that are not clean are to come in pairs), the second marker pertains to gender, i.e. the animals, whether clean or not clean, are both to be male and female (Gen 7:2–3).

Comments that concern the Flood (Gen 7:4) are divided into three secondary sections: (i) the specific countdown to the Flood, "for in seven days I will cause it to rain upon the earth," Gen 7:4a, (ii) the demarcation of the duration of the Flood, that is, it will last for "forty days and forty nights," Gen 7:4b, and (iii) clarity with respect to the devastating, total consequence (result) or purpose of the Flood, "thus I will blot out every living thing that I have made from upon the ground" (Gen 7:4c).

II.   *Narratival Comments Concerning Noah's Obedience (Gen 7:5)*

ויעש נח [a] ככל [b] אשר צוהו יהוה

So Noah did according to all that the LORD commanded him.

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    a.   Summarizing or concluding *waw*. Chisholm, *Exegesis*, 123.
    b.   The preposition denotes "agreement between trajector x and landmark y." *BHRG* §39.10.

The second main rhetorical unit of this specific pericope (Gen 7:1–24), is entitled "Narratival Comments Concerning Noah's Obedience" (Gen 7:5). It involves scribal comments concerning Noah's obedience (the refrain) which affirm that Noah "did all the LORD commanded him" (Gen 7:5).[3] This concludes our analysis of rhetorical subunits of this divine speech—including its refrain (Gen 7:1–5).

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[3] Hamilton, *Genesis 1–17*, 288. Cf. Sailhamer, *Pentateuch*, 126.

III. *Initial Recounting of the Entry into the Ark (Gen 7:6–9)*

ונח בן שש מאות שנה[b]והמבול[c] היה מים על הארץ[a]

ויבא נח[e]ובניו ואשתו ונשי בניו אתו אל התבה מפני מי המבול[d]

מן הבהמה הטהורה ומן הבהמה אשר איננה טהרה ומן העוף

וכל אשר רמש על האדמה שנים שנים באו אל נח אל התבה[f]

זכר[g]ונקבה כאשר צוה אלהים את נח

Now Noah was six hundred years old. Then the Flood came upon the earth.

Then Noah went, and his sons, and his wife, and his son's wives with him,

into the ark in order to escape the waters of the Flood.[h]

From the clean beast, and from the beast that is not clean, and from the bird,

from every creature that creeps on the ground, by pairs they went with

Noah into the ark—male and female—as God commanded Noah.

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a. Introductory (disjunctive) *waw*. Chisholm, *Exegesis*, 124. Cf. *GBHS* §3.5.1.c (narratival *waw*), and Joüon §166g. (observation *waw*).
b. See GKC §164a for further information on the temporal nature of this disjunctive clause.
c. Note: though the disjunctive *zâqēph qāṭôn* here makes the following phrase become appositional to the previous one, the LXX puts the phrase in the genitive, i.e. "flood of waters." See Tal, *BHQ*, 95, and Wevers, *Notes on the Greek Text of Genesis*, 92. Cf. McCarter, *Textual Criticism*, 32–33.
d. Sequential *waw*. *GBHS* §3.5.1.a. Cf. Chisholm, *Exegesis*, 124 (consequential *waw*).
e. This *waw* (and the ones that follow, unless indicated otherwise) show accompaniment. Williams, *Hebrew Syntax*, §436, *GBHS* §4.3.3.e.
f. Summarizing or concluding *waw*. Chisholm, *Exegesis*, 123
g. This coordinative *waw* joins opposites. Williams, *Hebrew Syntax*, §430a and §431.
h. Hebrew reads "from before the face of the waters of the Flood." A precedent for the English translation of "escape" is found in the NIV 1984, NIV 2011, NRSV, NJB, and the GNB. Other EVV render the clause as causal (see AV, NASB, NJPS, NAB, HCSB, CSB).

This main subunit is entitled "Initial Recounting of the Entry into the Ark" (Gen 7:6–9).[4] It is identified as a rhetorical unit by virtue of its referential, situational, and structural (relational) coherence signified by there being: (a) sameness of time (cf. Gen 7:6 with Gen 7:10, 11, 12, 13), (b) sameness of place (cf. Gen 7:7–9 with Gen 7:13–16),

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[4] A number of scholars (Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis*, 138, Mathews, *Genesis 1—11:26*, 374, and Keiser, *Genesis 1–11*, 129) disrégard the temporal shift that occurs between Gen 7:6–9 and Gen 7:10–12 by keeping Gen 7:10 with Gen 7:6–9 as one and the same unit, i.e. Gen 7:6–10.

(c) sameness of participants, namely Noah (Gen 7:6, 7, 9), Noah's kin (Gen 7:7), and the animals that God had chosen (Gen 7:8–9), and (d) sameness of topic and theme, i.e. salvation from the devastating onslaught of the Flood (Gen 7:6–9). One also notes the use of the narrator to depict each of the persons of the verbs.

This section, "Initial Recounting of the Entry into the Ark" (Gen 7:6–9), may also be divided into three primary subsections: (1) temporal clarification by the narrator, "now Noah was six hundred years of age when the Flood waters came upon the earth" (Gen 7:6), (2) human entry into the ark (Gen 7:7), and (3) animal entry into the ark (Gen 7:8–9). The human entry into the ark (Gen 7:7) is comprised of two secondary subsections: (i) a delineation of each of the persons that are soon to be safe on board the ark, namely Noah, his sons, his wife, and his son's wives (Gen 7:7a), and (ii) clarification concerning their reason for entering the ark, namely to "escape the waters of the Flood" (Gen 7:7b). The animal entry into the ark is comprised of two secondary subsections: (i) a delineation of the diverse types of animals that went with Noah into the ark, their groupings, and their gender: "from the clean beast, and from the beast that is not clean, and from the bird, and every creature that creeps on the ground, by pairs they went with Noah into the ark, male and female . . ." (Gen 7:8–9b), and (ii) a comment by the narrator that all this transpired "as God commanded Noah" (Gen 7:9b). The first secondary subsection of the animal entry into the ark is comprised of several lower level subunits that delineate: (a) that there were clean animals aboard, (b) that there were animals that were not clean, (c) that birds were aboard the ark, and, in addition, (d) every creature that creeps on the ground. These lower level subunits are accompanied by two further comments: the first details their groupings (animal pairings), the second marks their gender (Gen 7:8a–9b).

IV.   Narration of the Flood: Part A "It Cometh" (Gen 7:10–12)

ויהי לשבעת הימים ^bומי המבול היו על הארץ^a

בשנת^c שש מאות ^dשנה לחיי נח בחדש השני בשבעה עשר יום ^eלחדש

ביום הזה נבקעו כל מעינת תהום רבה^fוארבת השמים נפתחו

ויהי הגשם על הארץ ארבעים יום ^hוארבעים ⁱלילה^g

Then seven days passed.

Then the Flood waters were upon the earth.

In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, on the

seventeenth day of the month, on that day, all the fountains of the great

deep burst open and the windows of heaven were opened.

At the same time, the rain was upon the earth forty days and forty nights.

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a. Introductory *waw*. Chisholm, *Exegesis*, 120. Cf. *GBHS* §3.5.1.c (narratival *waw*).
b. Dramatic *waw*. Chisholm, *Exegesis*, 126.
c. Note: "Smr and G prefer the determined numeral, in line with Lev 25:11, where M also has the determined form." Tal, *BHQ* 95.
d. Such repetition is not unusual in this type of construction. See GKC §134o, Joüon §142o.
e. Note: "G makes the flood exactly one year long (cf. 8:14)." Tal, *BHQ* 95, 96.
f. Synchronic *waw*. Chisholm, *Exegesis*, 126.
g. Synchronic *waw*. Chisholm, *Exegesis*, 126.
h. This coordinative *waw* joins opposites. Williams, *Hebrew Syntax*, §430a and §431.
i. On the use of plurals here for singular numbers, see Hamilton, *Genesis 1–17*, 290.

The next main unit is entitled "Narration of the Flood: Part A 'It Cometh'" (Gen

7:10–12).[5] It is identified as a rhetorical unit by virtue of its referential, situational, and

structural (relational) coherence signified by there being: (a) sameness of time (cf. Gen

7:10–12 with Gen 7:13), (b) sameness of place (cf. Gen 7:10–12 with Gen 7:13–16), (c)

sameness of participants, namely Noah (Gen 7:11 cf. Gen 7:13), the Flood (Gen 7:10),

and all its mechanisms (Gen 7:11–12), (d) sameness of topic and theme, i.e. the ensuing

Deluge (Gen 7:10–12). In this way, the destructive capacity of the hydrologic phenomena

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[5] Both Longacre, "Noah's Flood," 238, and Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis*, 138 choose to include Gen 7:10–12 within Gen 7:11–16 (as a unit together). See the analysis portion below for more details.

that surrounds the Flood (Gen 7:10–12) may be compared to the salvific nature of the ark (Gen 7:7–9), thus helping to differentiate this section from the preceding unit. Alongside this (keeping the discussion concerning Gen 7:10 in mind, of course), one notes that Gen 7:6–9 represents "Noah's fulfillment of the divine imperative" of Gen 7:1, while Gen 7:10 represents the "fulfillment of the divine indicative (a promissory note) of v. 4. Noah does what God says. And God does what God says."[6]

This particular unit (Gen 7:10–12), is comprised of three primary subsections that are each marked temporally: (1) an initial comment by the narrator that makes clear that after the seven days passed the Flood waters were upon the earth (Gen 7:10), (2) another statement concerning the exact time and date of the Flood and its specifics (Gen 7:11), and (3) the duration of the Flood (Gen 7:12). The first primary subsection may be divided into two secondary subunits: (i) temporal clarification that seven days passed (7:10a), and (ii) a restatement that "the Flood waters were upon the earth" (Gen 7:10b).

The second primary subsection is also comprised of two secondary subunits: (i) temporal clarification regarding the Flood, "in the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day, on that day" (Gen 7:11a) and, (ii) mechanical clarification regarding the Flood, "all the fountains burst open [that belonged to] the great deep and the windows of heaven were opened" (Gen 7:11b).

The third primary subsection has two secondary subsections: (i) the initial comment that the rain fell upon the earth (Gen 7:12a), and (ii) temporal clarification that it rained for forty days and forty nights (Gen 7:12b).

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[6] Hamilton, *Genesis 1–17*, 289.

V.   *Second Recounting of the Boarding of the Ark (Gen 7:13–16)*

בעצם היום הזה[a]

בא נח[b] ושם וחם ויפת בני נח ואשת נח ושלשת[c] נשי בניו אתם אל התבה

המה וכל החיה למינה וכל הבהמה למינה

וכל הרמש הרמש על הארץ למינהו וכל העוף למינהו כל צפור כל כנף

ויבאו[d] אל נח אל התבה שנים שנים מכל הבשר אשר בו רוח חיים

והבאים זכר[e] ונקבה[f] מכל בשר באו כאשר צוה אתו אלהים

ויסגר[g] יהוה בעדו

On that very same day, Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, the sons of Noah, and

 Noah's wife, and the three wives of his sons, with them, entered the ark.

Them and every living animal after its kind—including every kind of domestic

 beast, alongside every creeping thing that creeps on the earth after its kind,

 and everything that flies after its kind: every bird—every wing.

They came with Noah into the ark,[h] pairs of every creature in which there was the

 breath of life. Those that entered, male and female of all flesh went in,

 came just as God had commanded him.

Then the LORD shut them in.

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a.   On the use of substantives to represent pronominal ideas (here understood to be a metaphor to communicate the idea of "self same/very same"), see GKC §139g, and Joüon §147a.

b.   This *waw* (and the ones that follow, unless indicated otherwise) signify accompaniment. Williams, *Hebrew Syntax*, §436, *GBHS* §4.3.3.e.

c.   The construction of the numerals is rare. See GKC §97c, and Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 182.

d.   Summarizing or concluding *waw*. Chisholm, *Exegesis*, 123.

e.   Summarizing or concluding *waw*. Chisholm, *Exegesis*, 123.

f.   This coordinative *waw* joins opposites. Williams, *Hebrew Syntax*, §430a and §431.

g.   Sequential *waw*. See *GBHS* §3.5.1.a, and Chisholm, *Exegesis*, 120.

h.   The preposition may show accompaniment (Williams, *Hebrew Syntax*, §304) or be spatially terminative (see *GBHS* §4.1.2.a, and Williams, *Hebrew Syntax*, §298). The translation can thus be "they came with Noah into the ark" or "they came to Noah inside the ark." Hamilton, *Genesis 1–17*, 291.

This unit, "Second Recounting of the Boarding of the Ark" (Gen 7:13–16), has

cohesion based upon many of the aforementioned factors: (a) sameness of time and speed

of action (cf. Gen 7:13 with 7:17–20), (b) sameness of participants, i.e. Noah (Gen 7:13,

14, 15), his kin (Gen 7:13, 14, 15), and the animals (Gen 7:14, 15), (c) sameness of narratival speed of action (cf. Gen 7:13–16 with Gen 7:17–20), (d) sameness of place/space—namely close proximity to the ark itself (cf. Gen 7:13–16 with Gen 7:17–20), and (e) sameness of topic and theme, i.e the ark as a salvific vehicle that provides redemption from the flood (cf. Gen Gen 7:13–16 with 7:17–22, 24).[7]

This section is comprised of three primary subsections: (1) human entry into the ark (Gen 7:13), (2) animal entry into the ark (Gen 7:14–16b), and (3) an explicit comment by the narrator that "the LORD shut him in" (Gen 7:16c). Human entry into the ark (Gen 7:13) may be divided into two secondary subunits: (i) temporal clarification, "on that very same day" (Gen 7:13a), and (ii) occupant clarification, i.e. that Noah, his three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, his wife, and his son's wives together all entered the ark (Gen 7:13b).

Animal entry into the ark may be divided into two secondary subunits: (i) occupant clarification, that is every living animal after its kind, including (a) every kind of domestic beast, (b) everything that creeps on the earth, and (c) everything that flies after its kind, every bird, every wing. These three lower-level subunits are also marked by two further comments: first, that there were pairs of everything that had the breath of life, and, second, that they were male and female (Gen 7:14–16a). The other secondary subunit may be described as 'theological clarification,' (ii) they "came just as God had commanded him" (Gen 7:16b).

Lastly, the narrator makes explicit that the LORD shut the ark's door behind the inhabitants, thereby ensuring their safety and the survival of all life on earth (Gen 7:16c).

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[7] Compare the schematics of Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis*, 138, and Keiser, *Genesis 1–11*, 129.

VI.   Narration of the Flood: Part B "The Waters Prevail" (Gen 7:17–24)

^aויהי המבול ארבעים יום על הארץ ^bוירבו המים ^cוישאו את התבה

^dותרם מעל הארץ ^eויגברו המים ^fוירבו מאד על הארץ ^gותלך התבה על פני המים

^hוהמים גברו מאד ⁱמאד על הארץ ^jויכסו כל ההרים הגבהים אשר תחת כל השמים

חמש עשרה אמה ^kמלמעלה גברו המים ^lויכסו ההרים ^mויגוע כל בשר הרמש על הארץ

בעוף ⁿובבהמה ובחיה ובכל השרץ השרץ על הארץ וכל האדם

כל אשר נשמת רוח חיים באפיו מכל אשר בחרבה מתו

^oוימח את כל היקום אשר על פני האדמה מאדם עד בהמה עד רמש ^pועד עוף השמים

^qוימחו מן הארץ

^rוישאר אך נח ^sואשר אתו ^tבתבה

^uויגברו המים על הארץ חמשים ^vומאת יום

Now the Flood lasted forty days upon the earth.

> The waters increased—they bore up the ark. Then it (the ark) was raised from
>> above the earth. Then the waters prevailed.
>> In fact, they increased greatly upon the earth.
>> Thus the ark went on the face of the water.

> Alongside this, the waters continued to prevail—they were exceedingly great
>> on the earth—so as to cover all the high mountains that were under all
>> the heavens. Fifteen cubits from above the waters prevailed.

> Then the mountains were covered.

> Thus every creature that moved on the earth perished: the bird, and the cattle,
>> and the beast, all the swarming creatures that swarm on the earth, and all
>> humankind. Everything which had life's breath in its nostrils, from all
>> which was on the dry ground, died.

> So he wiped away every living thing which was upon the face of the ground–
>> from humans, beasts, creeping things, and the birds of the sky.
>> They were wiped away from the earth.

> Thus Noah was the only remnant, alongside those with him in the ark.

> So the waters prevailed over the earth one hundred and fifty days.

a. Narratival *waw*. See *GBHS* §3.5.1.c. Cf. Chisholm, *Exegesis*, 120 (introductory *waw*).

b. Sequential *waw*. *GBHS* §3.5.1.a, and Chisholm, *Exegesis*, 120.

c. Consequential *waw*. *GBHS* §3.5.1.b.

d. Sequential *waw*. See *GBHS* §3.5.1.a, and Chisholm, *Exegesis*, 120.

e. Sequential *waw*. See *GBHS* §3.5.1.a, and Chisholm, *Exegesis*, 120.

f. Explicative *waw*. Williams *Hebrew Syntax*, §434.

g. Consequential *waw*. *GBHS* §3.5.1.b.

h. Synchronic *waw*. Chisholm, *Exegesis*, 126.

i. The intensification of attributes by means of repetition is for rhetorical emphasis. GKC §133k.

j. This *waw* is considered "complex" with respect to aspect. See *IBHS* §33.3.1.a.

k. "The local extent of a verbal action can . . . stand as an accusative of place" (so *IBHS* §10.2.2.b), an accusative of extent (so *GKC* §118h, and Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 153), or, alternatively, one may view this clause as "an accusative of measure." Joüon §126j.

l. Sequential *waw*. *GBHS* §3.5.1.a. Cf. Chisholm, *Exegesis*, 124 (consequential waw).

m. Consequential *waw*. *GBHS* §3.5.1.b.

n. This waw and the ones that follow (unless indicated otherwise) are coordinative *waws*. Williams, *Hebrew Syntax*, §430a.

o. Sequential *waw*. *GBHS* §3.5.1.a. Cf. Chisholm, *Exegesis*, 124 (consequential waw).

p. Coordinative *waw*. Williams, *Hebrew Syntax*, §430a.

q. Summarizing *waw*. Chisholm, *Exegesis*, 123.

r. Concluding *waw*. Chisholm, *Exegesis*, 123.

s. Coordinative *waw*. Williams, *Hebrew Syntax*, §430a.

t. Note: 4Q370 (column I, line 6) adds "'the mighty ones' to the list of those who perished" providing even "a separate clause for 'the mighty ones,' emphasizing their death . . . (and the giants did not escape.)" Lyon, *Qumran Interpretation*, 117–18, 144. Cf. *1 En* 89:5–6; *Sir* 16:7; *Wis* 14:6–7; *3 Macc* 2:4.

u. Summarizing or concluding *waw*. Chisholm, *Exegesis*, 123.

v. Coordinative *waw*. Williams, *Hebrew Syntax*, §430a.

This main section is entitled "Narration of the Flood: Part B "The Waters Prevail" (Gen 7:17–24).[8] It is the most thorough and comprehensive narration of the Flood within the entire Noachic Deluge narrative. There is a pronounced change of pace within this section as the narrator severely slows the action down—repeating the essence of the Flood's onslaught and destruction three times for emphasis (Gen 7:18, 19, 20). Aside from the narrator, which has been common throughout Gen 7 (save for the divine speech

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[8] There is a consensus of scholars regarding this to be a unit. See Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis*, 139, Mathews, *Genesis 1—11:26*, 379, McKeown, *Genesis*, 58, Hamilton, *Genesis 1–17*, 295, Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 182, Keiser, *Genesis 1–11*, 129, and Longacre, "Flood Narrative," 238.

of Gen 7:1–4), the Flood (water) acts as a new participant of many of the verbs within this unit (Gen 7:17–20, 24). Alongside the above, the referential, situational, and structural (relational) coherence of this unit is also demonstrated by: (a) sameness of place (differentiated from the previous section by the 'bird's eye' view of the ark and the Flood), (b) sameness of participants, namely the inhabitants of the ark (Gen 7:23), all those creatures and human beings outside of it (Gen 7:21–23), and the Flood itself, a new 'actor' (Gen 7:17–20, 24), (c) sameness of topic/theme (the reversal of creation, the cosmos becoming chaos), and (d) and frequent repetition of the same key word throughout the unit (Gen 7:18, 19, 20, 24), namely that the waters "prevailed" (גבר).

This section, "Narration of the Flood: Part B "The Waters Prevail" (Gen 7:17–24), is comprised of four primary subunits: (1) comments that concern the ark in relation to the Flood (Gen 7:17–18), (2) comments that concern the Flood itself more specifically (Gen 7:19–20), (3) comments concerning the devastating consequences of the Flood (Gen 7:21–23), and (4) a comment about the devastation and duration of the Flood (Gen 7:24).

The first primary subunit (Gen 7:17–18) may be divided into four secondary subunits: (i) the temporal comment by the narrator that "the Flood lasted forty days upon the earth," Gen 7:17a, (ii) two specific comments that pertain to the ark itself, namely that "the waters increased—they bore up the ark" and "it was raised from above the earth," Gen 7:17b–c, (iii) further clarification regarding the nature of the Flood "then the waters prevailed. Indeed, they increased greatly upon the earth," Gen 7:18a–b, and (iv) final comments concerning the ark "the ark went on the surface of the water" (Gen 7:18c).

The second primary subunit (Gen 7:19–20) is comprised of two secondary subunits: (i) comments pertaining to the (much) water of the Flood, i.e. "the waters

prevailed," "they were exceedingly great on the earth," Gen 7:19a, and (ii) comments that concern the much water in relation to the high hills or mountains (Gen 7:19b–20). The latter section is comprised of two lower-level subunits: (a) the much water was so great "as to cover all the high mountains that are under all the heavens," Gen 7:19b–d, and, (b) "fifteen cubits from above the waters prevailed so as to cover the mountains" (Gen 7:20).

The third primary subunit (Gen 7:21–23), is comprised of two secondary subunits: (i) statements relaying the consequence and devastation of the Flood, Gen 7:21–23e, (ii) specific comments concerning the preservation of Noah and company (Gen 7:23f–g).

Series One

Initial Summative Announcement	Thus every creature that moved perished:	Gen 7:21a
Clarification and Specifics	the bird, and the cattle, and the beast, all the swarming creatures on the earth, and all humankind.	Gen 7:21b–d
Concluding Summative Statement	Everything which had the breath of life in it, from all which was on the dry ground, died.	Gen 7:22a–b

Series Two

Initial Summative Announcement	So he wiped away every living thing which was upon the face of the ground—	Gen 7:23a–b
Clarification and Specifics	from humans, beasts, creeping things, to even the birds of the sky,	Gen 7:23c–d
Concluding Summative Statement	they were wiped away from the earth.	Gen 7:23e

The last primary rhetorical unit (Gen 7:24) is differentiated by virtue of the time shift that occurs between it and Gen 7:17. This primary subunit is also comprised of two secondary subunits: (i) the narrator's summative conclusion that "the waters prevailed upon the earth," Gen 7:24a, and (ii) temporal clarification that the duration of this time period was "one hundred and fifty days," Gen 7:24b. This concludes our analysis of the

main, primary, secondary, lower-level, and marked rhetorical subunits of Gen 7:1–24.

It is now necessary to argue that Gen 7:1–24 together constitutes a rhetorical unit, in and of itself, that ought to be differentiated from the rest of the narrative that follow (Gen 8:1–22). The referential, situational, and structural (relational) coherence of these verses is, perhaps, best demonstrated through drawing attention to the key turn of events that transpires within the following passage. It is written "Now God remembered Noah" (Gen 8:1). At this time, the flow of the Noachic Deluge narrative begins to reverse as does the direction of the Flood water.[9] As Blenkinsopp states: "the pivot of the narrative, the *peripateia*, occurs at this point, with the flood water at its highest point . . . God remembered Noah, the water began to recede and the vessel was grounded on Mount Ararat in Armenia."[10] This dramatic turnabout in the narrative clearly differentiates Gen 7:1–24 from Gen 8:1–22. Further details will be offered below.

Each of the rhetorical subunits of the above section are depicted below:

It Cometh! (Gen 7:1–24)
I. Divine Speech "Enter!" (Gen 7:1–4)
    1. Preface (Gen 7:1a)
    2. Directives to enter the ark (Gen 7:1b–3)
        i. Directives that concern human beings (Gen 7:1b–c)
            (a) divine imperative for Noah to enter the ark (Gen 7:1b)
            (b) inclusion of all of Noah's household (Gen 7:1b)
            (c) further clarification (Gen 7:1c)
        ii. Directives that concern animals (Gen 7:2–3)
            (a) specifics that pertain to clean animals (Gen 7:2a)
                • Groupings (sevens)/Gender (male and female)
            (b) specifics pertaining to animals that are not clean (Gen 7:2b)
                • Groupings (pairs)/Gender (male and female)
            (c) specifics that pertain to birds (Gen 7:3a)
                • Groupings (sevens)/Gender (male and female)
            (d) explanatory comment (Gen 7:3b)
    3. Comments that concern the Flood (Gen 7:4)
        i. Countdown to the Flood (Gen 7:4a)

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[9] See Mathews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, 382.
[10] Blenkinsopp, *Creation*, 142.

        ii. Duration of the Flood (Gen 7:4b)

        iii. Consequence (result) or purpose of the Flood (Gen 7:4c)

II. Noah's Obedient Faithfulness (Gen 7:5)

III. Initial Recounting of the Entry into the Ark (Gen 7:6–9)

    1. Temporal clarification (Gen 7:6)

    2. Human entry into the ark (Gen 7:7)

        i. Delineation of persons (Gen 7:7a)

        ii. Clarification for entry (Gen 7:7b)

    3. Animal entry into the ark (Gen 7:8–9)

        i. Delineation of animals (Gen 7:8–9b)

            (a) clean animals (Gen 7:8)

              • Groupings (pairs)/Gender (male and female)

            (b) animals that are not clean (Gen 7:8)

              • Groupings (pairs)/Gender (male and female)

            (c) birds (Gen 7:8)

              • Groupings (pairs)/Gender (male and female)

            (d) every creature that creeps on the ground (Gen 7:8)

              • Groupings (pairs)/Gender (male and female)

        ii. Clarifying comment (Gen 7:9b).

IV. Narration of the Flood: Part A "It Cometh" (Gen 7:10–12)

    1. Initial comment (Gen 7:10)

        i. Temporal clarification (Gen 7:10a)

        ii. Re-statement about the Flood (Gen 7:10b)

    2. Second comment (Gen 7:11)

        i. Temporal clarification (Gen 7:11a)

        ii. Mechanical clarification (Gen 7:11b)

    3. Final comment (Gen 7:12).

        i. initial statement (Gen 7:12a)

        ii. Temporal clarification (Gen 7:12b)

V. Second Recounting of the Boarding of the Ark (Gen 7:13–16)

    1. Human entry into the ark (Gen 7:13)

        i. Temporal clarification (Gen 7:13a)

        ii. Occupant clarification (Gen 7:13b)

    2. Animal entry into the ark (Gen 7:14–16b)

        i. Occupant clarification (Gen 7:14–16a)

            (a) domestic beast

              • Groupings (pairs)/Gender (male and female)

            (b) everything that creeps on the earth

              • Groupings (pairs)/Gender (male and female)

            (c) everything that flies//every bird, every wing.

              • Groupings (pairs)/Gender (male and female)

        ii. Theological clarification (Gen 7:16b).

    3. Theological affirmation (Gen 7:16c)

VI. Narration of the Flood: Part B "The Waters Prevail" (Gen 7:17–24)

    1. The ark in relation to the Flood (Gen 7:17–18)

        i. Temporal clarification (Gen 7:17a)

ii. Movement of the ark (Gen 7:17b–c)
iii. Devastating nature of the Flood (Gen 7:18a–b)
iv. Further movement of the ark (Gen 7:18c)
2. The prevailing of the Flood (Gen 7:19–20)
i. The much water (Gen 7:19a)
ii. Much water and the mountains (Gen 7:19b–20)
(a) Initial comment (Gen 7:19b–d)
(b) Secondary comment (Gen 7:20)
3. The consequences of the Flood (Gen 7:21–23)
i. Devastation comments (Gen 7:21–23e)
ii. Salvific comments (Gen 7:23f–g)
4. Summative comment (Gen 7:24)
i. Summative conclusion (Gen 7:24a)
ii. Temporal clarification (Gen 7:24b)

Step Two: Determining the Rhetorical Situation

It has been suggested in our analysis of Gen 6:9–22 that there exists within the Noachic

Deluge narrative multiple exigencies. The primary exigence is between humanity's sin

and "lawlessness" (חמס) and how to respond in an effective fashion. As noted above,

however, this tension is not at the forefront of each of the main sections of the Noachic

Deluge narrative. Within Gen 7:1–24, for instance, the secondary tension between God

and the Flood itself is actually more at center stage. That is, God must exercise complete

and sovereign control over the Deluge so as to: (1) ensure the complete and utter

destruction of all those whom he wishes to destroy and annihilate, and (2) ensure the

safety and preservation of all those whom he wishes to save and deliver. Between these

two, however, as will be noted at length in the analysis below, "it is first and foremost"

the "picture of Noah's salvation that the author wants his readers to take a long look at."[11]

This tension between devastation and deliverance was muted in our analysis of

Gen 6:9–22 due to the fact that though God was adamant that he himself would ruin all

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[11] See Sailhamer, *Pentateuch*, 124.

things by means of the Flood (see Gen 6:13, 17) no actual rain had yet appeared nor did a Flood manifest itself. Thus, though God made clear that alongside the destruction he would soon send that there would also be deliverance for his chosen few (Gen 6:14–16, 18–21), there was no opportunity to actually witness the tension in action within the narrative itself until this particular pericope (Gen 7:1–24). The critical balance between destruction and salvation is explicitly noted at four different intervals within Gen 7:1–24.

