

Genesis 1:11–11:26

NET Bible

The Creation of the World

1:1 In the beginning¹ God² created³ the heavens and the earth.⁴

1:2 Now⁵ the earth⁶ was without shape and empty,⁷ and darkness⁸ was over the surface of the watery deep,⁹ but the Spirit of God¹⁰ was moving¹¹ over the surface¹² of the water.¹³ **1:3** God said,¹⁴ “Let there be¹⁵ light.”¹⁶ And there was light!¹⁷ **1:4** God saw¹⁷ that the light was good,¹⁸ so God separated¹⁹ the light from the darkness. **1:5** God called²⁰ the light “day” and the darkness²¹ “night.” There was evening, and there was morning, marking the first day.²²

¹**tn** The translation assumes that the form translated “beginning” is in the absolute state rather than the construct (“in the beginning of,” or “when God created”). In other words, the clause in v. 1 is a main clause, v. 2 has three clauses that are descriptive and supply background information, and v. 3 begins the narrative sequence proper. The referent of the word “beginning” has to be defined from the context since there is no beginning or ending with God.

sn *In the beginning.* The verse refers to the beginning of the world as we know it; it affirms that it is entirely the product of the creation of God. But there are two ways that this verse can be interpreted: (1) It may be taken to refer to the original act of creation with the rest of the events on the days of creation completing it. This would mean that the disjunctive clauses of v. 2 break the sequence of the creative work of the first day. (2) It may be taken as a summary statement of what the chapter will record, that is, vv. 3-31 are about God’s creating the world as we know it. If the first view is adopted, then we have a reference here to original creation; if the second view is taken, then Genesis itself does not account for the original creation of matter. To follow this view does not deny that the Bible teaches that God created everything out of nothing (cf. John 1:3)—it simply says that Genesis is not making that affirmation. This second view presupposes the existence of pre-existent matter, when God said, “Let there be light.” The first view includes the description of the primordial state as part of the events of day one. The following narrative strongly favors the second view, for the “heavens/sky” did not exist prior to the second day of creation (see v. 8) and “earth/dry land” did not exist, at least as we know it, prior to the third day of creation (see v. 10).

sn *God.* This frequently used Hebrew name for God (*‘ēlōhīm* [אֱלֹהִים]) is a plural form. When it refers to the one true God, the singular verb is normally used, as here. The plural form indicates majesty; the name stresses God’s sovereignty and incomparability—he is the “God of gods.”

tn The English verb “create” captures well the meaning of the Hebrew term in this context. The verb בָּרָא (*bārā*) always describes the divine activity of fashioning something new, fresh, and perfect. The verb does not necessarily describe creation out of nothing (see, for example, v. 27, where it refers to the creation of man); it often stresses forming anew, reforming, renewing (see Ps 51:10; Isa 43:15, 65:17).

tn Or “the entire universe.” This phrase is often interpreted as a merism, referring to the entire ordered universe, including the heavens and the earth and everything in them. The “heavens and the earth” were completed in seven days (see Gen 2:1) and are characterized by fixed laws (see Jer 33:25). Another option is to translate “the sky and the dry land.” “Heavens” refers specifically to the sky, created on the second day (see v. 8), while “earth” refers specifically to the dry land, created on the third day (see v. 10). Both are distinct from the sea/seas (see v. 10 and Exod 20:11).

tn The disjunctive clause (conjunction + subject + verb) at the beginning of v. 2 gives background information for the following narrative, explaining the state of things when “God said...” (v. 3). Verse one is a title to the chapter, v. 2 provides information about the state of things when God spoke, and v. 3 begins the narrative *per se* with the typical narrative construction (*vav* consecutive followed by the prefixed verbal form). (This literary structure is paralleled in the second portion of the book: Gen 2:4 provides the title or summary of what follows, 2:5-6 use disjunctive clause structures to give background information for the following narrative, and 2:7 begins the narrative with the *vav* consecutive attached to a prefixed verbal form.) Some translate 1:2a “and the earth became,” arguing that v. 1 describes the original creation of the earth, while v. 2 refers to a judgment that reduced it to a chaotic condition. Verses 3ff. then describe the re-creation of the earth. However, the disjunctive clause at the beginning of v. 2 cannot be translated as if it were relating the next event in a sequence. If v. 2 were sequential to v. 1, the author would have used the *vav* consecutive followed by a prefixed verbal form and the subject.

tn That is, what we now call “the earth.” The creation of the earth as we know it is described in vv. 9-10. Prior to this the substance which became the earth (= dry land) lay dormant under the water.

tn Traditional translations have followed a more literal rendering of “waste and void.” The words describe a condition that is without form and empty. What we now know as “the earth” was actually an unfilled mass covered by water and darkness. Later הָרָוּ and הָיָוָה, when used in proximity, describe a situation resulting from judgment (Isa 34:11; Jer 4:23). Both prophets may be picturing judgment as the reversal of creation in which God’s judgment causes the world to revert to its primordial condition. This later use of the terms has led some to conclude that Gen 1:2 presupposes the judgment of a prior world, but it is unsound method to read the later application of the imagery (in a context of judgment) back into Gen 1:2.

sn *Darkness.* The Hebrew word simply means “darkness,” but in the Bible it has come to symbolize what opposes God, such as judgment (Exod. 10:21), death (Ps. 88:13), oppression (Isa. 9:1), the wicked (1 Sam. 2:9) and in general, sin. In Isaiah 45:7 it parallels “evil.” It is a fitting cover for the primeval waste, but it prepares the reader for the fact that God is about to reveal himself through his works.

tn The Hebrew term דְּהֵימָה (*‘ēhōm*, “deep”) refers to the watery deep, the salty ocean—especially the primeval ocean that surrounds and underlies the earth (see Gen 7:11).

sn *The watery deep.* In the Babylonian account of creation Marduk killed the goddess Tiamat (the salty sea) and used her carcass to create heaven and earth. The form of the Hebrew word for “deep” is distinct enough from the name “Tiamat” to deny direct borrowing; however, it is possible that there is a polemical stress here. Ancient Israel does not see the ocean as a powerful deity to be destroyed in creation, only a force of nature that can be controlled by God.

tn The traditional rendering “Spirit of God” is preserved here, as opposed to a translation like “wind from/breath of God” (cf. NRSV) or “mighty wind” (cf. NEB), taking the word “God” to represent the superlative. Elsewhere in the OT the phrase refers consistently to the divine spirit that empowers and energizes individuals (see Gen 41:38; Exod 31:3; 35:31; Num 24:2; 1 Sam 10:10; 11:6; 19:20, 23; Ezek 11:24; 2 Chr 15:1; 24:20).

tn The Hebrew verb has been translated “hovering” or “moving” (as a bird over her young, see Deut. 32:11). The Syriac cognate term means “to brood over; to incubate.” How much of that sense might be attached here is hard to say, but the verb does depict the presence of the Spirit of God moving about mysteriously over the waters, presumably preparing for the acts of creation to follow. If one reads “mighty wind” (cf. NEB) then the verse describes how the powerful wind begins to blow in preparation for the creative act described in vv. 9-10. (God also used a wind to drive back the flood waters in Noah’s day. See Gen 8:1.)

tn *Heb* “face.”

sn *The water.* The text deliberately changes now from the term for the watery deep to the general word for water. The arena is now the life-giving water and not the chaotic abyss-like deep. The change may be merely stylistic, but it may also carry some significance. The deep carries with it the sense of the abyss, chaos, darkness—in short, that which is not good for life.

tn The prefixed verb form with the *vav* consecutive introduces the narrative sequence. Ten times in the chapter the decree of God in creation will be so expressed. For the power of the divine word in creation, see Ps 33:9, John 1:1-3, 1 Cor 8:6, and Col 1:16.

sn *God said.* By speaking, God brings the world into existence. The efficacious nature of the word of the LORD is a prominent theme in this chapter. It introduces the Law, the words and commandments from the LORD that must be obeyed. The ten decrees of God in this chapter anticipate the ten words in the Decalogue (Exod 20:2-17).

tn “Let there be” is the short jussive form of the verb “to be”; the following expression “and there was” is the short preterite form of the same verb. As such, הָיָה (*yēhi*) and וַיְהִי (*vayēhi*) form a profound wordplay to express both the calling into existence and the complete fulfillment of the divine word.

sn *Light.* The Hebrew word simply means “light,” but it is used often in scripture to convey the ideas of salvation, joy, knowledge, righteousness, and life. In this context one cannot ignore those connotations, for it is the antithesis of the darkness. The first thing God does is correct the darkness; without the light there is only chaos.

tn *Heb* “And God saw the light, that it was good.” The verb “saw” in this passage carries the meaning “reflected on,” “surveyed,” “concluded,” “noted.” It is a description of reflection of the mind—it is God’s opinion.

tn The Hebrew word יָבֵן (*tōb*) in this context signifies whatever enhances, promotes, produces, or is conducive for life. It is the light that God considers “good,” not the darkness. Whatever is conducive to life in God’s creation is good, for God himself is good, and that goodness is reflected in all of his works.

1:6 God said, “Let there be an expanse²³ in the midst of the waters and let it separate water²⁴ from water. **1:7** So God made the expanse and separated the water under the expanse from the water above it.²⁵ It was so.²⁶ **1:8** God called the expanse “sky.”²⁷ There was evening, and there was morning, a second day.

1:9 God said, “Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place²⁸ and let dry ground appear.”²⁹ It was so. **1:10** God called the dry ground “land”³⁰ and the gathered waters he called “seas.” God saw that it was good.

1:11 God said, “Let the land produce vegetation:³¹ plants yielding seeds according to their kinds,³² and³³ fruit trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds.” It was so. **1:12** The land produced vegetation—plants yielding seeds according to their kinds, and trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds. God saw that it was good. **1:13** There was evening, and there was morning, a third day.

1:14 God said, “Let there be lights³⁴ in the expanse³⁵ of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them be signs³⁶ to indicate seasons and days and years, **1:15** and let them serve as lights in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth.” It was so. **1:16** God made two great lights³⁷—the greater light to rule over the day and the lesser light to rule over the night. He made the stars also.³⁸ **1:17** God placed the lights³⁹ in the expanse of the sky to shine on the earth, **1:18** to preside over the day and the night, and to separate the light from the darkness.⁴⁰ God saw that it was good. **1:19** There was evening, and there was morning, a fourth day.

1:20 God said, “Let the water swarm with swarms⁴¹ of living creatures and let birds fly⁴² above the earth across the expanse of the sky.” **1:21** God created the great sea creatures⁴³ and every living and moving thing with which the water swarmed, according to

¹⁹tn The verb “separate, divide” here explains how God used the light to dispel the darkness. It did not do away with the darkness completely, but made a separation. The light came alongside the darkness, but they are mutually exclusive—a theme that will be developed in the Gospel of John (cf. John 1:5).

sn The idea of separation is critical to this chapter. God separated light from darkness, upper water from lower water, day from night, etc. The verb is important to the Law in general. In Leviticus God separates between clean and unclean, holy and profane (Lev. 10:10, 11:47 and 20:24); in Exodus God separates the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place (26:33). There is a preference for the light over the darkness, just as there will be a preference for the upper waters, the rain water which is conducive to life, over the sea water.

²⁰tn Heb “he called to,” meaning “he named.”

sn God called. Seven times in this chapter naming or blessing follows some act of creation. There is clearly a point being made beyond the obvious idea of naming. In the Babylonian creation story *Enuma Elish*, naming is equal to creating. In the Bible the act of naming, like creating, can be an indication of sovereignty (see 2 Kgs 23:34). In this verse God is sovereign even over the darkness.

²¹tn Heb “and the darkness he called night.” The words “he called” have not been repeated in the translation for stylistic reasons.

²²tn Another option is to translate, “Evening came, and then morning came.” This formula closes the six days of creation. It seems to follow the Jewish order of reckoning time: from evening to morning. Day one started with the dark, continued through the creation of light, and ended with nightfall. Another alternative would be to translate, “There was night and then there was day, one day.”

sn The first day. The exegetical evidence suggests the word “day” in this chapter refers to a literal twenty-four hour day. It is true that the word can refer to a longer period of time (see Isa 61:2, or the idiom in 2:4, “in the day,” that is, “when”). But this chapter uses “day,” “night,” “morning,” “evening,” “years,” and “seasons.” Consistency would require sorting out how all these terms could be used to express ages. Also, when the Hebrew word *yom* (יָוֶם) is used with a numerical adjective, it refers to a literal day. Furthermore, the commandment to keep the Sabbath clearly favors this interpretation. One is to work for six days and then rest on the seventh, just as God did when he worked at creation.

²³tn The Hebrew word refers to an expanse of air pressure between the surface of the sea and the clouds, separating water below from water above. In v. 8 it is called “sky.”

sn An expanse. In the poetic texts the writers envision, among other things, something rather strong and shiny, no doubt influencing the traditional translation “firmament” (cf. NRSV “dome”). Job 37:18 refers to the skies poured out like a molten mirror. Dan 12:3 and Ezek 1:22 portray it as shiny. The sky or atmosphere may have seemed like a glass dome. For a detailed study of the Hebrew conception of the heavens and sky, see L. I. J. Stadelmann, *The Hebrew Conception of the World*, 37-60.

²⁴tn Heb “the waters from the waters.”

²⁵tn Heb “the expanse.”

²⁶tn This statement indicates that it happened the way God designed it, underscoring the connection between word and event.

²⁷tn Though the Hebrew word can mean “heaven,” it refers in this context to “the sky.”

sn Let the water...be gathered to one place. In the beginning the water covered the whole earth; now the water was to be restricted to an area to form the ocean. The picture is one of the dry land as an island with the sea surrounding it. Again the sovereignty of God is revealed. Whereas the pagans saw the sea as a force to be reckoned with, God controls the boundaries of the sea. And in the judgment at the flood he will blur the boundaries so that chaos returns.

²⁹tn When the waters are collected to one place, dry land emerges above the surface of the receding water.

³⁰tn Heb “earth,” but here the term refers to the dry ground as opposed to the sea.

³¹tn The Hebrew construction employs a cognate accusative, where the nominal object (“vegetation”) derives from the verbal root employed. It stresses the abundant productivity that God created.

sn Vegetation. The Hebrew word translated “vegetation” (נֶשֶׁת, *dese*) normally means “grass,” but here it probably refers more generally to vegetation that includes many of the plants and trees. In the verse the plants and the trees are qualified as self-perpetuating with seeds, but not the word “vegetation,” indicating it is the general term and the other two terms are sub-categories of it. Moreover, in vv. 29 and 30 the word vegetation/grass does not appear. The Samaritan Pentateuch adds an “and” before the fruit trees, indicating it saw the arrangement as bipartite (The Samaritan Pentateuch tends to eliminate asyndetic constructions).

³²sn After their kinds. The Hebrew word translated “kind” (מִיֵּן, *min*) indicates again that God was concerned with defining and dividing time, space, and species. The point is that creation was with order, as opposed to chaos. And what God created and distinguished with boundaries was not to be confused (see Lev 19:19 and Deut 22:9-11).

³³tn The conjunction “and” is not in the Hebrew text, but has been supplied in the translation to clarify the relationship of the clauses.

sn Let there be lights. Light itself was created before the light-bearers. The order would not seem strange to the ancient Hebrew mind that did not automatically link daylight with the sun (note that dawn and dusk appear to have light without the sun).

³⁵tn The language describing the cosmos, which reflects a pre-scientific view of the world, must be interpreted as phenomenal, describing what appears to be the case. The sun and the moon are not in the sky (below the clouds), but from the viewpoint of a person standing on the earth, they appear that way. Even today we use similar phenomenological expressions, such as “the sun is rising” or “the stars in the sky.”

³⁶tn The text has “for signs and for seasons and for days and years.” It seems likely from the meanings of the words involved that “signs” is the main idea, followed by two categories, “seasons” and “days and years.” This is the simplest explanation, and one that matches vv. 11-13. It could even be rendered “signs for the fixed seasons, that is [explicative *vav*] days and years.”

sn Let them be for signs. The point is that the sun and the moon were important to fix the days for the seasonal celebrations for the worshipping community.

³⁷sn Two great lights. The text goes to great length to discuss the creation of these lights, suggesting that the subject was very important to the ancients. Since these “lights” were considered deities in the ancient world, the section serves as a strong polemic (see G. Hasel, “The Polemical Nature of the Genesis Cosmology,” *EvQ* 46 [1974]: 81-102). The Book of Genesis is affirming they are created entities, not deities. To underscore this the text does not even give them names. If used here, the usual names for the sun and moon [*Shemesh* and *Yarid*, respectively] might have carried pagan connotations, so they are simply described as greater and lesser lights. Moreover, they serve in the capacity that God gives them, which would not be the normal function the pagans ascribed to them. They merely divide, govern, and give light in God’s creation.

³⁸tn Heb “and the stars.” Now the term “stars” is added as a third object of the verb “made.” Perhaps the language is phenomenological, meaning that the stars appeared in the sky from this time forward.

³⁹tn Heb “them”; the referent (the lights mentioned in the preceding verses) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

⁴⁰sn In days one to three there is a naming by God; in days five and six there is a blessing by God. But on day four there is neither. It could be a mere stylistic variation. But it could also be a deliberate design to avoid naming “sun” and “moon” or promoting them beyond what they are, things that God made to serve in his creation.

⁴¹tn The Hebrew text again uses a cognate construction (“swarm with swarms”) to emphasize the abundant fertility. The idea of the verb is one of swift

their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. God saw that it was good. **1:22** God blessed them⁴⁴ and said, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the water in the seas, and let the birds multiply on the earth.”⁴⁵ **1:23** There was evening, and there was morning, a fifth day.

1:24 God said, “Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds: cattle, creeping things, and wild animals, each according to its kind.”⁴⁶ It was so. **1:25** God made the wild animals according to their kinds, the cattle according to their kinds, and all the creatures that creep along the ground according to their kinds. God saw that it was good.

