

The Biblical Flood

Today I'm starting a new series called "The Biblical Flood". As with many of the series on this channel, I don't begin with a complete roadmap. I don't have every episode planned out in advance, and I don't know exactly where each step will lead. That's not a lack of preparation—it's part of the process. Over time, I've come to recognize that some of the most important insights don't come all at once. They come piece by piece, as I study, reflect, and listen for the Spirit's guidance between each episode.

This series will unfold the same way. We'll take it one step at a time—following the text, testing ideas, and allowing space for clarity to emerge rather than forcing conclusions too early.

This series is part of a larger journey we've been on—understanding the work of the Holy Spirit across Scripture. Some series have been directly focused on the Spirit. Others, like this one, are more indirect—but no less important.

As we've seen, all roads lead back to Genesis. The Garden...the Fall...and now the Flood. These are not isolated stories—they are foundational movements in God's unfolding plan. The Flood sits in a critical place between *The Fall* and *The Abrahamic Promise*. Whatever the Flood is, it is part of the path that leads to the Messiah...and ultimately to the restoration of God's Spirit dwelling within humanity.

In that sense, this is a series about the Spirit—because it is a series about God's overall plan of redemption.

And I'll be honest—this is a topic I've been reluctant to take on. It's one of the last areas in Scripture where I don't have an explanation that truly makes sense to me. In a way, I've felt a bit like Jonah—avoiding something because I know it's going to be difficult, because I don't see a clear path forward, and because I don't know if I'm going to like the answer I end up with.

I'm a scientist at heart, and even though I reject using the Bible as a source of "supernatural information", the Flood story is different. It's narrative, not apocalyptic. It's presented as history. It's placed in a relatively recent timeframe. And yet...it resists clean alignment with geology, archaeology, population genetics, and ancient Near Eastern parallels.

That combination is what makes it the darkest of my "dark corners."

Before we look for answers...we must face and understand the problem. That is where we begin today.

Part 1: The Conundrum

When it comes to the Biblical Flood, none of the common explanations fully work for me.

A purely figurative approach isn't Biblically consistent. A purely literal approach seems highly unlikely from a geological standpoint. And hybrid explanations—like a local flood, or a God-centered retelling of surrounding cultural myths—don't quite hold together either.

Each approach solves part of the problem but creates others at the same time.

In many ways, this is like the 6-day Creation account. That used to be a “dark corner” for me as well. But in that case, a figurative reading that presents a God-centered perspective of creation in contrast to the myths of surrounding cultures make sense to me.

And a guiding principle emerged from that: *God would not create a situation where modern people have a clear, technological advantage in proving His existence over ancient people.* Ancient mankind had no way to scientifically verify how the universe was created or how life developed. They had to accept it by faith and competing ideas were also faith-based. And it seems unlikely that modern humanity would be given a kind of scientific proof (aka miraculous scientific information) embedded in the text that ancient readers could never access. [Btw, my friend who's a teacher at large international church didn't like this idea. It was because God doesn't hide or fabricate evidence of his actions, which I agree with. But if he included precise verifiable evidence in the creation and in the Bible, that would violate His *principle of faith.*]

But the Flood is different—primarily because it's placed in a relatively recent timeframe. Archbishop James Ussher famously dated it to 2348 BC based on the genealogies in Genesis 5 and 11 using the Masoretic Text. But even if that date were pushed back significantly—even to something like 20,000 BC—that's still extremely recent in geological terms.

If a global deluge really occurred sometime in the early history of civilization, then the kind of evidence it would leave behind should be observable—not just to modern science, but even to ancient observers in some form. And yet we don't see that kind of clear, shared evidence.

And that's the conundrum.

The Conundrum

- Possible approaches: purely figurative, purely literal, and hybrid
 - Figurative approach isn't Biblically consistent.
 - Literal approach seems highly unlikely from a geological standpoint.
 - Hybrid explanations—like a local flood or a God-centered retelling of surrounding cultural myths—don't quite hold together either.
- Guiding principle
 - *God would not create a situation where modern people have a clear, technological advantage in proving His existence over ancient people.*

- Similar to: Don't use the Bible as a source of miraculous scientific knowledge.
- The Flood is recent: 20,000 BC to maybe 2350 BC
 - If a global or large regional flood occurred in this timeframe, there should be evidence.

Constraining the Text

- Constraint 1: The text presents the Flood as real
 - Narrative, not symbolic or apocalyptic
 - Integrated into genealogy and covenant history.
- Constraint 2: The Flood has theological purpose
 - Judgment of human wickedness
 - Reset leading to covenant with Noah
- Constraint 3: The language is universal
 - "All flesh," "whole earth," "under heaven"
 - This must be accounted for, not dismissed
- Constraint 4: The Flood exists within a broader cultural context
 - Other ancient flood traditions (e.g., Epic of Gilgamesh)
 - Raises questions of shared memory or narrative
- Constraint 5: It must not violate God's "fairness across time" principle
 - No unfair epistemological advantage to modern humans

Reframing the Question

- The key question may be wrong
 - Not just "global or local?"
 - Not just "literal or figurative?"
- What does "the earth" and "human beings" mean in Genesis?
 - "Earth" (אֲדָמָה, adamah) — ground, land, territory
 - Genesis 2:7 — man formed from the ground. Literally, "God formed the adam from the Adamah".
 - Genesis 4:10–11 — the ground receiving blood
 - Ancient perspective vs modern assumptions/theology.
 - "Human beings" (אָדָם, adam) — mankind, humanity; "the human" or adam (אָדָם, ha-adam) or still generic humanity
 - Genesis 1:26–27 — creation of mankind
 - Genesis 6:5 — wickedness of man
- Ancient perspective vs modern assumptions
 - Language describes the world as people experience it, not as later theology or science defines it.
 - ***When multiple meanings fit the context, the chosen word becomes interpretative.***

Exposing Dark Corners

- Areas without clear, consistent explanations
 - Interpretive gymnastics
 - Where common interpretations break down
- The Flood
 - Text, science, and theology in tension
- Other examples
 - Creation account
 - Humans outside the Garden
 - Sons of God and the Nephilim
- Not problems to avoid *but the precise place to attack*
 - Areas that require deeper understanding.
 - We aren't going to explain away anything—instead we're going to harmonize the text, theology and what we observe in nature.

Closing

I'm not starting this series with answers—I'm starting with constraints. Because whatever the Flood was, it must satisfy the text, the world we observe, and the nature of God as revealed throughout Scripture. And right now, I don't see any models that accomplish this.

Part 2: The Baked-in Narrative

Last week introduced what I called The Conundrum: How do we understand Genesis 1–6 in a way that agrees not only with the evidence we observe in nature, but also with the narrative itself and with the rest of the Bible?

This is the central tension. Leaning too far in one direction allows the scientific evidence to align but strains the text. Leaning too far in the other direction preserves the text but creates tension with observable reality. The goal of this series is not to choose between these, but to determine whether both can be taken seriously at the same time.

To approach this, a key hermeneutical principle was introduced: When multiple meanings fit the context, the meaning that is chosen becomes interpretive. This principle is especially relevant in Hebrew, where words often carry a range of meanings within similar contexts, and verbs do not always encode strict tense. As a result, translation is not a purely mechanical process. It involves decisions, and over time those decisions shape the narrative that readers perceive in the text.

From this foundation, five constraints were established. These are not conclusions but guardrails—any interpretation that fails to account for them is unlikely to be viable.

Constraint #1: The text presents the Flood as real. It is not framed as symbolic or metaphorical, but as an event that actually occurred.

Constraint #2: The Flood has a theological purpose. It functions within the narrative to communicate something about God, humanity, and judgment.

Constraint #3: The language is universal. Phrases such as “all the earth” and “every living thing” present the scope as total, at least at the level of the text.

Constraint #4: The Flood exists within a broader cultural context. Other flood traditions exist in the ancient world, indicating that Genesis is not written in isolation.

Constraint #5: God’s fairness across time. Any interpretation must preserve consistency in God’s dealings with humanity, avoiding the implication that modern readers possess a decisive advantage in understanding reality that ancient people did not.

The overarching goal of the series is to move the Flood out of the “Dark Corner” category—not by dismissing it or explaining it away, but by developing a more coherent understanding.

This episode will build on that foundation in two ways.

First, a sixth constraint is introduced: The text assumes a shared understanding of existing side-narratives and therefore refers to them without elaboration, often glossing over details that today can only be reconstructed through speculation.

This suggests that the author of Genesis may not be attempting to explain every element of the narrative. Instead, certain references may function as allusions to material already familiar to

the original audience. This helps account for passages in Genesis 2 through 6 that introduce unusual or complex elements and then move forward without explanation, as though the reader is expected to supply the missing context.

Second, Constraint #3 is refined. Previously, Constraint #3 stated that the language is universal. While this is accurate, it is incomplete. The refinement is as follows: The narrative is presupposed to be universal, and the language is selected and translated in ways that reinforce that universality.