The first instance occurs just prior to the Flood event (Gen 7:1–4). At this time, the LORD commanded Noah (and company) to enter the ark (Gen 7:1–3) because he was about to send forty days and forty nights of rain and "blot out every living thing" that he had made from upon the face of the ground (Gen 7:4). The balance between destruction and salvation is clearly noted here and the hope of salvation is made clear (Gen 7:5).[12]

The second instance is, in some ways, a simple restatement of this fact. That is, the narrator reaffirms his main point that though "the Flood waters came upon the earth" (Gen 7:6) those select few individuals and animals that were appointed for salvation did, in fact, actually enter the ark (the mechanism of deliverance) just as God had commanded Noah (Gen 7:7–9). Given an awareness of the intent of the Flood, one once again notes the delicate balance between destruction and salvation and judgment and redemption.

The third occurrence is very much akin to this although more chronological and other such details are provided than in either of the first two instances. Here, the narrator underscores the means of devastation though noting that the Flood waters were upon the earth after seven days (Gen 7:10), the fountains of the great deep had burst open (Gen 7:11), the windows of heaven were opened (Gen 7:11), and the fact that the rain fell upon

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[12] See Harper, "It's All In The Name," 42.

the earth for forty days and forty nights (Gen 7:12). At the same time, however, it is also made clear that Noah and company safely entered the ark—indeed, the LORD himself shut them in (Gen 7:13–16). Something that will be examined in more detail later on is why it is not made explicit within the text that God himself is the concrete source or engineer behind the mechanisms of the fountains of the great deep bursting open or the floodgates of the sky being opened (Gen 7:11–12).[13] In other words, though God does make clear that he will "blot out" (מחה) every living thing that he has made from upon the ground, the specific mechanic for this seems to be, at least initially, only the forty days and forty nights of rain falling upon the earth (see Gen 7:4, 10. Cf. Gen 6:17).

The fourth and final occurrence follows a somewhat different pattern than the previous three instances. Though the text states that the waters rose and bore up the ark so that it was raised from above the earth (Gen 7:17) and that the ark went on the surface of the water (Gen 7:18) the well-being of the occupants of the ark is not actually made explicit. In contrast to this, an event that is mentioned explicitly three times is that the waters prevailed at that time (see Gen 7:18–20). Of course, some might simply assume that because Noah and company were in the ark this meant that they were "in good hands," namely the care of their Creator, since there was no rudder or sail.[14]

To this end, the only positive comment that the narrator makes with respect to salvation/deliverance is that very point, namely: "Noah was the only remnant, alongside those with him in the ark" (Gen 7:23). The rest of the text (Gen 7:17–24) places great emphasis upon the fact that absolutely everything that could perish in the Flood did so and died (Gen 7:21–23). The text then closes on the sober note that the "the waters

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[13] See Harper, "It's All In The Name," 44.
[14] Cf. McKeown, *Genesis*, 58–59.

prevailed upon the earth one hundred and fifty days" (Gen 7:24). The reader is thus left in suspense as to what will happen next. This point will be taken up in the next chapter.

Concerning the secondary exigence that exists between God and Noah and the covenant, it is clear that "the future of salvation history" depends on the survival of Noah and company.[15] As such, if Noah failed to enter the ark which he had just built (see Gen 6:22 alongside Gen 6:14–21), all attempts of God to crush the serpent via the seed of the woman (Gen 3:15) would be for naught. In conjunction with this, the question remains:

> Can Noah count on God? God calls upon Noah to trust him to keep his threat to wipe out the earth and his promise to preserve him, his family, and the life of all that breathes. If the Lord does not send the threatened Flood . . . [a]nd if God does not keep his promise to preserve Noah and his family through the Flood, their faithful service is in vain. The plot develops as the . . . covenant partners commit themselves to one another.[16]

We have already seen in the last chapter that the scribe goes out of his way to underscore Noah's full and complete obedience and compliance to the divine imperatives that have been uttered in the first divine speech (Gen 6:22). We see a similar pattern manifest itself at the end of this particular divine speech as well (Gen 7:5).

Referent	Hebrew
Gen 6:22	ויעש נח ככל אשר צוה אתו אלהים כן עשה
Gen 7:5	ויעש נח ככל אשר צוהו יהוה

"The reiteration of Noah's obedience (7:5) confirms that he has fulfilled his part of the covenant stipulations and now he can do no more than wait for God to provide the protection that he has promised."[17] Aside from the affirmation of the narrator within Gen 7:5, the text also makes clear the specific manner in which Noah obeyed by noting more

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[15] Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis*, 123. See also McKeown, *Genesis*, 56.
[16] Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis*, 123.
[17] See McKeown, *Genesis*, 57.

than once that Noah and company entered the ark (Gen 7:7–9, 13–14, 15–16).[18]

Turning from exigence to audience, no failure exists on the scribe's part in persuasively communicating the virtues of fidelity to God for "only Noah was left, together with those that were with him in the ark" (Gen 7:23b). In this way, "the author's point could not be clearer. Obedience to God's will is the way to salvation."[19]

Step Three: Determining the Rhetorical Strategy

This step involves determining and assessing the rhetorical strategies that govern the rhetorical units, including commenting on the persuasive nature of the scribe. The analysis will be divided according to the main subunits delineated above within step one of the rhetorical analysis. The English translation used above will also be leveraged. To reiterate, the six main rhetorical subunits are: (I) "Divine Speech 'Enter!'" (Gen 7:1–4), (II) "Narratival Comments Concerning Noah's Obedience" (Gen 7:5), (III) "Initial Recounting of the Entry into the Ark" (Gen 7:6–9), (IV) "Narration of the Flood: Part A 'It Cometh,'" (Gen 7:10–12), (V) "Second Recounting of the Boarding of the Ark" (Gen 7:13–16), and (VI) "Narration of the Flood: Part B 'The Waters Prevail'" (Gen 7:17–24).

I. *Divine Speech "Enter!" (Gen 7:1–4)*
    Then the LORD said to Noah:
    "Go—you and all your house—into the ark!
    For you have I seen as just before me in this generation.
    From all the clean beasts, take with you seven pairs—a male and his mate.
    Also, from the beast which is not clean, (take) a pair—a male and his mate.

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[18] As Collins (*Reading Genesis Well*, 166) states: "on the literary side, the linguistic peak often has some bearing on the resolution of the central conflict of the narrative." This point will be returned to later.

[19] Sailhamer, "Genesis," 125. Arguably, as McKeown (*Genesis*, 57) states: "Noah's behavior contrasts with that of Adam, who lost the protective environment . . . through disobedience. Noah through obedience receives protection."

Even from the birds of the sky, (take) a pair—male and female—in order
    to keep seed alive upon the face of the earth.
For in seven days I will cause it to rain upon the earth forty and forty nights.
Thus I will blot out every living thing that I have made from upon the face of
    the ground."

Extended Analysis:

Divine speeches dominate the beginning of the Noachic Deluge narrative (Gen 6:13–21
and Gen 7:1–4; cf. Gen 6:7).[20] One notes that though the preface of this speech (Gen
7:1a) still clarifies both the interlocutor and the recipient of the message, much as the
other speech does (Gen 6:13), it differs from it in the way that it refers to the Deity.[21]

Referent	Hebrew
Gen 6:13	ויאמר אלהים לנח
Gen 7:1a	ויאמר יהוה לנח

As noted in our discussion of diachronic (source-critical) scholarship and the
Noachic Deluge narrative, those who perceive a doublet in the text often appeal to this
type of phenomenon in order to support their case, i.e. the scribe of one of the Flood
stories (J) uses only the *tetragrammaton* in reference to deity while the scribe of the other
Flood story (P) uses only *elohim* to refer to the Deity.[22] Extensive work in ancient Near
East literature, however, reveals that deities were often referred to by more than one
name within accounts that have no record of having been compiled from "interwoven
source documents."[23] As such, it seems reasonable to say that theme and context tend to
drive the usage of divine epithets within the Noachic Deluge narrative rather than

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[20] Harper, "It's All In The Name," 42.
[21] Hamilton, *Genesis 1–17*, 285.
[22] See Hamilton, *Genesis 1–17*, 285.
[23] Steinmann, *Genesis*, 12. See too Shaviv, "Flood," 527–31.

divergent sources.[24] Though not identical, these two divine speeches make essentially the same point: humanity (save Noah) is so thoroughly evil that God has resolved to destroy the earth and the fullness thereof, yet, "paradoxically, nothing is to be lost, representatives of everything are to be saved."[25] In this particular divine speech (Gen 7:1–4), however, in inverse to the preceding speech that is offered by the Deity (Gen 6:13–21), "the motivating problems are only implicit and the emphasis is on salvation: the righteousness of Noah, the preservation of seed."[26]

Noah's household is repeatedly defined throughout the Flood narrative as being comprised of himself, his three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, his wife, and his three daughter-in-laws (Gen 6:18, 7:7, 13, 8:16, 18).[27] Within the first portion of the second divine speech, Gen 7:1, however, the text is abbreviated to the command for Noah "and all his household" (וכל ביתך), to enter the ark without the explicit delineation of who such members are (cf. Gen 7:13). It seems that a principle of solidarity is being employed here wherein the members are subsumed under their patriarchal figure-head.[28] It is of interest, therefore, to note that the text also seems to insinuate that Noah's righteousness is not only the reason why he is admitted entry into the ark but also the reason why his family members, i.e. his household) are included as well (see Gen 7:1).[29] As one scholar puts it:

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[24] Hamilton (*Genesis 1–17*, 286) suggests that the *tetragrammaton* only occurs where there is "special reason" for it, i.e. whenever the thematic participant is Yahweh himself. Steinmann (*Genesis*, 12) argues: "the more generic name *Elohim* is often used to emphasize God's general relationship to his creatures" and that "God's proper name *Yahweh* highlights his covenant relationship with individuals and groups." In this light, it is possible that the *tetragrammaton* occurs within Gen 7:1 due to its close proximity and relationship to Gen 6:18–20. Cf. Longacre, "Discourse Structure," 235–62, and Wenham, "Pentateuchal Source Criticism," 87. For a different perspective, see Friedman, *Sources Revealed*, 42.

[25] Harper, "It's All In The Name," 42.

[26] Harper, "It's All In The Name," 42.

[27] Arnold, *Genesis*, 102.

[28] See Steinberg, "Genesis," 286–88.

[29] See McKeown, *Genesis*, 56.

"we are told for the first time explicitly that the salvation of Noah and his family is due to his virtuous character."[30] If this is true, then the scribe's rhetoric convincingly communicates the virtues of fidelity to God and the rewards of faithful obedience.

In contrast to the narrator's comments about the righteous character of Noah in the preceding passage (Gen 6:9), in this pericope, specifically, it is the LORD himself who declares Noah to be of virtue; the explicit notation being that Yahweh "saw" (הרא) Noah as being "just" (צדיק) before him in his generation (Gen 7:1). This point forms a striking contrast with God's assessment of humanity prior to another divine speech, where God also "saw" (הרא) the earth and declared that it was altogether sorely ruined (see Gen 6:12. Cf. Gen 6:5).[31] The scribe's rhetoric convincingly communicates that God is actively sovereign over creation and that he is demonstrably concerned about the moral rectitude of all of the inhabitants of the world that he has created.

In another divine speech (Gen 6:13–21), Noah was instructed to take (only) two of every kind of animal (Gen 6:19–20). Within this particular speech (Gen 7:1–4), however, the LORD requires seven pairs of each type of "clean" (טהור) animal.[32] Alongside this, Noah must also be sure to also include one pair—male and female—a male and his mate—of every type of animal that is not clean to come aboard the ark (Gen 7:2–3).[33] One notes that the scribe discreetly avoids using the word for "unclean" (טמא).

The reason for this final set of instructions remains uncertain.[34] It is possible that "the purpose of the larger number is to provide animals for sacrifice or food without

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[30] Mathews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, 370. Cf. Kaminski, *Was Noah Good?*, 137.
[31] Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis*, 137.
[32] See *DCH* 3:343, and *HALOT* 1:369–70 for details.
[33] See Joüon §145a for details concerning a defense of the rendering "a male and his mate."
[34] Those scholars who adhere to doublets within the Flood narrative "find further support for their position in the fact that two different numbers of animals are cited here." Hamilton, *Genesis 1–17*, 287.

wiping out the species."[35] If one reads Gen 6:19–20 as a general statement, however, and the 'keyword' as a "collective for pairs," the contradiction between the texts disappears.[36] In light of the above, the scribe's rhetoric convincingly communicates God's care for all of his creation for the animals themselves receive the same level of compassion from their Creator as Noah does. As one scholar puts it: "if nothing else, their inclusion in those who are delivered is partial confirmation of the fact that in the OT 'sinful' is not normally a synonym for 'unclean,' especially in the cultic sections of the OT."[37]

One understands that orchestrating various ways to "wrangle" the many droves of animals onto the ark is unnecessary; one also goes beyond the text in stating that all of the animals occupied the ark for the entire duration of the seven days or that seven days were somehow required for the occupants to be accommodated on board.[38] Even so, the function here of the seven days is unclear.[39] In addition to this, it is understood that forty is a conventional number for "a long time" (Ex 24:18; Num 13:25; 1 Sam 17:16; 1 Kgs 19:8) and that it can also represent the introduction of "a new age" (Gen 25:20; 26:34; cf. Acts 1:3).[40] Forty may also be associated with hardship, affliction, and punishment (Ezek 4:6; cf. Jonah 3:4 and Matt 4:2).[41] Given such, the scribe's usage here of this type of "preferred number" seems to indicate that it is not "purely rational" math.[42] In brief,

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[35] See McKeown, *Genesis*, 57. One notes, however, that the animals that are boarded are according to their kind(s), not species. Such a taxonomy distinction is necessary in a scientific age.

[36] See Hamilton, *Genesis 1–17*, 287, Mathews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, 371, Walton, Genesis, 315–16, and Hartley, *Genesis*, 100–01 and 107. Cf. Arnold, *Genesis*, 102–03. Alongside this, since "seven-seven" is qualified as being male and female, only seven pairs matches the description and lines up with the grammatical use of distributives that is used here to express pairing. So TNIV, NIV 2011, HCSB, RSV, NRSV, NLT, NCV, ESV, NET, and CEB. Contra NIV 1984, KJV, NKJV, and NASB.

[37] See Hamilton, *Genesis 1–17*, 288.

[38] See Mathews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, 374. Cf. Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis*, 138.

[39] Interestingly, the Gilgamesh Epic reckons only seven days to build a craft of a much larger scale and a Flood that lasts only seven days. See Smith, *Babylon*, 512–16. Cf. Blenkinsopp, *Creation*, 139.

[40] Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis*, 138. See too Sarna, *Genesis*, 54.

[41] See Ryken et al., eds., *DBI*, 305, and Hodge, *Days of Genesis*, 150–52.

[42] See Hill, "Numbers of Genesis," 243. Cf. Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis*, 138.

though it may be possible that the scribe is simply relaying certain technicalities that may have been involved in the Flood, it seems that the scribe is arguing for the certainty and finality of judgment. The function of the Flood was to destroy all life—blotting out every living thing that God made via forty days and forty nights of "rain" (רמט).[43] The scribe's rhetoric convincingly communicates that the earth's doom is certain and irrevocable.

II. *Narratival Comments Concerning Noah's Obedience (Gen 7:5)*
So Noah did according to all that the LORD commanded him.

Extended Analysis:

As noted above, the same sequence occurs here as in the previous divine speech: (a) an imperative that is given to Noah by God (Gen 6:13–21; 7:1–4) and (b) the fulfillment of or Noah's execution of the divine command (Gen 6:22; 7:5).[44] Given that the text provides us with only a single verse concerning the construction and preparation of the ark for entry (Gen 6:22) and yet devotes a considerable amount more space to reiterate all of the personnel who are to be on board the ark (Gen 7:1–4), a point that is unlikely to have been forgotten by Noah himself during the construction of the salvific vessel, it is reasonable to conclude that "the narrator wishes to insist that the latter events were much more important than the actual building of the ark."[45] As Hamilton states:

> Presumably the writer could have supplied myriads of details about Noah's erection of the ark and the assembling of the animals, but he did not. Noah's rather long and complicated exploits are condensed into these words: he did it! Not a note about his expertise in construction and zoology. By condensing Noah's considerable achievements into an unbelievably skeletal statement, the author concentrates on one fact only, Noah's obedience to and successful completion of the divine mandate.[46]

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[43] This word refers to a "regular rainfall. It is not normally a torrential downpour. What makes this storm so potent is that it is to last forty days and nights." Hamilton, *Genesis 1–17*, 288. Cf. Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 181. For further lexical information, see *DCH* 5:240–41.

[44] Hamilton, *Genesis 1–17*, 288.

[45] Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 178.

[46] Hamilton, *Genesis 1–17*, 288.

The refrains are thus key turning points within the "developing story line," indicating that "the flood will only take place upon Noah's faithful completion of the assigned tasks."[47] As such, the scribe's rhetoric convincingly communicates that one's activities do not go unnoticed by the Creator. Indeed, they can make great the magnitude of God's salvation.

III.   *Initial Recounting of the Entry into the Ark (Gen 7:6–9)*

> Now Noah was six hundred years old when the waters came upon the earth.
>
> Then Noah went, and his sons, and his wife, and his son's wives with him, into the ark in order to escape the waters of the Flood.[r]
>
> From the clean beast, and from the beast that is not clean, and from the bird, from every creature that creeps on the ground, by pairs they went with Noah into the ark—male and female—as God commanded Noah.

Extended Analysis:

The general statement by the narrator that "Noah did according to all that the LORD had commanded him" (Gen 7:5) is now particularized in these few verses that detail the occupant's entry into the ark itself (Gen 7:6–9).[48] The notation that Noah was six hundred years of age (נח בן שש מאות שנה) when the Flood came is interesting because the Flood is the only event within primeval history (Gen 1–11) that is so precisely dated; though other chronological base lines within Scripture include regnal years, earthquakes, and such, here it is the age of Noah himself—a prominent patriarchal figure.[49] It is, of course, not by chance that the rains fall "precisely on the day that God had forewarned one week earlier (v. 4). Noah's confidence is not misplaced."[50] The scribe's rhetoric convincingly communicates that God's watchful (and rewarding!) eye is everywhere.

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[47] Mathews, *Genesis 1:1—11:26*, 373.
[48] Hamilton, *Genesis 1–17*, 288.
[49] Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 178-79.
[50] Mathews, *Genesis 1:1—11:26*, 374.

The initial recounting of the entry into the ark (Gen 7:7–9) proceeds logically from the divine imperative to enter the ark (Gen 7:1). The text reads as though "they scramble on board just 'before the waters of the flood,'" thus adding an element of suspense to the narrative.[51] The notation of each specific occupant that boarded the vessel, i.e. Noah, his sons, his wife, his son's wives, clean animals, animals that are not clean, and everything that creeps on the ground (Gen 7:7–8), underscores the Creator's desire to save every form of life. That the animals were male and female (Gen 7:9) brings fecundity to mind and the hope of offspring (cf. Gen 1:20–22, 24–30 and 7:3). The scribe's rhetoric convincingly communicates that whatever may happen next with the earth and the Flood, it will teem with life once again because of the LORD's rich mercy.

IV.   *Narration of the Flood: Part A "It Cometh" (Gen 7:10–12)*

> Then seven days passed.
> Then the Flood waters were upon the earth.
> In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, on the
>> seventeenth day of the month, on that day, all the fountains of the great
>> deep burst open and the windows of heaven were opened.
> At the same time, the rain was upon the earth forty days and forty nights.

Extended Analysis:

It is interesting that the text twice notes the fact that Noah was six hundred years of age when the Flood began (Gen 7:6, 11). Some suggest that Noah's age of six hundred years (60 x 10) "was considered to be a perfect number in the sexagesimal system, and was symbolic of Noah's perfection as a person."[52] In a similar manner, another author states:

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[51] Mathews, Genesis 1:1—11:26, 374.
[52] Hill, "Numbers of Genesis," 247.

"it has been suggested that an age of 600 years may be related to the Sumerian *ner* which equals 600 . . . a learned loan word in Babylonian, or to Ziusudra, who according to one tradition ruled 600 *ner* until the flood came . . . but this may be just coincidence."[53]

While this connection may be stimulating to consider, it is difficult to construe any significance beyond the ordinary in terms of why the Flood would have been said to have occurred not just in the six hundredth year of Noah's life but also, specifically, in "the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on the same day" (Gen 7:11). As it stands, the precise significance of the chronological details of the Flood remain an enigma that has yet to be solved in its entirety.[54] This point will be returned to later on.

With respect to the specific mechanics concerning the Flood itself, there are also many mysteries. Though it is written that "all the springs belonging to the great deep were broken up," no scholarly consensus exists as to what the "springs" (מעינת) actually are.[55] One scholar suggests "geysers" that spray up from "wells deep underground."[56] The same sort of challenges arise concerning the so-called "great deep" (תהום רבה). Though traditionally understood to be derived from Tiamat of the Babylonian Enuma Elish, this term here seems to refer either to: (i) the primeval ocean that surrounded the earth at the beginning of the creation week (see Gen 1:2), (ii) the subterranean waters, i.e. the lower parts of a three storied universe, or (iii) a (poetical) term for the open sea.[57]

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[53] Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 179.

[54] For more information on this point, see Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 178–81, Barré, "Flood Chronology," 3–20, Sarna, *Genesis*, 376, and Boyd and Snelling, eds., *Chronology*, 189–298.

[55] For more details, see *DCH* 5:397, and *HALOT* 1:612.

[56] Miller, *Complete Guide to the Bible*, 14.

[57] See *DCH* 8:593–94. For further information against the Babylonian connection, see also Heidel, *Babylonian Genesis*, 98–101, and Tsumura, *Creation and Destruction*, 36–53. For other lexical details, see *DCH* 7:552–53, and *HALOT* 2:1690–91. Cf. Hasel, "Fountains of the Great, Deep," 67–72, Hasel "Biblical View," 77–95, Wolde, "Creation out of Nothing, 157–76 (but especially 160–61), and Collins, *Reading Genesis Well*, 166.

With respect to the "floodgates of the sky" (ארבת השמים), another interpretive

challenge, some mention should also be made of the so-called "firmament" (רקיע).[58]

These sundry things intersect and work together to provide the engine for the Flood itself.

On the רקיע, Davis A Young and Ralph F. Stearley state:

> The ancient world universally believed that the dome-like vault of the sky
> is a glassy, crystalline *solid* . . . Some commentators attempt to avoid the
> force of the statement by claiming that Scripture is using phenomenal
> language, the language of appearance. But that's our problem. The
> Israelites would not have seen it that way. The sky didn't just look solid to
> them; they believed it to be a solid.[59]

This point, however, is disputed. Joe R. Miller, for instance, states that Hebrew

cosmology, while written in an ancient language for ancient peoples, is a manifestation of

the unique Hebrew worldview grounded in Yahweh's divine revelation, which gives

insight to modern readers into both physical beginnings and spiritual purposes of

Creation, and is, therefore, uniquely positioned to provide a "dialogic paradigm for

scientific exploration."[60] It is unnecessary to elaborate on these matters at length.

A depiction of the ancient Hebrew conception of the cosmos may be seen below:[61]

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[58] For more details, see Walton, *Ancient Cosmology*, 155–61, Walton, *Job*, 371–73, Greenwood, *Scripture and Cosmology*, 82–94, Sailhamer, *Genesis Unbound*, 123–31, alongside Seely, "Part 1," 227–40, Seely, "Part 2," 31–46, Seely, "Noah," 303–11, and Seely, "Geographical Meaning," 231–55.

[59] Young and Stearley, *The Bible, Rocks and Time*, 206–07. Emphasis original.

[60] See Miller, "Uniqueness of Hebrew Cosmology," 4. Rebuttals against such concordistic views are numerous. Walton (*Lost World of Genesis One*, 104) states: "the problem with concordist approaches is that while they take the text seriously, they give no respect to the human author . . . scientific theory cannot serve as the basis for determining divine intention." For more details, see Soden, "Concordism," 104.

[61] For comparable depictions, see Copan and Jacoby, *Origins*, 215, Davids, *2 Peter and Jude*, 269, Greenwood, *Scripture and Cosmology*, 26, Presutta, *Biblical Cosmos*, 190, Enns, *Inspiration*, 43, Lamoureux, *Evolutionary Creation*, 122, Lamoureux, "No Historical Adam," 48, Anderson, *Creation*, 21, Miller and Soden, *In the Beginning*, 44, and Walton, "Genesis," 8. See also Hill, *Worldview Approach*, 10, and Okyoye, *Genesis 1–11*, 27 (who modify Sarna, *Understanding Genesis*, 5), Glover, *Firmament*, 81 (who uses the work of Christian, *Philosophy*, 512), Keel and Schroer, *Creation*, 83 (who uses the figure in Keel, "Weltbild," 161), Dillow, *The Waters Above*, 9 (who uses the figure that is found in *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, 1:703), and Collins, *Reading Genesis Well*, 245 (who uses the image within *UBS Handbook on Genesis*, 27). For a Babylonian conception of the world, see Horowitz, *Geography*, 20–42. Note that this figure has been reproduced in its entirety digitally with express permission from Logos.

FIGURE FOURTEEN: ANCIENT HEBREW CONCEPTION OF THE UNIVERSE

Ancient Hebrew Conception of the Universe

The ancient Israelites divided the world into Heaven, Earth, Sea, and the Underworld.

They viewed the sky as a vault resting on foundations—perhaps mountains—with doors and windows that let in the rain. God dwelt above the sky, hidden in cloud and majesty.

The world was viewed as a disk floating on the waters, secured or moored by pillars. The earth was the only known domain—the realm beyond it was considered unknowable.

The Underworld (Sheol) was a watery or dusty prison from which no one returned. Regarded as a physical place beneath the earth, it could be reached only through death.