1:26 Then God said, “Let us make⁴⁷ mankind⁴⁸ in our image, after our likeness,⁴⁹ so they may rule⁵⁰ over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the cattle, and over all the earth,⁵¹ and over all the creatures that move⁵² on the earth.”

1:27 God created mankind⁵³ in his own image,
in the image of God he created them,⁵⁴
male and female he created them.⁵⁵

1:28 God blessed⁵⁶ them and said⁵⁷ to them, “Be fruitful and multiply! Fill the earth and subdue it!⁵⁸ Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and every creature that moves on the ground.⁵⁹ **1:29** Then God said, “I now⁶⁰ give you every seed-bearing

movement back and forth, literally swarming. This verb is used in Exod 1:7 to describe the rapid growth of the Israelite population in bondage.

⁴²**tn** The Hebrew text uses the Polal form of the verb instead of the simple Qal; it stresses a swarming flight again to underscore the abundant fruitfulness.

⁴³**tn** For the first time in the narrative proper the verb “create” (בָּרָא, *bārā*) appears. (It is used in the summary statement of v. 1.) The author wishes to underscore that these creatures—even the great ones—are part of God’s perfect creation. The Hebrew term תַּנִּינִים (*tanninim*) is used for snakes (Exod 7:9), crocodiles (Ezek 29:3), or other powerful animals (Jer 51:34). In Isa 27:1 the word is used to describe a mythological sea creature that symbolizes God’s enemies.

⁴⁴**tn** While the translation “blessed” has been retained here for the sake of simplicity, it would be most helpful to paraphrase it as “God endowed them with fruitfulness” or something similar, for here it refers to God’s giving the animals the capacity to reproduce. The expression “blessed” needs clarification in its different contexts, for it is one of the unifying themes of the Book of Genesis. The divine blessing occurs after works of creation and is intended to continue that work—the word of blessing guarantees success. The word means “to enrich; to endow,” and the most visible evidence of that enrichment is productivity or fruitfulness. See C. Westermann, *Blessing in the Bible and the Life of the Church* (OBT).

⁴⁵**sn** The instruction God gives to creation is properly a fuller expression of the statement just made (“God blessed them”), that he enriched them with the ability to reproduce. It is not saying that these were rational creatures who heard and obeyed the word; rather, it stresses that fruitfulness in the animal world is a result of the divine decree and not of some pagan cultic ritual for fruitfulness. The repeated emphasis of “be fruitful—multiply—fill” adds to this abundance God has given to life. The meaning is underscored by the similar sounds: *barak* (בָּרַךְ) with *bara* (בָּרָא), and *parah* (פָּרָה) with *rabah* (רָבָה).

⁴⁶**tn** There are three groups of land animals here: the cattle or livestock (mostly domesticated), things that creep or move close to the ground (such as reptiles or rodents), and the wild animals (all animals of the field). The three terms are general classifications without specific details.

⁴⁷**tn** The plural form of the verb has been the subject of much discussion through the years, and not surprisingly several suggestions have been put forward. Many Christian theologians interpret it as an early hint of plurality within the Godhead, but this view imposes later trinitarian concepts on the ancient text. Some have suggested the plural verb indicates majesty, but the plural of majesty is not used with verbs. C. Westermann (*Genesis*, 1:145) argues for a plural of “deliberation” here, but his proposed examples of this use (2 Sam 24:14; Isa 6:8) do not actually support his theory. In 2 Sam 24:14 David uses the plural as representative of all Israel, and in Isa 6:8 the LORD speaks on behalf of his heavenly court. In its ancient Israelite context the plural is most naturally understood as referring to God and his heavenly court (see 1 Kgs 22:19-22; Job 1:6-12; 2:1-6; Isa 6:1-8). (The most well-known members of this court are God’s messengers, or angels. In Gen 3:5 the serpent may refer to this group as “gods/divine beings.” See the note on the word “evil” in 3:5.) If this is the case, God invites the heavenly court to participate in the creation of mankind (perhaps in the role of offering praise, see Job 38:7), but he himself is the one who does the actual creative work (v. 27). Of course, this view does assume that the members of the heavenly court possess the divine “image” in some way. Since the image is closely associated with rulership, perhaps they share the divine image in that they, together with God and under his royal authority, are the executive authority over the world.

⁴⁸**tn** The Hebrew word is אָדָם (*adam*), which can sometimes refer to man, as opposed to woman. The term refers here to humankind, comprised of male and female. The singular is clearly collective (see the plural verb, “[that] they may rule” in v. 26b) and the referent is defined specifically as “male and female” in v. 27. Usage elsewhere in Gen. 1-11 supports this as well. In 5:2 we read: “Male and female he created them, and he blessed them and called their name ‘humankind’ [אָדָם].” The noun also refers to humankind in 6:1, 5-7 and in 9:5-6.

⁴⁹**tn** The two prepositions translated “in” and “according to” have overlapping fields of meaning and in this context seem to be virtually equivalent. In 5:3 they are reversed with the two words. The word צֶלֶם (*selem*, “image”) is used frequently of statues, models, and images—replicas (see D. J. A. Clines, “The Etymology of Hebrew *selem*,” *JNSL* 3 [1974]: 19-25). The word דְּמוּת (*dēmūt*, “likeness”) is an abstract noun; its verbal root means “to be like; to resemble.” In the Book of Genesis the two terms describe human beings who in some way reflect the form and the function of the creator. The form is more likely stressing the spiritual rather than the physical. The “image of God” would be the God-given mental and spiritual capacities that enable people to relate to God and to serve him by ruling over the created order as his earthly vice-regents.

⁵⁰**tn** *In our image, after our likeness*. Similar language is used in the instructions for building the tabernacle. Moses was told to make it “according to the pattern” he was shown on the mount (Exod 25:9, 10). Was he shown a form, a replica, of the spiritual sanctuary in the heavenly places? In any case, what was produced on earth functioned as the heavenly sanctuary does, but with limitations.

⁵¹**tn** Following the cohortative (“let us make”), the prefixed verb form with *vav* conjunctive indicates purpose/result (see Gen 19:20; 34:23; 2 Sam 3:21). God’s purpose in giving mankind his image is that they might rule the created order on behalf of the heavenly king and his royal court. So the divine image, however it is defined, gives humankind the capacity and/or authority to rule over creation.

⁵¹**tc** The MT reads “earth”; the Syriac reads “wild animals” (cf. NRSV).

⁵²**tn** *Heb* “creep” (also in v. 28).

⁵³**tn** The Hebrew text has the article prefixed to the noun (הָאָדָם). The article does not distinguish man from woman here (“the man”) as opposed to “the woman”), but rather indicates previous reference (see v. 26, where the noun appears without the article). It has the same function as English “the aforementioned.”

⁵⁴**tn** The third person suffix on the particle הָאָדָם (*ēl*) is singular here, but collective.

⁵⁵**sn** The distinction of “mankind” as “male” and “female” is another point of separation in God’s creation. There is no possibility that the verse is teaching that humans were first androgynous (having both male and female physical characteristics) and afterwards were separated. The mention of male and female prepares for the blessing to follow.

⁵⁶**tn** As in v. 22 the verb “bless” here means “to endow with the capacity to reproduce and be fruitful,” as the following context indicates. As in v. 22, the statement directly precedes the command “be fruitful and multiply.” The verb carries this same nuance in Gen 17:16 (where God’s blessing of Sarai imparts to her the capacity to bear a child); Gen 48:16 (where God’s blessing of Joseph’s sons is closely associated with their having numerous descendants); and Deut 7:13 (where God’s blessing is associated with fertility in general, including numerous descendants). See also Gen 49:25 (where Jacob uses the noun derivative in referring to “blessings of the breast and womb,” an obvious reference to fertility) and Gen 27:27 (where the verb is used of a field to which God has given the capacity to produce vegetation).

⁵⁷**tn** *Heb* “and God said.” For stylistic reasons “God” has not been repeated here in the translation.

⁵⁸**tn** Elsewhere the Hebrew verb translated “subdue” means “to enslave” (2 Chr 28:10; Neh 5:5; Jer 34:11, 16), “to conquer,” (Num 32:22, 29; Josh 18:1; 2 Sam 8:11; 1 Chr 22:18; Zech 9:13; and probably Mic 7:19), and “to assault sexually” (Esth 7:8). None of these nuances adequately meets the demands of this context, for humankind is not viewed as having an adversarial relationship with the world. The general meaning of the verb appears to be “to bring under one’s control for one’s advantage.” In Gen 1:28 one might paraphrase it as follows: “harness its potential and use its resources for your benefit.” In an ancient Israelite context this would suggest cultivating its fields, mining its mineral riches, using its trees for construction, and domesticating its animals.

⁵⁹**tn** The several imperatives addressed to both males and females together (plural imperative forms) actually form two commands: reproduce and rule. God’s word is not merely a form of blessing, but is now addressed to them personally; this is a distinct emphasis with the creation of human beings. But with the blessing comes the ability to be fruitful and to rule. In procreation they will share in the divine work of creating human life and passing on the divine image (see 5:1-3); in ruling they will serve as God’s vice-regents on earth. They together, the human race collectively, have the responsibility of seeing to the welfare of that which is put under them and the privilege of using it for their benefit.

⁶⁰**tn** The text uses הִנְנֶה (*hinnēh*), archaically translated “behold.” It is often used to express the dramatic present, the immediacy of an event—“Look, this is what I am doing!”

plant on the face of the entire earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food.⁶¹ **1:30** And to all the animals of the earth, and to every bird of the air, and to all the creatures that move on the ground—everything that has the breath of life in it—I give⁶² every green plant for food. It was so.

1:31 God saw all that he had made—and it was very good!⁶³ There was evening, and there was morning, the sixth day.

2:1 The heavens and the earth⁶⁴ were completed with everything that was in them.⁶⁵ **2:2** By⁶⁶ the seventh day God finished the work that he had been doing,⁶⁷ and he ceased⁶⁸ on the seventh day all the work that he had been doing. **2:3** God blessed the seventh day and made it holy⁶⁹ because on it he ceased all the work that he⁷⁰ had been doing in creation.⁷¹

The Creation of Man and Woman

2:4 This is the account⁷² of the heavens and the earth⁷³ when they were created—when the LORD God⁷⁴ made the earth and heavens.⁷⁵

2:5 Now⁷⁶ no shrub of the field had yet grown on the earth, and no plant of the field⁷⁷ had yet sprouted, for the LORD God had not caused it to rain on the earth, and there was no man to cultivate the ground.⁷⁸ **2:6** Springs⁷⁹ would well up⁸⁰ from the earth and water⁸¹

⁶¹ **sn** G. J. Wenham (*Genesis* [WBC], 1:34) points out that there is nothing in the passage that prohibits the man and the woman from eating meat. He suggests that eating meat came after the fall. Gen 9:3 may then ratify the post-fall practice of eating meat rather than inaugurate the practice, as is often understood.

⁶² **tn** The phrase “I give” is not in the Hebrew text but has been supplied in the translation for clarification.

⁶³ **tn** The Hebrew text again uses הִנְנֶה (*hinnēh*) for the sake of vividness. It is a participle that goes with the gesture of pointing, calling attention to something.

⁶⁴ **tn** See the note on the phrase “the heavens and the earth” in 1:1.

⁶⁵ **tn** *Heb* “and all the host of them.” Here the “host” refers to all the entities and creatures that God created to populate the world.

⁶⁶ **tn** *Heb* “on/in the seventh day.”

⁶⁷ **tn** *Heb* “his work which he did [or, “made”].”

⁶⁸ **tn** The Hebrew term שָׁבַת (*sabat*) can be translated “to rest” (“and he rested”) but it basically means “to cease.” This is not a rest from exhaustion; it is the cessation of the work of creation.

⁶⁹ **tn** The verb is usually translated “and sanctified it.” The Piel verb שָׁבַת (*qidēš*) means “to make something holy; to set something apart; to distinguish it.” On the literal level the phrase means essentially that God made this day different. But within the context of the Law, it means that the day belonged to God; it was for rest from ordinary labor, worship, and spiritual service. The day belonged to God.

⁷⁰ **tn** *Heb* “God.” The pronoun (“he”) has been employed in the translation for stylistic reasons.

⁷¹ **tn** *Heb* “for on it he ceased from all his work which God created to make.” The last infinitive construct and the verb before it form a verbal hendiadys, the infinitive becoming the modifier—“which God creatively made,” or “which God made in his creating.”

⁷² **tn** The Hebrew phrase הִלְכֵהוּ אֱלֹהִים (*‘ēlêh tōlêdōt*) is traditionally translated as “these are the generations of” because the noun was derived from the verb “beget.” Its usage, however, shows that it introduces more than genealogies; it begins a narrative that traces what became of the entity or individual mentioned in the heading. In fact, a good paraphrase of this heading would be: “This is what became of the heavens and the earth,” for what follows is not another account of creation but a tracing of events from creation through the fall and judgment (the section extends from 2:4 through 4:26). See M. H. Woodstra, “The *Tolēdot* of the Book of Genesis and Their Redemptive-Historical Significance,” *CTJ* 5 (1970).

sn The expression *this is the account of* is an important title used throughout the Book of Genesis, serving as the organizing principle of the work. It is always a heading, introducing the subject matter that is to come. From the starting point of the title, the narrative traces the genealogy or the records or the particulars involved. Although some would make the heading in 2:4 a summary of creation (1:1–2:3), that goes against the usage in the book. As a heading it introduces the theme of the next section, the particulars about this creation that God made. Genesis 2 is not a simple parallel account of creation; rather, beginning with the account of the creation of man and women, the narrative tells what became of that creation. As a beginning, the construction of 2:4–7 forms a fine parallel to the construction of 1:1–3. The subject matter of each *tōlēdot* (“this is the account of”) section of the book traces a decline or a deterioration through to the next beginning point, and each is thereby a microcosm of the book which begins with divine blessing in the garden, and ends with a coffin in Egypt. So, what became of the creation? Gen 2:4–4:26 will explain that sin entered the world and all but destroyed God’s perfect creation.

⁷³ **tn** See the note on the phrase “the heavens and the earth” in 1:1.

sn This is the only use of the Hebrew noun *tōlēdot* in the book that is not followed by a personal name (e.g., “this is the account of Isaac”). The poetic parallelism reveals that even though the account may be about the creation, it is the creation the LORD God made.

⁷⁴ **sn** Advocates of the so-called documentary hypothesis of pentateuchal authorship argue that the introduction of the name Yahweh (LORD) here indicates that a new source (designated J), a parallel account of creation, begins here. In this scheme Gen 1:1–2:3 is understood as the priestly source (designated P) of creation. Critics of this approach often respond that the names, rather than indicating separate sources, were chosen to reflect the subject matter (see U. Cassuto, *The Documentary Hypothesis*). Gen 1:1–2:3 is the grand prologue of the book, showing the sovereign God creating by decree. The narrative beginning in 2:4 is the account of what this God invested in his creation. Since it deals with the close, personal involvement of the covenant God, the narrative uses the covenantal name Yahweh (LORD) in combination with the name God. For a recent discussion of the documentary hypothesis from a theologically conservative perspective, see D. A. Garrett, *Rethinking Genesis*. For an attempt by source critics to demonstrate the legitimacy of the source critical method on the basis of ancient Near Eastern parallels, see J. H. Tigay, ed., *Empirical Models for Biblical Criticism*. For reaction to the source critical method by literary critics, see I. M. Kikawada and A. Quinn, *Before Abraham Was*; R. A. Alter, *The Art of Biblical Narrative*, 131–54; and A. Berlin, *Poetics and Interpretation of Biblical Narrative*, 111–34.

⁷⁵ **tn** See the note on the phrase “the heavens and the earth” in 1:1; the order here is reversed, but the meaning is the same.

⁷⁶ **tn** *Heb* “Now every sprig of the field before it was.” The verb forms, although appearing to be imperfections, are technically preterites coming after the adverb הָיָה (*terem*). The word order (conjunction + subject + predicate) indicates a disjunctive clause, which provides background information for the following narrative (as in 1:2). Two negative clauses are given (“before any sprig...,” and “before any cultivated grain” existed), followed by two causal clauses explaining them, and then a positive circumstantial clause is given—again dealing with water as in 1:2 (water would well up).

⁷⁷ **tn** The first term, שִׁיחַ (*siyah*), probably refers to the wild, uncultivated plants (see Gen 21:15; Job 30:4,7); whereas the second, עֵשֶׂב (*‘ēssēb*), refers to cultivated grains. It is a way of saying: “back before anything was growing.”

⁷⁸ **tn** The two causal clauses explain the first two disjunctive clauses: there was no uncultivated, general growth because there was no rain, and there were no grains because there was no man to cultivate the soil.

sn The last clause in v. 5, “and there was no man to cultivate the ground,” anticipates the curse and the expulsion from the garden (Gen 3:23).

⁷⁹ **tn** The conjunction *vav* introduces a third disjunctive clause. The Hebrew word עַד (*‘ed*) was traditionally translated “mist” because of its use in Job 36:27. However, an Akkadian cognate *edu* in Babylonian texts refers to subterranean springs or waterways. Such a spring would fit the description in this context, since this water “goes up” and waters the ground.

⁸⁰ **tn** *Heb* “was going up.” The verb is an imperfect form, which in this narrational context carries a customary nuance, indicating continual action in past time.

⁸¹ **tn** The perfect with *vav* consecutive carries the same nuance as the preceding verb. Whenever it would well up, it would water the ground.

the whole surface of the ground.⁸² **2:7** The LORD God formed⁸³ the man from the soil of the ground⁸⁴ and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life,⁸⁵ and the man became a living being.⁸⁶

2:8 The LORD God planted an orchard⁸⁷ in the east,⁸⁸ in Eden,⁸⁹ and there he placed the man he had formed.⁹⁰ **2:9** The LORD God made all kinds of trees grow from the soil,⁹¹ every tree that was pleasing to look at⁹² and good for food. (Now⁹³ the tree of life⁹⁴ and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil⁹⁵ were in the middle of the orchard.)