This shifts the emphasis from the words themselves to the relationship between narrative and translation. The universality may not arise solely from the vocabulary, but from an underlying assumption about the scope of the story, which then guides how ambiguous terms are resolved.

This leads directly to the central idea of the episode: Other, possibly very different, overarching meanings may exist outside of the baked-in narrative.

How can we identify elements of the story that point to different narratives? We look for places that do not fully resolve. In other words, certain features remain abrupt, unusual, or under-explained, and rather than glossing over them, I will expose and enumerate them.

Therefore, these unresolved elements will provide the starting point for alternate narratives.

Genesis 1: The First Baked-in Narrative

- Genesis 1 already contains interpretive pressure points before the Flood story even begins.
- “In the beginning” is not wrong, but modern readers naturally hear it through later assumptions about creation, time, and the universe.
- A modern writer might say, “At the start of space and time”—still a valid translation of “רֵאשִׁית” (*rē’šīt*).
- The word “day” creates another interpretive pressure point.
 - “יוֹם” (*yôm*) can mean a normal day, a symbolic day, or a broader period, *then the chosen meaning becomes interpretive*.
 - The repeated evening-and-morning pattern pushes readers toward ordinary days.
 - The scale of creation pushes many readers toward something broader than ordinary days.
 - The text is not trying to answer modern scientific questions, yet modern readers cannot avoid hearing those questions.
- This creates the first baked-in narrative: Genesis 1 is usually read through an assumed framework before Genesis 2 even begins.

- The tension is not only between Genesis and science: it is also between the words and phrases *available* to ancient people speaking an ancient language.

Genesis 2: Presupposed Narrative vs. Textual Detail

- Genesis 2:4–25 is commonly read as a “zoomed-in” account of the latter part of Day 6.
- This reading depends on a presupposed narrative: Adam and Eve are the first two humans and the progenitors of the entire human race.
- The text itself does not explicitly restate this assumption; it is carried in from the broader narrative.
- As a result, details in Genesis 2 are often interpreted in ways that maintain continuity with Genesis 1.
- This creates pressure to harmonize sequence, purpose, and terminology between the two chapters.
- That harmonization introduces interpretive decisions that are not always required by the immediate text.

Genesis 2: Specific Tensions

- Vegetation timing introduces a translation decision.
 - Genesis 2:5 describes shrubs as not yet present.
 - Genesis 1 places plant creation on Day 3.
 - This leads to translations such as “had planted” instead of “planted” to maintain sequence.
- Animal and bird formation introduces another decision.
 - Genesis 2:19 can read as “formed” rather than “had formed.”
 - Genesis 1 places birds on Day 5 and land animals before humans on Day 6.
 - The use of “had formed” aligns the sequence with Genesis 1.
- The phrase “suitable helper” is appropriate but undefined.
 - The text does not specify the task for which help is needed.
 - Modern readers often assume the task is marriage or companionship.
 - That assumption depends on later context rather than the immediate passage.
- The eventual creation of the woman raises a related question.
 - Genesis 2:24 defines the role of the wife in terms of union.
 - This suggests marriage but does not explicitly define the original task.
 - Whether the intended task is companionship, stewardship, procreation, or something else is not stated.

Genesis 3: The Serpent and the Nature of the Fall

- The introduction of the serpent is abrupt and unexplained.
 - It is not distinguished from the other animals by nature, but by behavior.

- Genesis 3:1 identifies the serpent as “more crafty” than the other animals. The distinction is intellectual not biological.
- The defining feature is the use of deceptive and manipulative speech—not speech itself.
- A speaking serpent is presented without explanation or reaction.
 - The narrative does not pause to justify or explain this phenomenon.
 - The lack of explanation suggests the audience may not require one.
- The temptation centers on knowledge rather than immediate mortality.
 - The serpent frames the issue in terms of “knowing good and evil.”
 - The focus is not initially on death, but on a transformation of awareness.
- God confirms a key element of the serpent’s claim.
 - Genesis 3:22 states that, “The humans have become like one of us, knowing good and evil.”
 - This acknowledgment introduces tension between warning and outcome.
- The Tree of Life becomes central after the transgression.
 - Access to the Tree of Life is restricted to prevent continued life. The implication is that ongoing access would allow indefinite life.
 - The biological change is intellectual, not mortality. Mortality comes from no longer having access to the Tree of Life.

Genesis 4: Population and Narrative Assumptions

- The presupposed narrative is that Adam and Eve are the only humans at this stage.
- The text introduces immediate tension with that assumption: Cain’s fear asserts others exist.
 - Genesis 4:14 — Cain fears being killed by “whoever finds me.”
 - The identity of these others is not explained.
- Cain’s wife is introduced without origin.
 - The narrative does not state where she comes from.
 - The presupposed narrative fills this gap implicitly.
- Cain builds a city.
 - Genesis 4:17 — a city implies a broader population.
 - The text does not describe population growth sufficient to support this.
- Cultural and moral development accelerates rapidly.
 - Music, metalworking, and social structures appear within a few generations.
- Genesis 4:26 — “people began to call on the name of the Lord” is an amazing statement!
 - It sticks out from chapters 4 and 5 and implies a transition that is not explained.

Genesis 5: Genealogy and Compression

- The presupposed narrative treats Genesis 5 as a complete lineage.
- The text may function as a compressed or selective genealogy.
- Long lifespans introduce interpretive tension.

- Individuals stretched-out lives of hundreds of years without explanation.
- At the time of writing (Moses' time) lifespans and childbearing ages were approaching that of typical modern humans.
- Genealogical structure may omit generations.
 - "Father of" can indicate ancestry, not immediate parenthood.
 - This allows for compression within the lineage.
- Enoch breaks the established pattern.
 - The repeated phrase "and he died" is interrupted.
 - Genesis 5:24 — "God took him" is stated without explanation.
- The narrative presents large implications with minimal detail.
 - Population growth, lifespan, delayed childbearing, and unique events are assumed rather than developed.
 - There's no explanation as to why Noah waited so long to have children.

Closing

This episode has examined how the Genesis 1–5 narrative is shaped not only by the text itself, but by interpretive choices that have been reinforced over time.

When multiple meanings fit the context, the selected meanings tend to align with a presupposed narrative. Over time, that narrative becomes stable, familiar, and difficult to recognize as interpretive.

And yet, even within that framework, the text continues to present unresolved elements:

- Genesis 1 introduces pressure points in language.
- Genesis 2 requires sequence adjustments and leaves key purposes undefined.
- Genesis 3 presents unexplained categories.
- Genesis 4 raises population questions.
- Genesis 5 compresses generations and introduces anomalies.

These are not isolated issues. They are consistent features of the text. In each case, the narrative moves forward without explanation, and the gaps are typically filled by the baked-in narrative rather than by the text itself.

This leads to a key conclusion: The baked-in narrative may not be the only way to understand these chapters.

That brings us to what comes next: the first four verses of Genesis 6. All of these tensions converge in a single, highly compressed, highly presumptive passage. A passage where every phrase raises questions, and where the text provides almost no explanation. This will be the focus of the next episode.

Part 3: The God's Sovereign Plan

Last week, we stepped back and asked a foundational question: Are we reading Genesis...or are we reading a translation that has already made key interpretive decisions for us?

We started with this idea: The framework of meaning is often baked into the translation itself. Translators don't just translate words, they choose between multiple contextually valid options, which are naturally made consistently across the text. The result is a coherent reading that often aligns with a traditional, historically accepted narrative.

That led to a refinement of Constraint #3: *The narrative is presupposed to be universal, and the language is selected and translated in ways that reinforce that universality.* (things like "the whole world", "all mankind", "a global flood", etc.

In other words, the text may not explicitly argue for universality at every point, but the translation choices often assume it.

Then we added a new constraint—Constraint #6: *The text assumes a shared understanding of existing side-narratives and therefore refers to them without elaboration, often glossing over details that today can only be reconstructed through speculation.* (although The Book of Enoch may be one such remaining narrative)

This helps explain some of the most puzzling parts of Genesis (like 6:1-4)—not as seemingly random gaps, but as intentional references to stories the original audience already knew.

And that brings us back to the purpose of the constraints themselves: These aren't conclusions—they're guardrails. They exist to prevent us from:

- Forcing modern assumptions onto an ancient text
- Over-explaining what the text leaves unexplained
- Treating silence as absence rather than intentional brevity

Instead, the constraints allow us to ask a better question: What kind of text are we actually dealing with and how would its original audience have understood it?

And that question sets up everything for today, because once we understand how the text communicates, we can start asking: Are God's actions in these early chapters random...or are they part of a deliberate, unfolding plan?