GOD
HEAVEN OF HEAVENS

HEAVENS · GATE OF HEAVEN · HEAVENS

WATERS ABOVE THE FIRMAMENT

THE SKY

WINDOWS AND DOORS OF HEAVEN

MOON

CLOUDS

FIRMAMENT

SUN

STARS

FIRMAMENT

EARTH

MOUNTAINS · SEA · SEA · MOUNTAINS

SEA

FOUNDATIONS OF THE HEAVENS

SHEOL

SEA

FOUNDATIONS OF THE HEAVENS

FOUNDATIONS OF THE EARTH

THE GREAT DEEP
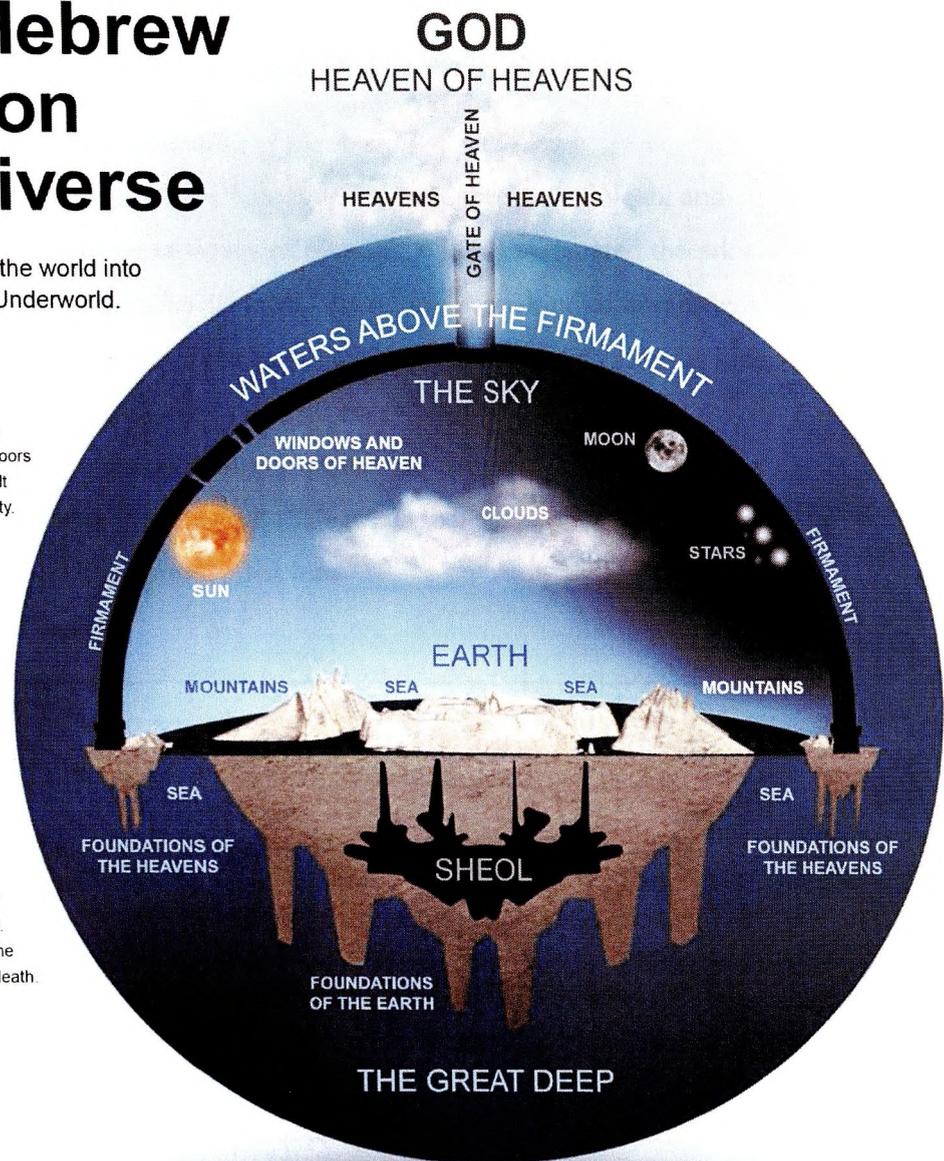
GRAPHIC BY KARBEL MULTIMEDIA,
COPYRIGHT 2012 LOGOS BIBLE SOFTWARE

Whatever the actual mechanics involved in the Flood itself, the "the cosmic phenomena described . . . represents a reversal of creation, or 'uncreation' as it has been called . . . as the sky dome was created to keep the heavenly waters from falling to earth (1:6–7), here the opened 'windows of the heavens' reverse that created function (7:11).

When the 'fountains of the great deep [*têhôm*]' burst forth (7:11), the cosmic order that had been fashioned from water chaos returns to watery chaos."[62] The scribe is persuasive in communicating the disastrous, debilitating effects of sin—the cosmos is chaos.

V.   *Second Recounting of the Boarding of the Ark (Gen 7:13–16)*

On that very same day, Noah, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, the sons of Noah, and Noah's wife, and the three wives of his sons, with them, entered the ark.

Them and every living animal after its kind—including every kind of domestic beast, alongside every creeping thing that creeps on the earth after its kind, and everything that flies after its kind: every bird—every wing.

They came with Noah into the ark, pairs of every creature in which there was the breath of life. Those that entered, male and female of all flesh went in, came just as God had commanded him.

Then the LORD shut them in.

Extended Analysis:

This passage differs from the first entry with respect to its tone, detail, and pacing. The scribe slows down the narrative, thus enabling one to appreciate the grandeur of the salvific acts of God in imparting his salvation.[63] It is interesting to note that the text makes explicit that the Noah's wife entered the ark (Gen 7:13). Elsewhere, the explicit name of Noah is not mentioned. It is either "his wife" (Gen 7:7, 8:18) or "your wife" (Gen 6:18, 8:16). It is possible that the scribe is seeking to draw attention to Noah himself or, perhaps, the import of his name.[64] Alongside this, there is no differentiation between 'clean' and 'unclean' animals.[65] In sum, Wenham states:

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[62] Arnold, *Genesis*, 103.
[63] Sailhamer, "Genesis," 125. See too Sailhamer, *Pentateuch*, 126.
[64] See Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 182.
[65] See Blenkinsopp, *Creation*, 139–40 for details as to how this concerns 'J' and 'P' sources.

The entry into the ark is here described again (cf, vv 7–9), but with extra details giving the whole occasion a 'festive tone' as befits an act which marks one of the turning points in human history. Noah's great act of obedience not merely saved himself but made possible the new world order, whose safety would be guaranteed by covenant. These verses thus portray the founders of the new humanity and new animals kingdom processing in a double column into the ark. As each group embarks, its name is called and recorded for posterity.[66]

The scribe's rhetoric convincingly communicates that God is keen to offer his aid to all those whom he wishes to save—the closing the door of the ark being a token of his great mercy and love.[67] As far-reaching and all-encompassing as the Flood waters are that will soon destroy the earth so much more are the Creator's efforts to redeem his created ones.

VI. *Narration of the Flood: Part B "The Waters Prevail" (Gen 7:17–24)*

Now the Flood lasted forty days upon the earth.

The waters increased—they bore up the ark. Then it (the ark) was raised from above the earth. Then the waters prevailed.

In fact, they increased greatly upon the earth.

Thus the ark went on the face of the water.

Alongside this, the waters continued to prevail—they were exceedingly great on the earth—so as to cover all the high mountains that were under all the heavens. Fifteen cubits from above the waters prevailed.

Then the mountains were covered.

Thus every creature that moved on the earth perished: the bird, and the cattle, and the beast, all the swarming creatures that swarm on the earth, and all humankind. Everything which had life's breath in its nostrils, from all which was on the dry ground, died.

So he wiped away every living thing which was upon the face of the ground—from humans, beasts, creeping things, and the birds of the sky.

They were wiped away from the earth.

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[66] Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 181.

[67] Okoye (Genesis 1–11, 104) calls it "[a]n act of paternal love." Interestingly, in the Babylonian account of the great Deluge, the flood hero, Uta-napishti, closed the hatch. See George, *Gilgamesh*, 91, Sargent, "Wind, Water, and Battle Imagery," 153, and Wenham, *Rethinking Genesis*, 50.

> Thus Noah was the only remnant, alongside those with him in the ark.
>
> So the waters prevailed over the earth one hundred and fifty days.

Extended Analysis:

Here marks the climax (or peak) of the narrative.[68] It is the "zone of maximum linguistic

turbulences—that is, there are [significant] textual devices that draw attention to the

event."[69] It is recorded within Gen 7:17–24 not only that the Flood came upon the earth

and that the water increased, Gen 7:17 but also (four times!) that "the water prevailed"

(Gen 7:18, 19, 20, 24).[70] As Keiser states, these sections "provide descriptions of the

flood using recapitulation, that is, each section picking up the narrative at a point in time

in the midst of the prior section, but carrying the narrative further forward."[71] The

scribe's rhetoric convincingly communicates sin's import and the severity of God's

judgment. When God created the universe, he separated the waters above from the waters

below (see Gen 1:6–7). "Now, in an act of uncreation, he reverses the process and returns

all to *tohu wa-bohu* (watery wilderness!)."[72]

That the water prevailed an additional fifteen cubits, i.e. approximately seven

meters or just over twenty two feet (half the height of the ark) upward from the heights of

the mountains seems to indicate that the ark would have been safe from scraping bottom

while floating above the waters.[73] Alongside this, it is, perhaps, also possible that the

drenching or covering of the mountains here represents a type of spiritual conquest of

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[68] Mathews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, 354, Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 183, and Licht, *Storytelling in the Bible*, 113–14.

[69] Collins, *Reading Genesis Well*, 163.

[70] The term "prevail" is being used here in the military sense ('triumphed'). See Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 150, 82–83, Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis*, 140, and Sargent, "Wind, Water, and Battle Imagery," 81. Cf. Wevers (*Genesis*, 97) who states: "Gen portrays the waters . . . battling against life . . . on earth and emerging victorious."

[71] Keiser, *Genesis 1–11*, 129.

[72] Okoye, *Genesis 1–11*, 104. Cf. Hamilton, *Genesis 1–17*, 275, and Turner, *Plot*, 38.

[73] Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 183. See too Ramm, *Christian View of Science and Scripture*, 164.

sorts over the deities or powers that presumably lived and reigned there since the Sumerians considered their temples (ziggurats) to be "mountains," *É. kur*, or a "house of the mountain/mountain house."[74] In either case, the scribe's rhetoric convincingly communicates the sovereignty of God and his compassion for all inhabitants on board which, not insignificantly, represent the very cradle of life itself (see Gen 7:3).

Strikingly, "the sequence of annihilation, 'birds, domestic animals, wild animals, all swarming creatures that swarm on the earth, and all human beings' (7:21), follows closely that of creation itself in Gen 1:1—2:3."[75] The Creator who first gave the breath of life now removes it.[76] In the words of one scholar, "the narrator's camera lingers longest over the destruction of life by the flood."[77] As another puts it: "we see water everywhere, as though the world had reverted to its primeval state at the dawn of Creation, when the waters of the deep submerged everything. Nothing remained of the teeming life that had burst forth upon the earth."[78] Indeed, the text (Gen 7:2) makes clear that everything which had "life's breath"[79] in its nostrils died (מות). Mathews notes:

> Elsewhere in Genesis 'expire and die' are used in quick succession to describe the process of dying (25:8, 17; 35:29). To 'expire' 'signifies the movement of transition from life to death.' 'To die' 'indicates the condition obtaining after that moment' . . . Here the members of this standard word pair are spaced out . . . [s]uch slowing of pace regularly marks the climax of a narrative.[80]

The scribe's rhetoric convincingly communicates the sober reality: "the soul that

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[74] See Hill, "Noachian Flood," 173, alongside Roaf "Palaces and Temples," 425.

[75] Arnold, *Genesis*, 103. See also Sailhamer, "Genesis," 125.

[76] Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 183.

[77] Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 183.

[78] Cassuto, *Genesis*, 2:97.

[79] The NET Bible states: "The MT reads נִשְׁמַת רוּחַ חַיִּים (nishmat ruakh khayyim, "breath of the breath/spirit of life"), but the LXX and Vulgate imply only נִשְׁמַת חַיִּים (nishmat khayyim). Either the LXX translator omitted translation of both words because of their similarity in meaning, or the omission in LXX shows that the inclusion of רוּחַ in the MT is the addition of an explanatory gloss."

[80] Mathews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, 381.

sins shall die" (Ezek 18:20) and "the wages of sin is death" (Rom 6:23). It also stirs a deep sense of reverence and awe for the power of Almighty God.

At the same time, however, one also notes that Noah and company did, in fact, survive the onslaught of the Flood even though everything else was totally obliterated. Indisputably, "God is committed to salvage operations. Noah and his family are saved; the world and human civilization are salvaged. Salvaging involves retrieving that which is valuable from the wreckage. This concept is at the heart of Israel's remnant theology."[81] Given such, "the contrast between those wiped out *mḥh* and Noah *nḥ* is deliberately highlighted by using the similar verb with the proper name."[82] The scribe's rhetoric convincingly communicates the power of God to both destroy *and* deliver.

Chronologically, according to the lunar calendar, the 150 days would cover at least the first five months from the coming of the Flood (Gen 7:11) to the grounding of the Ark upon the mountains of Ararat (Gen 8:3–4).[83] "Evidently the first forty days of heavy rain (7:12) were followed by 110 days of the waters' triumph. 8:4 makes plain that at least toward the end of the five months, the waters had begun to fall."[84] Hamilton states the "Flood begins (1st of 40 days) on Noah's 600th year, 2nd month, 17th day (7:11). [The] Ark rests on mountain on Noah's 600th year, 7th month, 17th day (8:4), i.e. 150 days later, possibly to be understood as 5 months of 30 days each."[85] Since chronology also plays a large role in the next section (Gen 8:1–22), no further comments will be made at this time since these point will be discussed again at length later on.

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[81] Walton, Genesis, 337–38. Cf. Hasel, "Semantic Values," 152-69.

[82] Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 183.

[83] Mathews, *Genesis 1:1–11:26*, 382, and Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 183.

[84] Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 183.

[85] Hamilton, *Genesis 1–17*, 298. For further information on this matter, see Steinmann, *Genesis*, 99, Boyd and Snelling, eds., *Chronology*, 231–756, and Sarna, *Genesis*, 376.

Summary

Much as it was within the previous analysis (Gen 6:9–22), there are two main emphases within this specific pericope (Gen 7:1–24): judgment and deliverance. The scribe's rhetoric convincingly communicates the nocuous effects of disobedience to God. The cosmos has now become chaos on account of sin (Gen 7:4, 10–12, 17–24). At the same time, however, God is also portrayed as being eager to offer his aid to all those whom he wishes to save—with he himself closing the door of the ark perhaps being one of the greatest tokens of his bountiful mercy and love (Gen 7:16). As far-reaching and all-encompassing as the Flood waters are that will overtake, destroy, ruin, and, ultimately, triumph over the earth (Gen 7:4, 10–12, 17–24), so much more so are God's efforts to salvage, redeem, deliver, and save his created ones—both human and animals. This is evidenced by the Lord's compassion for all the inhabitants who boarded the ark (Gen 7:1–4, 6–9, 13–16, 23). The scribe's emphasis upon Noah's virtue (Gen 7:1), faithfulness to God (Gen 7:5), and his deliverance from the Flood's onslaught (see Gen 7:23, cf. Gen 7:4), also make clear God's sovereignty over creation, his demonstrable concern about the moral rectitude of the inhabitants of the world that he has created, and the Lord's benevolence in rewarding life to those who are obedience to his will and way. In sum, the scribe's rhetoric convincingly communicates the power of God to both destroy *and* deliver with the clear emphasis being on his capacity to save. Despite the onslaught of the Flood, the earth will teem with life once again because of the LORD's rich mercy.

Step Four: Determining the Rhetorical Effectiveness

Up to this point, we have outlined the rhetorical units that comprise the text of Gen 7:1–

24 (step one of rhetorical criticism), explicated the entextualized rhetorical situation and showcased its exigences (step two), and commented on the various rhetorical strategies that the scribe employed (step three). Step four determines the rhetorical effectiveness of the text. As noted above, there are several exigences—one primary and two secondary.

With respect to the colossal amount of water that was involved in the Flood itself, though the tension between devastation and deliverance was mostly muted in our analysis of Gen 6:9–22 due to the fact that the Flood had yet to manifest on the earth, it is quite evident in Gen 7:1–24 via the graphic portrayal of the water's triumphant "prevailing." Certainly, though the text does make mention of Noah being saved, together with all those that were within him in the ark (Gen 7:23), the somber report at the text's close that "the water prevailed upon the earth one hundred and fifty days" (Gen 7:24), provides little assurance at this time in the narrative that the sovereign LORD will, indeed, actually commandeer the relentless Deluge and bring things back to order again. Within this portion of the Noachic Deluge narrative, therefore, the situation seems hopeless as the Flood's power seems unstoppable, insurmountable, and completely uncontrollable.[86]

Concerning the exigence that exists with respect to God, Noah, and the covenant, however, it is quite clear that Noah was fully obedient to God (Gen 7:6). Also the fact that the LORD himself safely shut the occupants of the ark inside (Gen 7:16) indicates that each party sought to fulfill all stipulations and requirements that would be necessary to keep the covenant alive. In this way, one may consider that portion as being resolved.

Another primary exigence that is also now resolved is the sheer preponderance of humanity's sin. With all human beings, save Noah and company, of course, obliterated

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[86] For further details to this end, see Sargent, "Wind, Water, and Battle Imagery," 80–81.

from the face of the earth, there remain precious few people to actually carry out sin.

Thus, the magnitude and pervasiveness of sin is now no more. That being said, however,

we still wait for God's ultimate plan to mitigate "lawlessness" (חמס) since the Flood was

not intended to be a failsafe mechanism to deal with the far-reaching consequences of sin

beyond the immediate. God's intention to destroy humanity and yet redeem it requires

further action on the part of God, i.e. the implementation of new, less cataclysmic ways

to curb humanity's sinful proclivities (cf. Gen 8:20–22 and 9:1–17).

Our analysis must also consider how the Israelites within an exilic and post-exilic

context might have considered this pericope. McKeown states:

> The account of Noah and his ark is often romanticized as a children's story
> with the emphasis on the animals that are rescued. However, it is also a
> horror story in which human beings—men women, and children—and . . .
> animals are swept are away by the merciless floodwaters. To ancient
> readers who had suffered calamities such as the exile, it is this horror
> dimension that would have been analogous to their situation.[87]

As noted above, out of the entirety of the Noachic Deluge narrative, Gen 7:17–24 offers

the clearest depiction of the totality and severity of the Flood. "Outside the ark, nothing

survives."[88] The cataclysmic nature of the Flood is all-encompassing and terrifying. As

McKeown also poignantly states:

> While the fate of those outside the ark is inevitable and terrible, the fate of
> those inside is not enviable. Since the ark has no rudder, they have no
> control over their destination and all they can do is wait and hope. Exiled
> Israelites probably saw themselves in a similar situation to those in the ark.
> Both shared that most debilitating sense of uncertainty combined with an
> inability to control their own destiny.[89]

It behooves us, therefore, to remember, that the scribe explicitly states with respect to the

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[87] McKeown, *Genesis*, 58. See also Dalton, *Children's Bibles in America*.

[88] McKeown, *Genesis*, 58.

[89] McKeown, *Genesis*, 58. McKeown (*Genesis*, 59) also states that, as a nation, Israel's circumstances "hemmed them in like the walls of a rudderless ark."

door of the ark that "the LORD closed it behind them" (Gen 7:16). In light of this, it may

safely be said that no matter where God's people are and however great a storm that they

might face, God's mercies shall always be present with them (Gen 7:23).

Conclusion

This chapter analyzed the text of Gen 7:1–24 by means of the rhetorical-critical, "rhetoric

as persuasion" method that was outlined in chapter 2 of this study. It started (step one) by

determining the rhetorical units. Within this section, it was demonstrated that the text

was constructed of several main rhetorical subsections, namely a divine speech "Enter!"

(Gen 7:1–4), comments concerning Noah's obedient faithfulness (Gen 7:5), the initial

recounting of the entry into the ark (Gen 7:6–9), the beginning stages of the narration of

the Flood itself (Gen 7:10–12), a second recounting of the boarding of the ark (Gen 7:13–

16), and, to conclude, the final narration of the Flood where the waters prevail (Gen

7:17–24). The analysis also determined that each of these main subsections consist of a

various number of primary, secondary, lower-level, and marked subunits. As noted

above, these details are provided in the preceding discussion and need not detain us here.

Following this, in step two, *determining the rhetorical situation*, it was re-asserted

that though the primary exigence of the rhetorical situation pertains to humanity's

"lawlessness" (חמס) this aspect of the rhetorical situation is not necessarily resolved

since only a portion of the problem is addressed. It remains indeterminate how God will

seek to prevent the situation from compounding again once humanity begins to marry and

multiply again on the earth. With respect to the potential risk of covenant infidelity on the

part of God and Noah, this secondary exigence was effectively resolved though we will

explore more details of this aspect in future chapters. The other secondary exigence that

concerns the Flood itself and the delicate balance between redemption and judgment, salvation and destruction was also not resolved.

Concerning step three, *determining the rhetorical strategy*, a number of literary devices were noted that had both aesthetic appeal and rhetorical efficacy. It was also specifically noted that the scribe's rhetoric convincingly communicated both God's judgment and his deliverance with the greater weight and emphasis being placed on deliverance. Concerning step four, *determining the rhetorical effectiveness*, it was understood that though a number of exigencies were somewhat resolved, we still await further analysis concerning the "triumphing" of the Flood. This section also noted the marked effect that this particular text would have upon an exilic/post-exilic Israel.

With respect to our primary argument that the Noachic Deluge narrative is unabashedly focused on redemption, deliverance, and salvation, it was demonstrated through the above analysis that a great deal of time was spent recounting the parade of the different persons and creatures entry into the ark (Gen 7:1–3, 7–9, 13–16). That the ark was to be the salvific vehicle from the Deluge was first made clear via the divine speech of Yahweh (Gen 7:1–4). The scribe's comment that Noah "did according to all that the LORD had commanded him" (Gen 7:5) also provides assurance that all those on board the ark (every human and animal entity) would be kept safe from the cataclysm of the Flood despite the imminent danger imposed by the presence of the water itself (Gen 7:7, 10) and the various mechanisms, or engine, of the Flood that were involved (Gen 7:11, 12). The narrator's specific comment that "the LORD closed it behind him" (Gen 7:16), namely the door of the ark, also gives assurance that, despite the clear and present danger, God's hand of favour would rest upon all those who entered his boat of

deliverance. As such, though Gen 7:17–24 places the highest degree of stress and emphasis on the death-inducing nature of the Flood within the entire Noachic Deluge narrative, the text also forces us to remember that because God spared Noah and the seeds of life of those aboard the ark, there is always hope for mercy triumphs over judgment (Gen 7:2–3, 23).

In sum, the argument that the Noachic Deluge narrative functions as intellectual, world-view formative rhetoric demonstrating that God's intentions to carry out his plans and purpose for creation, the establishment of order via covenant, will not be thwarted, has been both bolstered and strengthened by means of the above analysis.

CHAPTER 5: AFTER THE RAIN: THE FLOOD SUBSIDES
GEN 8:1–22

Introduction

The first chapter of analysis studied Gen 6:9–22 of the Noachic Deluge narrative. In that section, it was determined that the ark and the Noachic covenant that God established were at the forefront of the pericope. It was also noted that despite the prevalence of humanity's sin within the world and the dynamic way that God chose to deal with it, nothing would thwart Yahweh's plans and purpose to bless, redeem, and restore order via covenant. In the previous section (Gen 7:1–24), it was determined that though Gen 7:17–24 placed tremendous emphasis upon the Flood's devastation, Noah and all those with him in the ark were spared because of the LORD'S great mercy, grace, and love. Thus, though Gen 7:17–24 represents the 'trough' of the Noachic Deluge narrative, Gen 8:1–22 functions as the 'pivot' of the story with Gen 8:1 being the key 'turnaround' of the entire construct. In sum, this chapter will note the rhetorical efficacy of the scribe in communicating that despite the devastation that God upended on the earth—the cosmos becoming chaos—death and despair do not have the last word. God promised to never destroy all life again with his bow being the sign. The chaos of the cosmos is now being returned to order via the structure of the Noachic covenant.

This chapter will proceed in the same manner as the previous two analyses, i.e. the first step is determining the rhetorical units of Gen 8:1–22. Also, as in the previous two chapters, each of the main rhetorical units of this specific pericope will be broken down into smaller subunits in step one of the method, following the same procedure(s) and using the same terms that were used prior in the previous two chapters of analysis.

Step One: Determining the Rhetorical Units

As in the previous chapters, the analysis will begin with a fresh, English translation, alongside a commentary of certain grammatical and syntactical features (including text criticism issues). Each portion of text will be divided according to the "main" subunits that will be delineated at length within the rhetorical analysis itself (step one). To be clear, these main subunits are: (I) "The Flood Waters Abate" (Gen 8:1–5), (II) "After the Rain" (Gen 8:6–14), (III) "Disembarking the Ark" (Gen 8:15–19), and (IV) "Noah's Worship and God's Promise" (Gen 8:20–22).

I. *The Flood Waters Abate (Gen 8:1–5)*

[a]ויזכר אלהים את נח [b]ואת כל החיה ואת כל הבהמה אשר אתו בתבה

[c]ויעבר אלהים רוח על הארץ [d]וישכו המים [e]ויסכרו מעינת תהום [f]וארבת השמים

[g]ויכלא הגשם מן השמים [h]וישבו [i]המים מעל הארץ הלוך [j]ושוב

[k]ויחסרו המים [l]מקצה חמשים [m]ומאת יום

[n]ותנח התבה בחדש השביעי בשבעה עשר יום לחדש על [o]הרי אררט

[p]והמים היו הלוך

[q]וחסור עד [r]החדש העשירי בעשירי באחד לחדש נראו ראשי ההרים

Now God remembered Noah,[r] along with all the wild animals, and all the
    other animals with him in the ark.

Thus God caused a wind to blow on the earth. As a result, the waters calmed.

(The springs of the deep[s] had been closed, along with the windows of heaven.

Thus the rain from the sky was restrained).[t]

So the waters kept receding steadily from upon the earth.

Thus the waters had gone down the end of 150 days.

Then the ark rested, in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month,
    among the mountains of Ararat.[u]

But the waters continued to exist—they diminished until the tenth month; in the
    tenth month (on the first day), the mountain tops were able to be seen.

a. Narratival *waw*. *GBHS* §3.5.1.c. Cf. Chisholm, *Exegesis*, 120 (introductory *waw*).

b. This *waw* and the ones that follow (unless indicated otherwise) are accompaniment *waws*. Williams, *Hebrew Syntax*, §436.

c. Consequential *waw*. *GBHS* §3.5.1.b. See *IBHS* §27.2.b for more details on the Hiphil here.

d. Consequential *waw*. *GBHS* §3.5.1.b, and Chisholm, *Exegesis*, 120.

e. Supplemental or parenthetical *waw*. Chisholm, *Exegesis*, 122.

f. Accompaniment *waw*. Williams, *Hebrew Syntax*, §436.

g. Consequential *waw*. *GBHS* §3.5.1.b ,and Chisholm, *Exegesis*, 120.

h. Resumptive *waw*. Chisholm, *Exegesis*, 121.

i. The intensifying infinitive comes along the main verb of motion in order to signify repetition or continuance. See GKC §113u, Joüon §123s, and *IBHS* §35.3.2.c

j. Consequential *waw*. *GBHS* §3.5.1.b.

k. Note: the MT is more likely than the SamPent due to the preference of the latter for uniform spelling despite the fact that its rendering is actually more usual in temporal phrases than MT. See Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 153, and Tal, *BHQ*, 98.

l. Coordinative/conjunctive *waw*. Williams, *Hebrew Syntax*, §430a.

m. Sequential *waw*. Chisholm, *Exegesis*, 120, and *GBHS* §4.1.13.a.

n. It is possible that the plural is being used here to denote an indefinite singular, i.e. "one of the mountains" (see GKC §124o) or in the sense of "mountain range" (Speiser, *Genesis*, 53).

o. Contrastive *waw*. Chisholm, *Exegesis*, 126.

p. Explicative *waw*. Williams, *Hebrew Syntax*, §434.

q. For the day of the month with a cardinal, see GKC §134p, and Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 153.

r. Though many EVV offer a disjunctive conjunction here, namely "but" (see, for example, NET, NIV 1984, NIV 2011, ESV, NASB, NLT, RSV, and NRSV), there is no grammatical basis for that particular rendering as this is not a *waw* + non-verb form. Though the rhetorical nuance of the Noachic Deluge narrative, as a whole, forbids rendering the *waw* as the simple conjunction "and" (contra the KJV and BBE), one should also not leave the *waw* untranslated altogether (contra the CEB, HCSB, and CSB) since it is foundational for determining the flow of the units. Lastly, though the NKJV offers the rendering "then," the *waw* is not merely sequential but either a narrative *waw* or an introductory *waw* (see the commentary above).

s. See NIV 1984/NIV 2011 for a precedent of this rendering. Cf. NET, NASB, ESV, BBE, KJV, NKJV, and NRSV "fountains of the deep" and CSB/HCSB "sources of the watery depths." The NLT rendering "underground waters" and *The Message*, "underground springs," fail to clarify the ancient Near East nuances that are often associated with "the deep."

t. A "pluperfect" rendering is required to communicate the logical idea that the sources of water would have likely stopped before the waters began to recede. Cf. the NIV 1984/NIV 2011 "had gone down," and the NRSV/REB "had abated." See *IBHS* §33.2.3.a, GKC §111q, Joüon §118 d, Collins, "*Wayyiqtol* as 'Pluperfect," 117–40, Wenham, "Pentateuchal Source Criticism," 89–92, and Mathews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, 385.

u. While the ark may certainly have come to rest on a particular mountain within the mountain chain itself (see the details below for specifics concerning Ararat), to say that the ark came to rest "on" a mountain chain is inappropriate (cf. EVV). Clearly, however, the preposition indicates a spatial relationship wherein *x* is "above," "over," or "upon" *y* (*BHRG* §39.20.i.a and *GBHS* §4.1.16.a.i.). To this end, Walton (*Genesis*, 328) suggests that "it may be preferable . . . to translate that the ark came to rest *against* the mountains." Emphasis original.