2:10 Now⁹⁶ a river flows⁹⁷ from Eden⁹⁸ to water the orchard, and from there it divides⁹⁹ into four headstreams.¹⁰⁰ **2:11** The name of the first is Pishon; it runs through¹⁰¹ the entire land of Havilah, where there is gold. **2:12** (The gold of that land is pure,¹⁰² pearls¹⁰³ and lapis lazuli¹⁰⁴ are also there). **2:13** The name of the second river is Gihon; it runs through¹⁰⁵ the entire land of Cush.¹⁰⁶ **2:14** The name of the third river is Tigris; it runs along the east side of Assyria.¹⁰⁷ The fourth river is the Euphrates.

2:15 The LORD God took the man and placed¹⁰⁸ him in the orchard in¹⁰⁹ Eden to care for and maintain it.¹¹⁰ **2:16** Then the LORD God commanded¹¹¹ the man, “You may freely eat¹¹² fruit¹¹³ from every tree of the orchard, **2:17** but¹¹⁴ you must not eat¹¹⁵ from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when¹¹⁶ you eat from it you will surely die.”¹¹⁷

⁸²tn The Hebrew word אֲדָמָה (*’ādāmāh*) actually means “ground; fertile soil.”

sn Here is an indication of fertility. The water would well up from the *earth* (Hebrew *’ereš*) and water all the surface of the *fertile soil* (Hebrew *’ādāmāh*). It is from that soil that the man (Hebrew *’ādām*) was made (Gen 2:7).

⁸³tn Or “fashioned.” The prefixed verb form with *vav* consecutive initiates narrative sequence. The Hebrew word יָצַר (*yāšar*) means “to form” or “to fashion,” usually by plan or design (see the related noun יָצָר [*yōšēr*] in Gen 6:5). It is the term for an artist’s work (The Hebrew term יָצָר [*yōšēr*] refers to a potter; see Jer 18:2-4).

sn Various traditions in the ancient Near East reflect this idea of creation. Egyptian drawings show a deity turning little people off of the potter’s wheel with another deity giving them life. In the Bible humans are related to the soil and return to it (see 3:19; see also Job 4:19, 20:9; and Isa 29:16).

⁸⁴tn The line literally reads “And Yahweh God formed the man, soil, from the ground.” “Soil” is an adverbial accusative, identifying the material from which the man was made.

⁸⁵tn The Hebrew word נְשָׁמָה (*nēšāmāh*), “breath,” is used for God and for the life imparted to humans, not animals (see T. C. Mitchell, “The Old Testament Usage of *Nēšāmāh*,” *VT* 11 [1961]: 177-87). Its usage in the Bible conveys more than a breathing living organism (הַנְּשָׁמָה [*nēpēs hayyāh*]). Whatever is given this breath of life becomes animated with the life from God, has spiritual understanding (Job 32:8), and has a functioning conscience (Prov 20:27).

sn Human life is described here as consisting of a body (made from soil from the ground) and breath (given by God). Both animals and humans are called a *living being* (*nēpēs hayyāh*) but mankind became that in a different and more significant way.

⁸⁶tn The Hebrew term נְשָׁמָה (*nēpēs*, “being”) is often translated “soul,” but the word usually refers to the whole person. The phrase הַנְּשָׁמָה (*nēpēs hayyāh*, “living being”) is used of both animals and human beings (see 1:20, 24, 30; 2:19).

⁸⁷tn Traditionally “garden,” but the subsequent description of this “garden” makes it clear that it is an orchard of fruit trees.

sn *The LORD God planted an orchard.* Nothing is said of how the creation of this orchard took place. A harmonization with chap. 1 might lead to the conclusion that it was by decree, prior to the creation of human life. But the narrative sequence here in chap. 2 suggests the creation of the garden followed the creation of the man. Note also the past perfect use of the perfect in the relative clause in the following verse.

⁸⁸tn Heb “from the east” or “off east.”

sn One would assume this is *east* from the perspective of the land of Israel, particularly since the rivers in the area are identified as the rivers in those eastern regions.

⁸⁹sn The name *Eden* (*’ēden*) means “pleasure” in Hebrew.

⁹⁰tn The perfect verbal form here requires the past perfect translation since it describes an event that preceded the event described in the main clause.

⁹¹tn Heb “ground,” referring to the fertile soil.

⁹²tn Heb “desirable of sight [or, “appearance].” The phrase describes the kinds of trees that are visually pleasing and yield fruit that is desirable to the appetite.

⁹³tn The verse ends with a disjunctive clause providing a parenthetical bit of information about the existence of two special trees in the garden.

⁹⁴tn In light of Gen 3:22, the construction “tree of life” should be interpreted to mean a tree that produces life-giving fruit (objective genitive) rather than a living tree (attributive genitive). See E. O. James, *The Tree of Life* (SHR); and R. Marcus, “The Tree of Life in Proverbs,” *JBL* 62 (1943): 117-20.

⁹⁵tn The expression “tree of the knowledge of good and evil” must be interpreted to mean that the tree would produce fruit which, when eaten, gives special knowledge of “good and evil.” Scholars debate what this phrase means here. For a survey of opinions, see G. J. Wenham, *Genesis* (WBC), 1:62-64. One view is that “good” refers to that which enhances, promotes, and produces life, while “evil” refers to anything that hinders, interrupts or destroys life. So eating from this tree would change human nature—people would be able to alter life for better (in their thinking) or for worse. See D. J. A. Clines, “The Tree of Knowledge and the Law of Yahweh,” *VT* 24 (1974): 8-14, and I. Engnell, “‘Knowledge’ and ‘Life’ in the Creation Story,” *VT* 3 (1955): 103-119. Another view understands the “knowledge of good and evil” as the capacity to discern between moral good and evil. The following context suggests the tree’s fruit gives one wisdom (see the phrase “capable of making one wise” in 3:6, as well as the note there on the word “wise”), which certainly includes the capacity to discern between good and evil. Such wisdom is characteristic of divine beings, as the serpent’s promise implies (3:5) and as 3:22 makes clear. (Note, however, that this capacity does not include the ability to *do* what is right.) God prohibits man from eating of the tree. The prohibition becomes a test to see if man will be satisfied with his role and place, or if he will try to ascend to the divine level. There will be a time for man to possess moral discernment/wisdom, as God reveals and imparts it to him, but it is not something to be grasped at in an effort to become “a god.” In fact, the command to be obedient was the first lesson in moral discernment/wisdom. God was essentially saying: “Here is lesson one—respect my authority and commands. Disobey me and you will die.” When man disobeys, he decides he does not want to acquire moral wisdom God’s way, but instead tries to rise immediately to the divine level. Once man has acquired such divine wisdom by eating the tree’s fruit (3:22), he must be banned from the garden so that he will not be able to achieve his goal of being godlike and thus live forever, a divine characteristic (3:24). Ironically, man now has the capacity to discern good from evil (3:22), but he is morally corrupted and rebellious and will not consistently choose what is right.

⁹⁶tn The disjunctive clause (note the construction conjunction + subject + predicate) introduces an entire paragraph about the richness of the region in the east.

⁹⁷tn The Hebrew active participle may be translated here as indicating past durative action, “was flowing,” or as a present durative, “flows.” Since this river was the source of the rivers mentioned in vv. 11-14, which appear to describe a situation contemporary with the narrator, it is preferable to translate the participle in v. 10 with the present tense. This suggests that Eden and its orchard still existed in the narrator’s time. According to ancient Jewish tradition, Enoch was taken to the Garden of Eden, where his presence insulated the garden from the destructive waters of Noah’s flood. See *Jub.* 4:23-24.

⁹⁸sn *Eden* is portrayed here as a source of life-giving rivers (that is, perennial streams). This is no surprise because its orchard is where the tree of life is located. Eden is a source of life, but tragically its orchard is no longer accessible to humankind. The river flowing out of Eden is a tantalizing reminder of this. God continues to provide life-giving water to sustain physical existence on the earth, but immortality has been lost.

⁹⁹tn The imperfect verb form has the same nuance as the preceding participle. (If the participle is taken as past durative, then the imperfect would be translated “was dividing.”)

¹⁰⁰tn Or, “branches”; Heb “heads.” Cf. NEB “streams”; NASB “rivers.”

¹⁰¹tn Heb “it is that which goes around.”

¹⁰²tn Heb “good.”

¹⁰³tn The Hebrew term translated “pearls” may be a reference to resin (cf. NIV “aromatic resin”) or another precious stone (cf. NEB, NASB, NRSV “bdellium”).

¹⁰⁴tn Or “onyx.”

¹⁰⁵tn Heb “it is that which goes around.”

¹⁰⁶sn *Cush*. In the Bible the Hebrew word *kūš* (“Kush”) often refers to Ethiopia, but here it must refer to a region in Mesopotamia, the area of the later Cassite dynasty of Babylon. See Gen 10:8 as well as E. A. Speiser, *Genesis* (AB), 20.

¹⁰⁷tn Heb “Asshur” (so NEB, NIV).

¹⁰⁸tn The Hebrew verb יָצַר (*nūāh*) translated “placed” is a different verb than the one used in 2:8.

¹⁰⁹tn Traditionally translated “the Garden of Eden,” the context makes it clear that the garden (or orchard) was in Eden (making “Eden” a genitive of location).

¹¹⁰tn Heb “to work it and to keep it.”

sn Note that man’s task is *to care for and maintain* the trees of the orchard. Not until after the fall, when he is condemned to cultivate the soil, does this

2:18 The LORD God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone.¹¹⁸ I will make a companion¹¹⁹ for him who corresponds to him.”¹²⁰ **2:19** The LORD God formed¹²¹ out of the ground every living animal of the field and every bird of the air. He brought them to the man to see what he would¹²² name them, and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. **2:20** So the man named all the animals, the birds of the air, and the living creatures of the field, but for Adam¹²³ no companion who corresponded to him was found.¹²⁴ **2:21** So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep;¹²⁵ and while he was asleep,¹²⁶ he took part of the man’s side¹²⁷ and closed up the place with flesh.¹²⁸ **2:22** Then the LORD God made¹²⁹ a woman from the part he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man. **2:23** Then the man said,
 “This one at last¹³⁰ is bone of my bones
 and flesh of my flesh;
 this one will be called¹³¹ ‘woman,’
 for she was taken out of¹³² man.”¹³³

2:24 That is why¹³⁴ a man leaves¹³⁵ his father and mother and unites with¹³⁶ his wife, and they become a new family.¹³⁷ **2:25** The man and his wife were both naked,¹³⁸ but they were not ashamed.¹³⁹

task change.

¹¹¹ **tn** This is the first time in the Bible that the verb *šāwāh* (שָׁוָה, “to command”) appears. Whatever the man had to do in the garden, the main focus of the narrative is on keeping God’s commandments. God created humans with the capacity to obey him and then tested them with commands.

¹¹² **tn** The imperfect verb form probably carries the nuance of permission (“you may eat”) since the man is not being commanded to eat from every tree. The accompanying infinitive absolute adds emphasis: “you may freely eat,” or, “you may eat to your heart’s content.”

¹¹³ **tn** The word “fruit” is not in the Hebrew text, but is implied as the direct object of the verb “eat.” Presumably the only part of the tree the man would eat would be its fruit (cf. 3:2).

¹¹⁴ **tn** The disjunctive clause here indicates contrast: “but from the tree of the knowledge....”

¹¹⁵ **tn** The negated imperfect verb form indicates prohibition, “you must not eat.”

¹¹⁶ **tn** Or “in the very day, as soon as.” If one understands the expression to have this more precise meaning, then the following narrative presents a problem, for the man does not die physically as soon as he eats from the tree. In this case one may argue that spiritual death is in view. If physical death is in view here, there are two options to explain the following narrative: (1) The following phrase “You will surely die” concerns mortality which ultimately results in death (a natural paraphrase would be, “You will become mortal”), or (2) God mercifully gave man a reprieve, allowing him to live longer than he deserved.

¹¹⁷ **tn** *Heb* “dying you will die.” The imperfect verb form here has the nuance of the specific future because it is introduced with the temporal clause, “when you eat...you will die.” That certainty is underscored with the infinitive absolute, “you will surely die.”

¹¹⁸ **tn** The Hebrew text (“dying you will die”) does not refer to two aspects of death (“dying spiritually, you will then die physically”). The construction simply emphasizes the certainty of death, however it is defined. Death is essentially separation. To die physically means separation from the land of the living, but not extinction. To die spiritually means to be separated from God. Both occur with sin, although the physical alienation is more gradual than instant, and the spiritual is immediate, although the effects of it continue the separation.

¹¹⁹ **tn** *Heb* “The being of man by himself is not good.” The meaning of “good” must be defined contextually. Within the context of creation, in which God instructs mankind to be fruitful and multiply, the man alone cannot comply. Being alone prevents the man from fulfilling the design of creation and therefore is not good.

¹²⁰ **tn** Traditionally “helper.” The modern connotation of the Hebrew word עֲזָרָה (*‘ezer*, “helper”) can be negative. The word does not suggest a subordinate role. In the Bible God is frequently described as the “helper,” the one who does for us what we cannot do for ourselves, the one who meets our needs. In this context the word seems to express the idea of an “indispensable companion.” The woman would supply what the man was lacking in the design of creation and logically it would follow that the man would supply what she was lacking, although that is not stated here. See further M. L. Rosenzweig, “A Helper Equal to Him,” *Jud* 139 (1986): 277-80.

¹²¹ **tn** The Hebrew expression כָּנָה (קָנָה) (*ke-neg-edō*) literally means “according to the opposite of him.” Translations such as “suitable [for]” (NASB, NIV), “matching,” “corresponding to” all capture the idea. (Translations that render the phrase simply “partner” [cf. NEB, NRSV], while not totally inaccurate, do not reflect the nuance of correspondence and/or suitability.) The man’s form and nature are matched by the woman’s as she reflects him and complements him. Together they correspond. In short, this prepositional phrase indicates that she has everything that God had invested in him.

¹²² **tn** Or “fashioned.” To harmonize the order of events with the chronology of chapter one, some translate the prefixed verb form with *vav* consecutive as a past perfect (“had formed,” cf. NIV) here. (In chapter one the creation of the animals preceded the creation of man; here the animals are created after the man.) However, it is unlikely that the Hebrew construction can be translated in this way in the middle of this pericope, for the criteria for unmarked temporal overlay are not present here. See S. R. Driver, *A Treatise on the Use of the Tenses in Hebrew*, 84-88, and especially R. Buth, “Methodological Collision between Source Criticism and Discourse Analysis,” *Biblical Hebrew and Discourse Linguistics*, 138-54. For a contrary viewpoint see *IBHS* 33.2,3 and C. J. Collins, “The *Wayyiqtol* as ‘Pluperfect’: When and Why,” *TynBul* 46 (1995): 117-40.

¹²³ **tn** The imperfect verb form is future from the perspective of the past time narrative.

¹²⁴ **tn** Here for the first time the Hebrew word אָדָם (*‘ādām*) appears without the article, suggesting that it might now be the name “Adam” rather than “[the] man.” Translations of the Bible differ as to where they make the change from “man” to “Adam” (e.g., NASB and NIV translate “Adam” here, while NEB and NRSV continue to use “the man”; the KJV uses “Adam” twice in v. 19).

¹²⁵ **tn** *Heb* “there was not found a companion who corresponded to him.” The subject of the third masculine singular verb form is indefinite. Without a formally expressed subject the verb may be translated as passive: “one did not find = there was not found.”

¹²⁶ **tn** *Heb* “And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall on the man.”

¹²⁷ **tn** *Heb* “and he slept.” In the sequence the verb may be subordinated to the following verb to indicate a temporal clause (“while...”).

¹²⁸ **tn** Traditionally translated “rib,” the Hebrew word actually means “side.” The Hebrew text reads, “and he took one from his sides,” which could be rendered “part of his sides.” That idea may fit better the explanation by the man that the woman is his flesh and bone.

¹²⁹ **tn** *Heb* “closed up the flesh under it.”

¹³⁰ **tn** The Hebrew verb is בָּנָה (*bānāh*, “to make; to build; to construct”). The text states that the LORD God built the rib into a woman. Again, the passage gives no indication of precisely how this was done.

¹³¹ **tn** The Hebrew term הַיּוֹם (*happā’am*) means “the [this] time; this place,” or “now; finally; at last.” The expression conveys the futility of the man while naming the animals and finding no one who corresponded to him.

¹³² **tn** The Hebrew text is very precise, stating: “of this one it will be said, ‘woman.’” The text is not necessarily saying that the man named his wife—that comes after the fall (Gen 3:20).

¹³³ **tn** Some argue that naming implies the man’s authority or ownership over the woman here. Naming can indicate ownership or authority if one is calling someone or something by one’s name and/or calling a name *over* someone or something (see 2 Sam 12:28; 2 Chr 7:14; Isa 4:1; Jer 7:14; 15:16), especially if one is conquering and renaming a site. But the idiomatic construction used here (the Niphal of נָקַד with ל) does not suggest such an idea. In each case where it is used, the one naming discerns something about the object being named and gives it an appropriate name (See 1 Sam 9:9; 2 Sam 18:18; Prov 16:21; Isa 1:26; 32:5; 35:8; 62:4, 12; Jer 19:6). Adam is not so much naming the woman as he is discerning her close relationship to him and referring to her accordingly. He may simply be anticipating that she will be given an appropriate name based on the discernible similarity (see v. 23).

¹³⁴ **tn** Or “from” (but see v. 22).

¹³⁵ **tn** This poetic section expresses the correspondence between the man and the woman. She is bone of his bones, flesh of his flesh. Note the wordplay (paronomasia) between “woman” (*‘iššāh* [אִשָּׁה]) and “man” (*‘iš* [אִישׁ]). On the surface it appears that the word for woman is the feminine form of the word for man. But the two words are not etymologically related. The sound and the sense give that impression, however, and make for a more effective wordplay.