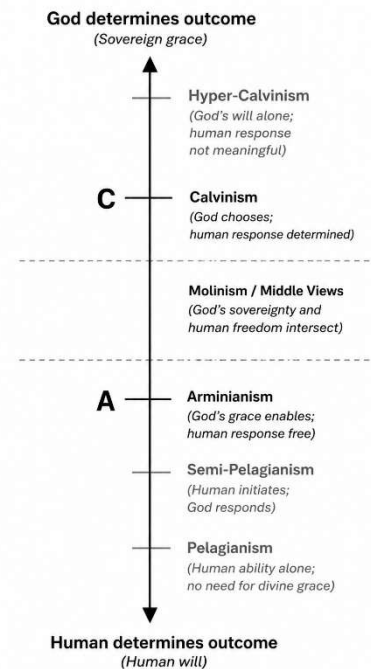
Eden vs. The Flood: Mercy and Judgment

- Eden: Judgment is restrained
 - God could have reset the story with just two deaths
 - Spiritual death happens immediately

- Humanity is expelled, not destroyed or reset
- Access to the tree of life is removed, making physical death to be inevitable
- The Flood: Judgment is executed
 - Corruption reaches a tipping point
 - Widespread destruction of human and animal life
 - A remnant is preserved through Noah
- Common thread:
 - God intervenes at a specific threshold
 - Judgment and mercy are both present
 - A remnant is preserved in both cases
- What hasn't happened yet
 - The Messiah does not come
- God's preconditions—whatever they are—have not yet been met.

Calvinism vs. Arminianism (Predestination & Purpose) – Romans 9:6-24

- Shared ground (Romans 9 is central to the discussion)
 - God has a purpose and plan
 - Salvation is initiated by God
- Calvinism (more emphasis on God's choice)
 - God determines who will be saved
 - Election is not based on human response
 - Human choice reflects God's prior decision
- Arminianism (more emphasis on human response)
 - God desires all to be saved
 - Election is based on foreknown response
 - Human choice plays a real role
- The tension
 - Is God's purpose independent of human will?
 - Or does God's purpose include human response?
- Why would I be talking about this now?
 - We might not know about God's future choices...but we do know **about his prior choices**—and these are inarguably His **plan**.



Would Calvinists and Arminianists agree with this? Somewhat but not totally. For myself, the correct answer is uncertain and can only be speculated; humanity is in the same boat regardless—no one knows what's going on in the mind of others and even within their own heart. For myself, the correct answer is uncertain and can only be speculated. Humanity is in the same boat regardless (i.e. no one knows what's going on in the mind of others).

What Can We Say About God's Decisions?

- In the Garden
 - The plan can go on with Adam and Eve (and their offspring) having the knowledge of good and evil
 - But they cannot remain in the Garden, so they continue outside of it
 - Apparently, the Garden and its animal inhabitants can continue to exist—for now.
- In the Flood
 - Of Adam and Eve's lineage, only Noah and his three sons are allowed to continue
 - Enough corruption of Adam's line appears to be removed
 - The surviving line of Adam must now be fruitful and spread across the land
- Across both events
 - God acts selectively, not randomly
 - Judgment and mercy are both consistently present
 - A remnant is preserved each time
- What this suggests
 - God's decisions are purposeful, even if not fully explained, and always advance His plan
 - There are conditions or thresholds that prompt intervention
 - The plan is unfolding, not reacting.

Working Premises (for this series)

- Why introduce premises?
 - The constraints limit interpretation—but still allow many possibilities
 - To make progress, we must tentatively narrow the field. These are not certainties—they are working assumptions
- Premise #1: Humans outside the Garden
 - Humans are created broadly in Gen 1 (male and female)
 - Gen 2 does not read as a simple zoom-in of Day 6 (ordering differences)
 - Some Garden elements appear unique (e.g., reasoning serpent)
 - Gen 4 raises external population questions (Cain's fear, wife, city)
 - Therefore: Humans may have existed outside the Garden for an extended time
- Premise #2: Adam's line is distinct
 - Adam's line exhibits unusually long lifespans
 - Possible connection to initial access to the tree of life
 - Gen 6 reflects unusual interactions (sons of God, Nephilim)

- Humans outside the Garden appear more typical by comparison
- Therefore: Adam's line may have been biologically or functionally distinct
- Important clarification
 - These premises are not proven—they are proposed
 - They are meant to reduce possibilities, not eliminate uncertainty
 - They will be tested against the rest of the text
- Why this matters:
 - It changes how we read the Flood and pre-Flood world.
 - It reframes questions about corruption, judgment, and thresholds, helping explain why God acts when He does

Next week

We'll get into Genesis 6:1-4, Who are the Sons of God and what to do with those pesky Nephilim.

Part 4: The Garden 2.0

Believe it or not, we're making progress—and that's not something to take lightly, given that this text has been studied for thousands of years. If a straightforward explanation existed that satisfied both Scripture and the natural world, *it likely would have surfaced by now*, so it may be time to carefully explore ideas outside the box.

The fact that no fully satisfying explanation has emerged suggests we may need to move beyond conventional frameworks and think a bit more creatively—without abandoning our constraints.

Maybe you're thinking, "Don't we already have valid explanations?" I've looked—and I haven't found one that remains fully consistent with both the Biblical text and the natural world. I keep running into questions that don't resolve easily: How did the Ark accommodate every kind of land animal and bird? How did animals from distant regions—like the Americas—end up in the Middle East and then disperse again? Etc.

Here's a review of the ideas we've come up with to narrow down the possibilities of the Flood:

Foundational constraints (These haven't been enumerated but are established previously by my channel:

- Scriptural Integrity: Any idea must be consistent with the full witness of Scripture—even when passages appear to be in tension.
- Natural Coherence: Any idea must not contradict the observable structure of the natural world, while recognizing that scientific models are provisional and can be influenced by underlying, possibly anti-Biblical assumptions.
- Supernatural Allowance: God's direct, often miraculous intervention is fully permitted, but explanations should not rely on unnecessary or ad hoc miracles and should remain consistent with the patterns of divine action seen in Scripture.
- Historical Awareness: Extra-biblical Jewish texts and traditions may provide context and insight, but they are not authoritative and are not binding on interpretation.

Constraint #1) The text presents the Flood as a real event: It is not framed as symbolic or metaphorical, but as something that actually occurred within the narrative.

Constraint #2) The Flood serves a theological purpose: It communicates something essential about God, humanity, and judgment within the broader biblical story.

Constraint #3) The narrative is presented in universal terms: The language consistently reinforces a scope that includes "all," "the whole," or "every," even where narrower meanings might be contextually possible.

Constraint #4) The Flood account exists within a broader ancient context: The presence of other flood traditions suggests Genesis is engaging with a shared cultural memory rather than operating in isolation.

Constraint #5) Consistency of Divine Revelation: Any interpretation must preserve continuity in God's dealings with humanity. It should not imply that modern readers possess a decisive advantage over ancient people in understanding reality or divine action.

Constraint #6) A presupposed Narrative World: The text assumes familiarity with additional narrative context. Certain events are referenced without explanation, suggesting the existence of side narratives or shared knowledge that are now largely lost and can only be cautiously reconstructed.

Premise #1) Humans existed outside the Garden: The text allows for the existence of humans prior to and outside the placement of Adam in the Garden. These populations may have existed for extended periods and could have developed in ways consistent with the natural world under God's sovereignty.

Premise #2) Adam and Eve's line is inheritable and distinct, arising from their unique formation and their access to the two trees of the Garden (this premise is significantly expanded):

- A distinct genealogical line: Adam and Eve represent a unique line within humanity, with characteristics passed down through their descendants. The genealogical focus of Genesis suggests continuity and significance tied specifically to this line.
- Extended lifespan and physical vitality: This line is marked by unusually long lifespans—often exceeding 900 years—possibly connected to access to the Tree of Life, suggesting a level of physical robustness not seen in later humanity.
- Unique moral awareness and accountability: By eating from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, this line carries a distinct form of moral awareness. The text presents this as transformative and consequential, introducing a level of divine moral knowledge that brings direct accountability before God and defines what constitutes *evil* from His perspective.
- Offspring and line interaction: Offspring produced by this line and ordinary humans produced the Nephilim, unusual and extraordinary individuals who appear to reflect aspects of both lines. At the same time, unions within the Adamic line preserve its continuity, as seen in the genealogical emphasis leading to Noah.
- Language and narrative compression: The text primarily uses a single term (often translated “man” or “human,” *adam*) to describe multiple groups. This creates ambiguity, making it difficult to distinguish between ordinary humans, the Adamic line, and their mixed offspring without relying on context. This compression parallels the

universal language described in Constraint #3, where broad terms are used even when more specific distinctions may be present.

Speculation #1 — The Garden remained until the time of Noah

- No explicit record of its destruction: The text never states that the Garden of Eden was destroyed or removed from the earth.
- Explicitly preserved, though inaccessible: Instead, it is described as being guarded (Gen 3:24), preventing access but not implying its elimination.
- Narrative continuity favors persistence: In the absence of any statement of removal, the simplest reading is that the Garden continued to exist as a real, though inaccessible, location.