The first main subunit, which is entitled "The Waters Abate" (Gen 8:1–5), has referential, situational, and structural (relational) coherence signified by there being: (a) sameness of place (one notes that all of the events take place on board the ark itself), (b) sameness of participants, namely God (Gen 8:1) and Noah (Gen 8:1), not to mention all of the other humans and animals that were with Noah on board the ark (Gen 8:1), and (c) sameness of topic and theme, i.e. the reversal of the Flood waters upon the earth and the beginning of a 'new' creation (Gen 8:1–5; cf. Gen 7:17–24). In addition, though there are numerous chronological details that are contained within this pericope (Gen 8:3, 4, 5) they each cover a single incident—namely the reversal of the Flood waters. To be specific, there are four temporal markers: (1) the waters decreasing and the initial time period of 150 days (Gen 8:3), (2) the ark resting on the mountains of Ararat on the seventh month on the seventeenth day due to the waters decreasing (Gen 8:4), (3) the waters decreasing steadily until the tenth month (Gen 8:5a), and finally, (4) the tops of the mountains becoming visible on the first day of the tenth month (Gen 8:5b). Alongside this, in Gen 8:1–5 it is either God or the waters that tend to dominate the subject of the verbs (cf. Gen 8:4 where the ark comes to rest). This contrasts with Gen 8:6–14 where the primary participants are either Noah, the raven, or the dove. Lastly, Gen 8:6 begins with the *wayyiqṭol* verb ויהי, "Now it was . . ." (cf. EVV), thus indicating that a new 'scene' has begun.[1]

As noted above, this section (Gen 8:1–5), may also be differentiated from the

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[1] See Van Pelt, ed., *Basics of Hebrew Discourse*, 70. The demarcation of Gen 8:1–5 being a unit is generally uncontested by scholars. See Longacre, "Flood Narrative," 238, Hamilton, *Genesis 1–17*, 299, and Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 183. Cf. Sailhamer, *Pentateuch*, 126–27. Albeit, a number of scholars choose to subdivide Gen 8:1a as its own 'scene.' See Mathews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, 384, and Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis*, 140–41. This is indefensible from both a grammatical and/or syntactical (linguistic) perspective, note the *wayyiqṭol* verb forms in Gen 8:1b–4, and a narrative/literary point of view. That is to say, God "remembering" Noah requires certain actions on his part As such, the two go 'hand in glove.' The decision of some scholars, such as McKeown, *Genesis*, 59, and Kidner, *Genesis*, 92, to extend the unit, i.e. Gen 8:1–14, is also indefensible. See the analysis portion below for more details.

rhetorical subunit that comes before it (Gen 7:17–24) by virtue of the not insignificant differences that occur with respect to topic and theme. Otherwise stated, while the previous text surely notes that Noah was left, together with those with him on the ark (Gen 7:23), the emphasis of that specific portion of text, particularly, is on the death-inducing nature of the Flood (Gen 7:17–24). The somber note on which the pericope ends, namely "the waters prevailed upon the earth one hundred and fifty days" (Gen 7:24), stands in stark contrast to the hope and optimism that now resounds within the narrative via the proclamation that "God remembered Noah . . ." (Gen 8:1).

As a whole, this main section (Gen 8:1–5), is comprised of two primary subsections: (1) "God Remembers Noah and Company" (Gen 8:1–3)[2] and (2) "The Ark Comes to Rest" (Gen 8:4–5). This first primary subsection pertains to the phenomena that instigates the end of the Flood and is marked by several comments by the narrator. One is that though the waters prevailed mightily upon the earth for a period of one hundred and fifty days (Gen 7:18–24), God did not fail to remember Noah and the other inhabitants of the ark (Gen 8:1a). For this reason, God also caused a wind to pass over the earth—calming the waters (Gen 8:1b). The fountains of the deep and the floodgates of the sky were also closed and the rain from the sky was restrained as well (Gen 8:2). Due to this activity, the water receded steadily from the earth and at the end of one hundred and fifty days the water decreased (Gen 8:3). The second primary subsection, "The Ark Comes to Rest" (Gen 8:4–5), is also marked by further comments by the narrator. The first pertains to calendar, namely when, specifically, the ark rested upon the mountains of Ararat, "in

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[2] As noted above, there is no evidence to substantiate the claim that Gen 8:1a should be differentiated as a unit, in and of itself, separate from 8:1b–22. Cf. Mathews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, 384, and Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis*, 140–41.

the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month" (Gen 8:4a). Other marked

comments include the mention of the fact that "the water decreased steadily until the

tenth month" (Gen 8:5a) and that it was not until "the tenth month, on the first day of the

month" that "the tops of the mountains became visible" (Gen 8:5c).

II. *After the Rain (Gen 8:6–14)*

ויהי מקץ ארבעים יום [b]ויפתח נח את חלון התבה אשר עשה[a]

וישלח את הערב ויצא יצוא [c]ושוב עד יבשת[d] המים מעל [e]הארץ

וישלח את היונה מאתו לראות הקלו המים מעל פני האדמה

[f]ולא מצאה היונה מנוח לכף [g]רגלה

[h]ותשב אליו אל התבה כי מים על פני כל הארץ

וישלח ידו [i]ויקחה ויבא אתה אליו אל התבה ויחל עוד שבעת ימים אחרים

ויסף שלח את היונה מן התבה ותבא אליו היונה לעת [k]ערב

[l]והנה עלה זית טרף בפיה וידע נח כי קלו המים מעל הארץ

ויחל עוד שבעת ימים אחרים וישלח את היונה

[m]ולא יספה שוב אליו עוד

[n]ויהי באחת [o]ושש מאות שנה בראשון באחד לחדש חרבו המים מעל הארץ

[p]ויסר נח את מכסה התבה

[q]וירא [r]והנה חרבו פני האדמה

[s]ובחדש השני בשבעה [t]ועשרים יום לחדש יבשה הארץ

Now it was the end of forty days.

Noah opened the window in the ark he had made. He sent forth a raven and it kept

flying back and forth[u] until the water dried up from upon the earth. Then

he sent forth a dove from himself, in order to see whether they—the

waters—had subsided from upon the surface of the ground. But the dove

could find no place to set her foot. So she returned to him to the ark, for

water was on the surface of the entire earth. So he put forth his hand and

he took her and he brought her to himself to the ark.

Then he waited until seven more days and he sent the dove out of the ark again.

Then the dove came to him by evening time with a freshly plucked

olive leaf in her beak!

Then Noah knew that the waters had subsided from upon the earth.

Then he waited until seven more days (passed). Then he sent forth the dove.

But she did not return to him anymore.

Now it was in the six hundred and first year [of Noah's life], in the first [month],

on the first [day] of the month, the waters were dried from on the earth.

Then Noah removed the covering of the ark.

And he saw that the face of the ground was dried up!

In the second month, on the twenty seventh day of the month, the earth was dry.

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a.   Narratival *waw*. See *GBHS* §3.5.1.c. Cf. Chisholm, *Exegesis*, 120 (introductory *waw*)

b.   Sequential *waw*. *GBHS* §3.5.1.a. Unless indicated otherwise, all *waws* here are sequential.

c.   Instances where a second infinitive absolute is coordinated with the first express "either an accompanying or antithetical action or the aim to which the principal action is directed." GKC §113s. In this particular case, it clearly expresses the "simultaneity or quasi-simultaneity of a second action . . . 'and he went out just to come back again (soon).'" Joüon §123m.

d.   Joüon §124h states: "where a verb has two infinitive forms . . . one was used as *nomen regens* in preference to the other. Thus in Gn 8.7 עַד־יְבֹ֫שֶׁת הַמַּ֫יִם† there probably is a genitive."

e.   Note: the LXX inserts "to see if the water had dried" assimilating Gen 8:7 to Gen 8:8. See Wenham *Genesis 1–15*, 154, alongside Sarna, *Genesis*, 57.

f.   Contrastive (or, perhaps, dramatic) *waw*. Chisholm, *Exegesis*, 126.

g.   For details on the word order that is used within this verbal clause, see Joüon §155o and 153.

h.   Though the *waw* is sequential (*GBHS* §3.5.1.a) the nuance is consequential (*GBHS* §3.5.1.b). For further information on the "telic" sense of the verb here, see *IBHS* §33.3.1.b.

i.   Though the *waw* is sequential (*GBHS* §3.5.1.a) the nuance is consequential (*GBHS* §3.5.1.b).

j.   Sequential *waw*. *GBHS* §3.5.1.a. Unless indicated otherwise, all *waws* here are sequential.

k.   For details on this being "motion in time and not point in time, i.e., 'by' and not 'at,'" see Hamilton, *Genesis 1–17*, 302. Cf. Meek, "Old Testament," 236–38. See too BBE.

l.   The construct here is "for dramatic effect to invite the audience to step into the story and see what a bystander or one of the characters saw." Chisholm, *Exegesis*, 126. Cf. *GBHS* §4.5.2.c.4. (temporal). See also Lambdin, *Biblical Hebrew*, 168–70.

m.   Contrastive (or, perhaps, dramatic) *waw*. Chisholm, *Exegesis*, 126.

n.   Narratival *waw*. See *GBHS* §3.5.1.c. Cf. Chisholm, *Exegesis*, 120 (introductory *waw*).

o.   Coordinative *waw*. Williams, *Hebrew Syntax*, §430a.

p.   Sequential *waw*. *GBHS* §3.5.1.a. For information on the verbal form here, see GKC §72t, aa.

q.   Sequential *waw*. *GBHS* §3.5.1.a.

r.   The construction here assumes that there is no anticipation of the ensuing event, i.e. it is a surprise. See Joüon §177i, and Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 154.

s.   Concluding *waw*. Chisholm, *Exegesis*, 127.

t.   Coordinative *waw*. Williams, *Hebrew Syntax*, §430a.

u.   See *IBHS* §35.3.2.c for a defense of this translation (cf. NIV 1984, NIV 2011, NET, NKJV).

This main subunit is entitled "After the Rain" (Gen 8:6–14). Although the events that transpired within Gen 8:1–5 all took place on board the ark, the literary viewpoint was at length, from a distance, with the ark mostly adrift (cf. Gen 8:4). Now, however, the viewpoint is up close aboard the ark while it remains stationary on top of the mountains of Ararat. As such, this unit has referential, situational, and structural (relational) coherence signified by there being: (a) sameness of place (see above), (b) sameness of participants, i.e. Noah (Gen 8:6–13), the raven (Gen 8:7), and the dove (Gen 8:9–12), and (c) sameness of topic/theme (discernment of the exact state of affairs with respect to the Flood waters). With respect to chronology, although the details that are recorded within this pericope take place over an extended period of time (see Gen 8:6, 8, 10, 12, 13, 14) the unit covers one primary incident—the ground becoming dry after the Flood. Lastly, Gen 8:15 marks another divine speech, thereby demarcating a new unit.[3]

This main subunit (Gen 8:6–14), is comprised of three primary subsections: (1) Noah, the window, and the raven (Gen 8:6–7), (2) Noah and the dove (Gen 8:8–12), and, (3) Noah and the dry ground (Gen 8:13–14). Within the first primary section, i.e. Noah, the window, and the raven (Gen 8:6–7) there are two secondary subunits: (i) Noah and the Window (Gen 8:6) and (ii) Noah and the Raven (Gen 8:7). The second primary section, Noah and the Dove (Gen 8:8–12), also contains two secondary subunits. They are entitled: The Dove: Part One—No Resting Place (Gen 8:8–9) and The Dove: Part Two—After Seven Days" (Gen 8:10–12). Each of these two secondary sections may also be divided into lower subunits. Concerning the former section (The Dove: Part One),

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[3] The demarcation of Gen 8:6–14 together being a unit is generally uncontested. See Mathews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, 386, Hamilton, *Genesis 1–17*, 302, Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 185, and Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis*, 141. Cf. Longacre, "Flood Narrative," 238 who has Gen 8:6–12.

there are two lower subunits: (a) the initial sending of the dove itself (Gen 8:8) and, (b) the return of the dove (Gen 8:9). Each of these lower-subunits are also marked. To begin, the narrator makes explicit that the reason why Noah sends the dove out is to see whether the water had abated from upon the surface of the ground (Gen 8:8b). Alongside this, the narrator also makes clear that the reason why the dove returned to Noah is because "there was no resting place for the sole of her foot" for "the water was on the surface of all the ground" (Gen 8:9a, b). In addition to this, the narrator states: "Noah put out his hand and took her and brought her into the ark to himself" (Gen 8:9c). The unit, as a whole (Gen 8:6–14), ends with the chronological comment: "in the second month, on the twenty seventh day of the month, the earth had dried" (Gen 8:14).

III.   *Disembarking the Ark (Gen 8:15–19)*

ᵃוידבר אלהים אל נח לאמר

צא מן התבה אתה ᵇואשתך ובניך ונשי בניך אתך

ᶜכל החיה אשר אתך מכל בשר

בעוף ᵈובבהמה ובכל הרמש הרמש על הארץ היצא אתך

ᵉושרצו בארץ ᶠופרו ורבו על הארץ ᵍויצא נח

ʰובניו ואשתו ונשי בניו אתו כל ⁱהחיה כל הרמש וכל העוף

כל רומש על הארץ למשפחתיהם יצאו מן התבה

Then God spoke to Noah: "Exit the ark!
You and your wife, and your sons, and your son's wives with you.
From every living creature that is with you, from all flesh—of birds, of domesticated animals, and of every creeping thing that creeps on the earth—bring (them) out with you! Thus they shall abound on the earth!
And they shall be fruitful! And they shall multiply on the earth!"
So Noah went out, and his sons, and his wife, and the wives of his sons with him.
Every living creature, every creeping thing, and every bird. Everything that moves on the earth, according to their families, went out of the ark.

a. Sequential *waw*. *GBHS* §3.5.1.a.
b. This *waw* and the two that follow it are coordinative. Williams, *Hebrew Syntax*, §430a.
c. Note: various versions add "and" here (Cf. Gen 8:17). See Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 154.
d. This *waw* and the one that follows it are both coordinative. Williams, *Hebrew Syntax*, §430a.
e. Consequential *waw*. Chisholm, *Exegesis*, 132, *GBHS* §3.5.1.b. The verbal form here also (possibly) carries an imperatival nuance. See Driver, *Tenses in Hebrew*, 124–25.
f. This *waw* and the one that follows it are both coordinative. Williams, *Hebrew Syntax*, §430a.
g. Though the *waw* is sequential (*GBHS* §3.5.1.a) because the action comes after an imperative, the nuance is consequential. Chisholm, *Exegesis*, 132, *GBHS* §3.5.1.b. For details on the use of a singular verb with a plural subject, see GKC §146f, and Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 154.
h. This *waw* and the three that follow it are each coordinative. Williams, *Hebrew Syntax*, §430a.
i. Note: though the LXX suggests "and all domesticated animals" the "MT may be preferable. Had Noah let out all the domesticated animals and birds, he would have had none to sacrifice. Cf. v 17 where he is instructed to release some of the birds and domesticated animals." Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 154.

This main subunit has been labelled "Disembarking the Ark" (Gen 8:15–19).[4] It contains a divine speech (Gen 8:16–17). The cohesion of this subunit is evidenced by the introductory formula "then God spoke to Noah" and the refrain that marks the end of the speech (Gen 8:18–20; cf. Gen 6:13–21 and 22; 7:1–4 and 5).[5] This particular subunit (Gen 8:15–19), is comprised of three primary subsections: (1) a preface that delineates both the interlocutor, God, as well as the recipient of the message, Noah (Gen 8:15), (2) explicit directives to exit the ark (Gen 8:16–17), which forms the substance of the divine speech itself, and (3) the fulfillment of the divine imperative to disembark (Gen 8:18–19).

The directives portion, i.e. the divine speech, Gen 8:16–17, is comprised of two secondary subunits: (i) those that concern human beings (Gen 8:16), and (ii) those that concern animals (Gen 8:17). While the first section is marked only by the delineation of the specific persons to whom God addresses the command, namely Noah, his wife, his

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[4] The demarcation of Gen 8:15–19 being a unit is generally uncontested. See Mathews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, 390, Sailhamer, *Genesis*, 116, Kidner, *Genesis*, 92, Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 185, Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis*, 141, and Hamilton, *Genesis 1–17*, 307. Cf. Longacre, "Flood Narrative," 238. Problems that relate to extending the unit, i.e. Gen 8:15–22 (passé McKeown, *Genesis*, 60) are addressed below.
[5] See Dorsey, *Literary Structure*, 23. Cf. Meier, *Speaking*, 9, and Miller, *Speech*, 400.

sons, and his son's wives with him (Gen 8:16), the second of these two portions of text

may also be divided into two lower subunits: (a) the divine imperative itself for the

animals to exit the ark, Gen 8:17a, marked only by the specific delineation of the various

types of animals to whom the Lord addressed the imperative (birds and animals and every

creeping thing), and (b) the purpose for their disembarking, namely so that they may

"breed abundantly on the earth and be fruitful and multiply on the earth" (Gen 8:17b).

The fulfillment of the divine imperative to disembark (Gen 8:18–19), follows

much the same pattern as above and has two secondary subunits: (i) this section is

marked by the delineation of the specific persons that exit the ark; in this instance, the

listing goes Noah, his sons, his wife, and his son's wives with him (Gen 8:16), (ii) this

section focuses on the animals of the ark and is marked only by the specific delineation of

the various types of creatures to whom the Lord addressed the command (Gen 8:19).

IV. Noah's Worship and God's Promise (Gen 8:20–22)

ᵃויבן נח מזבח ליהוה

ᵇויקח מכל הבהמה הטהורה ᶜומכל העוף הטהר ᵈויעל עלת במזבח

ᵉוירח יהוה את ריח הניחח

ᶠויאמר יהוה אל לבו

ᵍלא אסף לקלל עוד את ʰהאדמה ⁱבעבור האדם כי יצר לב האדם רע מנעריו

ʲולא אסף עוד להכות את כל חי כאשר עשיתי

עד כל ימי הארץ

ᵏזרע ˡוקציר וקר וחם וקיץ וחרף ויום ולילה לא ישבתו ᵛ

Then Noah built an altar to the LORD and he took of every clean animal and of
every clean bird and he offered burnt offerings on the altar.

Then the LORD smelled the pleasing odor and the LORD said to himself:

"I will never again curse the ground anymore, due to humanity.

Though the inclination of humanity's minds is evil from youth.

> Nor will I again anymore destroy all life as I have just done.
>
> > Yet all the days of the earth:[n]
> >
> > > Seedtime and Harvest
> > >
> > > Cold and Heat
> > >
> > > Summer and Winter
> > >
> > > Day and Night
> >
> > > Shall not cease."

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a. Sequential *waw*. *GBHS* §3.5.1.a.

b. Sequential *waw*. *GBHS* §3.5.1.a.

c. Coordinative *waw*. Williams, *Hebrew Syntax*, §430a.

d. Though the logic of the narrative would appear to make the nuance of the *waw* consequential (Chisholm, *Exegesis*, 132, *GBHS* §3.5.1.b) the flow makes it sequential (*GBHS* §3.5.1.a).

e. Sequential *waw*. *GBHS* §3.5.1.a.

f. It is understood that though the logic of the narrative would seem to make the nuance of the *waw* consequential (Chisholm, *Exegesis*, 132, *GBHS* §3.5.1.b), the flow itself makes it sequential (*GBHS* §3.5.1.a). For more information on the verbal form here, see GKC §72aa.

g. The prohibition particle indicates the "subject . . . is prohibited from doing the action (or being in the state) described by the verb." Williams, *Hebrew Syntax*, §396.

h. The article has a "generic function, indicating the class, i.e., "humankind." Williams, *Hebrew Syntax*, §92. The same rule applies to each of the other instances of the article in this pericope.

i. Causal preposition. *GBHS* §4.1.5.f.

j. Synchronic *waw*. Chisholm, *Exegesis*, 126.

k. The context makes clear that (by metonymy) this stands for the time when seeds are planted.

l. This coordinative *waw* joins opposites as do each of the *waws* that immediately follow it. Williams, *Hebrew Syntax*, §430a and §431. For further information on the "strong vocalization" of each of the six *waws* that follow this *waw* here, see Joüon §104d.

m. For further information on the intriguing differences between the MT, the LXX, and the SamP, see Dershowitz, "Man of the Land," 359–61.

n. The idea is that "so long as the earth exists," or "while there are yet all the days of the earth." See Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 191.

This main subunit is entitled "Noah's Worship and God's Promise" (Gen 8:20–22).[6] It, like Gen 8:15–19, also contains a divine speech (Gen 8:21–22). The cohesion of

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[6] Hamilton (*Genesis 1–17*, 306) does not divide the third (Gen 8:15–19) and fourth main subunit (Gen 8:20–22), keeping both sets of text under one title "Noah Leaves the Ark." This division does not account for the differences in time, place, and participants of the two units. Cf. Mathews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, 390, and Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis*, 142 who retain Gen 8:20–22 as a unit in and of itself, separate from Gen 8:15–19. The end of this section will discuss those scholars who combine 8:20–22 with 9:1–17, i.e. Gen 8:20—9:17, such as Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 188, and Sailhamer, *Pentateuch*, 128, Sailhamer, *Genesis*, 116.

this particular subunit is best demonstrated by the introductory formula "then the LORD said to himself,"[7] and the fact that immediately following this divine speech is another divine speech that covers a markedly different topic (Gen 9:1–7). The referential, situational, and structural (relational) coherence of this unit is also signified by there being: (a) sameness of time (one also notes the time differentiation that exists between Gen 8:20–22 as compared to Gen 8:15–19, given the disembarking of the ark and the time that would be involved in preparing a sacrifice and altar), (b) sameness of place (namely outside of the ark as compared to inside the ark), (c) sameness of participants, i.e. Noah (Gen 8:20) and God (Gen 8:21-22), (d) sameness of narratival speed of action (this includes the fact that the unit itself spans only a single event or incident, namely Noah's sacrifice to God), and (e) sameness of topic/theme (the promise of sustained deliverance). There is also a logical order and progression to the events that transpire within this unit (Gen 8:20–22), namely that Noah offers a sacrifice to the LORD upon the altar (Gen 8:20) and the LORD responds (Gen 8:21–22).

This main subunit, Gen 8:20–22, is comprised of two primary subsections: (1) a recounting of the sacrifice that Noah made to Yahweh (Gen 8:20) and (2) a divine speech in response to the sacrifice (Gen 8:21–22). Within the first primary subsection, this unit is also marked by a comment of the narrator that Noah took of every clean animal and of every clean bird (Gen 8:20). The divine speech begins with a preface that delineates both the interlocutor (the LORD) and the recipient of the message (Noah), i.e. "the LORD smelled the soothing aroma and said to himself . . . (Gen 8:21a). The speech itself is comprised of two secondary subunits: (i) the "never again" promises of Yahweh and (ii)

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[7] See Dorsey, *Literary Structure*, 21. Cf. Meier, *Speaking*, 9, and Miller, *Speech*, 400.

Yahweh's "forevermore" promises. The "never again" promises of Yahweh are comprised of two lower-level subunits: (a) never again will Yahweh curse the ground, something that is also marked by the statement that the human heart is evil from his youth, (b) never again will Yahweh destroy every living thing as he had just done (Gen 8:21). The "forevermore" promises of Yahweh are arranged in such a way to emphasize that as long as the earth endures, the basic rhythm of life will always continue (Gen 8:22).

At this time, it is also necessary to argue that Gen 8:1–22 together constitute a rhetorical unit, in and of itself, that ought to be differentiated from the rest of the Noachic Deluge narrative that follows (Gen 9:1ff). The referential, situational, and structural (relational) coherence of these verses is best demonstrated through recognizing that each of the events that transpired within the pericope occurred (temporally) after God had remembered Noah (Gen 8:1) and after the reversal of the Flood waters (Gen 8:2–5). A marked contrast to the previous pericope (Gen 7:17–24). Alongside this, there is a clear difference in the narrative's topic/theme when one compares the destruction and devastation of Gen 7:17–24, for instance, with the hope and promise of Gen 8:1 and 21–22. The question, however, is whether or not Gen 8:20–22 should be considered as part of Gen 8:1–19 together as a unit, i.e. Gen 8:1–22, or if Gen 8:20–22 belongs better with Gen 9:1–17, i.e. Gen 8:20—9:17. It is best to reckon Gen 9:1–17 as beginning a new section given that Gen 8:20–22 is substantially a divine monologue where God's own thoughts are being recorded.[8] This stands in marked contrast to the discourse that is addressed to Noah and his sons (Gen 9:1–7, 8–11, 12–16, 17). These not insignificant shifts in discourse warrant Gen 8:20–22 being marked as the end of a whole unit (Gen 8:1–22).

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[8] Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 188.

Alongside this, one notes that the main topic of Gen 8:20–22 involves the Flood while the

primary topic/theme of Gen 9:1–7 is human to animal and human to human relationships.

Each of the rhetorical subunits of the above section are depicted below:

After The Rain: The Flood Subsides (Gen 8:1–22)

I. The Waters Abate (Gen 8:1–5)
    1. God remembers Noah (Gen 8:1–3)
- God caused a wind
- The fountains of the deep and the windows of the sky were closed
- The rain was restrained
- The waters receded

    2. The Ark comes to Rest (Gen 8:4–5)
- Calendar
- Mountains become visible

II After the Rain (Gen 8:6–14)
    1. Noah, the window, and the raven (Gen 8:6–7)
        i. Noah and the window (Gen 8:6)
        ii. Noah and the raven (Gen 8:7)
    2. Noah and the dove (Gen 8:8–12)
        i. No-resting place (Gen 8:8–9)
            (a) The initial sending of the dove (Gen 8:8)
- Comments with respect to the water
            (b) The return of the dove (Gen 8:9)
- Comments with respect to the water
- Comments with respect to Noah and the ark
        ii. After seven days (Gen 8:10–12)
    3. Noah and the dry ground (Gen 8:13–14)

III. Disembarking the Ark (Gen 8:15–19)
    1. Preface (Gen 8:15)
    2. Divine directive to leave the ark (Gen 8:16–17)
        i. Directives that concern human beings (Gen 8:16)
        ii. Directives that concern animals (Gen 8:17)
            (a) specifics concerning the types of animals to disembark
            (b) reiteration of the function or purpose of disembarking
    3. Fulfillment of the disembarking (Gen 8:18–19)

IV. Noah's Worship and God's Promise (Gen 8:20–22)
    1. Noah's sacrifice to Yahweh (Gen 8:20)
- Notation of types of animals

    2. Divine speech (Gen 8:21–22)
        i. 'Never again' promises (Gen 8:21)
            (a) Curse the ground
            (b) Destroy every living thing
        ii. 'Forevermore' promises (Gen 8:22)

Step Two: Determining the Rhetorical Situation

This pericope (Gen 8:1–22) brings a significant amount of closure to the secondary

exigencies that have been determined to comprise the entextualized rhetorical situation of

the Noachic Deluge narrative. With respect to the unique covenant relationship that exists

between Noah and his Creator, it is clear that Noah is the same righteous, obedient, and

faithful man that he has consistently been throughout the whole of the Flood narrative.[9]

One key evidence of this assertion within this pericope (Gen 8:1–22) is the fact

that, at the first command of God to leave the ark, Noah obeyed (Gen 8:18, 19). In this

way, it is reasonable to conclude that Noah knew that he was not supposed to live in the

ark indefinitely. The ark was intended to be a temporary shelter, not a permanent home.

Given such, Noah's initiative to determine whether or not the Flood water had, indeed,

dried up by means of the birds, i.e. the raven and the dove, can best be understood as one

more manifestation of Noah's virtuous character as one who sought to obey God in all

that he did. To put the matter differently, given the constraints of the text as a narrative,

despite an acute knowledge that the ground was dry (Gen 8:13, 14), Noah's decision not

to leave the ark seems to indicate that he deemed it necessary to hear from God before

disembarking. Since it was at God's command that Noah both built and entered the ark,

why should he not also wait for God's command prior to leaving it?

Alongside the above, the narrator's comment that the LORD looked upon Noah's

sacrifice with favour and received it, i.e. he "smelled the soothing aroma" (Gen 8:21),

further speaks to the "good" character of Noah since God does not receive every offering

in this way (cf. Gen 4:1–7).[10] Of course, it is also understood that it is predominantly only

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[9] See Okoye, *Genesis 1–11*, 104–05.

[10] See Waltke, "Cain and His Offering," 363–72. Cf. Youngblood ed., *Genesis Debate*, 130–47.

the "righteous" who are concerned with these things. In brief, Noah fulfilled his covenant

obligations. There is nothing more on the part of Noah that he could do to either: (a)

break the covenant with God, or (b) add to it. This aspect of the exigence is thus resolved.