¹³⁶ **tn** This statement, introduced by the Hebrew phrase עַל-כֵּן (*‘al-kēn*, “therefore” or “that is why”), is an editorial comment, not an extension of the quotation. The statement is describing what typically happens, not what will or should happen. It is saying, “This is why we do things the way we do.” It links a contemporary (with the narrator) practice with the historical event being narrated. The historical event narrated in v. 23 provides the basis for the contemporary practice described in v. 24. That is why the imperfect verb forms are translated with the present tense rather than future.

¹³⁷ **tn** The imperfect verb form has a habitual or characteristic nuance. For other examples of עַל-כֵּן (*‘al-kēn*, “therefore”; “that is why”) with the imperfect in a narrative framework, see Gen 10:9; 32:32 (the phrase “to this day” indicates characteristic behavior is in view); Num 21:14, 27; 1 Sam. 5:5 (note “to this day”); 19:24 (perhaps the imperfect is customary here, “were saying”); 2 Sam. 5:8. The verb translated “leave” (לָזַק, *‘āzād*) normally means

The Temptation and the Fall

3:1 Now¹⁴⁰ the serpent¹⁴¹ was more shrewd¹⁴² than any of the wild animals¹⁴³ that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, “Is it really true that¹⁴⁴ God¹⁴⁵ said, ‘You must not eat from any tree of the orchard’?”¹⁴⁶ **3:2** The woman said to the serpent, “We may eat¹⁴⁷ of the fruit from the trees of the orchard; **3:3** but concerning the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the orchard God said, ‘You must not eat from it, and you must not touch it,¹⁴⁸ or else you will die.’”¹⁴⁹ **3:4** The serpent said to the woman, “Surely you will not die.¹⁵⁰ **3:5** For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will open¹⁵¹ and you will be like divine beings who know¹⁵² good and evil.”¹⁵³

“to abandon; to forsake; to leave behind; to discard,” when used with human subject and object (see Josh 22:3; 1 Sam 30:13; Ps 27:10; Prov 2:17; Isa 54:6; 60:15; 62:4; Jer 49:11). Within the context of the ancient Israelite extended family structure, this cannot refer to emotional or geographical separation. The narrator is using hyperbole to emphasize the change in perspective that typically overtakes a young man when his thoughts turn to love and marriage.

¹³⁶ **tn** The perfect with *vav* consecutive carries the same habitual or characteristic nuance as the preceding imperfect. The verb is traditionally translated “cleaves [to]”; it has the basic idea of “stick with/to” (e.g., it is used of Ruth resolutely staying with her mother-in-law in Ruth 1:14). In this passage it describes the *inseparable* relationship between the man and the woman in marriage as God intended it.

¹³⁷ **tn** *Heb* “and they become one flesh.” The perfect with *vav* consecutive carries the same habitual or characteristic nuance as the preceding verbs in the verse. The retention of the word “flesh” (בָּשָׂר, *bāsār*) in the translation often leads to improper or incomplete interpretations. The Hebrew word refers to more than just a sexual union. When they unite in marriage, the man and woman bring into being a new family unit (*hayah* + *lamed* [ל + ה] preposition means “become”). The phrase “one flesh” occurs only here and must be interpreted in light of v. 23. There the man declares that the woman is bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh. To be one’s “bone and flesh” is to be related by blood to someone. For example, the phrase describes the relationship between Laban and Jacob (Gen 29:14); Abimelech and the Shechemites (Judg 9:2; his mother was a Shechemite); David and the Israelites (2 Sam 5:1); David and the elders of Judah (2 Sam 19:12); and David and his nephew Amasa (2 Sam 19:13; see 2 Sam 17:2; 1 Chr 2:16-17). The expression “one flesh” seems to indicate that they become, as it were, “kin,” at least legally (a new family unit is created) or metaphorically. In this first marriage in human history, the woman was literally formed from the man’s bone and flesh. Even though later marriages do not involve such a divine surgical operation, the first marriage sets the pattern for how later marriages are understood and explains why marriage supersedes the parent-child relationship.

¹³⁸ **tn** *Heb* “And the two of them were naked, the man and his wife.”

sn *Naked*. The motif of nakedness is introduced here and plays an important role in the next chapter. In the Bible nakedness conveys different things. In this context it signifies either innocence or integrity, depending on how those terms are defined. There is no fear of exploitation, no sense of vulnerability. But after the entrance of sin into the race, nakedness takes on a negative sense. It is then usually connected with the sense of vulnerability, shame, exploitation, and exposure (such as the idea of “uncovering nakedness,” either in sexual exploitation or in captivity in war).

¹³⁹ **tn** The imperfect verb form here has a customary nuance, indicating a continuing condition in past time. The meaning of the Hebrew term בִּשְׁתִּי (bōš) is “to be ashamed; to put to shame,” but its meaning is stronger than “to be embarrassed.” The word conveys the fear of exploitation or evil—enemies are put to shame through military victory. It indicates the feeling of shame that approximates a fear of evil.

¹⁴⁰ **tn** The chapter begins with a disjunctive clause (conjunction + subject + predicate) that introduces a new character and a new scene in the story.

¹⁴¹ **sn** Many theologians identify or associate *the serpent* with Satan. In this view Satan comes in the disguise of a serpent or speaks through a serpent. This explains the serpent’s capacity to speak. While later passages in the Bible may indicate there was a satanic presence behind the serpent (see, for example, Rev 12:9), the immediate context pictures the serpent as simply one of the animals of the field created by God (see vv. 1, 14). An ancient Jewish interpretation explains the reference to the serpent in a literal manner, attributing the capacity to speak to all the animals in the orchard. This text (*Jub.* 3:28) states, “On that day [the day the man and woman were expelled from the orchard] the mouth of all the beasts and cattle and birds and whatever walked or moved was stopped from speaking because all of them used to speak to one another with one speech and one language [presumed to be Hebrew, see 12:26].” Josephus (*Ant.* 1.14 [1.41]) attributes the serpent’s actions to jealousy. He writes that “the serpent, living in the company of Adam and his wife, grew jealous of the blessings which he supposed were destined for them if they obeyed God’s behests, and, believing that disobedience would bring trouble on them, he maliciously persuaded the woman to taste of the tree of wisdom.”

¹⁴² **tn** The Hebrew word אָרִיז (‘*arūm*) basically means “clever.” This idea then polarizes into the nuances “cunning” (in a negative sense, see Job 5:12; 15:5), and “prudent” in a positive sense (Prov 12:16, 23; 13:16; 14:8, 15, 18; 22:3; 27:12). This same polarization of meaning can be detected in related words derived from the same root (see Exod 21:14; Josh 9:4; 1 Sam 23:22; Job 5:13; Ps 83:3). The negative nuance obviously applies in Gen 3, where the snake attempts to talk the woman into disobeying God by using half-truths and lies.

sn There is a wordplay in Hebrew between the words “naked” (‘*arūmim* [אָרִיזִים]) in 2:25 and “shrewd” (‘*arūm* [אָרִיז]) in 3:1. The point seems to be that the integrity of the man and the woman is the focus of the serpent’s craftiness. At the beginning they are naked and he is shrewd; afterward, they will be covered and he will be cursed.

¹⁴³ **tn** *Heb* “animals of the field.”

¹⁴⁴ **tn** *Heb* “Indeed that God said.” The beginning of the quotation is elliptical and therefore difficult to translate. One must supply a phrase like “is it true?”: “Indeed, [is it true] that God said.”

¹⁴⁵ **tn** *Heb* “God.” The serpent does not use the expression “Yahweh God” [LORD God] because there is no covenant relationship involved between God and the serpent. He only speaks of “God.” In the process the serpent draws the woman into his manner of speech so that she too only speaks of “God.”

¹⁴⁶ **tn** *Heb* “you must not eat from all the tree[s] of the orchard.” After the negated prohibitive verb, מִכֹּל (“from all”) has the meaning “from any.” Note the construction in Lev 18:26, where the statement “you must not do from all these abominable things” means “you must not do *any* of these abominable things.” See Lev 22:25 and Deut 28:14 as well.

¹⁴⁷ **tn** There is a notable change between what the LORD God had said and what the woman says. God said “you may freely eat” (the imperfect with the infinitive absolute, see 2:16), but the woman omits the emphatic infinitive, saying simply “we may eat.” Her words do not reflect the sense of eating to her heart’s content.

¹⁴⁸ **tn** *And you must not touch it*. The woman adds to God’s prohibition, making it say more than God expressed. G. von Rad observes that it is as though she wanted to set a law for herself by means of this exaggeration (G. von Rad, *Genesis*, 86).

¹⁴⁹ **tn** The Hebrew construction is פֶּן (*pen*) with the imperfect tense, which conveys a negative purpose: “lest you die” = “in order that you not die.” By stating the warning in this way, the woman omits the emphatic infinitive used by God (“you shall surely die,” see 2:17).

¹⁵⁰ **tn** The response of the serpent includes the infinitive absolute with a blatant negation equal to saying: “Not—you will surely die” (לֹא מוֹת הַמָּוֶת). The construction makes this emphatic because normally the negative particle precedes the finite verb. The serpent is a liar, denying that there is a penalty for sin (see John 8:44).

sn *Surely you will not die*. Here the serpent is more aware of what the LORD God said than the woman was; he simply adds a blatant negation to what God said. In the account of Jesus’ temptation Jesus is victorious because he knows the scripture better than Satan (Matt 4:1-11).

¹⁵¹ **tn** Or “you will have understanding.” This obviously refers to the acquisition of the “knowledge of good and evil,” as the next statement makes clear.

¹⁵² **tn** Or perhaps “like God, knowing.” It is unclear how the plural participle translated “knowing” is functioning. On the one hand, יָדָעַי (‘*yaḏēy*) could be taken as a substantival participle functioning as a predicative adjective in the sentence. In this case one might translate: “You will be, like God himself, knowers of good and evil.” On the other hand, it could be taken as an attributive adjective modifying אֱלֹהִים (‘*elohim*). In this case אֱלֹהִים has to be taken as a numerical plural referring to “gods,” “divine beings,” for if the one true God were the intended referent, a singular form of the participle would almost certainly appear as a modifier. Following this line of interpretation, one could translate, “You will be like divine beings who know good and evil.” The following context may favor this translation, for in 3:22 God says to an unidentified group, “Look, the man has become like one of us, knowing good and evil.” It is probable that God is addressing his heavenly court (see the note on the word “make” in 1:26), the members of which can be called “gods” or “divine beings” from the ancient Israelite perspective. (We know some of these beings as messengers or “angels.”) An examination of parallel constructions shows that a predicative understanding (“you will be, like God himself, knowers of good and evil,” cf. NIV, NRSV) is possible, but rare (see Gen 27:23, where “hairy” is predicative, complementing the verb “to be”). The statistical evidence strongly suggests that the participle is attributive, modifying “divine beings” (see Ps 31:12; Isa 1:30; 13:14; 16:2; 29:5; 58:11; Jer 14:9; 20:9; 23:9; 31:12; 48:4; 49:22; Hos 7:11; Amos 4:11). In all of these texts, where a comparative clause and accompanying adjective/participle follow a copulative (“to be”) verb, the adjective/participle is attributive after the noun in the comparative clause.

¹⁵³ **tn** *You will be like divine beings who know good and evil*. The serpent raises doubts about the integrity of God. He implies that the only reason for the prohibition was that God was protecting the divine domain. If the man and woman were to eat, they would enter into that domain. The temptation is to overstep divinely established boundaries. (See D. E. Gowan, *When Man Becomes God* [PTMS].)

3:6 When¹⁵⁴ the woman saw that the tree produced fruit that was good for food,¹⁵⁵ was attractive¹⁵⁶ to the eye, and was desirable for making one wise,¹⁵⁷ she took some of its fruit and ate it.¹⁵⁸ She also gave some of it to her husband who was with her, and he ate it.¹⁵⁹ **3:7** Then the eyes of both of them opened, and they knew they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.

The Judgment Oracles of God at the Fall

3:8 Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God moving about¹⁶⁰ in the orchard at the breezy time¹⁶¹ of the day, and they hid¹⁶² from the LORD God among the trees of the orchard. **3:9** But the LORD God called to¹⁶³ the man and said to him, “Where are you?”¹⁶⁴ **3:10** The man replied,¹⁶⁵ “I heard you moving about¹⁶⁶ in the orchard, and I was afraid because I was naked, so I hid.” **3:11** And the LORD God¹⁶⁷ said, “Who told you that you were naked?¹⁶⁸ Did you eat from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?”¹⁶⁹ **3:12** The man said, “The woman whom you gave me, she gave¹⁷⁰ me some fruit¹⁷¹ from the tree and I ate it.” **3:13** So the LORD God said to the woman, “What is this¹⁷² you have done?” And the woman replied, “The serpent¹⁷³ tricked¹⁷⁴ me, and I ate.”

3:14 The LORD God said to the serpent,¹⁷⁵
 “Because you have done this,
 Cursed¹⁷⁶ are you above all the wild beasts
 and all the living creatures of the field!
 On your belly you will crawl¹⁷⁷
 and dust you will eat¹⁷⁸ all the days of your life.
3:15 And I will put hostility¹⁷⁹ between you and the woman

¹⁵⁴tn Heb “And the woman saw.” The clause can be rendered as a temporal clause subordinate to the following verb in the sequence.

¹⁵⁵tn Heb “that the tree was good for food.” The words “produced fruit that was” are not in the Hebrew text, but are implied.

¹⁵⁶tn The Hebrew word פְּאִיִּם (*ta’awāh*, translated “attractive” here) actually means “desirable.” This term and the later term נְהֵמָה (*nehēmā*, “desirable”) are synonyms.

sn *Attractive* (Heb “desirable”)...*desirable*. These are different words in Hebrew. The verbal roots for both of these forms appear in Deut 5:21 in the prohibition against coveting. Strong desires usually lead to taking.

¹⁵⁷tn Heb “that good was the tree for food, and that desirable it was to the eyes, and desirable was the tree to make one wise.” On the connection between moral wisdom and the “knowledge of good and evil,” see the note on the word “evil” in 2:9.

sn *Desirable for making one wise*. The quest for wisdom can follow the wrong course, as indeed it does here. No one can become like God by disobeying God. It is that simple. The Book of Proverbs stresses that obtaining wisdom begins with the fear of God that is evidenced through obedience to his word. Here, in seeking wisdom, Eve disobeys God and ends up afraid of God.

¹⁵⁸tn The pronoun “it” is not in the Hebrew text, but is supplied (here and also after “ate” at the end of this verse) for stylistic reasons.

sn *She took...and ate it*. The critical word now discloses the disobedience: “[she] ate.” Since the LORD God had said, “You shall not eat,” the main point of the divine inquisition will be, “Did you eat,” meaning, “did you disobey the command?” The woman ate, being deceived by the serpent (1 Tim 2:14), but then the man ate, apparently willingly when the woman gave him the fruit (see Rom 5:12, 17-19).

¹⁵⁹sn This pericope (3:1-7) is a fine example of Hebrew narrative structure. After an introductory disjunctive clause that introduces a new character and sets the stage (3:1), the narrative tension develops through dialogue, culminating in the action of the story. Once the dialogue is over, the action is told in a rapid sequence of verbs—she took, she ate, she gave, and he ate.

¹⁶⁰tn The Hitpaël participle of הָלַךְ (*hālāk*, “to walk; to go”) here has an iterative sense, “moving” or “going about.” While a translation of “walking about” is possible, it assumes a theophany, the presence of the LORD God in a human form. This is more than the text asserts.

¹⁶¹tn The expression is traditionally rendered “cool of the day,” because the Hebrew word רָחַח (*rūah*) can mean “wind.” U. Cassuto concludes after lengthy discussion that the expression refers to afternoon when it became hot and the sun was beginning to decline (*Commentary on the Book of Genesis, From Adam to Noah*, 152-154). J. J. Niehaus offers a different interpretation of the phrase, relating רָחַח (*yōm*, usually understood as “day”) to an Akkadian cognate *umu*, “storm,” and translates the phrase “in the wind of the storm” (*God at Sinai*, 155-57). If Niehaus is correct, then God is not pictured as taking an afternoon stroll through the orchard, but as coming in a powerful windstorm to confront the man and woman with their rebellion. In this case הוֹרָא קוֹל, “sound of the LORD,” may refer to God’s thunderous roar, which typically accompanies his appearance in the storm to do battle or render judgment (e.g., see Ps 29).

¹⁶²tn The verb used here is the Hitpaël, giving the reflexive idea (“they hid themselves”). In v. 10, when Adam answers the LORD, the Niphal form is used with the same sense: “I hid.”

¹⁶³tn The Hebrew verb קָרָא (*qārā*, “to call”) followed by the preposition לְ (‘*el-*’ or ‘*le-*’, “to; unto”) often carries the connotation of “summon.”

¹⁶⁴sn *Where are you?* The question is probably rhetorical (a figure of speech called erotesis) rather than literal, because it was spoken to the man, who answers it with an explanation of *why* he was hiding rather than a location. The question has more the force of “Why are you hiding?”

¹⁶⁵tn Heb “and he said.”

¹⁶⁶tn Heb “your sound.” If one sees a storm theophany here (see the note on the word “time” in v. 8), then one could translate, “your powerful voice.”

¹⁶⁷tn Heb “and he said.” The referent (the LORD God) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

¹⁶⁸sn *Who told you that you were naked?* This is another rhetorical question, asking more than what it appears to ask. The second question in the verse reveals the LORD God’s real concern.

¹⁶⁹sn The Hebrew word order (“Did you from the tree—which I commanded you not to eat from it—eat?”) is arranged to emphasize that the man’s and the woman’s eating of the fruit was an act of disobedience. The relative clause inserted immediately after the reference to the tree brings out this point very well.

¹⁷⁰tn The Hebrew construction in this sentence uses an independent nominative absolute (formerly known as a *casus pendens*). “The woman” is the independent nominative absolute; it is picked up by the formal subject, the pronoun “she” written with the verb (“she gave”). The point of the construction is to throw the emphasis on “the woman.” But what makes this so striking is that a relative clause has been inserted to explain what is meant by the reference to the woman: “whom you gave me.” Ultimately, the man is blaming God for giving him the woman who (from the man’s viewpoint) caused him to sin.