Speculation #2 — The Adamic line remained near the Garden

- Nothing in the text requires the Adamic line to disperse early—so the simplest reading may be that they remained near where the story began.
- Geographic continuity with the original setting: The text never indicates that Adam, Eve, or their immediate descendants left the region associated with the Garden.
- It is therefore plausible that the early Adamic line remained in that general vicinity, even while being barred from re-entry.
- Cain's departure marks a separation: In contrast, Cain is explicitly described as leaving that region (Gen 4:16) and establishing life elsewhere. This suggests a geographic and possibly relational separation from the Adamic line.
- Marriage outside the Adamic line: Cain's wife is introduced without explanation, which is consistent with the existence of other human populations (Premise #1). This supports the idea that his descendants developed outside the primary Adamic lineage as Nephilim (Premise #2).
- Development of a distinct line outside the Garden region: Cain's descendants are associated with early city-building and cultural development, which may reflect a divergence from the Adamic line that remained closer to the original narrative focus.
- No clear physical distinction implied: The need for a "sign" placed on Cain (Gen 4:15) suggests he was not inherently distinguishable from ordinary humans. This indicates that any differences between groups were not outwardly obvious.

Speculation #3 — The Garden animals were distinct and required preservation

- Separate formation: Genesis 2 presents the animals brought to Adam as specially formed in connection with the Garden narrative, much like Adam himself is specially formed and placed there.

- Considered as possible helpers: These animals are presented in the search for a “suitable helper” for Adam, suggesting they were not ordinary animals in the way modern readers typically imagine them.
- The serpent as evidence of unusual capacity: The serpent is able to reason, speak, deceive, and manipulate, implying that at least some Garden creatures possessed capacities beyond ordinary animals.
- Therefore, preservation mattered: If the Garden contained a distinct class of animals and birds tied to that original sacred environment, then preserving them through the Flood becomes more understandable.
- In this model, the Ark was not preserving every ordinary birds and animals on the earth, but the distinct living creatures associated with the Garden world that was being judged, reset, and carried forward through Noah.

Speculation #4 — The Garden may have required removal as part of the Flood

- A preserved but vulnerable boundary: The Garden is described as guarded and inaccessible (Gen 3:24), but as human populations—both Adamic and ordinary—increased, maintaining a permanent separation may have become increasingly difficult.
- The problem of proximity: If the Adamic line remained near the Garden (Speculation #2), then over time the risk of renewed access to the Tree of Life and the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil may have grown.
- Integration with the Flood event: This raises the possibility that the Flood was not only a judgment on humanity, but also a means of removing and resetting that original sacred environment.
- A miraculous mechanism that fits the scope: A flood uniquely removes both population and landscape, while still allowing for preservation through the Ark. Unlike localized judgment (plague, fire, hail, etc.), it operates at a scale sufficient to eliminate access to a specific region or environment while carrying forward what God intends to preserve.
 - Note also that a human nation could not used to bring judgement (as seen later with Assyria and Babylon) because then they could access the two special trees.
- Provision and material connections: The gathering of provisions (Gen 6:21) and the use of “gopher wood”, a lost-to-time wood species, would be consistent with resources originating from or near a unique environment, though the specifics are not preserved in the text.
 - On “gopher” wood: This is a transliteration of the Hebrew word here. This is notable, as Hebrew contains as many as 20 words hardwood trees (such as cedar and cypress), suggesting this material may have been unfamiliar, specialized, or no longer recognized in later periods.

Speculation #5 — The Flood waters originated from the same source that sustained the Garden

- A pre-existing water source is described: Genesis 2 describes water “welling up” to water the Garden and forming the headwaters of four rivers, indicating a significant and possibly unique source.
- Consistent with a distinct environment: If the Garden was a unique and localized environment (Speculations #1–#4), it is plausible that its water system was also distinct and could play a role in the Flood event.
- A mechanism already embedded in the narrative: Rather than introducing an entirely new source, this model allows the Flood to emerge from an existing feature described earlier in Genesis.
- Integration with Flood language: This may align with descriptions such as the “fountains of the deep” (Gen 7:11), suggesting a release or expansion of pre-existing water systems.
- If the same system that sustained the Garden also became the source of the Flood, then the beginning and the reset of the world may be more closely connected than we’ve ever considered.

Closing

Okay, that’s a lot for today. Next week we’ll go over these speculations and apply them directly to Genesis 6 through 8. We’ll also start to talk about *when* this all happened.

Part 5: A Tour of Eden and the Flood

What Am I Trying to Accomplish?

- Piece together the biblical clues surrounding the Flood narrative, not being afraid to introduce “out of the box” speculations.
- Work within the flexibility and polysemous nature of major Hebrew words
- Explore whether Genesis allows for a limited or targeted Flood
- Ask whether such a Flood could still fully accomplish God’s spiritual purposes

Polysemy: The ability of a word to carry multiple related meanings depending on context.

- Ancient Hebrew contains many highly flexible words
- Words like “earth”, “land”, “all”, “flesh”, and “people” can have broader or narrower scopes depending on context
- This does not prove a somewhat recent regional Flood but it may allow one within the language of the text.

| Hebrew word | General range of meaning |
|-----------------|--|
| 'erets — אֶרֶץ | ground → land → region/territory → earth/world |
| 'adam — אָדָם | man/person → humankind → Adamic humanity → all humanity |
| basar — בָּשָׂר | flesh/body → living creatures → mortal beings → all flesh/life |
| kol — כֹּל | all of a group → every within scope → whole/complete → all universally |

The Eden and Flood Speculative Framework

- Eden
 - A real and possibly geographically identifiable region
 - A specially created
 - Had been a dry, barren region until God supernaturally watered it with springs that were enough to create four major rivers
 - Contained a plethora of fruit trees and other hardwood trees
 - Two unique trees: one the granted vitality and indefinitely long life, and the other that granted miraculous knowledge of Good and Evil.
- Three types of Humans
 - Type 1: Ordinary humans
 - Pre-existed the Garden and lived outside it
 - Theistically evolved like other animals and lived typical lifespans

- Did not have the “Garden-level” knowledge and accountability to Good and Evil
 - Type 2: Adamic humans
 - Started with Adam created as an adult and placed in the Garden and indwelt with God’s Spirit.
 - Next came specially created birds and animals, endowed with intelligence and speaking abilities.
 - Next was Eve, created after a suitable helper among the special animals could not be found. Also indwelt with God’s Spirit.
 - Adam and Eve were kicked out of the Garden after they disobeyed God and ate from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil.
 - They retained and their offspring retained vitality and long lifespans due to their prior access to the Tree of Life.
 - Their offspring became accountable to the knowledge of Good and Evil once they matured.
 - The pure Adamic line stayed by and lived outside the Garden
 - Type 3: Nephilim - The hybrid offspring of ordinary and Adamic lines
 - Offspring of Cain after he was further exiled away from the Garden to the land of ordinary humans.
 - Hybrids with some Adamic traits like vitality and longer lifespans.
- The Garden and the Adamic line needed to be destroyed
 - After 9 generations having produced just one extraordinary individual (Enoch) and all others full of evil, the time was up
 - The special garden with its special trees, animals, and Adamic humans needed to be destroyed
 - Of the Adamic line, only Noah (the only righteous individual found), his three sons and their wives, and pairs of the special Garden birds and animals would be saved by means of a giant ark.
 - A great flood met the criteria (extent and creation+chaos symbolism), whose source would be rain from the sky and the Eden spring.

A Tour of Eden and Flood

- Traditional Masoretic Chronology
 - Using the ages and genealogies in the Masoretic text:
 - Creation ≈ 4000 BC
 - Flood ≈ 2350 BC
 - This is the most common traditional biblical timeline
- Some old-earth biblical models propose much older dates for the Flood

- Hugh Ross / Reasons to Believe: *The Flood Revisited*
- These approaches place the Flood: as recently as ~40,000 BC or possibly as early as ~100,000 BC
- These models generally assume: the Genesis genealogies contain gaps and are as partial as 10%
- The Adamic line is the human line with lifespans fading over time
- The Flood was “worldwide” rather than strictly global
 - The extent of the human population at the time
 - The extent of the associated animal life
 - A region centered around the Middle East bounded to the south by northeast Africa, the west by eastern Mediterranean, the east by western India, and the north by Black Sea
- Reverse-dating from Babel
 - Human groups spread outward into Europe, Asia, and Africa in the same broad historical era
 - Language diversification is followed post-Babel population expansion
 - This suggests dates much earlier than the traditional Masoretic chronology.
 - Flood evidence may have been obscured by glacial expansion and recession.
 - The Flood occurred in an inter-glacial period and was partially sourced by glacial melt.