Concerning God's part of the matter, it is evident that God was the one who

"remembered" Noah and company (Gen 8:1). To this end, Kenneth A. Mathews states:

> The expression 'remembered' . . . does not mean 'calling to mind' here; it
> is covenant language, designating covenant fidelity (e.g. The Fourth
> Commandment, Exod 20:8; cf. Luke 1:72). God is acting in according
> with his earlier promise to Noah (6:18). We find the same expression in
> the Noachic covenant, where the Lord commits to carrying out his
> promises (8:21) and establishes the covenant sign of the rainbow (9:14–
> 15) . . . People of the covenant, whether yesterday or today, are expected
> to exercise covenant allegiance by 'remembering' the Lord (e.g., Deut
> 8:18; Ps 103:18). Israel's God had remembered Noah, and by this Israel
> too was incited to remember the Lord of Sinai.[11]

Because an analysis of Gen 9:1–17 will provide additional details concerning the full

resolution of this exigence, we will wait until that time to comment further on that point.

With respect to God himself and the Flood, it is clear that the Deluge is now over.

The scribe affirms this several times throughout the pericope: (1) he explicitly notes that

God caused a wind to pass over the earth—causing the waters to subside (Gen 8:1), (2)

he provides additional clarifying comments that "the waters (steadily) decreased" (Gen

8:1, 3, 5), and (3) he offers direct reporting of the closure of each of the specific

mechanisms that first induced the Flood, i.e. the fountains of the deep, the floodgates of

the sky, and the rain from the sky (Gen 8:2). On this particular point, although the text

does not state that God actually caused the fountains of the deep and the floodgates of the

sky to close, it is written elsewhere in the narrative that God himself would "bring the

flood of water upon the earth to destroy all flesh in which is the breath of life" (Gen 6:17,

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[11] Mathews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, 382–83. See too Collins, *Reading Genesis*, 87.

see also Gen 6:13). As such, it seems self-evident that the sovereignty of God had to be involved in these matters. This point is also supported by the miraculous timing of the onset of the Flood itself, namely that it was on the very same day that Noah and company entered the ark that "the water of the Flood came upon the earth" (Gen 7:10), and "all the fountains of the great deep burst open and the floodgates of the sky were opened" (Gen 7:11). Lastly, (4), the scribe records via divine speech that "never again" will God destroy every living thing by means of a Flood (Gen 8:21–22). It is finished.

With the above in mind, the additional comments of the narrator concerning the vast quantity of water that was involved in the Deluge (see Gen 8:7, 8, 9, 11, 13, 14) also make clear that that the survivors of the Flood did so by means of God's benevolence. It was noted in the previous chapter that a strong emphasis was placed upon the death-inducing nature of the Flood waters within Gen 7:17–24, albeit, one notes the resonance of hope within Gen 7:23, in particular. This particular pericope (Gen 8:1–22), also emphasizes the hydrologic damage that the Flood wrought. This is clear through the scribe's statement: "the water was on the surface of all the earth" (Gen 8:9). Undeniably, without such a vessel as the ark and the hand and favour of God resting upon it (see Gen 7:16), it would have been impossible for anyone to have escaped such a cataclysm alive.

In sum, God was exercising his sovereign care over all aspects of the Deluge so as to: (1) ensure that the death-inducing Flood would, indeed, destroy all those whom God wished to "wipe away" (Gen 6:7, 13, 17; 7:4, 17–24), and (2) ensure that the ark had fulfilled its salvific purpose (Gen 6:14, 18–21; 7:1–5, 7–9, 13–16, 23; 8:1, 16–19). Now that the annihilation of the world was complete—the cosmos becoming chaos—and the Deluge and the ark had both fulfilled their purposes, God states, unequivocally, that never

again would he ever destroy every living thing as he had just done with the Flood (Gen 8:21). As such, the exigence concerning God and the Flood is now fully resolved.

Turning to the second key component of the rhetorical situation, i.e. audience, it is once again made clear (as has also been done in the previous two chapters of analysis of the Noachic Deluge narrative), that Noah does not fit the traditional scheme of "indictment and sentence."[12] In the words of Walter Brueggemann:

> Noah is righteous and blameless. He walks with God (vv. 6:9; 7:1; cf. 5:2). In this dismal story of pain, there is one who embodies a new possibility . . . [t]he narrator wants the listening community to turn to Noah, to consider that in this troubled exchanged between creator and creation there is the prospect of fresh alternative. Something new is at work in creation. Noah is the new being . . . He is the fully responsive man who accepts creatureliness and lets God be God.[13]

The implications of this for determining the constraints of the rhetorical situation are far-reaching. If God's mercies are so all-encompassing that even the Flood itself is not the end, but, actually, a new beginning, and if the same grace that God extended to Noah is now offered to all of creation (Gen 8:21–22), then every day is an opportunity for one to accept their "creatureliness" and to become responsive and obedient to their Creator.[14]

Step Three: Determining the Rhetorical Strategy

This step centers on delineating and assessing the rhetorical strategies that the scribe employs to make his persuasive appeal. As done previously, the analysis will leverage the English translation offered above. The analysis will also be divided according to the main subunits that were noted above (step one), namely: (I) "The Flood Waters Abate"

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[12] Brueggemann, *Genesis*, 79.
[13] Brueggemann, *Genesis*, 79.
[14] As Hodge (*Days of Genesis*, 139) states: "each person's life will be a time of trial in which opportunity to repent from each individual's participation in חמס, 'acts against human life and preservation,' will be granted."

(Gen 8:1–5), (II) "After the Rain" (Gen 8:6–14), (III) "Disembarking the Ark (Gen 8:15–19), and (IV) "Noah's Worship and God's Promise" (Gen 8:20–22).

After The Rain: The Flood Subsides (Gen 8:1–22)

I.   *The Flood Waters Abate (Gen 8:1–5)*

Now God remembered Noah, along with all the wild animals, and all the
    other animals with him in the ark.

Thus God caused a wind to blow on the earth. As a result, the waters calmed.

(The springs of the deep had been closed, along with the windows of heaven.

Thus the rain from the sky was restrained).

So the waters kept receding steadily from upon the earth.

Thus the waters had gone down the end of 150 days.

Then the ark rested, in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month,
    among the mountains of Ararat.

But the waters continued to exist—they diminished until the tenth month; in the
    tenth month, on the first day of the month, the tops of the mountains were
    able to be seen.

Extended Analysis:

At long last, the deliverance and salvation of all life that was only hinted at within the

previous pericopes (Gen 6:14–21; 7:1–4, 7–9, 13–16, 23) is made manifest within the

first verse of this unit (Gen 8:1): "Now God remembered Noah" (ויזכר אלהים את נח).

The flow here of the Noachic Deluge narrative begins to reverse as does the direction of

the Flood water.[15] The scribe's rhetoric convincingly communicates God's faithfulness

and care, since the preservation of all those aboard the ark bears testimony to his grace.

In this way, it is of interest to note that the text makes no mention of either Noah's

righteousness (cf. Gen 6:9, 7:1) or his obedience to God (cf. Gen 6:22, 7:5) in connection

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[15] See Mathews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, 382.

to God's remembrance of Noah (Gen 8:1). In addition, one also notes that the covenant

(which will be the source of much of the discussion of Gen 9:9–17) is not mentioned.

Hamilton states: "By trimming the description of the divine remembrance as much as

possible, the point is made that when all appears helpless God intervenes to prevent

tragedy."[16] The scribe's rhetoric convincingly communicates the richness of God's great

kindness, mercy, and love which extends even to the animals (Gen 8:1; cf. Jonah 4:11).[17]

With respect to God "remembering" (זכר), it must be understood that this is "not

the retention or recollection of a mental image, but a focusing upon the object of memory

that results in action."[18] That is to say, God remembering Noah "is not only evidence of

his compassion, but it also translates into action."[19] As one scholar puts it: "When God

remembers, he acts, sets things in motion."[20] In this instance (Gen 8:1), God

remembering the ark's inhabitants directly relates to "causing a wind to blow over the

earth."[21] This comment, in particular, marks a striking similarity to the beginning of

creation: "blowing wind, retreating waters, and the emergence of drying land dominate

the telling of the deluge's reversal. The language of the passage echoes the description of

Genesis 1, showing that God has set about making a new creation."[22] The "wind" (רוח)

thus "heralds the reimposition of order."[23] The scribe's rhetoric convincingly

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[16] Hamilton, *Genesis 1–17*, 299.

[17] See Okoye, *Genesis 1–11*, 104, and Linzey and Cohn-Sherbok, *After Noah*.

[18] Sarna, *Genesis*, 56.

[19] Wevers, *Genesis*, 101. See too Childs, *Memory*, 34.

[20] Okoye, *Genesis 1–11*, 104.

[21] Though some EVV render this as a "divine wind," cf. the NEB and the AB that render this clause as "a mighty wind that swept over the surface of the waters" and "an awesome wind sweeping over the water" respectively, the textual, grammatical, and theological evidence suggests otherwise. See Bediako, "Spirit/Wind," 78–84. In addition, though many EVV choose to render the latter half of this phrase as "pass over" (see NASB, ESV, NLT, HCSB, CSB) rather than "blow over," there is no lexical or theological difference between the two. For details, see Sargent, "Wind, Water, and Battle Imagery," 3

[22] Mathews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, 383. Cf. Sailhamer, "Genesis," 113.

[23] Sarna, *Genesis*, 56.

communicates the sovereignty of God over his creation, for he commands all the cosmic

forces of nature—both the water and the wind. Truly, "it is only the remembering of God

that gives hope and makes new life possible."[24]

Subsequent to the scribe's comment that "the waters abated" (וישכו המים), each of

the two primary hydrological phenomena that were first noted in Gen 7:11, namely "the

springs of the deep" (תהום מעינת), and "the floodgates of the sky" (השמים ארבת), are

both "abruptly terminated" thus stopping and restraining the rain.[25] Mathews states that

the deep is now "no longer 'great.'"[26] That is, the waters are "humbled" before their lord

and maker.[27] In this way, the Noachic Deluge narrative is consistently and repeatedly

stressing the point that the Flood is not a "freak of nature. Both its commencement and

completion are divinely ordained and divinely controlled."[28] The scribe's rhetoric

convincingly communicates that everything—even the cosmic forces of wind and

water—issue from "God's sovereign will" and are under his "undisputed control."[29]

As noted above, calendar plays no small role within Gen 8:3–5. Specific dates and

times are consistently noted. To begin, it is written (Gen 8:3): "the waters kept receding

steadily from upon the earth" and that "the waters had gone down the end of 150 days."[30]

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[24] Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis*, 141. See also Blenkinsopp, *Creation*, 142.

[25] Sarna, *Genesis*, 56.

[26] Mathews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, 385.

[27] Sargent, "Wind, Water, and Battle Imagery," ii.

[28] Hamilton, *Genesis 1–17*, 300.

[29] Sarna, *Genesis*, 56. With respect to comparative analysis, within the Sumerian Flood account (see *ANET*, 44), Ziusudra prostrates himself before Utu, the sun-god, after he leaves his ship for "it is the sun that has just come out and illuminated the earth and the sky" Hamilton, *Genesis 1–17*, 300. Hamilton further states here that since the sun plays no role in the drying up of the Flood waters that this could indicate a "deliberate dissociation in biblical thought between the Flood's end and a sun deity."

[30] Hamilton (*Genesis 1–17*, 300), states: "to make sense of the last part of the verse, one must attribute to the verb inceptive force . . . that is, it describes the beginning of a process not the conclusion of that process." This understanding thus permits "the period of abatement to have begun already within the 150-day period." Mathews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, 385.

This process culminated (Gen 8:4) in the ark coming to rest in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month "among the mountains of Ararat."[31] With respect to this, there seems to be an intentional wordplay in Gen 8:4 in that "the verb *came to rest*, Heb. *tānaḥ*, is that from which the name Noah (Heb. *nōaḥ*) is derived. Thus, one might say that the ark "noah-ed" on one of the mountains of Ararat."[32] Given that the ark's resting was a perfect "three-point landing," the scribe's rhetoric convincingly communicates the sovereignty and power of God, alongside his mercy and compassion.

The waters diminished until the tenth month and on the first day of the month, seventy three days later, the tops of the mountains were seen (Gen 8:5).[33] The temporal conundrums that the interpreter faces here are numerous.[34] Even so, the scribe's rhetoric convincingly communicates God's absolute sovereignty over all aspects of creation and his sustaining hand of grace and faithful provision to all those abiding within the ark.

II.   *After the Rain (Gen 8:6–14)*

Now it was the end of forty days.

Noah opened the window in the ark he had made. He sent forth a raven and it kept
flying back and forth until the water dried up from upon the earth. Then
he sent forth a dove from himself, in order to see whether they—the
waters—had subsided from upon the surface of the ground.

But the dove could find no place to set her foot. So she returned to him

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[31] This refers to the mountainous region Urartu that is located north of Mesopotamia (modern day eastern Turkey). Yamauchi, *Foes from the Northern Frontier*, 29–32; Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 184–85; Hamilton, *Genesis 1–17*, 301. This is in contrast to *Jubilees* (5:28, 7:1) and 1QapGen which identify Mount Lubar as the landing point. See Mathews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, 386, and Lyon, *Qumran Interpretation*, 59–64.

[32] Hamilton, *Genesis 1–17*, 301. All emphases original. Another scholar states that there is "clearly a paronomastic allusion to Noah's name" here. Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 184.

[33] Sarna, *Genesis*, 57. For further information on this point, see Wenham, *Genesis*, 325–30, and Martin, *Solving the Riddle*, 19–21. Walton (*Genesis*, 328), suggests that the Flood "covered all the elevated places . . . within eyesight of the . . . ark."

[34] Hamilton (*Genesis 1–17*, 301) states: "I see no credible way of harmonizing the information of v. 5 with v. 4. V. 4 clearly states that the ark rested on one of the mountains of Ararat in the 17th day of the 7th month. Yet v. 5 states that no mountaintop was spotted until the first day of the 10th month.'"

to the ark, for water was on the surface of the entire earth. So he put forth

his hand and he took her and he brought her to himself to the ark.

Then he waited until seven more days and he sent forth the dove again out of the

ark. Then the dove came to him by evening time with a freshly plucked

olive leaf in her beak!

Then Noah knew that the waters had subsided from upon the earth.

Then he waited until seven more days (passed). Then he sent forth the dove.

But she did not return to him anymore.

Now it was in the six hundred and first year [of Noah's life], in the first [month],

on the first [day] of the month, the waters were dried from on the earth.

Then Noah removed the covering of the ark.

And he saw that the face of the ground was dried up!

In the second month, on the twenty seventh day of the month, the earth was dry.

Extended Analysis

Noah waits until the end of forty days to open the hatch of the ark which he had made

(Gen 8:6). After this, Noah sends out a "raven" (ערב)[35] and a "dove" (יונה)[36] in order to

determine whether or not the "waters had diminished from the earth," i.e. to discern the

suitability of the earth for habitation (Gen 8:7–8). This use of birds for this type of thing

is well founded.[37] The order of raven to dove also makes logical sense: "the raven is a

carrion eater and did not return because it found food on the mountain peaks. The dove is

a valley bird . . . it was released in order to determine whether the lower-lying areas were

habitable."[38] From an ancient Near East comparative perspective, "Heidel compared the

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[35] See *HALOT* 1:879.

[36] See *HALOT* 1:402.

[37] Wachsmann, *Seagoing Ships and Seamanship*, 300 and 371. See too Marcus, "Mission of the Raven," 71–80, and Heras, "'The Crow' of Noe," 131–39. Cf. Marczewski, "Kruka," 55–70.

[38] Hamilton, *Genesis 1–17*, 304–05. See too Keiter, "Dove," 262. On a different note, one scholar states: "the two birds are really one bird, but in two different versions of the story. The dove is the one bird sent out in the Yahwist's flood story, while the raven is the one bird sent out in the Priestly account of the flood." Moberly, "Raven," 348. See too Noort, "Flood," 9.

Babylonian version unfavorably with the account in Genesis supposing that 'by releasing

the raven first, Noah . . . displayed greater wisdom than Utnapišti, who . . . sent the raven

out last'. This statement, based as it was on a theory of bird behavior extrapolated from

the biblical account and thence unaltered to the cuneiform tradition, is methodologically

suspect. The Babylonian order of birds may have had a different rationale from that

which informed the Hebrew story."[39] There are, therefore, certain mysteries here:

> The three "missions" of the dove seem to be unusual – after all, if the land
> was already visible well before Noah sent out the dove the first time, why
> did it not find any rest? And why did it return after its second voyage – but
> with an olive branch . . . And if it was able to gain access to such trees,
> why did it come back at all – after all, when it was sent the third time and
> evidently found the water yet lower, it didn't return.[40]

Arnold simply states that "the three trips of the dove illustrate the degrees of readiness of

earth."[41] Clues, however, to the process that was involved here may be derived from what

immediately follows the account. After the episode of the birds, there is a dual reporting

of the situation—one from the perspective of Noah and the other from the narrator

himself. Each of these reports involve calendar and a statement concerning the condition

of the earth with respect to water. Concerning the first report:

> It is vital to view the narrative from a "real-world" perspective,
> remembering that the characters only know what they know and that the
> various questions posed, observations made and tests passed (or not) may
> be designed to further the actor's grasp of the situation. We find ourselves
> at the disadvantage of having read the story so many times that . . . we
> already know that the earth is completely dry . . . We have to sensitize
> ourselves to the reality that Noah doesn't know that—to anticipate the
> questions in his mind and view his actions in that light—as . . . thoughtful
> attempts to give him the information necessary to move forward.[42]

In this way, the scribe is persuasive in fostering additional support and empathy for Noah.

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[39] Smith, *Babylon*, 516–17. Cf. Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 186, Jacobus, "Birds," 85–112.
[40] Etshalom, *Between the Lines*, 2.
[41] Arnold, *Genesis*, 105.
[42] Etshalom, *Between the Lines*, 4.

The second report merely states: "in the second month, on the twenty seventh day of the month, the earth was dried up" (Gen 8:14). If one compares the calendar of these dates with those of the beginning of the narrative an interesting point emerges:[43]

Flood begins (Gen 7:11): 17th day/2nd month/600th year of Noah
Flood has gone (Gen 8:14): 27th day/2nd month/601st year of Noah

In brief, Noah's Flood lasted "twelve months and eleven days, the exact period required to equate the year of twelve lunar months, 354 days, with the solar year of 365 days."[44] To put the matter another way, Noah's Flood lasted "one solar year."[45] From the narrator's perspective, however, "one gets a strong impression that Noah does not wish to leave the ark precipitately."[46] This bespeaks the virtuous character of Noah who is waiting for a divine signal to leave that which he has been commanded to enter. The scribe's rhetoric convincingly communicates Noah's circumspection and judiciousness.

Concerning some of the other details of the account, it is of interest to note that the olive leaf was "fresh" (טרף זית).[47] This confirms that the "earth was again yielding its herbage (as 1:11–12, 30)."[48] Alongside this, the depiction of an olive leaf may have also prompted the reader to "reflect on" possible relationships with the menorah, which was fueled by olive oil and certain other cultic matters, such as the perfumed anointing oil.[49] One scholar states: "The olive tree, one of the earliest to be cultivated in the near East, is an evergreen. It is extraordinarily sturdy and may thrive for up to a thousand years. Thus

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[43] This schematic (with slight modifications) comes from Hamilton, *Genesis 1–17*, 305.

[44] De Vaux, *Ancient Israel*, 1:188–89. See also Larsson, "Noah-Flood Complex," 75–77.

[45] Hamilton, *Genesis 1–17*, 305. See too Kidner, *Genesis*, 98–100. Cf. Arnold, *Genesis*, 107.

[46] Hamilton, *Genesis 1–17*, 302.

[47] See Gevaryahu, "Dove," 172–75. For more lexical information, see *DCH* 3:376, *HALOT* 1:380.

[48] Mathews, *Genesis 1:1—11:26*, 388. Sarna (*Genesis*, 58) states "the rare noun *taraf* connotes that it was freshly removed from the tree and was not flotsam, a sure sign that plant life had begun to renew itself." Another scholar states that the olive leaf "represents a new beginning, the world coming to life once again." Gevaryahu, "Dove," 173. Cf. Galambush, *Reading Genesis*, 45.

[49] Mathews, *Genesis 1:1—11:26*, 388. See too Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 187.

it became symbolic of God's blessings of regeneration, abundance, and strength, which is most likely the function it serves here."[50] The scribe is persuasive in communicating God's desire for beauty, fertility, and abundance to spring anew in the new world.[51]

Although much fuss is sometimes made that the same terminology that is used within this pericope for Noah removing the "covering" (מכסה) of the ark (cf. Gen 6:16) is also almost exclusively used for the "hide cover" for the "tent of meeting" (e.g. Exod 26:14; 35:11; 36:19; Num 3:25), it is likely that there are some simple nautical components that are involved, such as a "tarpaulin of skins" of sorts, that have no cultic bearing or significance.[52] In sum, "this little sequence . . . 'subtly lets us witness the waiting and hoping of those enclosed in the ark'. Noah's resourcefulness comes to light, and above all, in 13, 14, his self-discipline as he patiently awaits God's time and word."[53] The scribe's rhetoric is persuasive in garnering additional support and empathy for Noah.

III. *Disembarking the Ark (Gen 8:15–19)*

Then God spoke to Noah: "Exit the ark!

> You and your wife, and your sons, and your son's wives with you.
> From every living creature that is with you, from all flesh—of birds, of domesticated animals, and of every creeping thing that creeps on the earth—bring (them) out with you! Thus they shall abound on the earth!
> And they shall be fruitful! And they shall multiply on the earth!"

So Noah went out, and his sons, and his wife, and the wives of his sons with him.
Every living creature, every creeping thing, and every bird. Everything that moves
> on the earth, according to their families, went out of the ark.

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[50] Sarna, *Genesis*, 58. Cf. Galambush, *Reading Genesis*, 45.

[51] See Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 187.

[52] One scholar even opines: "it's meaning is not in doubt." Kidner, *Genesis*, 92. Cf. Mathews, *Genesis 1:1—11:26*, 388. For ancient Near East (Gilgamesh) connections and comparisons, see Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 187. For more lexical details, see *DCH* 4:271, *HALOT* 1:581.

[53] Kidner, *Genesis*, 92.

Extended Analysis:

As noted above, Noah seems extremely reticent to disembark, despite his acute

knowledge that the earth is no longer water inundated. "Why not just leave the ark?

Evidently, when Noah's future is at stake, he subordinates his own experiments, however

noble and adroit, to a message from God."[54] It is interesting that this is the only instance

that Noah has heard the voice of God from within the ark. As has been the case in the

other divine speeches (Gen 6:13–21 and Gen 7:1–4), however, God speaks directly to

(and only to) Noah (Gen 8:15–17; cf. Gen 9:1–7, 8–11). It is thus assumed that Noah

relays the information to all parties involved in an expedient and reliable manner.[55]

Once Noah hears from God, Noah responds promptly in full obedience, in this

case, disembarking the ark *en masse* (Gen 8:18–19. Cf. Gen 6:22; 7:5). John Calvin states

concerning this: "How great must have been the fortitude of the man, who, after the

incredible weariness of a whole year, when the deluge has ceased, and new life has shone

forth, does not yet move a foot out of his sepulcher, without the command of God."[56] The

scribe's rhetoric convincingly communicates the need for faithful obedience to God. The

scribe is also persuasive in garnering further support and empathy for Noah.[57]

Noah's departure from the ark is noted through a four-fold repetition of the verb

יצא: (1) Qal imperative (Gen 8:16), (2) Hiphil imperative (Gen 8:17), (3) Qal *yiqṭol* with

waw (Gen 8:18), and Qal *qaṭal* (Gen 8:19). Hamilton states that by highlighting this verb,

the scribe "emphasises the departure from the ark. Noah and his companions are not

consigned to an ark existence. The ark is . . . only a shelter, not a domicile."[58] The

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[54] Hamilton, *Genesis 1–17*, 307.
[55] Hamilton, *Genesis 1–17*, 307.
[56] Calvin, *Genesis*, 280. Cf. Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis*, 142.
[57] See Mathews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, 391.
[58] Hamilton, *Genesis 1–17*, 307. Cf. Hodge, *Days of Genesis*, 146–50.

significance of the imperative to leave the ark and the recitation of the act itself by the

narrator highlights the redemptive nature of God to begin life anew. Longman states:

> The flood was an act of un-creation in which God reverted the earth to its
> pre-creation state of *tohu wabohu* ("formless and empty," 1:2). Not
> surprisingly then, we begin to encounter language that echoes language of
> the first creation. We move now from un-creation to re-creation.[59]

The scribe's rhetoric convincingly communicates God's desire to redeem and restore life.

IV.   Noah's Worship and God's Promise (Gen 8:20–22)

Then Noah built an altar to the LORD and he took of every clean animal and of

every clean bird and he offered burnt offerings on the altar.

Then the LORD smelled the pleasing odor and the LORD said to himself:

"I will never again curse the ground anymore, due to humanity.

Though the inclination of humanity's minds is evil from youth.

Nor will I again anymore destroy all life as I have just done.

Yet all the days of the earth:

Seedtime and Harvest

Cold and Heat

Summer and Winter

Day and Night

Shall not cease."

Extended Analysis:

Immediately following his dismemberment from the ark, Noah built an "altar" (מזבח)[60]

so as to sacrifice to the LORD (Gen 8:20). Although the text does not make the reason for

this sacrifice explicit, it may be presumed that the offering is in response to Noah's

gratitude for his deliverance and that it functions as an acknowledgment of who God is—

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[59] Longman, *Genesis*, 119–20. See also Sailhamer, "Genesis," 129, and Sarna, *Genesis*, 59.
[60] See *HALOT* 1:564.

Noah's Creator, Lord, Deliverer, and Savior.[61] While sacrifice had already been made

prior to this point within the book of Genesis (Gen 4:3–5), Gen 8:20 is the first mention

of an "altar" (מזבח) being made for such purposes.[62] While "Noah's altar is not described,

the first audience would have assumed it conformed to the Mosaic legislation requiring

all temporary altars be constructed of 'earth' or 'unhewn stones' (e.g. Exod 20:24–26;

Deut 27:5–6)."[63] It is of interest to note that the text specifically mentions that Noah

"took of every clean animal and of every clean bird" (Gen 8:20). According to Lev 1:

> The whole burnt offering . . . represented the worshiper's complete
> surrender and dedication to the LORD. After the flood Noah could see that
> God was not only a God of wrath, but a God of redemption and
> restoration. The one who escaped the catastrophe could best express his
> gratitude and submission through sacrificial worship, acknowledging God
> as the sovereign of the universe.[64]

Following Noah's sacrifice it is written (Gen 8:21a): "then the LORD smelled the

pleasing odor." This language shows God's pleasure toward the giver and the gift (e.g.

Exod 29:18, Lev 1:9, Num 15:3).[65] A refusal to receive or "smell" the sacrifice depicts

God's rejection of the worship act (Lev 26:31, cf. Amos 5:21).[66] Hamilton also states:

"since 'ōla, the Hebrew word for '(whole) burnt offering,' is related to 'ālâ, a verb

meaning 'to ascend,' it is natural to perceive the smoke of Noah's offering ascending

heavenward. Movement up and down as already been made in the Deluge story—rising

sin, falling divine forbearance; rising waters faking waters, rising smoke."[67]

There are also several sound plays on the name Noah that are brought together

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[61] Mathews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, 391 and 392. Cf. Walton, *Genesis*, 315.
[62] Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 189.
[63] Mathews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, 391–92.
[64] The NET Bible. See also Hartley, *Leviticus*, 17–18.
[65] Mathews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, 392. Cf. Kidner, *Genesis*, 93.
[66] Mathews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, 392.
[67] Hamilton, *Genesis 1–17*, 308.

here: "through the 'soothing' offerings (*nîḥōaḥ*), God is brought to 'rest' (*nûaḥ*) by 'Noah' (*nōaḥ*). Thus by 'Noah' (*nōaḥ*) the divine 'grief/regret' (*nḥm*) over human creation (6:6) and his decision to 'wipe out' (*mḥh*; 6:7) all humanity is transformed into his 'compassion' (*nḥm*) for postdiluvian humanity."[68] The scribe's rhetoric convincingly communicates that mercy triumphs over judgment for God will henceforth not give his fallen creatures their "just deserts. The punishable will not be punished."[69]

It is significant that God's promise to never again destroy the earth via this sort of Deluge is repeated. Indeed, to begin, the LORD states that he will "never again curse the ground anymore, due to humanity. Though the inclinations of humanity's minds are evil from youth" (Gen 8:21a). While it is written that God says this "to himself,"[70] there seems to be no real reason for this to be self-deliberation, in particular.[71] Following this, the LORD affirms that he will never again anymore destroy all life as he had just done (Gen 8:21b). The Flood is an unrepeatable event—a type of salvation (1 Pet 3:21).[72]

The poem that follows further substantiates God's promise (Gen 8:22). God will preserve the earth and its "ecology" until the final judgment (1 Peter 3:20–21; 2: Peter 2:5–12).[73] Sarna puts it well, "the ordered processes of nature will never again be interrupted. The rhythm of life" is "reflected in the rhythmic quality of the language."[74]

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[68] Mathews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, 393. See also van Wolde, *Words Become Worlds*, 82–83.