¹⁷¹tn The words “some fruit” here and the pronoun “it” at the end of the sentence are not in the Hebrew text, but are supplied for stylistic reasons.

¹⁷²tn The use of the demonstrative pronoun is enclitic, serving as an undeclined particle for emphasis. It gives the sense of “What in the world have you done?” (see R. J. Williams, *Hebrew Syntax*, §118).

¹⁷³sn The Hebrew word order puts the subject (“the serpent”) before the verb here, giving prominence to it.

¹⁷⁴tn This verb (the Hiphil of נָשַׁךְ [*nāšāk*]) is used elsewhere of a king or god misleading his people into false confidence (2 Kgs 18:29 = 2 Chr 32:15 = Isa 36:14; 2 Kgs. 19:10 = Isa 37:10), of an ally deceiving a partner (Obad 7), of God deceiving his sinful people as a form of judgment (Jer 4:10), of false prophets instilling their audience with false hope (Jer 29:8), and of pride and false confidence producing self-deception (Jer 37:9; 49:16; Obad 3).

¹⁷⁵sn Note that God asks no question of the serpent, does not call for confession, as he did to the man and the woman; there is only the announcement of the curse. The order in this section is chiasmic: the man is questioned, the woman is questioned, the serpent is cursed, sentence is passed on the woman, sentence is passed on the man.

¹⁷⁶tn The Hebrew word translated “cursed,” a passive participle from נָרַח (*ārār*), either means “punished” or “banished,” depending on how one interprets the following preposition. If the preposition is taken as comparative, then the idea is “cursed [i.e., punished] are you above [i.e., more than] all the wild beasts.” In this case the comparative preposition reflects the earlier comparison: the serpent was more shrewd than all others, and so more cursed than all others. If the preposition is taken as separative (see the note on the word “ground” in 4:11), then the idea is “cursed and banished from all the wild beasts.” In this case the serpent is condemned to isolation from all the other animals.

¹⁷⁷tn Heb “go;” “walk;” but in English “crawl” or “slither” better describes a serpent’s movement.

¹⁷⁸sn *Dust you will eat*. Being restricted to crawling on the ground would necessarily involve “eating dust,” although that is not the diet of the serpent. The idea of being brought low, of “eating dust” as it were, is a symbol of humiliation.

¹⁷⁹tn The Hebrew word translated “hostility” is derived from the root עָנָה (“to be hostile; to be an adversary [or, enemy]”). The curse announces that there will be continuing hostility between the serpent and the woman. The serpent will now live in a “battle zone,” as it were.

and between your offspring and her offspring,¹⁸⁰
 they will attack¹⁸¹ your head,
 but¹⁸² you¹⁸³ will attack their heels.¹⁸⁴
3:16 To the woman he said,
 “I will greatly increase¹⁸⁵ your labor pains,¹⁸⁶
 with pain you will give birth to children.
 You will want to control your husband,¹⁸⁷
 but he will dominate¹⁸⁸ you.”
3:17 But to Adam¹⁸⁹ he said,
 “Because you obeyed¹⁹⁰ your wife
 and ate from the tree about which I commanded you,
 ‘You must not eat from it,’
 cursed is the ground¹⁹¹ thanks to you,¹⁹²
 in painful toil you will eat¹⁹³ of it all the days of your life.

¹⁸⁰ **sn** The Hebrew word translated “offspring” is a collective singular. The text anticipates the ongoing struggle between human beings (the woman’s offspring) and deadly poisonous snakes (the serpent’s offspring). An ancient Jewish interpretation of the passage states: “He made the serpent, cause of the deceit, press the earth with belly and flank, having bitterly driven him out. He aroused a dire enmity between them. The one guards his head to save it, the other his heel, for death is at hand in the proximity of men and malignant poisonous snakes.” See *Sib. Or.* 1:59-64. For a similar interpretation see Josephus, *Ant.* 1.1.4 (1.50-51).

¹⁸¹ **tn** *Heb* “he will attack [or, “bruise”] you [on] the head.” The singular pronoun and verb agree grammatically with the collective singular noun “offspring.” To clarify the collective sense of the pronoun, the translation uses the English plural pronoun “they.” For other examples of singular verb and pronominal forms being used with the collective singular “offspring,” see Gen 16:10; 22:17; 24:60. The word “head” is an adverbial accusative, locating the blow. A crushing blow to the head would be potentially fatal.

¹⁸² **tn** The disjunctive clause (conjunction + subject + verb) is understood as contrastive. Another option is to translate, “as they attack your head, you will attack their heel.” Both clauses place the subject before the verb, a construction that is sometimes used to indicate synchronic action (see Judg 15:14).

¹⁸³ **sn** *You will attack their heels.* Though the conflict will actually involve the serpent’s offspring (snakes) and the woman’s offspring (human beings), v. 15b for rhetorical effect depicts the conflict as being between the serpent and the woman’s offspring, as if the serpent will outlive the woman. The statement is personalized for the sake of the addressee (the serpent) and reflects the ancient Semitic concept of corporate solidarity, which emphasizes the close relationship between a progenitor and his offspring. Note Gen 28:14, where the LORD says to Jacob, “Your offspring will be like the dust of the earth, and you [second masculine singular] will spread out in all directions.” Jacob will “spread out” in all directions through his offspring, but the text states the matter as if this will happen to him personally.

¹⁸⁴ **tn** *Heb* “you will attack him [on] the heel.” The verb (translated “attack”) is repeated here, a fact that is obscured by some translations (e.g., NIV “crush...strike”). The singular pronoun agrees grammatically with the collective singular noun “offspring.” To clarify the collective sense of the pronoun, the translation uses the English plural “their.” For other examples of singular verb and pronominal forms being used with the collective singular “offspring,” see Gen 16:10; 22:17; 24:60. The word “heel” is an adverbial accusative, locating the blow. A bite on the heel from a poisonous serpent is potentially fatal. The translation uses the plural “heels” for the sake of consistency with the collective sense of the pronoun.

sn The etiological nature of v. 15 is apparent, though its relevance for modern western man is perhaps lost because we rarely come face to face with poisonous snakes. Ancient Israelites, who often encountered snakes in their daily activities (see, for example, Eccl 10:8; Amos 5:19), would find the statement quite meaningful as an explanation for the hostility between snakes and humans. (In the broader ancient Near Eastern context, compare the Mesopotamian serpent omens. See W. H. F. Saggs, *The Greatness that was Babylon*, 309.) This ongoing struggle, when interpreted in light of v. 15, is a tangible reminder of the conflict introduced into the world by the first humans’ rebellion against God. Many Christian theologians (going back to Irenaeus) understand v. 15 as the so-called *protevangeliem*, supposedly prophesying Christ’s victory over Satan (see W. Witfall, “Genesis 3:15—a Protevangeliem?” *CBQ* 36 [1974]: 361-65; and R. A. Martin, “The Earliest Messianic Interpretation of Genesis 3:15,” *JBL* 84 [1965]: 425-27). In this allegorical approach, the woman’s offspring is initially Cain, then the whole human race, and ultimately Jesus Christ, the *offspring* (*Heb* “seed”) of the woman (see Gal 4:4). The *offspring* of the serpent includes the evil powers and demons of the spirit world, as well as those humans who are in the kingdom of darkness (see John 8:44). According to this view, the passage gives the first hint of the gospel. Satan delivers a crippling blow to the Seed of the woman (Jesus), who in turn delivers a fatal blow to the Serpent (first defeating him through the death and resurrection [1 Cor 15:55-57] and then destroying him in the judgment [Rev 12:7-9; 20:7-10]). However, the grammatical structure of Gen 3:15b does not suggest this view. The repetition of the verb “attack,” as well as the word order, suggests mutual hostility is being depicted, not the defeat of the serpent. If the serpent’s defeat were being portrayed, it is odd that the alleged description of his death comes first in the sentence. If he has already been crushed by the woman’s “Seed,” how can he bruise his heel? To sustain the allegorical view, v. 15b must be translated in one of the following ways: “he will crush your head, even though you attack his heel” (in which case the second clause is concessive) or “he will crush your head as you attack his heel” (the clauses, both of which place the subject before the verb, may indicate synchronic action).

¹⁸⁵ **tn** The imperfect verb form is emphasized and intensified by the infinitive absolute from the same verb.

¹⁸⁶ **tn** *Heb* “your pain and your conception,” suggesting to some interpreters that having a lot of children was a result of the judgment (probably to make up for the loss through death). But the next clause shows that the pain is associated with conception and childbirth. The two words form a hendiadys (where two words are joined to express one idea, like “good and angry” in English), the second explaining the first. “Conception,” if the correct meaning of the noun, must be figurative here since there is no pain in conception; it is a synecdoche, representing the entire process of childbirth and child rearing from the very start. However, recent etymological research suggests the noun is derived from a root הָרַר, not הָרָה, and means “trembling, pain” (see D. Tsumura, “A Note on הָרַר (Gen 3,16),” *Bib* 75 [1994]: 398-400). In this case “pain and trembling” refers to the physical effects of childbirth. The word עֲצָבוֹן (*iššēḇōn*, “pain”), an abstract noun related to the verb (עָצַב, *‘aššāb*), includes more than physical pain. It is emotional distress as well as physical pain. The same word is used in v. 17 for the man’s painful toil in the field.

¹⁸⁷ **tn** *Heb* “and toward your husband [will be] your desire.” The nominal sentence does not have a verb; a future verb must be supplied, because the focus of the oracle is on the future struggle. The precise meaning of the noun הַשְׁרָקָה (*ḥšrāqāh*, “desire”) is debated. Many interpreters conclude that it refers to sexual desire here, because the subject of the passage is the relationship between a wife and her husband, and because the word is used in a romantic sense in Song 8:6. However, this interpretation makes little sense in Gen 3:16. First, it does not fit well with the assertion “he will dominate you.” Second, it implies that sexual desire was not part of the original creation, even though the man and the woman were told to multiply. And third, it ignores the usage of the word in Gen 4:7 where it refers to sin’s desire to control and dominate Cain. (Even in Song of Songs it carries the basic idea of “control,” for it describes the young man’s desire to “have his way sexually” with the young woman.) In Gen 3:16 the LORD announces a struggle, a conflict between the man and the woman. She will desire to control him, but he will dominate her instead. This interpretation also fits the tone of the passage, which is a judgment oracle. See further Susan T. Foh, “What is the Woman’s Desire?” *WTJ* 37 (1975): 376-83.

¹⁸⁸ **tn** The Hebrew verb מָסַל (*māsāl*) means “to rule over,” but in a way that emphasizes powerful control, domination, or mastery. This also is part of the baser human nature. The translation assumes the imperfect verb form has an objective/indicative sense here. Another option is to understand it as having a modal, desiderative nuance, “but he will want to dominate you.” In this case, the LORD simply announces the struggle without indicating who will emerge victorious.

sn This passage is a judgment oracle. It announces that conflict between man and woman will become the norm in human society. It does not depict the NT ideal, where the husband sacrificially loves his wife, as Christ loved the church, and where the wife recognizes the husband’s loving leadership in the family and voluntarily submits to it. Sin produces a conflict or power struggle between the man and the woman, but in Christ man and woman call a truce and live harmoniously (Eph 5:18-32).

¹⁸⁹ **tn** Since there is no article on the word, the personal name is used, rather than the generic “the man” (cf. NRSV).

¹⁹⁰ **tn** The idiom “listen to the voice of” often means “obey.” The man “obeyed” his wife and in the process disobeyed God.

¹⁹¹ **sn** For the ground to be *cursed* means that it will no longer yield its bounty as the blessing from God had promised. The whole creation, Paul writes in Rom 8:22, is still groaning under this curse, waiting for the day of redemption.

¹⁹² **tn** The Hebrew phrase בְּעִבְרֶיךָ (*ba‘‘ābūreḵ*) is more literally translated “on your account” or “because of you.” The idiomatic “thanks to you” in the translation tries to capture the point of this expression.

¹⁹³ **sn** *In painful toil you will eat.* The theme of eating is prominent throughout Gen 3. The prohibition was against eating from the tree of knowledge. The

3:18 It will produce thorns and thistles for you,
but you will eat the grain¹⁹⁴ of the field.

3:19 By the sweat of your brow¹⁹⁵ you will eat food
until you return to the ground,¹⁹⁶
for out of it you were taken;
for you are dust, and to dust you will return.¹⁹⁷

3:20 The man¹⁹⁸ named his wife Eve,¹⁹⁹ because²⁰⁰ she was the mother of all the living.²⁰¹ **3:21** The LORD God made garments from skin²⁰² for Adam and his wife, and clothed them. **3:22** And the LORD God said, “Now²⁰³ that the man has become like one of us,²⁰⁴ knowing²⁰⁵ good and evil, he must not be allowed²⁰⁶ to stretch out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever.” **3:23** So the LORD God expelled him²⁰⁷ from the orchard in Eden to cultivate the ground from which he had been taken. **3:24** When he drove²⁰⁸ the man out, he placed on the eastern side²⁰⁹ of the orchard in Eden sentries²¹⁰ who used the flame of a whirling sword²¹¹ to guard the way to the tree of life.

The Story of Cain and Abel

4:1 Now²¹² the man had marital relations with²¹³ his wife Eve, and she became pregnant²¹⁴ and gave birth to Cain. Then she said, “I have created²¹⁵ a man just as the LORD did!”²¹⁶ **4:2** Then she gave birth²¹⁷ to his brother Abel.²¹⁸ Abel took care of the flocks, while Cain cultivated the ground.²¹⁹

sin was in eating. The interrogation concerned the eating from the tree of knowledge. The serpent is condemned to eat the dust of the ground. The curse focuses on eating in a “measure for measure” justice. Because the man and the woman sinned by eating the forbidden fruit, God will forbid the ground to cooperate, and so it will be through painful toil that they will eat.

¹⁹⁴tn The Hebrew term עֵשֶׂב (*‘eseb*), when referring to human food, excludes grass (eaten by cattle) and woody plants like vines.

¹⁹⁵tn The expression “the sweat of your brow” is a metonymy, the sweat being the result of painful toil in the fields.

¹⁹⁶tn *Until you return to the ground.* The theme of mankind’s mortality is critical here in view of the temptation to be like God. Man will labor painfully to provide food, obviously not enjoying the bounty that creation promised. In place of the abundance of the orchard’s fruit trees, thorns and thistles will grow. Man will have to work the soil so that it will produce the grain to make bread. This will continue until he returns to the soil from which he was taken (recalling the creation in 2:7 with the wordplay on Adam and ground). In spite of the dreams of immortality and divinity, man is but dust (2:7), and will return to dust. So much for his pride.

¹⁹⁷tn In general, the themes of the curse oracles are important in the NT teaching that Jesus became the cursed one hanging on the tree. In his suffering and death, all the motifs are drawn together: the tree, the sweat, the thorns, and the dust of death (see Ps 22:15). Jesus experienced it all, to have victory over it through the resurrection.

¹⁹⁸tn Or “Adam”; however, the Hebrew term has the definite article here.

¹⁹⁹tn The name *Eve* means “Living one” or “Life-giver” in Hebrew.

²⁰⁰tn The explanatory clause gives the reason for the name. Where the one doing the naming gives the explanation, the text normally uses “saying”; where the narrator explains it, the explanatory clause is typically used.

²⁰¹tn The explanation of the name forms a soundplay (paronomasia) with the name: “Eve” is חַוְוָה (*hawwāh*) and “living” is חַי (*hay*). The name preserves the archaic form of the verb *hāyāh* (חָיָה) explained from *hāyāh* (חָיָה), “to live,” with the middle *vav*; the form חַי (*hay*) is derived from the normal form חָיָה (*hāyāh*). (Compare the name *Yahweh* [יְהוָה] explained from *hāyāh* [חָיָה], “to be,” rather than from יהוה.) The biblical account stands in contrast to the pagan material that presents a serpent goddess *hawwat* who is the mother of life. See J. Heller, “Der Name Eva,” *ArOr* 26 (1958): 636-56, and A. F. Key, “The Giving of Proper Names in the OT,” *JBL* 83 (1964): 55-59.

²⁰²tn *The LORD God made garments from skin.* The text gives no indication of how this was done, or how they came by the skins. Earlier in the narrative (v. 7) the attempt of the man and the woman to cover their nakedness with leaves expressed their sense of alienation from each other and from God. By giving them more substantial coverings, God indicates this alienation is greater than they realize. This divine action is also ominous; God is preparing them for the more hostile environment in which they will soon be living (v. 23). At the same time, there is a positive side to the story in that God makes provision for the man’s and woman’s condition.

²⁰³tn The particle הֵן (*hēn*) introduces a foundational clause, usually beginning with “since, because, now.”

²⁰⁴tn *The man has become like one of us.* See the notes on Gen 1:26 and 3:5.

²⁰⁵tn The infinitive explains in what way the man had become like God: “knowing good and evil.”

²⁰⁶tn *Heb* “and now, lest he stretch forth.” Following the foundational clause, this clause forms the main point. It is introduced with the particle *per* (פֶּן) which normally introduces a negative purpose, “lest....” The construction is elliptical; something must be done lest the man stretch forth his hand. The translation interprets the point intended.

²⁰⁷tn The verb is the Piel preterite of שָׁלַח (*sālāh*), forming a wordplay with the use of the same verb (in the Qal stem) in v. 22: to prevent the man’s “sending out” his hand, the LORD “sends him out.”

²⁰⁸tn The verb with the *vav* consecutive is made subordinate to the next verb forming a temporal clause. This avoids any tautology with the previous verse that already stated that the LORD expelled the man.

²⁰⁹tn Or “placed in front.” Directions in ancient Israel were given in relation to the east rather than the north.