A Tour of Eden and Flood

- The Mesopotamian/fertile crescent area
- Home to modern day Turkey and the Middle East (primarily Iran, Iraq, and Syria)
- It’s difficult to imagine four major river systems originating from a low, flat region. The description sounds much more like a highland watershed.
- Eden is described as a watered region with a spring or source
- That water then divides into four rivers
- This suggests elevated terrain with significant topographic variation rather than a flat plain where rivers merge together downstream.
- Genesis 2 describes the opposite: one substantial source becoming multiple rivers
- This may point toward: mountainous or highland terrain, overflowing lake or basin with multiple outlets.
- The Ark’s box-like design, lacking a keel or sail and containing only a high window opening near the top, suggests it was not intended to be navigated or steered. Rather than cutting through the water like a ship, it would have drifted slowly with the wind and currents during

the rising waters, and then gradually settled and moved with the receding flow as the waters went down.



When Did the Flood Occur?

- Traditional Masoretic Chronology
 - Using the ages and genealogies in the Masoretic text:
 - Creation ≈ 4000 BC
 - Flood ≈ 2350 BC
 - This is the most common traditional biblical timeline
- Some old-earth biblical models propose much older dates for the Flood
 - Hugh Ross / Reasons to Believe: *The Flood Revisited*
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 - The Adamic line is the human line with lifespans fading over time
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 - A region centered around the Middle East bounded to the south by northeast Africa, the west by eastern Mediterranean, the east by western India, and the north by Black Sea

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 - Flood evidence may have been obscured by glacial expansion and recession.
 - The Flood occurred in an inter-glacial period and was partially sourced by glacial melt.

Next week: We'll dive deeper into the spiritual implications of the Adamic line. In the weeks ahead, we'll explore the Tower of Babel, Abraham, and how these ideas may connect to modern Christianity, the symbolism of water, and the work of the Holy Spirit.

Part 6: A Flood of Judgment

Before we begin, I want to briefly clarify the direction of the final three episodes of this series.

Episodes 1 through 5 established the speculative framework surrounding the Garden, Adamic humanity, the Flood, and the world before Noah. But after reviewing the ending of Episode 4, I realized I never actually walked sequentially through Genesis 6–8 itself using that framework.

So Episode 6 is going to focus directly on the Flood narrative itself — applying the speculative lenses to the text of Genesis 6–8 and asking how the story reads through that perspective.

Episode 7 will move beyond the Flood into Noah, Babel, Abraham, and the continuation of the Adamic line.

Then Episode 8 will conclude the series by focusing on the spiritual implications and symbolism of water, judgment, cleansing, and ultimately the Holy Spirit and Christianity itself.

Reference Slide of Constraints, Premises, and Speculations

Constraints

1. The text presents the Flood as a real event through its many details
2. The Flood serves the theological purpose of communicating something essential about God, humanity, and judgment
3. The narrative is presented in universal terms like “all”, “whole”, and “every” but narrower meanings are possible
4. The Flood account exists within a broader ancient context shared cultural memory
5. Consistency of Divine Revelation: Any interpretation must preserve continuity in God’s dealings with humanity
6. The narrative presupposes a broader world of stories and context now largely lost to history

Premises

1. Humans existed outside the Garden, possibly for millennia; this is not only allowed by the text, but in some ways makes better sense of it
2. Adam and Eve’s line possessed unique inherited characteristics arising from their formation and access to the two trees

Speculations

1. The Garden remained until the time of Noah: there’s no mention of its destruction, but its special trees were dangerous
2. The Adamic line remained near the Garden: Cain departed, while Seth’s line preserved the Adamic inheritance
3. The Garden animals were distinct and required preservation: these were the paired animals (the seven pairs likely referred to domesticated/clean livestock)
4. The Garden required removal by the Flood, and its fruit and hardwood trees may have supplied material for the Ark
5. The Flood waters originated from the same source that sustained the Garden

Chapter 6 through the Speculative Lens

For this episode, I want to try something a little different. Rather than merely talking about the speculative framework, I want to temporarily read Genesis 6 through that lens directly — replacing universal language with regional language and distinguishing Adamic humanity from humanity outside the Garden realm. This is not a translation or claim of certainty, but an exercise in perspective. Also notice how little actually has to change for the narrative to begin reading differently.

Chapter 6

Verses 1-4

When the [ordinary] humans began to increase in number in the regions [outside the Garden], and daughters were born to them, the Adamic sons saw that the daughters of humans were beautiful, and they married any of them they chose.

Then the LORD said, "My Spirit will not contend with the [Adamic] humans forever, for they are mortal; their days will be a hundred and twenty years."

The Nephilim¹ were in the land in those days—and also afterward—when the Adamic sons went to the daughters of humans and had children by them. These were the mighty men of old, the men of renown.

1 – Transliteration of the Hebrew for *The Fallen Ones*

Verses 5-7

The LORD saw how great the wickedness of the [Adamic] humanity had become in the region [connected to the Garden], and that every inclination of the thoughts of their heart was only evil continually.

The LORD regretted that he had made the [Adamic] humanity in that region, and his heart was deeply troubled.

So the LORD said, "I will wipe from the face of the land the [Adamic] humanity I have created—and with them the [living creatures of the Garden] animals, birds of the air, and creatures that move along the ground—for I regret that I have made them."

Verses 8-10

But Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord.

Noah and the Flood

This is the account of Noah and his family.

Noah was a righteous man, blameless among the people of his time, and he walked faithfully with God. Noah had three sons: Shem, Ham and Japheth.

Verses 11-13

Now the region [outside the Garden] was corrupt in God's sight and was full of violence.

God saw how corrupt that region had become, for all the [Adamic] humanity in that region had corrupted their ways.

So God said to Noah, "I am going to put an end to all flesh within this region, for the land is filled with violence because of them. I am surely going to destroy both them and the land."

Verses 14-18

So make yourself an ark of gopher¹ wood; make rooms in it and coat it with pitch inside and out.

This is how you are to build it: The ark is to be 450 feet long, 75 feet wide and 45 feet high.

Make a roof for it, leaving below the roof an opening 18 inches high all around. Put a door in the side of the ark and make lower, middle and upper decks.

I am going to bring floodwaters in this region to destroy all flesh under the heavens, every creature with the breath of life. Everything in this region will perish.

But I will establish my covenant with you, and you will enter the ark—you and your sons and your wife and your sons' wives with you.

1 – This is a transliteration of a Hebrew word whose type is no longer known.

Verses 19-21

You are to bring into the Ark two of all living creatures [from the Garden], male and female, to keep them alive with you.

Two of every kind of bird, of every kind of animal, and of every kind of creature that moves along the ground will come to you [from the Garden] to be kept alive.

You are to take every kind of food that is to be eaten and store it away as food for you and for them."

Chapter 6

Verses 1-4

When human beings began to increase in number on the earth and daughters were born to them, the sons of God saw that the daughters of humans were beautiful, and they married any of them they chose.

Then the Lord said, "My Spirit will not contend with humans forever, for they are mortal; their days will be a hundred and twenty years."

The Nephilim were on the earth in those days—and also afterward—when the sons of God went to the daughters of humans and had children by them. They were the heroes of old, men of renown.

Verses 5-7

The Lord saw how great the wickedness of the human race had become on the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of the human heart was only evil all the time.

The Lord regretted that he had made human beings on the earth, and his heart was deeply troubled.

So the Lord said, "I will wipe from the face of the earth the human race I have created—and with them the animals, the birds and the creatures that move along the ground—for I regret that I have made them."

Verses 11-13

Now the earth was corrupt in God's sight and was full of violence.

God saw how corrupt the earth had become, for all the people on earth had corrupted their ways.

So God said to Noah, "I am going to put an end to all people, for the earth is filled with violence because of them. I am surely going to destroy both them and the earth.

Verses 14-18

So make yourself an ark of cypress[c] wood; make rooms in it and coat it with pitch inside and out.

This is how you are to build it: The ark is to be three hundred cubits long, fifty cubits wide and thirty cubits high.

Make a roof for it, leaving below the roof an opening one cubit high all around. Put a door in the side of the ark and make lower, middle and upper decks.

I am going to bring floodwaters on the earth to destroy all life under the heavens, every creature that has the breath of life in it. Everything on earth will perish.

But I will establish my covenant with you, and you will enter the ark—you and your sons and your wife and your sons' wives with you.

Verses 19-21

You are to bring into the ark two of all living creatures, male and female, to keep them alive with you.

Two of every kind of bird, of every kind of animal and of every kind of creature that moves along the ground will come to you to be kept alive.

You are to take every kind of food that is to be eaten and store it away as food for you and for them."