[69] Hamilton, *Genesis 1–17*, 310.

[70] Though generally translated as "in his heart" in many EVV, this term refers to "the center of one's being, an image for a person's thought life, reflections, and will. The story of the 'heart' reveals a person's commitment and direction in life." VanGemeren, "The Heart," 1019. Cf. von Rad, *Genesis*, 117. See also *DCH* 4:506–09, and *HALOT* 1:513–15.

[71] Hamilton (*Genesis 1–17*, 309) seems to be overreaching when he asserts that God did not make Noah privy to this pronouncement due to the potential of there being "magic" involved. For details on this matter, see Oswalt, *Bible Among the Myths*, 54–55, 75–76.

[72] For more details, see Longman, *Genesis*, 124–25, and Yoshikawa, "Noachic Flood," 443–90.

[73] Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis*, 143. Cf. Fisher, "Gilgamesh and Genesis," 401.

[74] Sarna, *Genesis*, 59.

In sum, "God pledges to allow time, and the liturgical cycle, to continue."[75] The scribe's rhetoric convincingly communicates the mercies and long-suffering of the Creator.

The poem is comprised of four couplets or pairs of merisms: (1) seedtime and harvest, (2) cold and heat, (3) summer and winter, and (4) day and night.[76] Together they describe three "environmental phenomena: agricultural, climatic, and temporal."[77] Walton maintains that these denote food, weather, and time respectively—the three staple things that are required to sustain life on the earth.[78] The scribe's rhetoric convincingly communicates God's mercies and the promise of his plan to form a "new creation."

Step Four: Determining the Rhetorical Effectiveness

Having outlined the rhetorical units of Gen 8:1–22 (step one of the rhetorical critical method), explicated the entextualized rhetorical situation and showcased its exigences (step two), and commented on the various rhetorical strategies that the scribe employed (step three), the final step involves determining the rhetorical effectiveness (step four). As noted above, there are several exigences (primary and secondary) with respect to the Noachic Deluge narrative, and each exigence has a different level of prominence.

Concerning the massive amount of water that was involved in the Flood, this tension is altogether eliminated for the Flood itself has been fully reckoned with. Not only have the waters ceased their raging and are now calm but they have also dissipated, and the land has become dry once more—bearing life and vegetation (Gen 8:13–14). Full and complete closure to this matter is also underscored by God's declaration that he will

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[75] Cotter, *Genesis*, 59.
[76] Hamilton, *Genesis 1–17*, 310. For more details on this device, which functions to convey the idea of completeness or totality, see Watson, *Classical Hebrew Poetry*, 31.
[77] Sarna, *Genesis*, 59.
[78] Walton, *Ancient Cosmology*, 170.

never again send a Flood such as this one ever again (Gen 8:21–22).

Concerning the exigence involving God, Noah, and the covenant, it is clear that Noah remains fully obedient to his Creator. The one who heeded God's imperative to build, stock, and enter the ark (Gen 6:14–22; 7:1–5, 7–9, 13–16) also obeyed the command to exit the ark (Gen 8:15–19). Though silent, Noah's actions speak volumes. He completely fulfills each one of his covenant obligations (Gen 6:22; 7:5, 7, 9, 13–16). In addition, since the text does not say that Noah offered his sacrifice out of compulsion or necessity (Gen 8:20), it may, perhaps, even be said that he went "above and beyond."

God, too, may be said to have fulfilled his covenant obligations to Noah. First, God promised Noah that he would establish his covenant with him (Gen 6:18). Then, after Noah entered the ark (Gen 7:5, 7, 13, 15) God's hand of protection rested upon him (see Gen 7:16) and his life was spared (Gen 7:23). Next, God "remembered" all those who were aboard the ark and began to reverse the Flood waters (Gen 8:1). Following this, once the earth was dry, God commanded Noah and company to leave the ark (Gen 8:15) and then promised to never again destroy all life via a cataclysmic Deluge (Gen 8:21–22).

That being said, however, one notes that the primary exigence concerning humanity and his "death-inducing, sinful lawlessness" (חמס) remains unresolved. If God is no longer able to send a Flood to "fix" the problem of humanity's hell-bent tendencies, what will he do in order to help curb humanity's self-destructive potential? This issue will be addressed in the next chapter which brings complete resolution to this key issue.

Our analysis must also consider how those within an exilic/post exilic context might have considered these words. McKeown states that the text would be "particularly relevant to early Israelite readers who were longing to return to their homeland after a

period of enforced exile with hopes of a new beginning."[79] As it is written:

> "In overflowing anger for a moment I hid my face from you, but with everlasting love I will have compassion on you," says the LORD, your redeemer. "This is like the days of Noah to me: as I swore that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth, so I have sworn that I will not be angry with you, and will not rebuke you." (Isa 54:8–9 ESV)

McKeown also asserts that "this passages shows that in spite of the long delay God did permit a new beginning . . . the message of the flood story is that after even the most severe judgment comes mercy . . . a new beginning would bring encouragement and hope to the exiles and be an antidote to despair."[80] The same "loving commitment" that God showed to the seed of Noah still rings true to the Hebrew exiles.[81]

Conclusion

This chapter analyzed the text of Gen 8:1–22 by means of the rhetorical-critical "rhetoric as persuasion" four step method that was outlined in chapter 2 of this study. It started (step one) by *determining the rhetorical units* of the passage. Within this step, it was demonstrated that the text was constructed of several main rhetorical subunits, namely the initial abatement of the Flood (Gen 8:1–5), further comments concerning life after the Flood (Gen 8:6–14), the process of disembarking the ark (Gen 8:15–19), and, lastly, Noah's sacrifice/worship and God's promise (Gen 8:20–22). The analysis also determined that each of these main subsections consisted of numerous primary, secondary, lower-level, and marked subunits (the details of which are provided above).

Following this, in step two, *determining the rhetorical situation*, it was re-asserted

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[79] McKeown, *Genesis*, 63.
[80] McKeown, *Genesis*, 63.
[81] Mathews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, 393. See too Dumbrell, "Covenant with Noah," 7–8.

that the secondary exigence that pertained to the potential risk of covenant infidelity on the part of God and Noah was fully resolved. Alongside this, the secondary exigence that concerned the delicate balance between deliverance and destruction with respect to the Flood water was also fully resolved. The primary exigence that concerns humanity's "lawlessness" (חמס), however, remains unresolved for there is still no closure (as of yet) as to how God will mitigate their self-destructive habits once humanity starts to multiply.

Concerning step three, *determining the rhetorical strategy*, the scribe's aesthetic appeal and rhetorical efficacy of convincingly communicating God's compassion, love, grace, and mercy were all duly noted and assessed. With respect to step four, *determining the rhetorical effectiveness*, it is clear (see above) that though the text's secondary exigencies have both been resolved, the primary exigence remains at large. This section also noted the marked effect that this text would have on an exilic/post-exilic Israel.

With respect to our main argument, there are two key factors within the above analysis that have helped to augment and bolster our assertions: (1) first and foremost, God remembered Noah and all those persons and animals that were with him in the ark and, because of this, God caused the Flood waters to begin the reversal process which culminated in the ground becoming completely dry (Gen 8:1–14). To this must be added the divine imperative for all inhabitants to leave the ark (Gen 8:15–19). Were it not for these things there would have been little to no hope for new life to have occurred, (2) God promised to never send the Deluge again despite humanity's hell-bent disposition and self-destructive propensities (Gen 8:21–22).

These things together serve to further bolster the main proposition of this study, namely that the Noachic Deluge narrative is best understood as part of redemption

through God fulfills his salvific purposes for creation. As intellectual, world-view formative rhetoric, the Genesis scribe(s) convincingly communicates God's merciful, benevolent, and gracious character and poignantly depict the Creator's overarching redemptive plans and purpose for his world. In brief, the argument that the Noachic Deluge narrative demonstrates that God's intentions to carry out his plans and purpose for creation, the establishment of order via covenant, will not be thwarted has been both bolstered and strengthened by means of the above analysis.

CHAPTER 6: THE COVENANT: CONDITIONS AND ASSURANCE
GEN 9:1–17//18–29

Introduction

Prior to expounding on the passage at hand, it is prudent to offer a brief summary of the plot of the Noachic Deluge narrative *in toto*. To begin, despite God instituting an epic Flood of cataclysmic proportions so as to obliterate all life on earth (Gen 6:5–7), Noah found favour with God (Gen 6:8). As such, God commanded Noah to build a colossal salvific vehicle—the ark—so as to ensure his and his immediate family's survival as well as the survival of all the different kinds of creatures that God created (Gen 6:9–21). In full obedience to God, Noah built, victualed, and then boarded the ark, along with Shem, Ham, Japheth, Noah's wife, the three wives of his sons, and various representatives from each of the different members of the animal kingdom—then the LORD shut them in (Gen 6:22—7:16). All life outside the ark perished and died as the waters prevailed on the earth for one hundred and fifty days (Gen 7:17–24).

At the most turbulent time, however, God remembered Noah and all those aboard the ark (Gen 8:1). God caused the waters to begin to recede and stopped the machinations of the Flood itself (Gen 8:1–3). The ark then came to rest upon the mountains of Ararat where Noah proceeded to discern the habitability of life on the earth by means of sending out a raven and a dove from the ark (Gen 8:4–12). In due time, the ground eventually dried, and God commanded Noah and company to exit the ark (Gen 8:13–17). Noah obeyed as did his companions (Gen 8:18–29). Noah then built an altar to the LORD and sacrificed an offering to God (Gen 8:20). The LORD received Noah's sacrifice and promised to never again send another Deluge of such magnitude—ever—and vowed that he would never again destroy every living thing as he had just done (Gen 8:21–22).

The remainder of the Noachic Deluge narrative continues to reiterate God's blessings. By means of several speeches, God shares the promise of his good news with Noah, his sons, and all living things (Gen 9:1–7, 9–11, 12–16). He also provides a clear signifier of this special turn of events, the rainbow, which functions as the sign of the covenant that God establishes with all of his creation (Gen 9:12–16, 17. Cf. Gen 6:18).

In sum, this chapter's analysis will offer clear resolution to the main exigence of the rhetorical situation, namely humanity's "lawlessness" (חמס). It will also offer further evidence and more specific details to better substantiate the primary argument of this study, namely that the focus of the Noachic Deluge narrative, when taken in its totality, is best understood as part of redemption through which God brings creation to fulfill his purposes, with the overarching bent towards God's salvific and redemptive intentions. In this way, the Noachic Deluge narrative, as intellectual, worldview formative rhetoric, is a description of God's merciful, benevolent, caring, gracious, and loving character. The scribe's rhetoric convincingly communicates that God's desire to carry out his intentions for creation, the establishment of order via covenant, will not be thwarted, irrespective of the numerous challenges that are involved in doing so. That is to say, "God will seek every conceivable means to keep the [covenant] relationship intact; throughout history the salvific will of God for the people remains constant . . . Through it all, God's faithfulness and gracious purposes remain constant and undiminished."[1] Albeit, humanity has a new responsibility to mitigate self-destructive violence, insufferable injustice, and blood-thirsty revenge (חמס) through a special provision that empowers mortals to act for God—as his image—to the extent of even being able to take human life (Gen 9:1–7).

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[1] Fretheim, *Suffering of God*, 111.

Step One: Determining the Rhetorical Units

This section will follow the same procedure(s) and use the same definitions as in each of the previous chapters. In the same way, also, the analysis will begin with a fresh, English translation, along with a commentary of certain grammatical/syntactical features (including text criticism issues). The analysis will be divided according to the main subunits that will be delineated at length below within this step of the rhetorical analysis, namely: (I) "Be Fruitful and Multiply!" (Gen 9:1–7), (II), "The Covenant Promise: never again!" (Gen 9:8–11), (III), "The Covenant Sign: the rainbow" (Gen 9:12–16), and (IV) "Reiteration of the Covenant Sign of the Rainbow" (Gen 9:17). Certain comments concerning Gen 9:18–29 and 10:1 will also take place within the analysis below.

I. *Be Fruitful and Multiply! (Gen 9:1–7)*

[a]ויברך אלהים את נח [b]ואת בניו [c]ויאמר להם

פרו [d]ורבו ומלאו [e]את הארץ

[f]ומוראכם יהיה על כל חית הארץ ועל כל עוף השמים

בכל אשר תרמש האדמה [g]ובכל דגי הים בידכם [h]נתנו

כל רמש אשר הוא חי לכם יהיה לאכלה כירק עשב נתתי לכם את כל

[i]אך בשר [j]בנפשו דמו [k]לא תאכלו [l]ואך את דמכם לנפשתיכם [m]אדרש

[n]מיד כל חיה אדרשנו [o]ומיד [p]האדם מיד איש אחיו אדרש את נפש האדם

[q]שפך דם האדם [r]באדם דמו ישפך [s]כי [t]בצלם אלהים עשה את האדם

[u]ואתם פרו [v]ורבו [w]שרצו בארץ [x]ורבו בה

Then God blessed Noah and his sons. Thus, he said to them:

Be fruitful! Multiply! Fill the earth!

The fear of you and the dread[y] of you shall be upon all the (wild) animals of the earth, and upon all the birds of the heavens, on everything that creeps on the ground, and on every fish of the sea—into your power they are delivered. Every moving thing that lives for you will be for food;

as the green plants, I now give you everything.

Only flesh with its life in it (that is, its blood) you must not eat![z]

Surely your blood-life, I will require a reckoning.

From the hand of every beast I will require it.

And from the hand of human beings,

from the hand of every man's brother,

I will require the life of a human being.

Whoever sheds the blood of a human being,

By a human being his blood shall be shed.

For in the image of God he made humanity.

But you, fruitfully multiply! Bring forth abundantly on the earth! Multiply in her!

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a.   Sequential *waw*. *GBHS* §3.5.1.a.
b.   Coordinative/conjunctive *waw*. Williams, *Hebrew Syntax*, §430a.
c.   Synchronic waw (displaying simultaneous action). Chisholm, *Exegesis*, 126, *GBHS* §3.5.4.b.
d.   This *waw* and the following ones (unless indicated otherwise) are each synchronic. Chisholm, *Exegesis*, 126.
e.   Note: LXX adds "and subdue it," thus bringing Gen 9:1 into conformity with Gen 1:28. See Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 154.
f.   Note: "G MSS add 'and over all domesticated animals." Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 154.
g.   Coordinative/conjunctive *waw*. Williams, *Hebrew Syntax*, §430a.
h.   Note: "SamPent, G read I have given it." Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 154.
i.   Restrictive adverb. Williams, *Hebrew Syntax*, §388, Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 154.
j.   The preposition communicates the idea of "proximity," "vicinity near," and "association with something." See GKC §119n. Wenham (*Genesis 1–15*, 154) suggests the rendering "with."
k.   Categorical prohibition. Williams, *Hebrew Syntax*, §396, and Hamilton, *Genesis 1–17*, 314.
l.   This disjunction *waw* is dramatic or contrastive. Chisholm, *Exegesis*, 126.
m.   The word order (object preceding the verb) places emphasis on the verb. *GBHS* §5.1.2.b.2.
n.   Though the Hebrew reads "hand," it is a symbol for strength, power, and authority. Ryken et al. eds., *DBI*, 360–62.
o.   Sequential *waw*. See *GBHS* §3.5.1.a, and Chisholm, *Exegesis*, 120.
p.   The article has a "generic function, indicating the class, i.e., "humankind." Williams, *Hebrew Syntax*, §92. The same rule applies to each of the other instances within this pericope.
q.   The Qal participle stands at the beginning of the sentence as a "*causus pendens* (or as the subject of a *compound noun-clause* . . .) to indicate a condition, the contingent occurrence of which involves a further consequence." GKC §116w. Italics original.
r.   The preposition could be understood as a "*bet pretii*," yielding the translation '*for* a human will that person's blood be shed," thus leaving the "executor of justice undefined" (cf. LXX) and allowing the possibility that "only God may seek vengeance." See Wilson, "Blood," 269. A thorough defense, however, of the rendering "by a human" (so NRSV, NIV 1984/2011, NASB, NJPS, KJV, NKJV ESV, NLT), i.e. a "*beth instrumenti*," may be found in *BHRG* §39.6.3.a, *GBHS* §4.1.5.c, and GKC §121f. This point will be elaborated later on in this study.

Waltke and Fredricks (*Genesis*, 145), do, however, state: "the preposition could be read 'in exchange for.' Most English versions rightly understand the preposition to indicate agency. This is its normal meaning with Niphal (*IBHS* §23.2.2f); it avoids a tautology with 9:5 and lays a sold foundation for capital punishment as exacted later in the Mosaic law (cf. Ex. 31:12–14; Num. 35:16–32; Deut. 17:6–7; 19:15)." Cf. Harland, *Human Life*, 161.

s. Evidential conjunction. See *GBHS* §4.3.4.b.
t. Essence preposition. *GBHS* §4.1.5.h.
u. Concluding (disjunctive) *waw*. Chisholm, *Exegesis*, 127.
v. Coordinate *waw*. See *GBHS* §4.3.3.g.
w. "SamPent, G, Vg insert 'and' unnecessarily." Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 155.
x. Sequential *waw*. See *GBHS* §3.5.1.a, and Chisholm, *Exegesis*, 120.
y. Hamilton (*Genesis 1–17*, 311) renders this as "dread fear." Cf. EVV.
z. For a defense of this rendering, see GKC §131k, 138b, and Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 154.

The first main subunit of this section is labelled "Be Fruitful and Multiply!" (Gen 9:1–7).[2] It hangs together by virtue of it being a divine speech. As such, the introductory formula, "thus he said to them," is the clearest indicator of this portion of text being a unit.[3] Albeit, it has been expanded to include the fact that before God spoke to Noah and his sons, he blessed them first. Aside from this, the referential, situational, and structural (relational) coherence of this unit is also demonstrated through there being: (a) sameness of time and place, i.e. the unit covers a single conversation (Gen 9:1–7, cf. 9:8–11), (b) sameness of primary participants, namely God (Gen 9:1, 4, 5, 6), Noah (Gen 9:1–7), and his sons (Gen 9:1–7), and (c) sameness of topic/theme, i.e. the relationship of humanity to the animal kingdom and the relationship of humanity to humanity in light of the image of God (Gen 9:1–7). This may be compared to the not insignificant shift in topic/theme that transpires within the following divine speech, which focus on the covenant that God established with creation and the promise that there will never again be another Flood to

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[2] The demarcation of Gen 9:1–7 being a unit is generally uncontested by scholars. See Mathews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, 399, Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis*, 143, Kidner, *Genesis*, 100, See too Hamilton, *Genesis 1–17*, 311, 316, 319, McKeown, *Genesis*, 63–64, and Longacre, "Flood Narrative," 238, who all initially seem to lump Gen 9:1–17 as one unit but then break it up according to Gen 9:1–7 and 8–17. Cf. Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 191–92, who extends the unit to Gen 9:18, and Sailhamer, *Pentateuch*, 128–29, whose takes it to Gen 9:19. The problems with these schemas will be addressed later on in this study.

[3] See Dorsey, *Literary Structure*, 23. Cf. Meier, *Speaking*, 59, and Miller, *Speech*, 400.

ruin the earth (Gen 9:8–11).

There are several smaller subunits that are contained within this subunit (Gen 9:1–7). The first primary subunit is the initial proclamation of blessing (Gen 9:1). This primary subunit is comprised of three secondary subunits: (i) a summative statement concerning God's blessing (Gen 9:1a), (ii) the formulaic introduction to a speech (Gen 9:1b), and (iii) particulars of the blessing itself (Gen 9:1c). This secondary subunit (Gen 9:1c) also has three lower-level subunits that mark the specifics of the blessing itself: (a) be fruitful, (b) multiply, and (c) fill the earth.[4]

The second primary subunit details the dominion of humanity over the animal kingdom (Gen 9:2). It is comprised of two secondary subunits: (i) initial comments concerning humanity's relationship to diverse animal life forms (Gen 9:2a–d) and (ii) the overarching acknowledgment of humanity's sovereignty over the animal kingdom (Gen 9:2e). The first of these two secondary subunits (Gen 9:2a–e) also has several lower-level subunits that provide further details concerning the contents thereof: (a) comments about the terror that humanity will cause all of the wild animals of the earth (Gen 9:2a), (b) the self-same comments but about birds, specifically (Gen 9:2b), then (c) everything that creeps on the ground (Gen 9:2c), and (d) every fish of the sea (Gen 9:2d).

The third primary subunit centers on matters concerning food (Gen 9:3–4). It is comprised of two secondary subunits, the first of which concern the interchange between green plants and animals for food (Gen 9:3) and the second noting the prohibition for eating blood (Gen 9:4). The first secondary subunit here (Gen 9:3) contains three lower-level subunits: (a) the first defines the terms of the new food exchange (Gen 9:3a), (b) the

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[4] Cf. Hamilton, *Genesis 1–17*, 312.

second is comprised of the exchange itself (Gen 9:3b), and (c) the third reiterates the exchange that just took place (Gen 9:3c). The other secondary subunit (Gen 9:4) contains two lower-level subunits: (a) the first specifies the particulars of the prohibition (Gen 9:4a) while, (b) the second offers the actual injunction (Gen 9:4b).

The fourth primary subunit centers on manslaughter and the innate respect that is due to humanity by virtue of their being made in the image of God (Gen 9:5–6). It is comprised of two secondary subunits: (i) the first details matters that pertain to the death of a human being by a non-human (Gen 9:5a–b), (ii) while the second pertains to the death of a human being by another human being (Gen 9:5c–9:6).

The first secondary subunit (Gen 9:5a–b) contains two lower level units: (a) the first is an overarching, general acknowledgment that God will require a reckoning from whosoever spills blood to death (Gen 9:5a), (b) the second makes clear that this is true even if the thing that kills a human being is an animal and not a human being (Gen 9:5b).

The other secondary subunit (Gen 9:5c–9:6) also contains several lower-level subunits: (a) the first details a general recognition that God takes seriously any act of violence that is done against another human being by another human being (Gen 9:5c–e), itself being marked by three comments, while the second reiterates the same serious stance that God takes towards these matters (Gen 9:6a–c).

The last primary subunit (Gen 9:7) reiterates God's blessing and is comprised of three secondary subunits: (i) fruitfully multiply (Gen 9:7a), (ii) bring forth abundantly on the earth (Gen 9:7b), and (iii) multiply in it (Gen 9:7c). This concludes step one of the rhetorical-critical analysis of this particular portion of text (Gen 9:1–7).

II. The Covenant Promise: Never Again! (Gen 9:8–11)

^aויאמר אלהים אל נח ^bואל בניו אתו לאמר

^cואני ^dהנני מקים את בריתי אתכם ^eואת זרעכם אחריכם

ואת כל נפש החיה אשר אתכם

בעוף בבהמה ובכל חית הארץ אתכם ^fמכל יצאי התבה לכל חית הארץ

^gוהקמתי את בריתי אתכם

^hולא יכרת כל בשר עוד ⁱממי המבול

^jולא יהיה עוד מבול לשחת הארץ

Then God said to Noah, and to his sons with him:

"I will establish my covenant with you, along with your descendants after

you^r and with every living creature that is with you: among birds, among

domesticated animals, and among every beast with you—namely

everything that came out of the ark—to every beast of the earth!

I will establish my covenant with you. All flesh will not be cut off again by the

waters of the Flood, nor shall there be a Flood to destroy the earth."

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a. Sequential *waw*. See *GBHS* §3.5.1.a, and Chisholm, *Exegesis*, 120.
b. Coordinative *waw*. Williams, *Hebrew Syntax*, §430a.
c. Dramatic *waw*. Chisholm, *Exegesis*, 126. The additional pronoun serves to give "strong emphasis." See GKC §135.d.
d. The function is to point an addressee to something in the speech situation that is newsworthy and is often used for dramatic effect. See *BHRG* §40.22.4, and Chisholm, *Exegesis*, 126.
e. This *waw* (and the ones that follow unless indicated otherwise) are accompaniment *waws*. Williams, *Hebrew Syntax*, §436.
f. Explicative (or, perhaps, emphatic) preposition. Williams, *Hebrew Syntax*, §326/325.
g. Resumptive *waw*. Chisholm, *Exegesis*, 121.
h. Summarizing or concluding (disjunctive) *waw*. Chisholm, *Exegesis*, 123. There is "an element of emphasis" in the use of the negation. See Joüon §160b.
i. Wenham (*Genesis 1–15*) 155 states: "Unusually . . . 'from' expresses the agent of the passive (GKC, 121f)." It is possible that the more common *beth* preposition is avoided here so as to avoid the ambiguity "in/by the waters." See Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 155, and Joüon §132d.
j. Summarizing or concluding (disjunctive) *waw*. Chisholm, *Exegesis*, 123.

This main subunit is labelled "The Covenant Promise: Never Again!" (Gen 9:8–

11).[5] It is is another divine speech. As such, the introductory formula, "Then God said to Noah, and to his sons with him," is the clearest indicator of this portion of text being a unit.[6] Aside from this, the referential, situational, and structural (relational) coherence of this unit is also demonstrated through there being: (a) sameness of time and place, i.e. the unit covers a single conversation (Gen 9:8–11, cf. 9:12–16), (b) sameness of primary participants, namely God (Gen 9:1, 11), Noah (Gen 9:9, 11), Noah's descendants (Gen 9:9), and every living creature of the earth—everything that went out of the ark and remains on the earth, from now until the end of the earth (Gen 9:10–11), and (c) sameness of topic/theme, i.e. the covenant of creation (Gen 9:9–11). This may be differentiated from the section that follows which focuses on the sign of the covenant more particularly (Gen 9:12–16).

The introductory formula comprises the first primary subunit of this speech. To be even more specific, Gen 9:8 is also made up of two secondary subunits: (i) the first narrates that God spoke to Noah (Gen 9:8a) while (ii) the second makes clear that God spoke also to Noah's sons (Gen 9:9b). The second primary subunit of Gen 9:8–11 concerns God's covenant with humanity specifically (Gen 9:9). This verse (Gen 9:9) is also comprised of two secondary subunits: (i) the first makes clear that God established his covenant with Noah and his three sons (Gen 9:9a), (ii) the second relates that this covenant is effectual to their descendants also after them (Gen 9:9b). The third primary subunit pertains to the animal kingdom in general (Gen 9:10). It is comprised of several

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[5] The demarcation of Gen 9:8–11 being a unit is not unknown within scholarship. See Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 194, Mathews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, 408. Cf. Hamilton, *Genesis 1–17*, 316, and Sailhamer, *Pentateuch*, 126–27 who do not differentiate the units. See also Kidner, *Genesis*, 101, McKeown, *Genesis*, 64, and Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis*, 140–41 who extend the unit, i.e. Gen 9:8–17. This scheme fails to differentiate the divine speeches as units. See the analysis section below for further details.

[6] See Dorsey, *Literary Structure*, 23. Cf. Meier, *Speaking*, 59, and Miller, *Speech*, 400.

secondary subunits: (i) the first makes clear that it is not just humans who are part of this covenant, but animals too—every living creature that was with Noah and his sons on the ark (Gen 9:10a), (ii) the second intimates more specifically the types of animal, namely birds and domesticated animals and every animal that is with them (Gen 9:10b–c), (iii) the third secondary subunit reiterates that the covenant promise is to everything that came out of the ark (Gen 9:10d), (iv) namely every beast of the earth (Gen 9:10e). The fourth (and final) primary subunit of Gen 9:8–11 is a reiteration of the fact that the covenant has been established and that the Flood will never come again (Gen 9:11). It is comprised of two secondary subunits: (i) re-affirmation that the covenant is being established (Gen 9:11a) and (ii) the second provides assurance that there will never again be a Flood (Gen 9:11b–c). This section is marked by two lower level comments: (a) never again will a Flood cut off all flesh (Gen 9:11b), and (b) nor shall there ever again be a Flood to destroy the earth (Gen 9:11c).