²¹⁰tn The Hebrew word is traditionally transliterated “the cherubim.”

sn Sentries (Heb “cherubim”). The cherubim in the Bible seem to be a class of angels that are composite in appearance. Their main task seems to be guarding. Here they guard the way to the tree of life. The curtain in the tabernacle was to be embroidered with cherubim as well, symbolically guarding the way to God. (See in addition A. S. Kapelrud, “The Gates of Hell and the Guardian Angels of Paradise,” *JAOS* 70 [1950]: 151-56, and *TDOT* 7:307-19.)

²¹¹tn *Heb* “the flame of the sword that turns round and round.” The noun “flame” is qualified by the genitive of specification, “the sword,” which in turn is modified by the attributive participle “whirling.” The Hitpael of the verb “turn” has an iterative function here, indicating repeated action. The form is used in Job 37:12 of swirling clouds and in Judg 7:13 of a tumbling roll of bread. Verse 24 depicts the sword as moving from side to side to prevent anyone from passing or as whirling around, ready to cut to shreds anyone who tries to pass.

²¹²tn The disjunctive clause (conjunction + subject + verb) introduces a new episode in the ongoing narrative.

²¹³tn *Heb* “knew,” a frequent euphemism for sexual relations.

²¹⁴tn Or “she conceived.”

²¹⁵tn Here is another sound play (paronomasia) on a name. The sound of the verb קָנִיתִי (*qāniti*, “I have created”) reflects the sound of the name Cain in Hebrew (קַיִן [*qayin*]) and gives meaning to it. The saying uses the Qal perfect of קָנָה (*qānāh*). There are two homonymic verbs with this spelling: one meaning “obtain, acquire” and the other meaning “create” (see Gen 14:19, 22; Deut 32:6; Ps 139:13; Prov 8:22). The latter fits this context very well. Eve has created a man.

²¹⁶tn *Heb* “with the LORD.” The particle אֶת (*‘et-*) is not the accusative/object sign, but the preposition “with” as the ancient versions attest. Some take the preposition in the sense of “with the help of” (see BDB 86; cf. NEB, NIV, NRSV), while others prefer “along with” in the sense of “like, equally with, in common with” (see Lev 26:39; Isa 45:9; Jer 23:28). Either works well in this context; the latter is reflected in the present translation. Some understand אֶת (*‘et*) as the accusative/object sign and translate, “I have acquired a man—the LORD.” They suggest that the woman thought (mistakenly) that she had given birth to the incarnate LORD, the Messiah who would bruise the Serpent’s head. This fanciful suggestion is based on a questionable allegorical interpretation of Gen 3:15 (see the note there on the word “heel”).

sn Since Exod 6:3 seems to indicate that the name *Yahweh* (יְהוָה), translated LORD was first revealed to Moses (see also Exod 3:14), it is odd to see it used in quotations in Genesis by people who lived long before Moses. This problem has been resolved in various ways: (1) Source critics propose that Exod 6:3 is part of the “P” (or priestly) tradition, which is at odds with the “J” (or Yahwistic) tradition. (2) Many propose that “name” in Exod 6:3 does not refer to the divine name per se, but to the character suggested by the name. God appeared to the patriarchs primarily in the role of El Shaddai, the giver of fertility, not as *Yahweh*, the one who fulfills his promises. In this case the patriarchs knew the name *Yahweh*, but had not experienced the full significance of the name. In this regard it is possible that Exod 6:3b should not be translated as a statement of denial, but as an affirmation followed by a rhetorical question implying that the patriarchs did indeed know God by the name of *Yahweh*, just as they knew him as El Shaddai. D. A. Garrett, following the lead

4:3 At the designated time²²⁰ Cain brought some of the fruit of the ground for an offering²²¹ to the LORD. **4:4** But Abel brought²²² some of the firstborn of his flock—even the fattest²²³ of them. And the LORD was pleased with²²⁴ Abel and his offering, **4:5** but with Cain and his offering he was not pleased.²²⁵ So Cain became very angry,²²⁶ and his expression was downcast.²²⁷

4:6 Then the LORD said to Cain, “Why are you angry, and why is your expression downcast? **4:7** Is it not true²²⁸ that if you do what is right, you will be fine?²²⁹ But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching²³⁰ at the door. It desires to dominate you, but you must suppress it.”²³¹

4:8 Cain said to his brother Abel, “Let’s go out to the field.”²³² While they were in the field, Cain attacked²³³ his brother²³⁴ Abel and killed him.

4:9 Then the LORD said to Cain, “Where is your brother Abel?”²³⁵ And he replied, “I don’t know! Am I my brother’s guardian?”²³⁶ **4:10** But the LORD said, “What have you done?”²³⁷ The voice²³⁸ of your brother’s blood is crying out to me from the ground! **4:11** So now, you are banished²³⁹ from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother’s blood from your

of F. Andersen, sees Exod 6:2-3 as displaying a paneled A/B parallelism and translates them as follows (D. A. Garrett, *Rethinking Genesis*, 21): (A) “I am Yahweh.” (B) “And I made myself known to Abraham...as El Shaddai.” (A) “And my name is Yahweh”; (B) “Did I not make myself known to them?” However, even if one translates the text this way, the LORD’s words do not necessarily mean that he made the name Yahweh known to the fathers. God is simply affirming that he now wants to be called Yahweh (see Exod 3:14-16) and that he revealed himself in prior times as El Shaddai. If we stress the parallelism with B, the implied answer to the concluding question might be: “Yes, you did make yourself known to them—as El Shaddai!” The main point of the verse would be that El Shaddai, the God of the fathers, and the God who has just revealed himself to Moses as Yahweh are one and the same. (3) G. J. Wenham suggests that pre-Mosaic references to Yahweh are the product of the author/editor of Genesis, who wanted to be sure that Yahweh was identified with the God of the fathers. In this regard, note how Yahweh is joined with another divine name or title in Gen 9:26-27; 14:22; 15:2, 8; 24:3, 7, 12, 27, 42, 48; 27:20; 32:9. The angel uses the name Yahweh when instructing Hagar concerning her child’s name, but the actual name (Ishma-el, “El hears”) suggests that El, not Yahweh, originally appeared in the angel’s statement (16:11). In her response to the angel Hagar calls God El, not Yahweh (16:13). In 22:14 Abraham names the place of sacrifice “Yahweh Will Provide” (cf. v. 16), but in v. 8 he declares, “God will provide.” God uses the name Yahweh when speaking to Jacob at Bethel (28:13) and Jacob also uses the name when he awakens from the dream (28:16). Nevertheless he names the place Beth-el (“house of El”). In 31:49 Laban prays, “May Yahweh keep watch,” but in v. 50 he declares, “God is a witness between you and me.” Yahweh’s use of the name in 15:7 and 18:14 may reflect theological idiom, while the use in 18:19 is within a soliloquy. (Other uses of Yahweh in quotations occur in 16:2, 5; 24:31, 35, 40, 42, 44, 48, 50, 51, 56; 26:22, 28-29; 27:7, 27; 29:32-35; 30:24, 30; 49:18. In these cases there is no contextual indication that a different name was originally used.) For a fuller discussion of this proposal, see G. Wenham, “The Religion of the Patriarchs,” in *Essays on the Patriarchal Narratives* (ed. A. Millard and D. Wiseman; Eisenbrauns, 1983): 189-93. For another well known example of the technique being proposed, note the renaming of Abram to Abraham in Gen 17:3. When examples from his life are cited in Hebrews 11:8-10, the author calls him Abraham, even when citing incidents from Gen 12:1 which happened long before Abram’s new name was introduced.

²¹⁷ **tn** *Heb* “And she again gave birth.”
²¹⁸ **sn** The name *Abel* is not defined here in the text, but the tone is ominous. Abel’s name, the Hebrew word *hebel* (הֶבֶל), means “breath; vapor; vanity,” foreshadowing Abel’s untimely and premature death.

²¹⁹ **tn** *Heb* “and Abel was a shepherd of the flock, and Cain was a worker of the ground.” The designations of the two occupations are expressed with active participles, רֹעֵה (rō’eh, “shepherd”) and עֹבֵד (ōbēd, “worker”). Abel is occupied with sheep, whereas Cain is living under the curse, cultivating the ground.

²²⁰ **tn** *Heb* “And it happened at the end of days.” The clause indicates the passing of a set period of time leading up to offering sacrifices.
²²¹ **tn** The Hebrew term מִנְחָה (*minḥāh*, “offering”) is a general word for tribute, a gift, or an offering. It is the main word used in Lev 2 for the dedication offering. This type of offering could be comprised of vegetables. The content of the offering (vegetables, as opposed to animals) was not the critical issue, but rather the attitude of the offerer.

²²² **tn** *Heb* “But Abel brought, also he...” The disjunctive clause (conjunction + subject + verb) stresses the contrast between Cain’s offering and Abel’s.
²²³ **tn** Two prepositional phrases are used to qualify the kind of sacrifice that Abel brought: “from the firstborn” and “from the fattest of them.” These also could be interpreted as a hendiadys: “from the fattest of the firstborn of the flock.” Another option is to understand the second prepositional phrase as referring to the fat portions of the sacrificial sheep. In this case one may translate, “some of the firstborn of his flock, even some of their fat portions” (cf. NEB, NIV, NRSV).

sn Here are two types of worshipers—one (Cain) merely discharges a duty at the proper time, while the other (Abel) goes out of his way to please God with the first and the best.

²²⁴ **tn** The Hebrew verb שָׂעַף (*sā’āh*) simply means “to gaze at; to have regard for; to look on with favor [or, “with devotion].” The text does not indicate how this was communicated, but it indicates that Cain and Abel knew immediately. Either there was some manifestation of divine pleasure given to Abel and withheld from Cain (fire consuming the sacrifice?), or there was an inner awareness of divine response.

²²⁵ **sn** The Letter to the Hebrews explains the difference between the brothers as one of faith—Abel by faith offered a better sacrifice. Cain’s offering as well as his reaction to God’s displeasure did not reflect faith. See further B. K. Waltke, “Cain and His Offering,” *WTJ* 48 (1986): 363-72.

²²⁶ **tn** *Heb* “and it was hot to Cain.” This Hebrew idiom means that Cain “burned” with anger.

²²⁷ **tn** *Heb* “And his face fell.” The idiom means that the inner anger is reflected in Cain’s facial expression. The fallen or downcast face expresses anger, dejection, or depression. Conversely, in Num 6 the high priestly blessing speaks of the LORD lifting up his face and giving peace.

²²⁸ **tn** The introduction of the conditional clause with an interrogative particle prods the answer from Cain, as if he should have known this. It is not a condemnation, but an encouragement to do what is right.

²²⁹ **tn** The Hebrew text is difficult, because only one word occurs, רָשָׁע (*śē’el*), which appears to be the infinitive construct from the verb “to lift up” (רָשָׁע, *rāśā’*). The sentence reads: “If you do well, uplifting.” On the surface it seems to be the opposite of the fallen face. Everything will be changed if he does well. God will show him favor, he will not be angry, and his face will reflect that. But more may be intended since the second half of the verse forms the contrast: “If you do not do well, sin is crouching...” Not doing well leads to sinful attack; doing well leads to victory and God’s blessing.

²³⁰ **tn** The Hebrew term translated “crouching” (רֹבֵשׁ, *rōbēš*) is an active participle. Sin is portrayed with animal imagery here as a beast crouching and ready to pounce (a figure of speech known as zoomorphism). An Akkadian cognate refers to a type of demon; in this case perhaps one could translate, “Sin is the demon at the door” (see E. A. Speiser, *Genesis* [AB], 29, 32-33).

²³¹ **tn** *Heb* “and toward you [is] its desire, but you must rule over it.” As in Gen 3:16, the Hebrew noun “desire” refers to an urge to control or dominate. Here the desire is that which sin has for Cain, a desire to control for the sake of evil; but Cain must have mastery over it. The imperfect is understood as having an obligatory sense. Another option is to understand it as expressing potential (“you can have [or, “are capable of having”] mastery over it.”) It will be a struggle, but sin can be defeated by righteousness. In addition to this connection to Gen 3, other linguistic and thematic links between chaps. 3 and 4 are discussed by A. J. Hauser, “Linguistic and Thematic Links Between Genesis 4:1-6 and Genesis 2-3,” *JETS* 23 (1980): 297-306.

²³² **tc** The MT has simply “and Cain said to Abel his brother,” omitting Cain’s words to Abel. It is possible that the elliptical text is original. Perhaps the author uses the technique of aposiopesis, “a sudden silence” to create tension. In the midst of the story the narrator suddenly rushes ahead to what happened in the field. It is more likely that the ancient versions (Samaritan Pentateuch, LXX, Vg, and Syriac), which include Cain’s words, “Let’s go out to the field,” preserve the original reading here. After writing אָדָם, “his brother,” a scribe’s eye may have jumped to the end of the form הַשָּׂדֶה, “the field,” and accidentally omitted the quotation. (This would be an error of virtual homoteleuton. In older phases of the Hebrew script the sequence ך on אָדָם, “his brother,” is graphically similar to the final *he* on הַשָּׂדֶה, “the field.”)

²³³ **tn** *Heb* “arose against” (in a hostile sense).

²³⁴ **sn** The word “brother” appears six times in vv. 8-11, stressing the shocking nature of Cain’s fratricide (see 1 John 3:12).

²³⁵ **sn** *Where is Abel your brother?* Again the LORD confronts a guilty sinner with a rhetorical question (see Gen 3:9-13), asking for an explanation of what has happened.

²³⁶ **tn** *Heb* “The one guarding my brother [am] I?”
sn *Am I my brother’s guardian?* Cain lies and then responds with a defiant rhetorical question of his own in which he repudiates any responsibility for his brother. But his question is ironic, for he is responsible for his brother’s fate, especially if he wanted to kill him. See P. A. Riemann, “Am I My Brother’s Keeper?” *Int* 24 (1970): 482-91.

²³⁷ **sn** *What have you done?* Again the LORD’s question is rhetorical (see Gen 3:13), condemning Cain for his sin.

²³⁸ **tn** The word “voice” is a personification; the evidence of Abel’s shed blood condemns Cain, just as a human eyewitness would testify in court. For helpful insights, see G. von Rad, *Biblical Interpretations in Preaching*; and L. Morris, “The Biblical Use of the Term ‘Blood,’” *JTS* 6 (1955/56): 77-82.

²³⁹ **tn** *Heb* “cursed are you from the ground.” As in Gen 3:14, the word “cursed,” a passive participle from אָרַר (“*arār*”), either means “punished” or

hand. **4:12** When you try to cultivate²⁴⁰ the ground it will no longer yield²⁴¹ its best²⁴² for you. You will be a homeless wanderer²⁴³ on the earth.” **4:13** Then Cain said to the LORD, “My punishment²⁴⁴ is too great to endure!”²⁴⁵ **4:14** Look! You are driving me off the land²⁴⁶ today and I must hide from your presence.²⁴⁷ I will be a homeless wanderer on the earth; whoever finds me will kill me.” **4:15** But the LORD said to him, “All right then,²⁴⁸ if anyone kills Cain, Cain will be avenged seven times as much.”²⁴⁹ Then the LORD put a special mark²⁵⁰ on Cain so that no one who found him would strike him down.²⁵¹ **4:16** So Cain went out from the presence of the LORD and lived in the land of Nod,²⁵² east of Eden.

The Beginning of Civilization

4:17 Cain had marital relations²⁵³ with his wife, and she became pregnant²⁵⁴ and gave birth to Enoch. Cain was building a city, and he named the city after²⁵⁵ his son Enoch. **4:18** To Enoch was born Irad, and Irad was the father²⁵⁶ of Mehujael. Mehujael was the father of Methushael, and Methushael was the father of Lamech.

4:19 Lamech took two wives for himself; the name of the first was Adah and the name of the second was Zillah. **4:20** Adah gave birth to Jabal; he was the first²⁵⁷ of those who live in tents and keep²⁵⁸ livestock. **4:21** The name of his brother was Jubal; he was the first of all who play the harp and the flute. **4:22** Now Zillah also gave birth to Tubal-Cain, who heated metal and shaped²⁵⁹ all kinds of tools made of bronze and iron. The sister of Tubal-Cain was Naamah.

4:23 Lamech said to his wives,

“Adah and Zillah! Listen to me!

You wives of Lamech, hear my words!

I have killed a man for wounding me,

a young man²⁶⁰ for hurting me.

4:24 If Cain is to be avenged seven times as much,

then Lamech seventy-seven times.”²⁶¹

4:25 And Adam had marital relations²⁶² with his wife again, and she gave birth to a son. She named him Seth, saying, “God has given²⁶³ me another child²⁶⁴ in place of Abel, because Cain killed him.” **4:26** And a son was also born to Seth, whom he named Enosh. At that time people²⁶⁵ began to worship²⁶⁶ the LORD.

From Adam to Noah

5:1 This is the record²⁶⁷ of the family line²⁶⁸ of Adam.

When God created mankind,²⁶⁹ he made them²⁷⁰ in the likeness of God. **5:2** He created them male and female; when they were created, he blessed them and named them “mankind.”²⁷¹

“banished,” depending on how one interprets the following preposition. If the preposition is taken as indicating source, then the idea is “cursed (i.e., punished) are you from [i.e., “through the agency of”] the ground” (see v. 12a). If the preposition is taken as separative, then the idea is “cursed and banished from the ground.” In this case the ground rejects Cain’s efforts in such a way that he is banished from the ground and forced to become a fugitive out in the earth (see vv. 12b, 14).

²⁴⁰tn Heb “work.”

²⁴¹tn Heb “it will not again (רָחַץ, *tōsēp*) give (רָחַץ, *tēt*),” meaning the ground will no longer yield. In translation the infinitive becomes the main verb, and the imperfect verb form becomes adverbial.

²⁴²tn Heb “its strength.”

²⁴³tn Two similar sounding synonyms are used here: נָדָד נָדָד (*nā wānād*), “a wanderer and a fugitive.” This juxtaposition of synonyms emphasizes the single idea. In translation one can serve as the main description, the other as a modifier. Other translation options include “a wandering fugitive” and a “ceaseless wanderer” (cf. NIV).