Chapter 7 – The Flood

- Verses 1-3: Food and sacrificial animals and future farm animals
 - Additional animals are now specified beyond the earlier paired creatures.
 - Translations use clean and unclean when the Levitical dietary laws were unspecified. Nevertheless, ancient cultures still had the concept of “clean” and “unclean” animals, likely reflecting older categories connected to sacrifice, food, and human use.
 - Likely this second list is talking about domesticated farms animals and livestock.
 - Seven pairs are taken from the clean livestock animals (lambs, goats, cows, chickens), while single pairs of the unclean domesticated animals (horses, pigs, geese).
 - Farm animals would be kept for after the flood for Noah and his family to reestablish themselves.
- Verses 6-24
 - Noah was 600 years old when the Flood began
 - The springs burst forth and rain fell for 40 days and 40 nights
 - Water appears to be actively added for 40 days, while the land remains inundated for 150 days
 - This may imply that the waters were restrained from dispersing during the judgment period and region
 - Several thousand feet of water is enormous hydraulic head. If a basin had outlets, the initial outflow would be violently fast. Even with friction, debris, constrictions, and shallow-gradient valleys, you would expect major drainage in **hours to days**.

Chapter 8 – The Flood recedes

- Verses 1-5: The waters recede
 - God “remembered” Noah and those in the Ark – center of the chiasm – the central, pivotal point
 - “remembered” in Hebrew does not mean “forgot and then recalled”
 - It means something closer to “acted covenantally toward”
 - The fountains and rain ceased after which the waters gradually receded over time via a wind (evaporation)
 - The Ark came to rest on the mountains of Ararat
 - The Flood narrative emphasizes controlled timing throughout
- Verses 6-14: Testing the land
 - Noah waits carefully rather than leaving immediately
 - The raven and doves test whether the land is habitable
 - The olive leaf signals restoration and renewed life

- Noah leaves only when commanded by God
- Verses 15-19: A new beginning
 - Noah, his family, and the preserved creatures emerge
 - The preserved living creatures are released into the land
 - The narrative shifts from judgment to restoration
- Verses 20-22: Sacrifice and Covenant Themes
 - Noah immediately builds an altar
 - Clean livestock animals are used for sacrifice
 - Sacrifice appears central even before the Law of Moses
 - God promises stability in the cycles of nature—Judgment gives way to preservation and continuity

Part 7: The Forced Dispersion of the Adamic Line

Review: Last week, we covered Genesis 6-8. In chapter 6, I created an interpretive translation that regionalized the universally translated words and inserted parenthetical notations for the Edenic/Adamic lens. In chapter 7 I explained how the second animal “manifest” was a separate list of domesticated farm animals for use during the Flood and afterwards. Chapter 7 then focuses on the first 150 days of the Flood. The water rose in the first 40 days and then were supernaturally contained for the next 110 days. Chapter 8 gives the timing of the second half of the Flood when the waters receded:

- 2nd month, 17th day: Noah (600 years old) enters the Ark
- 7th month, 17th day: the Ark came to rest on the mountains of Ararat.
- 10th month, 1st day: mountain tops appear
- 40 more days: Noah opens the window on the top of the Ark.
- First, a raven is sent out.
- Then a Dove is sent out three times, apparently in 7-day intervals.
 - The second time the Dove returns with a freshly plucked olive leaf. This leaf signals restoration and renewed life as the Olive tree was thought to be the Tree of Life by some Jews.
- 1st month, 1st day of Noah’s 601st year: ground is drying
- 2nd month, 27th day: earth is dry enough to leave the ark
- The Flood narrative covers about one year and ten days from entry into the ark to exit.
 - The duration is “about” because the strict definition of a year is not known.

I should say I re-did the Genesis chapter 6 interpretive translation to make it clearer and more consistent. They appear in the outline which is available on the WitheredFigTree.com.

Chapter 6

Verses 1-4

When the [ordinary] humans began to increase in number in the regions [outside the Garden], and daughters were born to them, the Adamic sons saw that the daughters of humans were beautiful, and they married any of them they chose.

Then the LORD said, “My Spirit will not contend with the [Adamic] humans forever, for they are mortal; their days will be a hundred and twenty years.”

The Nephilim¹ were in the land in those days—and also afterward—when the Adamic sons went to the daughters of humans and had children by them. These were the mighty men of old, the men of renown.

1 – Transliteration of the Hebrew for *The Fallen Ones*

Genesis 9:1-17 – The Covenant with Noah

- God's Blessing and Command
 - "Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the earth"
 - Repeats the original mandate given to humanity.
 - Indicates the Adamic line is beginning anew after the Flood

- New Relationship with Animals
 - Animals will now fear humans.
 - Every living creature is placed under human authority, which suggests a changed post-Flood world
- Food and Blood
 - Animals now permitted for food, but blood remains sacred and prohibited.
 - Life belongs to God.
- Protection of Human Life
 - Human bloodshed requires accountability.
 - "Made in the image of God" remains true after the Fall.
- The Noachic Covenant
 - Established with Noah, his descendants, and every living creature. God promises never again to destroy the world by Flood.
 - The rainbow serves as the covenant sign. A covenant extending beyond Noah to future generations
- First explicit post-Flood covenant with the Adamic line.
 - Focus shifts from judgment to preservation.
 - Sets the stage for humanity's renewed expansion across the earth

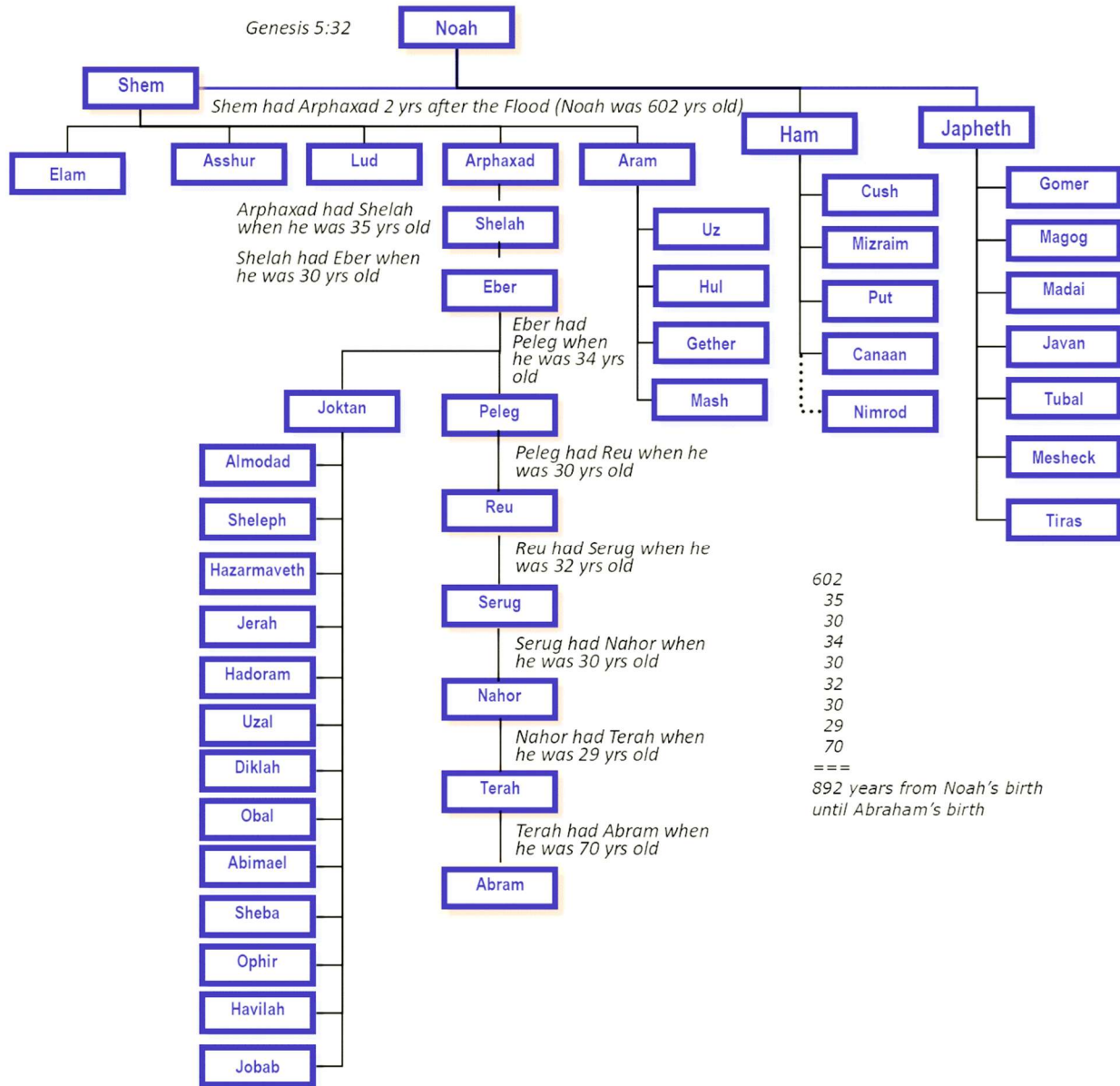
Genesis 9:18–29 – Ham and Noah: The First Fracture