III. The Covenant Sign: The Rainbow (Gen 9:12–16)

[a]ויאמר אלהים

זאת אות הברית אשר אני נתן ביני [b]וביניכם ובין כל נפש חיה אשר אתכם לדרת עולם

את [c]קשתי נתתי בענן [d]והיתה לאות ברית ביני [e]ובין הארץ

[f]והיה בענני ענן על הארץ [g]ונראתה הקשת בענן

[h]וזכרתי את בריתי אשר ביני [i]וביניכם ובין כל נפש חיה בכל בשר

[j]ולא יהיה עוד המים למבול לשחת כל בשר

[k]והיתה הקשת בענן

[l]וראיתיה לזכר ברית עולם בין אלהים

[m]ובין כל נפש חיה בכל בשר אשר על הארץ

Then God said:

"This is the sign of the covenant I am making between me and between you and between every living creature with you for all future generations:

I will set my bow in the clouds.

Thus it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth.

Then, whenever I bring clouds over the earth, and the bow is seen in the
clouds, I shall thus call to mind the covenant that is between me
and you and between every living creature from among all flesh.

Never again will the waters become a Flood to destroy all flesh.

(For when the bow is in the clouds, then I will look so as to
remember the long-lasting[n] covenant between God (myself) and
between every living thing among all flesh that is on the earth)."

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a. Sequential *waw*. See *GBHS* §3.5.1.a and Chisholm, *Exegesis*, 120.
b. This *waw* and the next one are both accompaniments. Williams, *Hebrew Syntax*, §436.
c. The placing of the object first emphasizes it. See Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 155.
d. Sequential *waw*. See *GBHS* §3.5.1.a, and Chisholm, *Exegesis*, 120.
e. Consequential *waw*. Chisholm, *Exegesis*, 120.
f. Supplemental or parenthetical *waw*. Chisholm, *Exegesis*, 122.
g. Accompaniment *waw*. Williams, *Hebrew Syntax*, §436.
h. Consequential *waw*. Chisholm, *Exegesis*, 120.
i. This *waw* and the next one are both accompaniment *waws*. Williams, *Hebrew Syntax*, §436.
j. Climatic (disjunctive) *waw*. Chisholm, *Exegesis*, 132. There is "an element of emphasis" in
the use of the negation. See Joüon §160b. For more details on the form, see GKC §72w.
k. Supplemental or parenthetical *waw*. Chisholm, *Exegesis*, 122.
l. Sequential *waw*. See *GBHS* §3.5.1.a, and Chisholm, *Exegesis*, 120.
m. Accompaniment *waw*. Williams, *Hebrew Syntax*, §436.
n. On this translation, see Niehaus, *Biblical Theology*, 210–14, and Longman, *Genesis*, 122.

This main subunit is entitled "The Covenant Sign: The Rainbow" (Gen 9:12–16).[7]

It hangs together by virtue of it being a divine speech. Given such, the introductory

formula, "God said," is the clearest indicator of this text forming a unit.[8] Aside from this,

however, the referential, situational, and structural (relational) coherence of this unit (Gen

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[7] This demarcation of Gen 9:12–16 as being a unit is not unknown within scholarship. See Waltke
and Fredricks, *Geness*, 145. Albeit, Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 195 extends the unit, i.e. Gen 9:12–17.
[8] The demarcation of Gen 9:8–11 being a unit is not unknown within scholarship. See Wenham,
Genesis 1–15, 194, Mathews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, 408. Cf. Hamilton, *Genesis 1–17*, 316, and Sailhamer,
Pentateuch, 126–27 who do not differentiate the units. See also Kidner, *Genesis*, 101, McKeown, *Genesis*,
64, and Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis*, 140–41 who extend the unit, i.e. Gen 9:8–17. This scheme fails to
differentiate the divine speeches as units. See the analysis section below for further details.

9:12–16), is also demonstrated through there being: (a) sameness of time and place, i.e. the unit covers a single conversation (cf. Gen 9:17), (b) sameness of participants, namely God (Gen 9:12–16), and every living creature that is on earth without discrimination (Gen 9:12–16), and (c) sameness of topic/theme, i.e. the covenant and the bow, which is the sign of the covenant (Gen 9:12–16). Although this is the same topic and theme as Gen 9:17, that specific verse also has an introductory formula which marks it as a new conversation and thus an independent unit of text.

This pericope is comprised of three primary subunits: (1) initial comments concerning the sign of the covenant (Gen 9:12), (2) particulars concerning the bow itself (Gen 9:13–15), (3) re-affirmation that God will keep his covenant (Gen 9:16). Each of these primary subunits may also be divided into further secondary and lower-level units. For instance, the first primary subunit (Gen 9:12) is comprised of several secondary subunits: (i) the formulaic introduction (Gen 9:12a) and (ii) initial comments concerning the sign of the covenant (Gen 9:12b–e). This latter secondary subunit may also be divided into further lower-level units: (a) the sign of the covenant (Gen 9:12b), (b) affirmation that the covenant is between human beings (Gen 9:12c), (c) affirmation that the covenant is with every living creature as well (Gen 9:12d), and (d) affirmation that the covenant is for all future generations (Gen 9:12e).

Primary subunit two, particulars concerning the bow itself (Gen 9:13–15), may also be divided into several secondary and lower-level subunits: (i) initial comments concerning the bow and the covenant (Gen 9:13), (ii) affirmation that the bow in the clouds will be the sign of the covenant that God will never again send a Flood to destroy the earth (Gen 9:14–15). The first secondary subunit (Gen 9:13) is also comprised of two

lower-level subunits: (a) God will set the bow in the clouds (Gen 9:13a) and (b) the bow

will be the sign of the covenant (Gen 9:13b). The next secondary subunit (Gen 9:14–15)

may be divided into two lower-level subunits: (a) further comments concerning the bow

and the clouds, Gen 9:14, marked by two comments (the first concerning the clouds

coming over the earth, Gen 9:14a, the second concerning the bow being seen in the

clouds, Gen 9:14b, and (b) further comments about the covenant, Gen 9:15, marked by

the initial comment that God will remember his covenant with humanity, Gen 9:15a, a

second comment that the covenant is also with every living creature of every kind, Gen

9:15b, and, finally, affirmation that a Flood will never again destroy everything (Gen

9:15c). The final primary subunit, re-affirmation that God will keep his covenant (Gen

9:16), is comprised of two secondary subunits: (i) matters pertaining to the bow itself

(Gen 9:16a–b) and (ii) matters pertaining to the covenant (Gen 9:16c–e).

The final main unit is entitled "Reiteration of the Covenant Sign of the Rainbow"

(Gen 9:17). It is the last divine speech that occurs within the Noachic Deluge narrative.[9]

The introductory formula, "then God said to Noah," is the clearest indicator of this text

forming a unit.[10] Aside from this, however, the coherence of this specific unit (Gen 9:17),

is also demonstrated through there being: (a) sameness of time and place, i.e. the unit

covers a single conversation (Gen 9:17), (b) sameness of the primary participants, namely

God (Gen 9:17), Noah (Gen 9:17), and every living creature that is on the earth (Gen

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[9] Though certain scholars, see Mathews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, 407, and Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis*, 145, place Gen 9:17 with Gen 9:8–16 together, not as its own separate subunit, this seems to ignore the formulaic procedures for determining the primary apertures and closings of a divine speech.

[10] The demarcation of Gen 9:8–11 being a unit is not unknown within scholarship. See Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 194, Mathews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, 408. Cf. Hamilton, *Genesis 1–17*, 316, and Sailhamer, *Pentateuch*, 126–27 who do not differentiate the units. See also Kidner, *Genesis*, 101, McKeown, *Genesis*, 64, and Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis*, 140–41 who extend the unit, i.e. Gen 9:8–17. This scheme fails to differentiate the divine speeches as units. See the analysis section below for further details.

9:17), and (c) sameness of topic/theme, i.e. God's covenant with creation (Gen 9:17). It is comprised of two primary subunits: (1) the formulaic introduction to the divine speech itself (Gen 9:17a) and (2) the reiteration of the covenant sign of the rainbow (Gen 9:17b–c). This concludes this specific portion of analysis.

Given that the *toledoth* of Shem, Ham, and Japheth begins at Gen 10:1 and that Noah's *toledoth* continues until Gen 9:29, it is prudent to offer a brief synopsis of the ensuing passage (Gen 9:18–29). The narrative opens (Gen 9:18–19) by noting that Shem, Ham, and Japheth were the sons of Noah who came out of the ark and that from them the whole earth was populated. The narrative turns to Noah planting a vineyard, imbibing of the wine that he had made, and becoming naked inside his tent (Gen 9:20–21). After this, Ham saw his father's nakedness (Gen 9:22–23), an immoral deed, the details of which are not important to the thesis of this study.[11] Shem and Japheth, however, safeguard their father and honored him by covering his nakedness in an appropriate and respectful way (Gen 9:23). The story concludes with "patriarchal curse and blessing."[12] Ham, i.e. Canaan, is cursed (Gen 9:25). Shem and Japheth are blessed (Gen 9:26–27). With respect to this point, however, Noah's benediction clearly indicates that he desires God to "enlarge Japheth" so as to enable him to "dwell in the tents of Shem" (Gen 9:27 NASB).

This key fact helps to explain the larger *toledoth* structure of the book of Genesis and its singular, unique emphasis upon the "righteous seed."[13] In brief, the "complication" that drives the book of Genesis, as a whole, including the intricacies of the Noachic Deluge narrative, specifically, is the conquering seed that was promised to

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[11] Further discussion may be found in Embry, "Reassessing Voyeurism," 417–33, Bassett, "Noah's Nakedness," 232–37, and Bergsma, "Noah's Nakedness," 25–40.

[12] Sailhamer, *Narrative*, 129. See too Mathews, *Genesis 1:1–11:26*, 412.

[13] See Patterson, *Plot-Structure of Genesis*, 1–29.

Eve (Gen 3:15), namely "Will it be righteous? Will it survive?"[14]

For this reason, though there is a clear shift that takes place in the narrative of Gen 9:18–29, the story of Noah and his three sons continues the story of the blessings of creation itself and the hope of the promised One. As one scholar puts it:

> These verses [Gen 9:18–20] form both the conclusion of the Flood story and an introduction to the episode of Noah's nakedness. They are a good example of the author's style of composition throughout Genesis. By means of these short transitional units the author ties together individual, self-contained narratives into a larger line of stories.[15]

Of course, one of the most critical components of this episode (Gen 9:18–29) is the the "identification of Canaan as one of the sons of Ham (9:18). That bit of information is crucial to the meaning of the narrative (cf. 9:22, 25)."[16] Shem, Ham, and Japeth were formally introduced within the conclusion of the *toledoth* of Adam (Gen 5:32) and the beginning portion of the *toledoth* of Noah (Gen 6:10). In addition, they make several apperances (implicitly and explicitly) within the Noachic Deluge narrative as a whole (Gen 6:18; 7:1, 7, 13; 8:16, 18; Gen 9:1, 7, 8, 9) and are the primary persons responsible for the "new life" on earth with respect to humanity (Gen 9:18–19, 10:1, 32).

To summarize, though the *toledoth* structure centers on the faithful obedience of Noah, from a rhetorical-critical "rhetoric as persuasion" perspective, the sons of Noah are also an essential component to the plot of the Noachic Deluge narrative and the rhetorical strategy of the book of Genesis. Though the scribe is clear in marking Ham as the "father of the line that falls outside the line of promise," the scribe is equally clear that "a new creation order" will emerge from the line of Shem.[17] This point brings hope and life.

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[14] See Patterson, *Plot-Structure*, 1–29.

[15] Sailhamer, *Narrative*, 129.

[16] Sailhamer, *Narrative*, 129. See too Mathews, *Genesis 1:1–11:26*, 412.

[17] Patterson, *Plot-Structures*, 88.

To this end, Todd L. Patterson proposes a new schematic for the Noachic Deluge
narrative that incoproates Gen 9:18–29 and these highly stimulating insights.[18]

FIGURE FIFTEEN—THE CHIASTIC STRUCTURE OF NOAH'S TOLEDOT

A	6:9–12	Noah, his three sons, (corruption in the earth)
B	6:13–22	**Divine Speech:** determination to destroy, covenant
C	7:1–9	**Divine Speech:** go into the ark
D	7:10–16	The flood begins, preservation of life shut inside
E	7:17–24	The waters rise, destruction of life outside
E'	8:1–5	God remembers Noah, the waters abate
D'	8:6–14	The waters dry up, preserved life opens up
C'	8:15–19	**Divine Speech:** go out of the ark
B'	8:20–9:17	**Divine Speech:** determination not to destroy, covenant
A'	9:18–29	Noah, his three sons, (corruption in the earth)

As noted by Patterson:

> One of the major advantages of the concentric structure of the flood
> narrative . . . presented . . . is that . . . the covenant appears in concentric
> layers of the text. This is important because the covenant is not just
> another element in the flood narrative; it is an important part of the
> structuring of the text. In fact, it is an important thrust of the text as a
> whole. This is clearly the case because the covenant does not just appear in
> concentric layers of the text but it appears in the very center and pivot
> point of the text. God's remembering in Gen 8:1, in the midst of the
> destruction and chaos of the flood, is a remembering of the covenant with
> Noah and with all flesh. The whole flood narrative is inextricably
> entangled with God's enacting and establishing this covenant.[19]

Though no formal translation or grammatical/syntactical analysis will be offered for Gen

9:18–29, further details will be taken up in the remainder of the steps below. Each of the

rhetorical subunits of the above section (Gen 9:1–18//20–29) are depicted below:

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[18] This schematic has been taken from Patterson, *Plot-Struture*, 76. All emphases orginal.

[19] Patterson, *Plot-Struture*, 79.

The Covenant: Conditions and Assurance (Gen 9:1–17//18–29)

I. Be Fruitful and Multiply! (Gen 9:1–7)
    1. God's initial proclamation of blessing (Gen 9:1)
        • Summative statement of God's blessings (Gen 9:1a)
            (a) God blessed Noah (Gen 9:1a)
            (b) God blessed Noah's sons (Gen 9:1a)
        • Formulaic introduction to the divine speech (Gen 9:1b)
        • Particulars of the blessings (Gen 9:1c)
            (a) Be fruitful!
            (b) Multiply!
            (c) Fill the earth!
    2. Dominion of Humanity over the Animal Kingdom (Gen 9:2)
        i.   Initial comments concerning relationships to animals (Gen 9:2a–d)
            (a) The terror over all undomesticated animals (Gen 9:2a)
            (b) The terror of humanity over all the birds (Gen 9:2b)
            (c) The terror humanity over everything that creeps (Gen 9:2c)
            (d) The terror of humanity over all the fish (Gen 9:2d)
        ii.   Acknowledgement of humanity's sovereignty over animals (Gen 9:2e)
    3. Matters concerning food (Gen 9:3–4)
        i.   Meat and green plants (Gen 9:3)
            (a) terms of the exchange (Gen 9:3a)
            (b) the exchange itself (Gen 9:3b)
            (c) reiteration of the exchange (Gen 9:3c)
        ii.   Prohibition of blood (Gen 9:4)
            (a) particulars of the prohibition (Gen 9:4a)
            (b) the injunction itself (Gen 9:4b)
    4. Manslaughter and the image of God (Gen 9:5–6)
        i.   Death of a human being by a non-human (Gen 9:5a–b)
            (a) God's required reckoning (Gen 9:5a)
            (b) Particulars of said reckoning (Gen 9:5b)
        ii.   Death of a human being by another human being (Gen 9:5c–9:6)
            (a) Seriousness of all acts of murderous violence (Gen 9:5c–e)
            (b) Reiteration of the seriousness of all acts of murder (Gen 9:6a–c)
    5. Reiteration of God's blessings (Gen 9:7)
        i.   Fruitfully multiply (Gen 9:7a)
        ii.   Bring forth abundantly on the earth (Gen 9:7b)
        iii. Multiply in the earth (Gen 9:7c).
II. The Covenant Promise: Never Again! (Gen 9:8–11)
    1. Formulaic introduction (Gen 9:8)
        i.   God spoke to Noah (Gen 9:8a)
        ii.   God spoke to Noah's sons with him (Gen 9:8b)
    2. God's covenant with humanity (Gen 9:9)
        i.   Covenant is with Noah and his sons (Gen 9:9a)
        ii.   Covenant is effectual to their descendants (Gen 9:9b)
    3. God's covenant with animals (Gen 9:10)

        i.   Covenant with everything on the ark (Gen 9:10a)

        ii.   Covenant with birds/domesticated animals (Gen 9:10b–c)

        iii.   Covenant with everything on the ark (Gen 9:10d)

        iv.   Covenant with every beast of the earth (Gen 9:10e)

   4. Reiteration of the restoration of peace and order (Gen 9:11)

        i.   Re-affirmation of the covenant (Gen 9:11a)

        ii.   Re-affirmation that there will never again be a Flood (Gen 9:11b–c)

             (a) Never again will a Flood cut off all flesh (Gen 9:11b)

             (b) Never again will a Flood destroy the earth (Gen 9:11c)

III. The Covenant Sign: The Rainbow (Gen 9:12–16)

   1. Initial comments concerning the sign of the covenant (Gen 9:12)

        i.   Formulaic introduction (Gen 9:12a)

        ii.   Initial comments about the covenant (Gen 9:12b–e)

             (a) The sign of the covenant (Gen 9:12b)

             (b) Affirmation of the covenant for humans (Gen 9:12c)

             (c) Affirmation of the covenant for animals (Gen 9:12d)

             (d) Affirmation that the covenant is for the future (Gen 9:12e)

   2. Particulars concerning the rainbow (Gen 9:13–15)

        i.   Initial comments concerning the bow and covenant (Gen 9:13)

             (a) God will set the bow in the clouds (Gen 9:13a)

             (b) The bow will be the sign of the covenant (Gen 9:13b)

        ii.   Affirmation with respect to the bow and the Deluge (Gen 9:14–15)

             (a) Further comments concerning the bow (Gen 9:14)

                • Clouds coming over the earth (Gen 9:14a)

                • The bow will be seen in the clouds (Gen 9:14b)

             (b) Further comments concerning the covenant (Gen 9:15)

                • God will remember his covenant (Gen 9:15a)

                • The covenant is for every living creature (Gen 9:15b)

                • Never again will a Flood destroy all (Gen 9:15c)

   3. Re-affirmation of God's faithfulness (Gen 9:16)

        i.   Matters pertaining to the bow (Gen 9:16a–b)

        ii.   Matters pertaining to the covenant (Gen 9:16c–e).

IV. Reiteration of the Covenant Sign of the Rainbow (Gen 9:17)

   1. Formulaic introduction (Gen 9:17a)

   2. Reiteration of the covenant sign of the rainbow (Gen 9:17b–c)

V. Noah's Sons: Curses and Blessings (Gen 9:18–28)

   1. Prologue (Gen 9:18–19)

   2. Noah, his sons, and the Vineyard (Gen 9:20–27)

   3. Epilogue (Gen 9:28–30)

Step Two: Determining the Rhetorical Situation

Within the previous analyses it has been suggested that there exists within the Noachic

Deluge narrative multiple exigences. A secondary tension concerns God and the Flood

itself. Another secondary tension concerns the covenant that exists between God, Noah, his descendants, and all of creation. The primary exigence is between humanity's sin and "lawlessness" (חמס) and how God and humanity should respond in an effective fashion.

Concerning the exigence of the Flood itself, not only has the water already dried up (Gen 8:13–14) but God now provides ample reassurance that never again will all flesh be cut off by the water of the Flood and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth (Gen 9:11, 15). God marks this promise with his bow—a sign of peace and hope for all of creation (Gen 9:12–16, 17). As such, not only does the Deluge itself no longer exist but the very threat of such a calamity ever happening again is altogether gone as well. In sum, this exigence is fully and completely resolved now and for all time.

Concerning the faithfulness of the two covenant parties (God and Noah), it has already been noted that Noah has already fulfilled all of his covenant stipulations and can do more. What's more, through building an altar and sacrificing offerings upon his departure from the ark, Noah has proven himself to have gone above the stipulations that God had commanded him for there were no divine imperatives for such an activity. In addition to this, it is clear that God has also fulfilled all of his covenant stipulations and can do no more. This was evidenced through God being faithful to the covenant that he made with Noah (Gen 6:18) by preserving Noah's life through the storm of the Flood (Gen 7:23), remembering him and causing the Flood waters to be calmed and to retreat (Gen 8:1–3), causing the ark to have a safe decent upon the mountains of Ararat (Gen 8:4), and honoring the sacrifice that he made upon disembarking the ark (Gen 8:21–22). What's more, God now attaches a sign to that covenant "a bow in the sky."[20] This bow

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[20] Hamilton, *Genesis 1–17*, 316.

serves as a reminder that "despite the fact that the world deserves judgment, God will show restraint and mercy."[21] In sum, God can do no more to assure creation of their continued preservation. Some significance may, also, perhaps, be attached to the fact that the bow is directed heavenward, i.e. toward God. As one scholar puts it: "the sign is a self-maledictory oath. In essence, God is saying, 'if I break this promise, may I die.'"[22]

With respect to the primary exigence of the narrative, namely humanity's "lawlessness" (חמס) despite the universal nature of the covenant and the perpetuity language that is involved with respect to it (see Gen 9:9–17), there remains a high level of human responsibility to mitigate self-destructive violence, insufferable injustice, and blood-thirsty revenge through a special provision that empowers mortals to act for God—as his image—to the extent of being able to take life—both human and animal (Gen 9:1–7). The scribe is not merely being descriptive in his accounting for though animals are incapable of willfully receiving or breaking covenants, human beings are and thus have the responsibility to put them (and even one another!) to death if necessary.[23] In brief, the power of life and death are given into human hands and they must bear it well or perish. God requires 'blood for blood' for the death of a human being, be it from a fellow image bearer or an animal (Gen 9:5–6). Through this special provision, the exigence is resolved for a way is made for humanity to be fruitful, multiply, and refresh the earth (Gen 9:7).

With respect to audience, the above statements also make clear that the scribe is

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[21] Hamilton, *Genesis 1–17*, 316. See too Batto, *Slaying the Dragon*, 88.

[22] Longman, *Genesis*, 122. Though Longman credits Kline with this comment, no footnote providing a particular reference to such may be found in his commentary. One does, read, however, that "the rainbow in the clouds (v. 13) pictures God's battle-bow, used in the flood-storm to shoot his shafts of wrath on the earth, now suspended in a condition of peace, a sign that the divine warrior is governing rebellious mankind [sic] with forbearance for a season." Kline, *Genesis: A New Commentary*, 42.

[23] Cf. Westmoreland and Stassen, "Biblical Perspectives," 127.

persuasive in communicating the necessity of a God-ordained sense of order for society

to exist. After all, the very reason for the Deluge itself was because of the inability of

humanity to curb its own propensity for "self-destructive lawlessness" (חמס). As such,

certain measures must be taken in order to "restore humanity to its intended position of

blessing and representation."[24] Sarna notes: "the destruction of the old world calls for the

repopulation of the earth and the remedying of the ills that brought on the Flood. Society

must henceforth rest on more secure moral foundations."[25] Arnold, however, opines:

"those who try to apply this to capital punishment in contemporary societies miss the

subtle ambiguities of 9:6 due to the concise poetry, fail to understand the

inappropriateness of modern nation states to execute this principle, and miss the thrust of

the *imago dei* statement of 9:6b."[26] While Arnold's comments are somewhat vague at

times (what principle, precisely does he refer to?) and may, perhaps, be overstating things

somewhat (is capital punishment indeed wrong in all cases?), it remains true that "in light

of the unrestrained violence before the flood and the coming promise of safety, God

reminds all people that even though the whole earth remains safe from destruction [by

means of a cataclysmic, catastrophic, Flood], there will still be consequences for sin,

especially sin which disrupts the divine plan to fill the earth with his image."[27]

Patterson sums it up well: "the corruption of humanity may have been mitigated, but it

has not been eradicated."[28] Though God himself has pledged not to destroy humanity the

onus is on humanity, as a collective, to continue to abide under God's rule and authority.

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[24] Keiser, *Genesis 1–11*, 135.
[25] Sarna, *Genesis*, 60.
[26] Arnold, *Genesis*, 110. Cf. Middleton, *Liberating Image*, 221.
[27] I am indebted to Jacob Burnette for these insights via private communiqué.
[28] Patterson, *Plot-Structure*, 89.

Step Three: Determining the Rhetorical Strategy

The focus of this step is on delineating and assessing the rhetorical strategies that the scribe employs to make his persuasive appeal. As in each of the previous chapters of this study, the analysis will leverage the base English translation that was given in step one. In addition, the analysis will be divided according to the main subunits delineated above in step of the study, namely: (I) "Be Fruitful and Multiply!" (Gen 9:1–7), (II), "The Covenant Promise: never again!" (Gen 9:8–11), (III), "The Covenant Sign: the rainbow" (Gen 9:12–16), and (IV) "Reiteration of the Covenant Sign of the Rainbow" (Gen 9:17). Some additional comments concerning Gen 9:18–29 will be taken up as well later on.

The Covenant: Conditions and Assurance (Gen 9:1–17//18–29)

I.   *Be Fruitful and Multiply! (Gen 9:1–7)*

Then God blessed Noah and his sons. Thus he said to them:

Be fruitful! Multiply! Fill the earth!

The fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon all the wild animals of the
    earth, and upon all the birds of the heavens, on everything that creeps on
    the ground, and on every fish of the sea—into your powe they are
    delivered. Every moving thing that lives for you will be for food; as the
    green plants, I now give you everything.

Only flesh with its life in it (that is, its blood) you must not eat.

Surely your blood-life, I will require a reckoning.

    From the hand of every beast I will require it.

    And from the hand of human beings,

        from the hand of every man's brother,

    I will require the life of a human being.

    Whoever sheds the blood of a human being,

        by a human being his blood shall be shed.

    For in the image of God he made humanity.

But you, fruitfully multiply! Bring forth abundantly on the earth! Multiply in her!

Extended Analysis

This section underscores the theme of "divine blessing."[29] This is the third time that

humanity has been told to "multiply" (רבה) by their Creator (Gen 1:28; 8:17; 9:1) and the

third time that they have been "blessed" (ברך) by God (Gen 1:28; 5:2; 9:1).[30] In brief,

"the 'blessing' of procreation and dominion conferred upon the postdiluvian world is a

restatement of God's creation promise for the human family and the creatures . . . but

now its provisions are modified in light of encroaching societal wickedness."[31]

Since it is clear that humanity's inability to effectively relate to God and one

another was the primary factor to his decision to send the Deluge (Gen 6:5–7, 11–13) and

that, at least in God's assessment, humanity shown no signs of improving these things in

the post-Flood world (Gen 8:21), it is important to understand that the Creator now

implements certain regulations so as to "insure the continuation of the earth until its final,

future redemption."[32] The scribe's rhetoric convincingly communicates God's wisdom in

making provision to safe-guard and protect the sanctity of human life by means of

empowering his image to mediate his justice and the safety of the newly created-order

by being able to take human life. As Wilson states: "God here *delegates* to humanity

the power to punish . . . Humans . . . are to enact their role as God's image by *imitating*

God and punishing murderers by taking their life."[33]

Many questions, however, remain unanswered. Though the scribe's rhetoric

convincingly communicates humanity's permission, nay, their responsibility, to de-

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[29] Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis*, 143.
[30] Wenham, *Genesis 1–15*, 192.
[31] Mathews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, 398.
[32] Mathews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, 398.
[33] Wilson, "Blood," 269. All emphases original. Cf. Middleton, *Liberating Image*, 294–95.

escalate "death-inducing lawlessness" (חמס) by virtue of sanctioned blood-shedding, he

does not provide enough particulars to determine the nuances involved here. For instance:

'Who, precisely, is able to authorize the death penalty and why them, specifically?' 'If

any nondescript person can wield such power, would not the world be back to where it

was before the Flood?' 'In what way and under what circumstances does this 'delegation'

of God apply?' 'What exactly does the narrator imply in saying that being made in the

image of God grants one the authority to take human life?' In very general terms:

> The 'violence' advocated in this text is not to be equated with bloodlust,
> and in many ways the principle of *lex talionis* (blood-for-blood) in Gen 9:6
> functions to prevent the escalation of aggression that could expand to
> include a murderer's relatives. But while this verse may limit violence, it
> certainly does not eradicate it; and in this text the reader is far removed
> from the pacifistic ethic of nonviolence that others have identified as the
> primary meaning of the *imago Dei*.[34]

That being said, however, one must also be duly cognizant that whatever type of

authority that God has given humanity to take life, it must always be understood within

the context and constraints of creatureliness and underscored by an acute awareness of

God's character and nature—who is both just *and* merciful (Exod 34:6–7).

Despite the echoes of creation that exist within this passage, there are also some

discontinuities. For instance, in contrast to the seeming tranquility of the Garden of Eden

and the vegetarian-eating epoch of humanity's initial existence, the presence of human

beings now bring terror to the animal kingdom for they are now able to eat animals—

save the life-blood (Gen 9:2–3. Cf. Gen 1:29).[35] That the text explicitly mentions the sons

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[34] Wilson, "Blood," 271–72. See too Dumbrell, "Covenant With Noah," 9.