²⁴⁴tn The primary meaning of the Hebrew word עָוֹן (*āwōn*) is “sin, iniquity.” But by metonymy it can refer to the “guilt” of sin, or to “punishment” for sin. The third meaning applies here. Just before this the LORD announces the punishment for Cain’s actions, and right after this statement Cain complains of the severity of the punishment. Cain is not portrayed as repenting of his sin.

²⁴⁵tn Heb “great is my punishment from bearing.” The preposition מִן (*min*, “from”) is used here in a comparative sense.

²⁴⁶tn Heb “from upon the surface of the ground.”

²⁴⁷sn I must hide from your presence. The motif of hiding from the LORD as a result of sin also appears in Gen 3:8-10.

²⁴⁸tn The Hebrew term לָכֵן *laken* (*lāken*, “therefore”) in this context carries the sense of “Okay,” or “in that case then I will do this.”

²⁴⁹sn The symbolic number *seven* is used here to emphasize that the offender will receive severe punishment. For other rhetorical and hyperbolic uses of the expression “seven times over,” see Pss 12:6; 79:12; Prov 6:31; Isa 30:26.

²⁵⁰tn Heb “sign,” “reminder.” The term “sign” is not used in the translation because it might imply to an English reader that God hung a sign on Cain. The text does not identify what the “sign” was. It must have been some outward, visual reminder of Cain’s special protected status.

²⁵¹sn God becomes Cain’s protector. Here is common grace—Cain and his community will live on under God’s care, but without salvation.

²⁵²sn The name *Nod* means “wandering” in Hebrew (see vv. 12, 14).

²⁵³tn Heb “knew,” a frequent euphemism for sexual relations.

²⁵⁴tn Or “she conceived.”

²⁵⁵tn Heb “according to the name of.”

²⁵⁶tn Heb “and Irad fathered.”

²⁵⁷tn Heb “father.” In this passage the word “father” means “founder,” referring to the first to establish such lifestyles and occupations.

²⁵⁸tn The word “keep” is not in the Hebrew text, but is supplied in the translation. Other words that might be supplied instead are “tend,” “raise” (NIV), or “have” (NRSV).

²⁵⁹tn The traditional rendering here, “who forged” (or “a forger of”) is now more commonly associated with counterfeit or fraud (e.g., “forged copies” or “forged checks”) than with the forging of metal. The phrase “heated metal and shaped [it]” has been used in the translation instead.

²⁶⁰tn The Hebrew term יָעֵד (*yeled*) probably refers to a youthful warrior here, not a child.

²⁶¹sn *Seventy-seven times*. Lamech seems to reason this way: If Cain, a murderer, is to be avenged seven times (see v. 15), then how much more one who has been unjustly wronged! Lamech misses the point of God’s merciful treatment of Cain. God was not establishing a principle of justice when he warned he would avenge Cain’s murder. In fact he was trying to limit the shedding of blood, something Lamech wants to multiply instead. The use of “seventy-seven,” a multiple of seven, is hyperbolic, emphasizing the extreme severity of the vengeance envisioned by Lamech.

²⁶²tn Heb “knew,” a frequent euphemism for sexual relations.

²⁶³sn The name *Seth* probably means something like “placed”; “appointed”; “set”; “granted,” assuming it is actually related to the verb that is used in the sentiment. At any rate, the name *sēt* (שֵׁט) and the verb *sāt* (שָׂט, “to place; to appoint; to set; to grant”) form a wordplay (paronomasia).

²⁶⁴tn Heb “offspring.”

²⁶⁵tn The word “people” is not in the Hebrew text, but is supplied in the translation. The construction uses a passive verb without an expressed subject.

²⁶⁶To call was begun” can be interpreted to mean that people began to call.

²⁶⁷tn Heb “call in the name.” The expression refers to worshipping the LORD through prayer and sacrifice (see Gen 12:8; 13:4; 21:33; 26:25). See G. J. Wenham, *Genesis* (WBC), 1:116.

²⁶⁸tn Heb “book” or “roll.” Cf. NIV “written account”; NRSV “list.”

²⁶⁹tn Heb “generations.” See the note on the phrase “this is the account of” in 2:4.

²⁷⁰tn The Hebrew text has אָדָם (*ādām*).

²⁷¹tn Heb “him.” The Hebrew text uses the third masculine singular pronominal suffix on the accusative sign. The pronoun agrees grammatically with its

5:3 When²⁷² Adam had lived one hundred and thirty years he fathered a son in his own likeness, according to his image, and he named him Seth. **5:4** The lifetime²⁷³ of Adam, after he became the father of Seth, was eight hundred years; during this time he had²⁷⁴ other²⁷⁵ sons and daughters. **5:5** The entire lifetime²⁷⁶ of Adam was nine hundred and thirty years, and then he died.²⁷⁷

5:6 When Seth had lived one hundred and five years, he became the father²⁷⁸ of Enosh. **5:7** Seth lived eight hundred and seven years after he became the father of Enosh, and he had²⁷⁹ other²⁸⁰ sons and daughters. **5:8** The entire lifetime of Seth was nine hundred and twelve years, and then he died.

5:9 When Enosh had lived ninety years, he became the father of Kenan. **5:10** Enosh lived eight hundred and fifteen years after he became the father of Kenan, and he had other sons and daughters. **5:11** The entire lifetime of Enosh was nine hundred and five years, and then he died.

5:12 When Kenan had lived seventy years, he became the father of Mahalalel. **5:13** Kenan lived eight hundred and forty years after he became the father of Mahalalel, and he had other sons and daughters. **5:14** The entire lifetime of Kenan was nine hundred and ten years, and then he died.

5:15 When Mahalalel had lived sixty-five years, he became the father of Jared. **5:16** Mahalalel lived eight hundred and thirty years after he became the father of Jared, and he had other sons and daughters. **5:17** The entire lifetime of Mahalalel was eight hundred and ninety-five years, and then he died.

5:18 When Jared had lived one hundred and sixty-two years, he became the father of Enoch. **5:19** Jared lived eight hundred years after he became the father of Enoch, and he had other sons and daughters. **5:20** The entire lifetime of Jared was nine hundred and sixty-two years, and then he died.

5:21 When Enoch had lived sixty-five years, he became the father of Methuselah. **5:22** After he became the father of Methuselah, Enoch walked with God²⁸¹ for three hundred years,²⁸² and he had other²⁸³ sons and daughters. **5:23** The entire lifetime of Enoch was three hundred and sixty-five years. **5:24** Enoch walked with God; and then he disappeared,²⁸⁴ because God took²⁸⁵ him away.

5:25 When Methuselah had lived one hundred and eighty-seven years, he became the father of Lamech. **5:26** Methuselah lived seven hundred and eighty-two years after he became the father of Lamech, and he had other²⁸⁶ sons and daughters. **5:27** The entire lifetime of Methuselah was nine hundred and sixty-nine years, and then he died.

5:28 When Lamech had lived one hundred and eighty-two years, he had a son. **5:29** He named him Noah,²⁸⁷ saying, “This one will bring us comfort²⁸⁸ from our labor and from the painful toil of our hands, because of the ground that the LORD has cursed.” **5:30** Lamech lived five hundred and ninety-five years after he became the father of Noah, and he had other²⁸⁹ sons and daughters. **5:31** The entire lifetime of Lamech was seven hundred and seventy-seven years, and then he died.

5:32 After Noah was five hundred years old, he²⁹⁰ became the father of Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

God’s Grief over the Wickedness of Mankind

6:1 When mankind²⁹¹ began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born²⁹² to them,²⁹³ **6:2** the sons of God²⁹⁴ saw that the daughters of mankind were beautiful. Thus they took wives for themselves from any they chose. **6:3** So the LORD said, “My

antecedent אָדָם (*ādām*). However, the next verse makes it clear that אָדָם (*ādām*) is collective here and refers to “mankind,” so it is preferable to translate the pronoun with the English plural.

²⁷⁴tn The Hebrew word used here is אָדָם (*ādām*).

²⁷⁵tn Heb “and Adam lived one hundred and thirty years.” In the translation the verb is subordinated to the following verb, “and he fathered,” and rendered as a temporal clause.

²⁷⁶tn Heb “days of.”

²⁷⁷tn Heb “he fathered.”

²⁷⁸tn Heb “he fathered.”

²⁷⁹tn The word “other” is not in the Hebrew text, but is supplied for stylistic reasons.

²⁸⁰tn Heb “all the days of Adam which he lived”

²⁸¹sn The genealogy traces the line from Adam to Noah and forms a bridge between the earlier accounts and the flood story. Its constant theme of the reign of death in the human race is broken once with the account of Enoch; but the genealogy ends with hope for the future through Noah. See further G. F. Hasel, “The Genealogies of Gen. 5 and 11 and their Alleged Babylonian Background,” *AUSS* 16 (1978): 361-74; idem, “Genesis 5 and 11,” *Origins* 7 (1980): 23-37.

²⁸²tn Heb “he fathered.”

²⁸³tn Heb “he fathered.”

²⁸⁴tn Here and in vv. 10, 13, 16, 19 the word “other” is not in the Hebrew text, but is supplied for stylistic reasons.

²⁸⁵sn With the seventh panel there is a digression from the pattern. Instead of simply saying that Enoch lived, the text observes that he “walked with God.” The rare expression “walked with” (the Hitpael form of the verb הָלַךְ [*hālāk*, “to walk”] collocated with the preposition אִתְּ [“with”]) is used in 1 Sam 25:15 to describe how David’s men maintained a cordial and cooperative relationship with Nabal’s men as they worked and lived side by side in the fields. In Gen 5:22 the phrase suggests that Enoch and God “got along.” This may imply that Enoch lived in close fellowship with God, leading a life of devotion and piety. An early Jewish tradition, preserved in *1 En.* 1:9 and alluded to in Jude 14, says that Enoch preached about the coming judgment. See F. S. Parnham, “Walking with God,” *EvQ* 46 (1974): 117-18.

²⁸⁶tn Heb “and Enoch walked with God, after he became the father of Methuselah, [for] three hundred years.”

²⁸⁷tn The word “other” is not in the Hebrew text, but is supplied for stylistic reasons.

²⁸⁸tn The Hebrew construction has the negative particle אֵין (*ēn*, “there is not”; “there was not”) with a pronominal suffix, “he was not.” Instead of saying that Enoch died, the text says he no longer was present.

²⁸⁹sn The text simply states that God *took* Enoch. Similar language is used of Elijah’s departure from this world (see 2 Kgs 2:10). The text implies that God overruled death for this man who walked with him.

²⁹⁰tn The word “other” is not in the Hebrew text, but is supplied for stylistic reasons.

²⁹¹sn The name *Noah* appears to be related to the Hebrew word *nūah* (נָוָה), “to rest.” There are several wordplays on the name “Noah” in the story of the flood.

²⁹²tn The Hebrew verb נָחַם (yēnahāmēnū) is from the root נָחַם (*nāhām*), which means “to comfort” in the Piel verbal stem. The letters *nun* and *heth* pick up the sounds in the name “Noah,” forming a paronomasia on the name. They are not from the same verbal root, and so the connection is only by sound. Lamech’s sentiment reflects the oppression of living under the curse on the ground, but also expresses the hope for relief in some way through the birth of Noah. His words proved to be ironic but prophetic. The relief would come with a new beginning after the flood. See E. G. Kraeling, “The Interpretations of the Name Noah in Genesis 5:29,” *JBL* 48 (1929): 138-43.

²⁹³tn The word “other” is not in the Hebrew text, but is supplied for stylistic reasons.

²⁹⁴tn Heb “Noah.” The pronoun (“he”) has been employed in the translation for stylistic reasons.

²⁹⁵tn The Hebrew text has the article prefixed to the noun. Here the article indicates the generic use of the word אָדָם (*ādām*), “mankind” or “humankind.”

²⁹⁶tn This disjunctive clause (conjunction + subject + verb) is circumstantial to the initial temporal clause. It could be rendered, “with daughters being born to them.” For another example of such a disjunctive clause following the construction כִּי וַיְהִי, “[and it came to pass] when,” see 2 Sam 7:1.

²⁹⁷tn The pronominal suffix is third masculine plural, indicating that the antecedent “mankind” is collective.

²⁹⁸sn The Hebrew phrase translated “sons of God” (*bēnē-hā’ēlohim*, בְּנֵי־הָאֱלֹהִים) occurs only here (Gen 6:2, 4) and in Job 1:6; 2:1; 38:7. In the Book of Job the phrase clearly refers to angelic beings. In Gen 6 the “sons of God” are distinct from “mankind,” suggesting they were not human. This is

spirit will not remain in²⁹⁵ mankind indefinitely,²⁹⁶ since²⁹⁷ they²⁹⁸ are mortal.²⁹⁹ They³⁰⁰ will remain for one hundred and twenty more years.³⁰¹

6:4 The Nephilim³⁰² were on the earth in those days (and also after this),³⁰³ when the sons of God were having sexual relations with³⁰⁴ the daughters of mankind, who gave birth to their children.³⁰⁵ They were the mighty heroes³⁰⁶ of old, the famous men.³⁰⁷

6:5 But the LORD saw³⁰⁸ that the wickedness of mankind had become great on the earth. Every inclination³⁰⁹ of the thoughts³¹⁰ of their minds³¹¹ was only evil³¹² all the time.³¹³ **6:6** The LORD regretted³¹⁴ that he had made mankind on the earth, and he felt highly offended.³¹⁵ **6:7** So the LORD said, “I will wipe mankind, whom I have created, from the face of the earth—everything from mankind to animals,³¹⁶ including creatures that move on the ground and birds of the air, for I regret that I have made them.”

consistent with the use of the phrase in Job. Since the passage speaks of these beings cohabiting with women, they must have taken physical form or possessed the bodies of men. An early Jewish tradition, preserved in *1 En.* 6-7, elaborates on this angelic revolt and even names the ringleaders. (2) Not all scholars accept the angelic interpretation of the “sons of God,” however. Some argue that the “sons of God” were members of Seth’s line, traced back to God through Adam in Gen 5, while the “daughters of mankind” were descendants of Cain. But, as noted above, the text distinguishes the “sons of God” from mankind (which would include the Sethites as well as the Cainites) and suggests that the “daughters of mankind” are human women in general, not just Cainites. (3) Others identify the “sons of God” as powerful tyrants, perhaps demon-possessed, who viewed themselves as divine and, following the example of Lamech (see Gen 4:19), practiced polygamy. But usage of the phrase “sons of God” in Job militates against this view. For literature on the subject see G. J. Wenham, *Genesis* (WBC), 1:135.

²⁹⁵tn The verb form יָדָן (*yāḏōn*) only occurs here. Some derive it from the verbal root יָדַן (“to judge”) and translate “strive” or “contend with” (so NIV) but in this case one expects the form to be יָדִין (*yāḏīn*). The Old Greek has “remain with,” a rendering which may find support from an Arabic cognate (see C. Westermann, *Genesis*, 1:375). If one interprets the verb in this way, then it is possible to understand רוּחַ (*rūāḥ*) as a reference to the divine life-giving spirit or breath, rather than the LORD’s personal Spirit. E. A. Speiser argues that the term is cognate with an Akkadian word meaning “protect” or “shield.” In this case, the LORD’s Spirit will not always protect mankind, for the race will suddenly be destroyed (E. A. Speiser, “YDWN, Gen. 6:3,” *JBL* 75 [1956]: 126-29).

²⁹⁶tn Or “forever.”

²⁹⁷tn The form בְּעַשְׂמָה (*beʿesamā*) appears to be a compound of the preposition בְּ , “in,” the relative שֶׁ , “who” or “which,” and the particle מָה , “also, even.” It apparently means “because even” (see BDB 980).

²⁹⁸tn Heb “he”; the plural pronoun has been used in the translation since “man” earlier in the verse has been understood as a collective (“mankind”).

²⁹⁹tn Heb “flesh.”

³⁰⁰tn See the note on “they” earlier in this verse.

³⁰¹tn Heb “his days will be one hundred and twenty years.” Some interpret this to mean that the age expectancy of people from this point on would be one hundred twenty, but neither the subsequent narrative nor reality favors this. It is more likely that this refers to the time remaining between this announcement of judgment and the coming of the flood.

³⁰²tn The Hebrew word נִפְּלִים (*neḫpīlim*) is simply transliterated here, because the meaning of the term is uncertain. According to the text, the Nephilim became mighty warriors and gained great fame in the antediluvian world. The text may imply they were the offspring of the sexual union of the “sons of God” and the “daughters of mankind” (v. 2), but it stops short of saying this in a direct manner. The Nephilim are mentioned in the OT only here and in Num 13:33, where it is stated that they were giants. The narrator observes that the Anakites of Canaan were descendants of the Nephilim. Certainly these later Anakite Nephilim could not be descendants of the antediluvian Nephilim (see also the following note on the word “this”).

³⁰³tn This observation is parenthetical, explaining that there were Nephilim even after the flood. If all mankind, with the exception of Noah and his family, died in the flood, it is difficult to understand how the postdiluvian Nephilim could be related to the antediluvian Nephilim or how the Anakites of Canaan could be their descendants (see Num 13:33). It is likely that the term Nephilim refers generally to “giants” (see *HALOT* 2:709) without implying any ethnic connection between the antediluvian and postdiluvian varieties.

³⁰⁴tn Heb “were entering to,” referring euphemistically to sexual intercourse here. The Hebrew imperfect verbal form draws attention to the ongoing nature of such sexual unions during the time before the flood.

³⁰⁵tn Heb “and they gave birth to them.” The masculine plural suffix “them” refers to the “sons of God,” to whom the “daughters of mankind” bore children. After the Qal form of the verb יָלַד (*yālāḏ*, “to give birth”) the preposition לְ , “to,” introduces the father of the child(ren). See Gen 16:1, 15; 17:19, 21; 21:2-3, 9; 22:23; 24:24, 47; 25:2, etc.