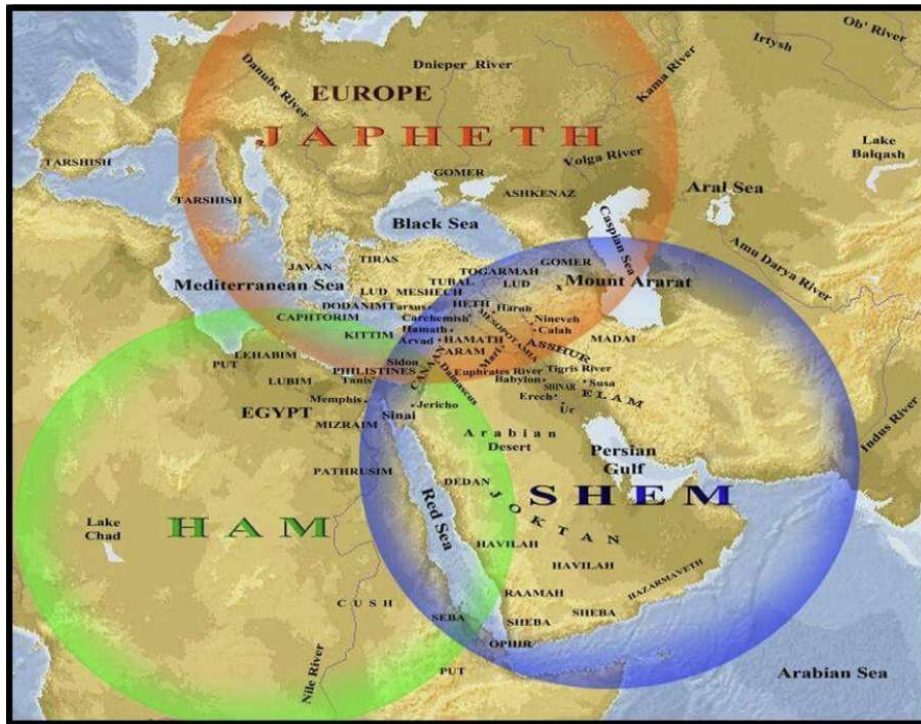
- Noah becomes drunk and exposed
- Ham exposes his father's shame
- Shem and Japheth preserve their father's honor
- Noah's response suggests more than a simple glance
 - The exact offense remains uncertain
 - There seems to be a gap between what was done and Noah's reaction
 - The Midrashic tradition and the Talmud (and modern podcasts like BEMA) posit offenses as great castration or sodomy
 - I believe these go way too far, and that the gap exists because a cultural emphasis against dishonor and mockery.
- Canaan is cursed; Shem and Japheth are blessed
- The Adamic line begins to divide from within
- Gen 9:18 is the first time Ham is associated with Canaan.
 - Noah is either being prophetic, or the narrator is deliberately preparing the reader for why Canaan will matter.

I do not think the text gives us enough to say Ham castrated Noah. That may be a later Jewish attempt to explain the severity of the curse. But I do think the text wants us to feel that Ham did

more than accidentally see something embarrassing. He dishonored his father, exposed his shame, and introduced division into the family line that had just been preserved through the Flood.

Genesis 10: The Family Tree





- Genesis 10 already assumes the nations have dispersed.
- Descendants of Noah organized by Shem, Ham, and Japheth
- Sets the stage for the Babel account in Genesis 11
- Biblical focus narrows to the line of Shem

Is Moses (the narrator) projecting nations of his time backwards? Noah's descendants are presented as the peoples and regions known to Israel. How would Moses know about distant lands like Europe, and Africa?

I would say Genesis 10 is not trying to catalog every human civilization on Earth. It is tracing the spread of the Adamic descendants through the regions that matter to the biblical story.

Moses almost certainly knew about the Mediterranean world and North Africa through the international knowledge of Egypt. The real question is whether Genesis 10 describes the nations as they existed in Moses' world, or whether it is also projecting the future extent of those family lines.

Genesis 11 – Why Babel Happened

- The Plain of Shinar is almost universally identified with southern Mesopotamia,
- in modern-day Iraq.
- I think many Christians focus on secondary themes in the Babel story:

- Human pride, ambition, and self-reliance instead of God-reliance.
- The power of unified effort (e.g. within a church trying to accomplish something).
- Myth behind the origin of languages
- The text repeatedly emphasizes scattering:
 - God commanded Noah's descendants to fill the earth (Gen 9:1)
 - The people feared being scattered (Gen 11:4)
 - They build a city and tower as a permanent center
 - One language enabled unified action and purpose
 - God confuses their language and disperses them
 - God scattered them over the face of the earth (Gen 11:8-9)
 - Their stated goal: "lest we be scattered"
- Babel explains the scattering summarized in Genesis 10.
- From this point forward Scripture no longer tracks the Adamic population as a whole. Instead, it follows a single covenant lineage through Shem and eventually Abraham.



Part 8: Exploring the Spiritual Ramifications of the Edenic Flood

Before moving into the new content of this episode, I'd like to step back and present the Edenic Flood Theory as a single, condensed narrative from Eden to Babel.

High-Level Review of Edenic Flood Theory

Two things destroyed, two things Preserved

The basic idea is that the Flood had two things to destroy and two things to preserve.

What needed to be destroyed was:

1. The Garden region itself: most importantly, the two special trees.
2. The corrupted Adamic line: the line uniquely accountable because of moral awareness.

What needed to be preserved was:

1. Noah and his family: the remaining righteous Adamic household.
2. The special animals associated with the Garden: the animals brought into the Ark.

Therefore, in this view, the Flood is not targeting the entire planet. It is a targeted judgment on the Edenic/Adamic world.

Translation Difficulties

This theory depends heavily on recognizing that several Hebrew words in Genesis are *polysemous* (they can have more than one scope). Words often translated globally, such as "earth," "all," "every," "flesh," or "mankind," can instead function regionally or covenantally depending on context.

The Adamic Line

The story begins in Eden, where Adam is formed and placed in a unique environment with two special trees: the Tree of Life (which indefinitely extends life) and the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil (which instills divine morality). Adam is given a direct command concerning that second tree, which introduces moral accountability.

God then determines that it is not good for Adam to be alone and sets out to make a suitable helper for him. In many English translations, Genesis 2:19 reads, "Now the LORD God *had formed* out of the ground all the wild animals..." However, the word "had" is supplied by translators and is not explicitly present in the Hebrew text. A more straightforward reading is simply, "God formed the animals." This makes the animals part of the suitable-helper narrative

itself rather than a callback to an earlier creation account, suggesting that they were specially formed and brought to Adam as potential candidates.

Yet no suitable helper was found. The animals, despite their uniqueness, were ultimately not strong enough candidates for the purpose God intended. God therefore creates Eve directly from Adam, establishing a distinct Adamic line set apart from the animals and uniquely suited to fulfill God's purpose for humanity within the Garden.

The serpent's temptation then becomes the pivotal event of the narrative. Whether motivated by jealousy after being passed over in the search for a suitable helper, rebellion against God's purposes, or some other unknown reason, he successfully manipulates Eve, who in turn influences Adam. Following their disobedience, the couple is expelled from the Garden and prevented from accessing the Tree of Life.

Eve is subsequently called "the mother of all the living." Traditionally this phrase is understood to refer to all humanity. Within the Edenic Flood framework, however, the wording points more specifically to the Adamic line— the line uniquely associated with the knowledge of good and evil and therefore possessing a distinct moral awareness and accountability.

Cain introduces a second humanity question

After their expulsion from the Garden, Adam and Eve likely settle nearby. While the text does not explicitly state this, it is both permitted by the narrative and a natural assumption. They have two sons, Cain and then Abel, but tragedy quickly follows. Cain murders his brother, perhaps because he could not properly handle the moral awareness associated with the knowledge of good and evil that came to him as he matured—a possibility hinted at by God's warning to Adam in Eden.

Cain's punishment is further exile away from both the Garden and his family. At this point the narrative introduces another intriguing possibility. Cain fears being killed by others, despite no other people having yet been mentioned outside his immediate family. God marks him for protection, but Cain nevertheless departs, finds a wife, and later builds a city. These details fit naturally with the existence of ordinary human populations beyond the Garden, populations that may have been indirectly referenced earlier in Genesis 1:26-28 when God creates humanity, male and female, in His image. This reading treats the Garden narrative of Genesis 2 as a separate divine intervention from the creation of humanity in Genesis 1, one that may have occurred centuries or even millennia later.