[35] Milgrom ("Blood," *EncJud* 4:1115) states: "the fact that Israel's neighbors possessed no parallel law indicates that the prohibition cannot be a vestige of primitive taboo, but the result of a deliberate, reasoned enactment."

of Noah also makes clear that they, together, are the future of the human race and, as such, all of humanity, together, are to be "life producers, not life takers."[36]

IV. The Covenant Promise: Never Again! (Gen 9:8–11)

Then God said to Noah, and to his sons with him:

"I will establish my covenant with you, along with your descendants after

you[r] and with every living creature that is with you: among birds, among

domesticated animals, and among every beast with you—namely

everything that came out of the ark—to every beast of the earth!

I will establish my covenant with you. All flesh will not be cut off again by the

waters of the Flood, nor shall there be a Flood to destroy the earth."

Extended Analysis

Within this speech, God provides further assurance that the Deluge was a one-time event (Gen 9:11). As such, though the "possibility of future judgment is not eliminated . . . that judgment will not be manifested as a flood."[37] To put the matter differently, while humanity's sin caused unspeakable harm and damage to all life, even destroying the earth itself (Gen 6:13; 9:11; 2 Pet 3:6), God's covenant makes clear that never again will "all flesh" (כל בשר) be "cut off" (כרת) from the "Flood" (מבול) and never again shall there be a Flood so as to "destroy" (שחת) the earth (Gen 9:11). That God repeats this point is not insignificant. The Creator's commitment to this "new world" is "irreversible . . . Noah's covenant is continually presented as universal and inclusive, involving all the animal life that emerged from the ark."[38] The scribe's rhetoric convincingly communicates the steadfastness of God's covenant and the richness of his great mercy and love.

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[36] Hamilton, *Genesis 1–17*, 316.
[37] Hamilton, *Genesis 1–17*, 316.
[38] Mathews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, 408–09.

At the same time, however, humanity also bears a great responsibility. The stipulation seems to be that if Gen 9:5–6 is ignored or if the proscription is abused, the result would be the self-same "death-inducing lawlessness" (חמס).[39] Though the covenant provides assurance for the continuation of all life on earth, the quality of that life remains contingent upon humanity's willingness to submit to God's created order and manifest his values—as bearers of the divine image (Gen 9:6). The scribe's rhetoric thus convincingly communicates the need for God-ordained authorial structures.[40]

On a different note, it is interesting that every land animal—including even the birds—are included together with Noah and company in God's covenant (Gen 9:9–10). In brief, animals play an "honorable role in the biblical economy," for not only does God hold them responsible for "crimes of brutality" (see Gen 9:5) but he also "enters into promissory arrangements with them."[41] Wilson states:

> The account of Noah and the flood serves as a reminder not only to people of the monotheistic faiths . . . but also to everyone that we must be stewards of the earth in an environmentally responsible way. The plants, animals, birds, and fish, as creations of God, are to be a blessing to humanity both to use and to enjoy.[42]

Ronald A. Simkins uses the rubric of "harmony with nature," "mastery over nature," and "subjugation to nature" to describe the comparative ways that humanity can choose to conduct their life; of course, Simkins advocates for "harmony" with nature and one another in recognition of one's creatureliness. See the graphic depiction below.[43]

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[39] Greenberger ("Noah," 31), goes too far, however, when he states: "God promises not to bring destruction on the world because it will not be necessary, as man [sic] will become accountable and prevent the moral deterioration which would necessitate such an action. God puts his faith in man [sic]."

[40] See Moberly, *Genesis*, 110, Schreiner, *Covenant*, 38. Cf. Hodge, *Days of Genesis*, 138.

[41] Hamilton, *Genesis 1–17*, 316.

[42] Wilson, "Noah," 12. See too Simkins, *Creation*, 256–66. Cf. Peterson, *Genesis*, 70.

[43] Simkins, *Creation*, 171.

FIGURE SIXTEEN—ISRAEL'S WORLDVIEW & VALUES TOWARDS NATURE
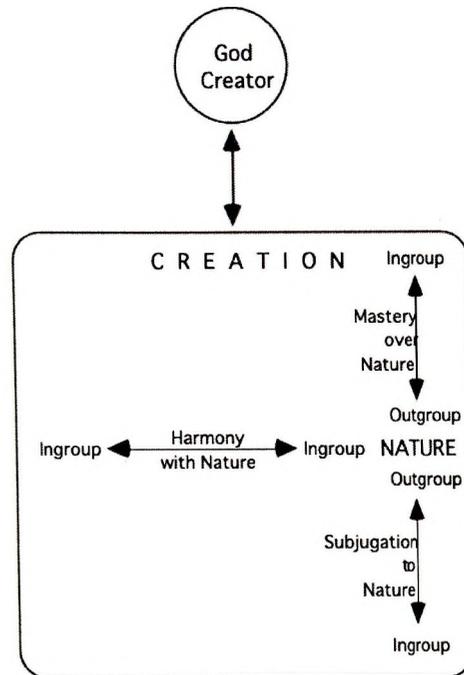
The implications that this model has with respect to such things such as nature

conservation, ecological stewardship, animal husbandry, and the like are far reaching.[44]

Alexander C. Stewart states:

> By combining ecological virtue ethics with biblical theology, we can
> attend to the suffering of creation in the Scriptures and in our
> present contexts, in order to cultivate empathetic sensitivity that
> benefits our Christian character and our communities.[45]

Aspects of this will be taken up in the concluding chapter of this study that need

not detain us here. It is sufficient to state that this is a burgeoning field of inquiry.

One notes that in the context of "international relations, the ingroup for the ancient Israelites comprised all Israelites in contrast to the nations. But there were also ingroup/outgroup distinctions between the Israelites within themselves. Within an inter-Israelite context, an ingroup could have been defined as in terms of a family, a village, or a geographical region, a profession such as shepherd or priest, or a class such as landowner or peasant. All other Israelites would have been classified in the outgroup. Moreover, many of these classifications overlap so that each Israelite could have belonged to several ingroups. The identification of the Israelite's ingroup and outgroup will thus vary according to the specific context in which they are examined." Simkins, *Creation*, 29–30. Cf. Mbuvi, *Belonging in Genesis*, 109–47.

[44] See Simkins, *Creation*, 256–66.

[45] See Stewart, "Ecological Suffering," 19.

V. The Covenant Sign: The Rainbow (Gen 9:12–16)

Then God said:

"This is the sign of the covenant I am making between me and between you

and between every living creature with you for all future generations:

> I will set my bow in the clouds.

> Thus it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth.

> Then, whenever I bring clouds over the earth, and the bow is seen in the

>> clouds, I shall thus call to mind the covenant that is between me

>> and you and between every living creature from among all flesh.

> Never again will the waters become a Flood to destroy all flesh.

>> (For when the bow is in the clouds, then I will look so as to

>> remember the long-lasting[s] covenant between God (myself) and

>> between every living thing among all flesh that is on the earth)."

Extended Analysis:

The "long-standing" or "everlasting" (עולם)[46] nature of the Noachic covenant is strongly

emphasized within this speech. Notably, this is also the first occurrence in the Bible of

the key term "sign" (אות), the other main instances of a covenant sign being circumcision

and the Sabbath day (see, for example, Gen 17:11 and Exod 31:16–17).[47] Here, "the

giving of the 'sign' guarantees the parties of its perpetual validity."[48] Since "bow" (קשתי)

is usually used in reference to a projectile-type weapon,[49] many propose that God means

to intimate that he is hanging up his "battle bow at the end of the flood, indicating he is

now at peace with humankind."[50] One scholar states: "God has holstered his weapon."[51]

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[46] This term conveys the sense of a "long time . . . usually eternal . . . but not in a philosophical sense." *HALOT* 1:798. Cf. Mason, *Covenant*, 43–44, and Walton, *Covenant*, 131–32.

[47] Mathews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, 409.

[48] Mathews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, 408–09.

[49] See *DCH* 7:339–40.

[50] The NET Bible. See also Waltke and Fredricks, *Genesis*, 146.

[51] Wilson, "Rainbow," 32. Cf. Speiser, *Genesis*, 59.

There are also many ancient Near East motifs that are involved. Bernard F. Batto asserts:

> After his victory over Tiamat and her allies, Marduk . . . "hung up" his bow. The bow, undrawn, is placed in the heavens to shine as the bowstar. One will not be far off the mark in interpreting this bowstar both as a sign of the definitiveness of Marduk's victory over the rebellious forces of chaos (in that he can afford to lay it aside) and as a guarantee that good order reigns within the cosmos.[52]

Extending this idea even further, Batto also states:

> The flood is an extension of *Chaoskampf.* Through human violence (*ḥāmās*, Gen 6:11–13), chaos (*tĕhôm*) had reentered the cosmos and threatened to undo God's initial victory of chaos (cf. Gen 1:2 and 7:11). Thus we are justified in appealing to the parallel in *Enuma Elish* and in interpreting the rainbow as a sign that God's victory is total and that God has indeed hung up his bow used to subdue the enemy. With the reestablishment of divine rule, a new and more perfect order has been achieved. Humankind . . . acknowledges its proper position before God. God binds himself to an everlasting covenant of peace with all creation. The rainbow now appears in the heavens to signal forevermore the advent of a new era of peace and harmony between God and the cosmos."[53]

Irrespective of any ancient Near Eastern connections and/or nuances with respect to the bow imagery itself, within the Noachic Deluge narrative, specifically, it is clear that the bow functions as a token of God "invisible word of grace."[54] Ephraim E. Speiser puts it quite beautifully: "the rainbow is introduced as a bright and comforting reminder that the race shall ensure, however transient the individual."[55] Interestingly, the term "bow" (קשתי) occurs three times within just as many verses (Gen 9:13, 14, 16).[56] As one scholar eloquently states: "[s]treched between heaven and earth, it is a bond of peace between both, and, spanning the horizon, it points to the all-embracing universality of the Divine

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[52] Batto, *In the Beginning*, 183. Cf. Galambush, *Reading Genesis*, 47.

[53] Batto, *In the Beginning*, 183. See too Batto, *Slaying the Dragon*, 87–88.

[54] Mathews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, 409. See too Schreiner, *Covenant*, 34–39.

[55] Speiser, *Genesis*, 59. See too Wilson, "Rainbow," 32.

[56] It is uncertain, however, what significance, if any, its thrice-time pairing with "clouds" has.

mercy."[57] The scribe's rhetoric convincingly communicates that there is a blessed assurance for all of the inhabitants of the earth—both human and non-human alike—forevermore. Indeed, whenever God sees the bow, the Creator will "call to mind" his covenant (see NJB). As such, "the harmony of the entire created order is guaranteed by this confirmation."[58] The scribe's rhetoric convincingly communicates that all hope and confidence for the preservation of humanity in the postdiluvian world "is founded on God's justice and mercy, and the reliability of the created world."[59] As Moberly states concerning the rainbow and this passage, in general:

> [It] is one of the most . . . beautiful, and moving of all recurrent natural phenomena. Its symbolic resonances are many, and one can imagine it variously . . . It usually appears after a time of heavy rain when the sun comes out and shine [sic] again but while dark clouds are still in the sky; and often the dark clouds are a backdrop for the many colours of the rainbow. Thus, when the rainbow is viewed in the light of the preceding Flood narrative, its appearance at the very moment when one can see both darkness and light in the sky comes to symbolize God's commitment to light over darkness, to beauty over chaos, to life over death.[60]

VI. Reiteration of the Covenant Sign of the Rainbow (Gen 9:17)

Then God said to Noah:

"This is the sign of the covenant that I established between me and between

everything which is upon the earth."

Extended Analysis:

The concluding emphasis here is not on the covenant itself but on the sign of the covenant—the bow.[61] In brief, the bow is a sign for humanity to reaffirm their humility, accept their creatureliness before God, and "show gratitude for being God's partner in a

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[57] Delitzsch, *A New Commentary on Genesis*, 290.
[58] Dumbrell, "Covenant with Noah," 6. See too Walton, "Flood," 323.
[59] Clifford, *Creation Accounts*, 149.
[60] Moberly, *Genesis*, 110–11. See too Mason, *Covenant*, 83–85.
[61] Hamilton, *Genesis 1–17*, 318.

covenant that allows him [sic] to continue to flourish within his [sic] imperfection."[62] God states again the "formal establishment of the agreement . . . 'I have established,' echoing the divine initiation and completion of the covenant; and 'all flesh,' showing the inclusive character of the agreement."[63] Although the Noachic covenant does not provide redemption itself, "the preservation of creation is the context in which redemption will be realized."[64] Indisputably, the scribe's rhetoric convincingly communicates that, as far as God is concerned, mercy shall triumph over judgment for the rest of the earth's days.

Concerning Gen 9:18–28, the fundamental assertion of this study is that the Noachic Deluge narrative is centered on life—not death—and that the scribe(s) of the book of Genesis sought to persuasively demonstrate the import of God's love and mercy in how they communicated about the Flood. The complex narrative of Noah's drunkenness echoes these same sentiments as the curses of Canaan (Gen 9:25) and the blessings of Shem (Gen 9:27) invite the reader to remember that God's hand of providence is at work in all aspects of our lives and that despite some uncomfortable questions, God himself is at work seeking to preserve all life through his created-order.

Step Four: Determining the Rhetorical Effectiveness

As noted above in step two (determining the rhetorical situation), both of the secondary exigencies of the Noachic Deluge narrative as well as the primary exigence itself, are now fully and completely resolved. To begin, not only did God state and repeat that he will never again send a Flood (Gen 9:11, 15) but he also instituted a covenant—complete with the bow as its sign—to provide even more assurance that it shall never happen again

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[62] Greenberger, "Noah's Survival," 32.

[63] Mathews, *Genesis 1–11:26*, 412.

[64] Schreiner, *Covenant*, 39. See too Keiser, *Genesis 1–11*, 128, and Fretheim, *God and World*, 10.

(Gen 9:12–17). As such, the exigence between God and the Flood itself is no more.

Concerning the role that the covenant parties play, it was noted above that though Noach and God have both fulfilled the stipulations of the covenant agreement there remains the new conditions of Gen 9:1–6 to reckon with. This ties directly to the exigence of humanity's self-destructive lawlessness" (חמס) and sinful tendencies. Even though God has made a way for humanity to move forward without the imposition of there being another Flood (that crisis is over—never again shall a Flood overtake the earth—God's covenant with creation is steadfast and true), the future of humanity remains at risk. Without a judicious exercise of God's gift of "new-creation" by means of stewarding one's relationships with one another and with creation, humanity runs the risk of falling into the same depraved, death-inducing spiral of sin and destruction.

Humanity requires wisdom, discernment, and understanding in order to know how best to execute their new-found authority and responsibility. Most of all, however, it is required of all human beings to recognize and respect their creatureliness before God. Without due cognizance of one's proper place under God as a created being, wholly and completely dependent upon the Creator for life and breath, it is impossible to walk in harmony with one another relationally or to exercise a circumspect form of ecology. In brief, the text has the potential to persuade—but the power itself lies in our hands.

With respect to those persons within the exilic/postexilic period and how they might have thought concerning this pericope (Gen 9:8–17), it must first be made clear that the promises of God were not given solely to Shem alone, i.e. Israel as a nation or a people group (Gen 9:8). Rather, the covenant promises were given to all of creation—all persons, i.e. to each one of the sons of Noah—to all of the descendants of Shem and Ham

and Japheth (Gen 9:9). All people, everywhere, for all time are entitled to the benefits of God's "eternal covenant."[65] As Steven D. Mason asserts: "there is a robust message here of God's intention for the preservation of Israel's international enemies."[66] The question is not just "what does it mean to live faithfully when somebody else is in charge?"[67] The true import of the passage manifests itself best in what the prophet Jeremiah admonished Israel to do when "the captives faced the challenge of living as political outsiders," and that is (baldly): "Seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the LORD on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare" (Jer 29:7—ESV).[68]

In brief, the "missional responsibilities" of Israel in Exile are understood to be predicated upon God's promises to all of creation (Gen 9:8–17).[69] In this way, to conclude, one can either stand in judgment against God, denouncing his acts and/or motives and questioning the standards by which he chooses to conduct himself, thereby leading to further death-inducing, self destructive "lawlessness" (חמס), or accept that God's promises were extended freely to all persons without measure or qualification.[70] The scribe's rhetoric convincingly communicates that one ought to be at peace in the world and work to achieve harmony with one's neighbors, resting in the comforting knowledge that "God is the Lord of history and that . . . blessing and prosperity . . . are under his righteous control."[71] No wickedness, no matter how severe, can ever thwart the Creator's purpose to bless the work of his hands and to preserve and redeem all life.[72]

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[65] See Mason, *Covenant*, 82.

[66] See Mason, *Covenant*, 82.

[67] Cf. Cochran and Van Drunen, eds., *Law and the Bible*, 76.

[68] Cochran and Van Drunen, eds., *Law and the Bible*, 76.

[69] Brueggemann, Jeremiah, 257–58.

[70] As one scholar states: "God blesses all; he calls an individual cursed." Vermeulen, "Blessing and Cursing," 127.

[71] Cochran and Van Drunen, eds., *Law and the Bible*, 76.

[72] See Patterson, *Plot-Structure*, 210.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION

Introductory Summary of Results

One aspect of this study was to showcase and demonstrate the usefulness of rhetorical-critical methods for the study of Hebrew narrative texts. Through investigating the specific rhetorical strategies that the scribe used to construct his arguments, I have considered the persuasive nature of the Noachic Deluge narrative. My study concluded that the Noachic Deluge narrative is well-crafted literature that moves from scenes of devastation and destruction (the cosmos becoming chaos) to God's promise of restoration and renewal (chaos to covenant) with the overarching emphasis being upon God's deliverance and mercy rather than God's judgment and wrath.

In brief, the Noachic Deluge event functions to recalibrate the kinship relationship of God and humanity that was lost in the Fall via the structure of covenant. In this way, the Noachic Deluge narrative is persuasive. As intellectual, world-view formative rhetoric, the scribe convincingly communicates that God's intentions for creation, the establishment of order via covenant, will not be thwarted. This includes human beings—as his image-bearers—employing the principle of *lex talionis* (blood-for-blood).

This study is sensitive to the broader context of scholarship concerning the Noachic Deluge narrative, including diachronic (source-critical) and synchronic (literary-critical) analyses. It reflects on the long-standing debate over the Noachic Deluge narrative's composition and lends support to theories of the rhetorical cohesion of the text. In this way, this study supplements the work of other scholars as the rhetorical-critical "rhetoric as persuasion" model "fills the void" between diachronic and synchronic approaches

(such as form, source, literary, and narrative criticisms).[1] Although the Noachic Deluge narrative interacts with the rest of the book of Genesis and, by extension, the Pentateuch the rest of the Deuteronomistic history, notwithstanding the entire HB/OT, and the canon, in general, it is a distinct literary and rhetorical unit in its own.

To summarize, though many HB/OT rhetorical scholars agree that the benefits of examining the literary nature of the biblical text and the unique qualities that lend it "esthetic power and appeal"[2] should not be understated and that such insights are most welcome and appreciated, rhetoric as "the art of persuasion" intends to build on rhetorical criticism as "the art of composition" and to take it a step further. To be clear, this study places itself among the "rhetoric as persuasion" group. It argues that the role of the "rhetorical critic is both to analyze the literary features of the text but further to articulate the impact of the given unit upon its audience."[3] The next section will elucidate the specifics of the rhetorical-critical "rhetoric as persuasion" model employed in this study.

The Rhetorical-Critical Model

The refinement and development of the so-called 'Kennedy rhetorical-critical model,' supplemented by the work of Möller (Amos), Barker (Joel), and Ahn (Chronicles), in particular, is also important to this study. Each of the aforementioned practitioners of this model, including certain others, such as Shaw (Micah) and, also, in part, Harper (Genesis/Leviticus) use similar approaches in each of the steps of the 'model," such as how to delimit rhetorical units and/or consider the scribe's rhetorical strategies.[4]

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[1] Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation*, 3–4. Cf. Barker, *From the Depths of Despair*, 32, 37.
[2] Barker, *From the Depths of Despair*, 33.
[3] Barker, *From the Depths of Despair*, 29. See also Watson and Hauser, *Rhetorical Criticism*, 14, and Howard, "Rhetorical Criticism," 103.
[4] See Barker, *From the Depths of Despair*, 262

That being said, however, this study supplements many of the steps of this model. For instance, with respect to step one, this study leverages a particularly nuanced approach to *determining the rhetorical units* by means of a close examination of: (1) persons of verbs, (2) the specific and focused use of *waws*, (3) and verbal forms.

This study's approach to *determining rhetorical situation* (step two) and *determining the rhetorical effectiveness* (step four), also nuances the work of Möller, Barker, Ahn, and others. To be clear, I first propose that an entextualized rhetorical situation makes sense in attempting to push rhetorical effectiveness in the direction of the implied audience that is constructed within the text itself and other reading and/or hearing audiences. This is often required of different canonical texts since it often cannot be determined with certainty how the actual audience of these words responded to them in their initial setting and environment, aside from the fact that the texts are well-preserved and included within the collection of writings that eventually came to be known as Scripture. As such, discussion of rhetorical effectiveness aligned with the 'hermeneutics of affirmation,' i.e. reading the text in such a way that the interpreter can experience the text's persuasive authority.[5] Alongside this, given the clear signals within the final form of the Pentateuch for an exilic/postexilic audience, it was also necessary to discuss how the message of the Noachic Deluge narrative might relate to that particular context.

With respect to step three, *determining the rhetorical species (or genre) of the text*, this study also supplements the aforementioned works. Rather than subordinating this discussion to the rhetorical strategies that the text employs in order to make its persuasive appeal, it has been suggested that this specific step should be entirely re-

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[5] See Barker, *From the Depths of Despair*, 262–63.

thought. In brief, rather than belabor the nuances of *judicial*, *epideictic*, and *deliberative* rhetoric, and thus potentially placing an "Occidental paradigm on an Oriental work,"[6] one should instead re-classify the text as being intellectual, worldview formative rhetoric. After this has been achieved, one may abandon any further delineation of the species entirely, thus effectively eliminating 'step three' of the model altogether.

In sum, each of the steps of the Kennedy model have been carefully nuanced.

Elements of Persuasion in the Noachic Deluge Narrative

Throughout this study I analyzed the Noachic Deluge narrative by the four-step model of rhetorical criticism, "rhetoric as persuasion," that has been detailed above. Throughout this study, I noted that the scribe's rhetoric persuasively communicated particular things concerning Noah, the Flood and humanity, and God himself.

Concerning Noah, the scribe's rhetoric convincingly communicated that Noah was a figure of no small import and an upstanding patriarch of his family. He had a distinguished lineage, and, after the Flood, his descendants would repopulate the earth—culminating (via Shem) in the esteemed patriarch, Abraham, and the sons of Israel. In this way, not only was Noah an exemplary individual and a model of faithful obedience to God who practiced and modeled wisdom, foresight, intelligence, and gratitude, he has also the distinct privilege of being the progenitor of all sustaining life (Gen 9:19).

With respect to the Flood and humanity, the scribe's rhetoric convincingly communicated the moral necessity of the catastrophe. The "moral malaise of humanity was a chronic condition and not just a spasmodic lapse."[7] As such, God's judgment was

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[6] Hwang, *Rhetoric of Remembrance*, 10.
[7] Hamilton, *Genesis 1–17*, 273.

clearly necessary. Alongside this, despite the pervasivness of sin before and after the Flood, humanity is blessed of God for they alone bear his image within the created order.

With respect to God, the scribe's rhetoric convincingly communicated God's desire for life to rule over death and for a "renewal of the kinship relationship" between humanity and himself.[8] By means of the covenant that God implemented with Noah and his sons and all of creation, the scribe's rhetoric convincingly communicated that all life is precious to God. Though judgment for sin is certain and the penalty may be of grave consequence, whatever disasters befall the earth or strike humanity, it will always teem with life until the end of all time due to the LORD's great mercy.

.   In sum, the scribe's rhetoric convincingly communicates the main argument of this study, namely that despite the vivid picture of devastation that the Noachic Deluge account depicts, the emphasis of the narrative is on redemption, salvation, deliverance, renewal, and the upholding of life itself. God's intentions to carry out creation's inherent plans and purposes (the establishment of order via covenant) will not be thwarted for God is committed to his purposes for humanity as his image bearers. In light of this, the proper response to the Noachic Deluge narrative is to live in light of God's mercy, repent of sin, and walk in faithful obedience to God in knowledge of the great hope of restoration. Although this may include the necessity of taking life, humanity is to walk in harmony with the created order—human to human relations/human to animal relations—in humble awareness of their own creatureliness—human to God relations/God to human relations.

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[8] Boda, *Heartbeat of Old Testament Theology*, 100.

Further Work

Further studies in primeval history and other biblical narratives using a rhetorical-critical "rhetoric as persuasion" method is sorely needed given the dearth of literature on the subject. While there is no shortage of monographs and commentaries on Gen 1–11 that leverage some type of "literary" and/or "narrative" analysis of the text (often with theological implications), a not insignificant lacuna exists concerning specific works that explore the persuasive nature of the text, its rhetorical function, and a thorough, methodologically rigorous, description of the scribe's persuasiveness.

In addition to this, further work using discourse analysis—otherwise known as text-linguistics—would bring increased nuance, detail, and texture to this study. The work of Robert E. Longacare is, perhaps, the most well-known in HB/OT studies for leveraging this particular method.[9] Albeit, more contemporary work is still desperately required.[10]

Other work on the Noachic Flood could involve inter-textual analysis. Boda notes:

> The Noachic covenant plays many functions within the OT. While it shows the creational and universal implications of the redemptive agreements established within Israel, it also provides hope that those redemptive agreements will endure and reach their fullest potential (Jer. 30–31). At times it is used to comfort (Isa. 54–55) and even to announce judgment in the present (Nah. 1:8) as well as the future (Isa. 24; Zeph 1–2). It can prompt praise (Ps. 29:10) but also be used in lament (Ps. 89).[11]

A thorough, methodologically rigorous, description of the scribe's persuasiveness with respect to this (and the NT) would prove beneficial and enlighten aspects of this study.[12]

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[9] Longacre, "Flood Narrative," 236–62, and Longacre, "Discourse Structure," 89–113.

[10] See Noonan, *Advances in the Study of Biblical Hebrew*, 178–79. Cf. Culley ("New Directions," 170), whoever who states: "the flood story is not an ideal text with which to initiate the study for discourse in biblical Hebrew prose, for this story has long been considered by most scholars to be a composite work." I am indebted to Ron Bell for some of these insights via private communiqué.

[11] Boda, *Heartbeat of Old Testament Theology*, 100.

[12] Cf. Jungels, Review of *From the Depths of Despair*, 568.

On a different note, since the Noachic Deluge narrative also speaks to things such as nature conservation, ecological stewardship, animal husbandry, and the like, it would not be amiss for there to be further work in concerning these things that are theologically sensitive and exegetically (methodologically) rigorous. Lastly, given the principle of *lex talionis* (blood-for-blood), more study in the area of politics, in general, alongside other matters of civil and national government, might also be prudent topics to consider.

Concluding Thoughts

This study demonstrated that despite the vivid picture of devastation that the Noachic Deluge account depicts, the overarching emphasis is on redemption, renewal, salvation, deliverance, and the upholding of life.[13] As world-view formative rhetoric, the scribe's focus is bent towards God's "salvific rather than punitive" purposes.[14] That is, the scribe highlights what God did to "preserve the creation beyond the disaster."[15] As such, the Flood narrative is not a catalog of "indescribable judgment" but "indescribable grace" and inexpressible redemption.[16] The scribe's rhetoric convincingly communicates that God's intentions to carry out his plan for creation, the establishment of order via covenant, will not be thwarted.[17] The Flood recalibrates the kinship relationship of God and humanity that was lost in the Garden of Eden via the structure of covenant.[18] This also involves the responsibility to mitigate "self-destructive violence" (חמס) through God's provision for mortals to act for God—as his image—via "blood-for-blood."[19]

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[13] Keiser, *Genesis 1–11*, 128, Fretheim, *God and World*, 10.

[14] Boyd, *Crucifixion*, 1140.

[15] Fretheim, *Creation Untamed*, 46. Cf. Kaminski, *Was Noah Good?*, 13; Clines, *Pentateuch*, 83.

[16] Walton, *Genesis*, 331. Keil and Delitzsch (*Pentateuch*, 141) state that it is a "flood of grace."

[17] See Kaminski, *From Noah to Israel*, 1.

[18] See Boda, "Old Testament Foundations," 41, Boda, *Heartbeat of Old Testament Theology*, 100.

[19] Wilson, "Blood," 271–72. See too Dumbrell, "Covenant With Noah," 9.

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