Three Types of Humans

Cain's line then develops independently from the line of Seth. While Genesis 5 primarily follows Seth's genealogy from Adam to Noah, Genesis 6 returns to the growing interaction between

these distinct groups. There we encounter three unique categories: the Sons of God, the daughters of humans, and the Nephilim. Rather than viewing these as references to angels (the Book of Enoch), all humanity, or mythical giants, the Edenic Flood framework understands them as three groups already present within the narrative. The Sons of God are the Adamic line descended through Seth, the daughters of humans are ordinary human women from outside that line, and the Nephilim are the descendants of Cain, representing a hybrid mixture of the Adamic and ordinary human populations.

Flood becomes necessary

Now we come to the primary reason for the Flood. The Adamic line, with its unique moral capacity and accountability, proves God's warning in Genesis 2 to be true: humanity cannot properly handle the knowledge of good and evil. As the generations pass, they become increasingly corrupt, until every inclination of their thoughts is directed toward evil. Noah, however, the grandson of Enoch, finds favor with God and becomes the means by which both the Adamic line and the special animals of Eden are preserved through the coming judgment.

Garden and Flood connected

A second indirect reason for the Flood is the continued existence of the two special trees of Garden. In Genesis 6:3, God declares that humanity's days will be limited. Yet the Tree of Life still represents the possibility of extended life, while the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil represents the spread of the same moral awareness that had already corrupted the Adamic line. The destruction of the Garden therefore removes both risks, leaving only Noah's descendants with this unique moral awareness—though they continue to experience unusually long lifespans for roughly another ten generations.

Flood narrative taken literally

The remainder of the Flood narrative is largely taken at face value. The dimensions of the Ark are highly specific, as are details such as its ventilated roof and the chronology of the Flood itself. The Edenic Flood framework does not require these details to be allegorized or reinterpreted.

Additional distinctions

The primary additional proposal is that the Garden itself supplied many of the resources involved in the story. Its fruit provided provisions for the year-long journey, its trees furnished the special but now lost-to-time gopher wood used in the Ark's construction, and its unique animals—or their descendants—were the animal occupants preserved aboard the Ark. Likewise, the spring described in Genesis 2 that watered the Garden and gave rise to four major rivers

became the "springs that burst forth," contributing to the Flood waters alongside the prolonged rains.

The Edenic Flood Theory also suggests several additional distinctions. The Ark was not a sailing vessel with a keel and rudder, but a large box designed simply to float, be lifted by the waters, and drift with the currents and wind. Because the Flood was regional rather than global, the Ark likely did not travel far from where it began. Interestingly, if the Ark were ever discovered, its location might also provide clues to the location of the Garden.

The theory also understands the second specified groups of seven pairs of clean and single pairs of unclean animals (Gen. 7:2-3) not as extra wild animals, but as domesticated livestock intended to sustain Noah's family during the Flood and seed a future agricultural society afterward. Finally, the famous olive leaf brought back by the dove may have come from the destroyed Tree of Life itself. Some ancient Jewish traditions identified the Tree of Life as an olive tree and the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil as a fig tree, making the dove's return one final symbolic reminder that Eden had passed away.

Waters supernaturally restrained

About the waters of the Flood, the theory proposes that God supernaturally restrained the Flood waters within the greater Edenic region. Otherwise, the waters would have continually spread outward as they accumulated and then rapidly dispersed once their sources ceased. Their continued rise, persistence, and eventual retreat therefore reflect not only natural processes, but God's ongoing involvement throughout the judgment.

Noahic line survives

Following the Flood, the narrative largely proceeds according to its natural reading. The Adamic line—now represented entirely by Noah and his descendants—is instructed to be fruitful, multiply, and spread throughout the land. The unusual episode involving Noah and Ham appears to foreshadow the future nation of Canaan, whose descendants will later become prominent adversaries of Israel.

Genesis 10 then describes the expansion of Noah's descendants into the surrounding world. Within the Edenic Flood framework, this is not the repopulation of the entire planet, but the dispersal of the Noahic line among the ordinary human populations already living throughout the broader region.

Babel completes the transition

By Genesis 11, however, Noah's descendants appear reluctant to disperse. Rather than spreading out, they gather together to build a city and a great tower. While traditionally interpreted primarily as a story about pride, the Edenic Flood framework emphasizes the stated

concern of dispersion. Having survived the Flood and now living among ordinary human populations, Noah's descendants may have sought security, unity, and separation by remaining together in one place.

God responds by confusing their language and forcing the dispersal they had resisted. Rather than describing the invention of all human languages, this event marks the division and spreading of the Noahic line throughout the known world—from Mesopotamia into Anatolia, the Caucasus, Europe, Arabia, North Africa, and beyond. From this point forward, the Adamic-Noahic line becomes fully integrated among the nations, setting the stage for the later call of Abraham.

Spiritual Implication #1: Moral Dualism

I am not going to fully defend this today. I simply want to introduce it as one of the possible spiritual ramifications of the theory. A deeper dive and a defense of the ideas will come in the next series.

The first major spiritual implication of the Edenic Flood Theory is what I'll call **Moral Dualism**. By this I mean that the Bible may be presenting two different moral categories of humanity: ordinary humans made in the image of God, and the Adamic line that became uniquely accountable through the knowledge of good and evil.

This matters because theologians have always wrestled with difficult edge cases: infants, the severely disabled, people in remote locations, and those who never receive meaningful revelation. Are they accountable in the same way? Are they judged by the same standard? How does original sin apply to them?

Spiritual Implication #2: Hereditary Election

The Old Testament also contains strong hereditary patterns. Election, covenant, blessing, curse, priesthood, kingship, inheritance, and judgment often moving through family lines. That does not answer every question, but it shows that Scripture is comfortable treating spiritual identity and responsibility *in hereditary terms*.

Paul later wrestles with similar categories when discussing Israel and the Gentiles, election and hardening, vessels of mercy and wrath, and God's sovereign right to shape redemptive history. Within the Edenic Flood framework, these concepts may not begin with abstract Calvinism or Arminianism, but with the biblical story itself: a uniquely accountable Adamic line, preserved through Noah, dispersed at Babel, and later narrowed again through Abraham.

Spiritual Implication #3: Moral Accountability and Judgment

The third spiritual implication concerns election, predestination, and the scope of salvation. One of the things that has always troubled interpreters is that the Bible's story is incredibly narrow. Rather than following all humanity, it repeatedly focuses on a single line: Adam, Noah, Abraham, Israel, David, and ultimately Messiah.

Within the Edenic Flood framework, election may be understood first as God's preservation and guidance of a particular lineage through history. This does not eliminate questions of individual salvation, but it may explain why Paul spends so much time discussing Israel, Gentiles, election, hardening, and God's sovereign purposes.

It also raises an uncomfortable but important question: if the Bible is primarily tracking one morally accountable lineage, what does that imply about the vast numbers of people who existed outside that narrative? Rather than answering that question today, I simply want to suggest that the Edenic Flood framework may provide a new way of approaching it.

I want to stress that I would not normally gravitate toward hereditary explanations. In fact, I probably would never have pursued this line of reasoning had Paul not repeatedly forced me to wrestle with election, Israel, Gentiles, and God's sovereign purposes in history. Nor would I emphasize hereditary distinctions if the Bible itself did not repeatedly do so. From Adam to Noah, Noah to Abraham, Abraham to Israel, Israel to David, and David to Messiah, Scripture continually advances through chosen lineages and family lines.

One consequence of this theory is that the Bible's narrow focus suddenly makes more sense. Rather than attempting to tell the story of all humanity, Genesis is primarily following a particular lineage. The question shifts from "Why does the Bible ignore most of humanity?" to "Why is the Bible tracking this lineage so carefully?"

What the Edenic Flood Theory “Gets You”

- Preserves the realism of the Flood narrative
 - Ark dimensions, chronology, logistics
 - Noah and the Flood remain historical
- Accommodates human origins evidence
 - Humanity outside the Garden
 - Multiple human populations before Adam
- Fits with organic lineage timing
 - No need to compress all creation and all humanity into 6,000 years
 - Preserves biblical genealogies as written (Adam ~4000 BC and Flood ~2350 BC) without having to compress.
- Explains Cain's wife and city
 - Other humans already exist

- Genesis 2 becomes a separate intervention
- Makes the Flood “manageable”
 - Regional resources and animals
 - Far fewer required miracles than a global or human-wide flood
 - God does not need to bring animals from every continent and fit them into (an albeit large ark) *for a whole year*.
 - God does not need to add and remove several oceans of water.
 - Instead, God contains a regional flood for roughly a year.
- Explains widespread flood traditions
 - Massive regional catastrophe
 - Neighboring peoples survive to remember and document it
- Clarifies the Bible's narrow focus
 - Adamic → Noahic → Abrahamic line → Messiah
 - Election and genealogy become central

To sum up

Whether the Edenic Flood Theory is ultimately correct or not, I find it fascinating because it doesn't merely reinterpret the Flood. It creates a coherent narrative from Eden to Babel that touches human origins, election, accountability, predestination, salvation, and the relationship between the biblical story and the natural world around it. Those are the implications we'll begin exploring in the next series.