³⁰⁶tn The parenthetical/explanatory clause uses the word הַגִּבּוֹרִים (*hagibbōrim*) to describe these Nephilim. The word means “warriors; mighty men; heroes.” The appositional statement further explains that they were “men of renown.” The text refers to superhuman beings who held the world in their power and who lived on in ancient lore outside the Bible. See E. A. Speiser, *Genesis* (AB), 45-46; C. Westermann, *Genesis*, 1:379-80; and Anne D. Kilmer, “The Mesopotamian Counterparts of the Biblical *Nephilim*” in *Perspectives on Language and Text*, ed. E. W. Conrad and W. G. Newing (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1987): 39-43.

³⁰⁷tn Heb “men of name” (i.e., famous men).

³⁰⁸tn The Hebrew verb translated *saw* (רָאָה , *rāʾāh*), used here of God’s evaluation of mankind’s evil deeds, contrasts with God’s evaluation of creative work in Gen 1, when he observed that everything was good.

³⁰⁹tn The noun יָצַר (*yāṣar*) is related to the verb יָצַר (*yāṣār*), “to form,” “to fashion” (with a design). Here it refers to human plans or intentions (see Gen 8:21; 1 Chr 28:9; 29:18). People had taken their God-given capacities and used them to devise evil. The word יָצַר (*yāṣar*) became a significant theological term in Rabbinic literature for what might be called the sin nature—the evil inclination (see also R. E. Murphy, “Yeser in the Qumran Literature,” *Bib* 39 [1958]: 334-44).

³¹⁰tn The related verb הָשִׁיב (*hāšīb*) means “to think; to devise; to reckon.” The noun (here) refers to thoughts or considerations.

³¹¹tn Heb “his heart” (referring to collective “mankind”). The Hebrew term לֵב (*lēb*, “heart”) frequently refers to the seat of one’s thoughts (see BDB 524). In contemporary English this is typically referred to as the “mind.”

³¹²tn *Every inclination of the thoughts of their minds was only evil.* There is hardly a stronger statement of the wickedness of the human race than this. Here is the result of falling into the “knowledge of good and evil”: evil becomes dominant, and the good is ruined by the evil.

³¹³tn Heb “all the day.”

tn The author of Genesis goes out of his way to emphasize the depth of human evil at this time. Note the expressions “every inclination,” “only evil,” and “all the time.”

³¹⁴tn Or “was grieved”; “was sorry.” In the Niphal stem the verb נָחַם (*nāḥām*) can carry one of four semantic meanings, depending on the context: (1) “to experience emotional pain or weakness,” “to feel regret,” often concerning a past action (see Exod 13:17; Judg 21:6, 15; 1 Sam 15:11, 35; Job 42:6; Jer 31:19). In several of these texts כִּי (“because”) introduces the cause of the emotional sorrow. (2) Another meaning is “to be comforted” or “to comfort oneself” (sometimes by taking vengeance). See Gen 24:67; 38:12; 2 Sam 13:39; Ps 77:3; Isa 1:24; Jer 31:15; Ezek 14:22; 31:16; 32:31. (This second category represents a polarization of category one.) (3) The meaning “to relent from” or “to repudiate” a course of action which is already underway is also possible (see Judg 2:18; 2 Sam 24:16 = 1 Chr 21:15; Pss 90:13; 106:45; Jer 8:6; 20:16; 42:10). (4) Finally, “to retract” (a statement) or “to relent or change one’s mind concerning,” “to deviate from” (a stated course of action) is possible (see Exod 32:12, 14; 1 Sam 15:29; Ps 110:4; Isa 57:6; Jer 4:28; 15:6; 18:8, 10; 26:3, 13, 19; Ezek 24:14; Joel 2:13-14; Am 7:3, 6; Jon 3:9-10; 4; 2; Zech 8:14). See R. B. Chisholm, “Does God ‘Change His Mind?’” *BSac* 152 (1995): 388. The first category applies here because the context speaks of God’s grief and emotional pain (see the following statement in v. 6) as a result of a past action (his making mankind). For a thorough study of the word נָחַם (*nāḥām*), see H. Van Dyke Parunak, “A Semantic Survey of *NHAM*,” *Bib* 56 (1975): 512-32.

³¹⁵tn Heb “and he was grieved to his heart.” The verb עָצַב (*ʿāṣāḇ*) can carry one of three semantic senses, depending on the context: (1) “to be injured” (Ps 56:5; Eccl 10:9; 1 Chr 4:10); (2) “to experience emotional pain”; “to be depressed emotionally”; “to be worried” (2 Sam 19:2; Isa 54:6; Neh 8:10-11); (3) “to be embarrassed”; “to be insulted”; “to be offended” (to the point of anger at another or oneself, Gen 34:7; 45:5; 1 Sam 20:3, 34; 1 Kgs 1:6; Isa 63:10; Ps 78:40). This third category develops from the second by metonymy. In certain contexts emotional pain leads to embarrassment and/or anger. In this last use the subject sometimes directs his anger against the source of grief (see especially Gen 34:7). The third category fits best in Gen 6:6 because mankind’s sin does not merely wound God emotionally. On the contrary, it prompts him to strike out in judgment against the source of his distress (see v. 7). The verb עָצַב (*ʿāṣāḇ*), a Hitpael from עָצַב (*ʿāṣāḇ*), alludes to the judgment oracles in Gen 3:16-19. Because Adam and Eve sinned, their life would be filled with pain; but sin in the human race also brought pain to God. The wording of v. 6 is ironic when compared to Gen 5:29. Lamech anticipated relief (נָחַם [*nāḥām*]) from their work (מַעֲשֵׂה [*maʿāšeh*]) and their painful toil (יִשְׁבֹּן [*iššəḇōn*]); but now we read that God was sorry (*naḥam* [נָחַם]) that he had made (עָשָׂה [*ʿāšāh*]) mankind for it brought him great pain (עָצַב [*ʿāṣāḇ*]).

³¹⁶tn The text simply has “from man to beast, to creatures, and to birds of the air.” The use of the prepositions $\text{עַל} \dots \text{מִן}$ (*min...ād*) stresses the extent of the judgment in creation.

6:8 But³¹⁷ Noah found favor³¹⁸ in the sight of³¹⁹ the LORD.

The Judgment of the Flood

6:9 This is the account of Noah.³²⁰

Noah was a godly man; he was blameless³²¹ among his contemporaries.³²² He³²³ walked with³²⁴ God. **6:10** Noah had³²⁵ three sons: Shem, Ham and Japheth.

6:11 The earth was ruined³²⁶ in the sight of³²⁷ God; the earth was filled with violence.³²⁸ **6:12** God saw the earth, and indeed³²⁹ it was ruined,³³⁰ for all living creatures³³¹ on the earth were sinful.³³² **6:13** So God said³³³ to Noah, “I have decided that all living creatures must die,³³⁴ for the earth is filled with violence because of them. Now I am about to destroy³³⁵ them and the earth. **6:14** Make³³⁶ for yourself an ark of cypress³³⁷ wood. Make rooms in the ark, and cover³³⁸ it with pitch inside and out. **6:15** This is how you should make it: the ark is to be four hundred fifty feet long, seventy-five feet wide, and forty-five feet high.³³⁹ **6:16** Make a roof for the ark and finish it, leaving eighteen inches³⁴⁰ from the top.³⁴¹ Put a door in the side of the ark, and make lower, middle and upper decks. **6:17** I am about to bring³⁴² floodwaters³⁴³ on the earth to destroy³⁴⁴ from under the sky all the living creatures that have the

³¹⁷tn The disjunctive clause (conjunction + subject + verb) is contrastive here: God condemns the human race, but he is pleased with Noah.

³¹⁸tn The Hebrew expression “find favor [in the eyes of]” is an idiom meaning “to be an object of another’s favorable disposition or action,” “to be a recipient of another’s favor, kindness, mercy.” The favor/kindness is often earned; coming in response to an action or condition (see Gen 32:5; 39:4; Deut 24:1; 1 Sam 25:8; Prov 3:4; Ruth 2:10). This is the case in Gen 6:8, where v. 9 gives the basis (Noah’s righteous character) for the divine favor.

³¹⁹tn Heb “in the eyes of,” an anthropomorphic expression for God’s opinion or decision. The LORD saw that the whole human race was corrupt; but he looked in favor on Noah.

³²⁰sn There is a vast body of scholarly literature about the flood story. The following studies are particularly helpful: A. Heidel, *The Gilgamesh Epic and the Old Testament Parallels*; M. Kessler, “Rhetorical Criticism of Genesis 7,” *Rhetorical Criticism: Essays in Honor of James Muilenberg* (PTMS), 1-17; I. M. Kikawada and A. Quinn, *Before Abraham Was*; R. E. Longacre, “The Discourse Structure of the Flood Narrative,” JAARSup 47 (1979): 89-133; A. R. Millard, “A New Babylonian ‘Genesis Story,’” *TynBul* 18 (1967): 3-18; G. J. Wenham, “The Coherence of the Flood Narrative,” *VT* 28 (1978): 336-48.

³²¹tn The Hebrew term אָמִים (*āmim*, “blameless”) is used of men in Gen 17:1 (associated with the idiom “walk before,” which means “maintain a proper relationship with,” see 24:40); Deut 18:13 (where it means “blameless” in the sense of not guilty of the idolatrous practices listed before this; see Josh 24:14; Pss 18:23, 26 (“blameless” in the sense of not having violated God’s commands); 37:18 (in contrast to the wicked); 101:2, 6 (in contrast to proud, deceitful slanderers; see 15:2); Prov 2:21; 11:5 (in contrast to the wicked); 28:10; Job 12:4.

³²²tn Heb “Noah was a godly man, blameless in his generations.” The singular “generation” can refer to one’s contemporaries, i.e., those living at a particular point in time. The plural “generations” can refer to successive generations in the past or the future. Here, where it is qualified by “his” (i.e., Noah’s), it refers to Noah’s contemporaries, comprised of the preceding generation (his father’s generation), those of Noah’s generation, and the next generation (those the same age as his children). In other words, “his generations” means the generations contemporary with him. See BDB 190.

³²³tn Heb “Noah.” The proper name has been replaced with the pronoun in the translation for stylistic reasons.

³²⁴tn The construction translated “walked with” is used in Gen 5:22, 24 (see the note on this phrase in 5:22) and in 1 Sam 25:15, where it refers to David’s and Nabal’s men “rubbing shoulders” in the fields. Based on the use in 1 Sam 25:15, the expression seems to mean “live in close proximity to,” which may, by metonymy, mean “maintain cordial relations with.”

³²⁵tn Heb “fathered.”

³²⁶tn Apart from Gen 6:11-12, the Niphal form of this verb occurs in Exod 8:20 HT (8:24 ET), where it describes the effect of the swarms of flies on the land of Egypt; Jer 13:7 and 18:4, where it is used of a “ruined” belt and “marred” clay pot, respectively; and Ezek. 20:44, where it describes Judah’s morally “corrupt” actions. The sense “morally corrupt” fits well in Gen 6:11 because of the parallelism (note “the earth was filled with violence”). In this case “earth” would stand by metonymy for its sinful inhabitants. However, the translation “ruined” works just as well, if not better. In this case mankind’s sin is viewed as having an adverse effect upon the earth. Note that vv. 12b-13 make a distinction between the earth and the living creatures who live on it.

³²⁷tn Heb “before.”

³²⁸tn The Hebrew word translated “violence” refers elsewhere to a broad range of crimes, including unjust treatment (Gen 16:5; Amos 3:10), injurious legal testimony (Deut 19:16), deadly assault (Gen 49:5), murder (Judg 9:24), and rape (Jer 13:22).

³²⁹tn Or “God saw how corrupt the earth was.”

³³⁰tn The repetition in the text (see v. 11) emphasizes the point.

³³¹tn Heb “flesh.” Since moral corruption is in view here, most modern western interpreters understand the referent to be mankind. However, the phrase “all flesh” is used consistently of mankind and the animals in Gen 6-9 (6:17, 19; 7:15-16, 21; 8:17; 9:11, 15-17), suggesting that the author intends to picture all living creatures, mankind and animals, as guilty of moral failure. This would explain why the animals, not just mankind, are victims of the ensuing divine judgment. The OT sometimes views animals as morally culpable (Gen 9:5; Exod 21:28-29; Jonah 3:7-8). The OT also teaches that a person’s sin can contaminate others (people and animals) in the sinful person’s sphere (see the story of Achan, especially Josh 7:10). So the animals could be viewed here as morally contaminated because of their association with sinful mankind.

³³²tn Heb “had corrupted its way.” The third masculine singular pronominal suffix on “way” refers to the collective “all flesh.” The construction “corrupt one’s way” occurs only here (though Ezek 16:47 uses the Hiphil in an intransitive sense with the prep ב [ber, “in”] followed by “ways”). The Hiphil of שָׁחַת (*śāḥāt*) means “to ruin; to destroy; to corrupt,” often, as here, in a moral/ethical sense. The Hebrew term דֶּרֶךְ (*derek*, “way”) here refers to behavior or moral character, a sense that it frequently carries (see BDB 203 s.v. 6.a).

³³³sn On the divine style utilized here, see R. Lapointe, “The Divine Monologue as a Channel of Revelation,” *CBQ* 32 (1970): 161-81.

³³⁴tn Heb “the end of all flesh is coming [or, ‘has come’] before me.” (The verb form is either a perfect or a participle.) The phrase “end of all flesh” occurs only here. The term “end” refers here to the end of “life,” as v. 3 and the following context (which describes how God destroys all flesh) make clear. The statement “the end has come” occurs in Ezek 7:2, 6, where it is used of divine judgment. The phrase “come before” occurs in Exod 28:30, 35; 34:34; Lev 15:14; Num 27:17; 1 Sam 18:13, 16; 2 Sam 19:8; 20:8; 1 Kgs 1:23, 28, 32; Ezek 46:9; Pss 79:11 (groans come before God); 88:3 (a prayer comes before God); 100:2; 119:170 (prayer comes before God); Lam 1:22 (evil doing comes before God); Esth 1:19; 8:1; 9:25; 1 Chr 16:29. The expression often means “have an audience with” or “appear before.” But when used metaphorically, it can mean “get the attention of” or “prompt a response.” This is probably the sense in Gen 6:13. The necessity of ending the life of all flesh on earth is an issue that has gotten the attention of God. The term “end” may even be a metonymy for that which has prompted it—violence (see the following clause).

³³⁵tn The participle, especially after הִנְנֶה (*hinnēh*) has an imminent future nuance. The Hiphil of שָׁחַת (*śāḥāt*) here has the sense “to destroy” (in judgment). Note the wordplay involving this verb in vv. 11-13: The earth is “ruined” because all flesh has acted in a morally “corrupt” manner. Consequently, God will “destroy” all flesh (the referent of the suffix “them”) along with the ruined earth. They had ruined themselves and the earth with violence, and now God would ruin them with judgment. For other cases where “earth” occurs as the object of the Hiphil of שָׁחַת, see 1 Sam 6:5; 1 Chr 20:1; Jer 36:29; 51:25.

³³⁶sn The Hebrew verb is an imperative. A motif of this section is that Noah did as the LORD commanded him—he was obedient. That obedience had to come from faith in the word of the LORD. So the theme of obedience to God’s word is prominent in this prologue to the law.

³³⁷tn A transliteration of the Hebrew term yields “gopher (גֹּפֶרֶת, *gōp̄per*) wood” (so KJV, NAB, NASB). While the exact nature of the wood involved is uncertain (cf. NLT “resinous wood”), many modern translations render the Hebrew term as “cypress” (so NEB, NIV, NRSV).

³³⁸tn The Hebrew term כִּפֵּר (*kāp̄ār*, “to cover; to smear” [= to caulk]) appears here in the Qal stem with its primary, non-metaphorical meaning. The Piel form כִּפַּר (*kip̄per*), which has the metaphorical meaning “to atone; to expiate; to pacify,” is used in levitical texts (see HALOT 2:493-94). Some authorities regard the form in v. 14 as a homonym of the much more common levitical term (see BDB 498).

³³⁹tn Heb “three hundred cubits long, fifty cubits wide, and thirty cubits high.” The standard cubit in the OT is assumed by most authorities to be about eighteen inches (45 cm) long.

³⁴⁰tn Heb “a cubit.”

³⁴¹tn Heb “to a cubit you shall finish it from above.” The idea is that Noah was to leave an eighteen-inch opening from the top for a window for light.

³⁴²tn The Hebrew construction uses the independent personal pronoun, followed by a suffixed form of הִנְנֶה (*hinnēh*, “look”) and the a participle used with an imminent future nuance: “As for me, look, I am going to bring.”

³⁴³tn Heb “the flood, water.”

³⁴⁴tn The verb שָׁחַת (*śāḥāt*) is repeated yet again, only now in an infinitival form expressing the purpose of the flood.

breath of life in them.³⁴⁵ Everything that is on the earth will die, **6:18** but I will confirm³⁴⁶ my covenant with you. You will enter³⁴⁷ the ark—you, your sons, your wife, and your sons' wives with you. **6:19** You must bring into the ark two of every kind of living creature from all flesh,³⁴⁸ male and female, to keep them alive³⁴⁹ with you. **6:20** Of the birds after their kinds, and of the cattle after their kinds, and of every creeping thing of the ground after their kinds, two of every kind will come to you so you can keep them alive.³⁵⁰ **6:21** And you must take³⁵¹ for yourself every kind of food³⁵² that is eaten,³⁵³ and gather it together.³⁵⁴ It will be food for you and for them.

6:22 And Noah did all³⁵⁵ that God commanded him—he did indeed.³⁵⁶

7:1 The LORD said to Noah, “Come into the ark, you and all your household, for I consider you godly among this generation.”³⁵⁷

7:2 You must take with you seven³⁵⁸ of every kind of clean animal,³⁵⁹ the male and its mate,³⁶⁰ two of every kind of unclean animal, the male and its mate, **7:3** and also seven³⁶¹ of every kind of bird in the sky, male and female,³⁶² to preserve their offspring³⁶³ on the face of the earth. **7:4** For in seven days³⁶⁴ I will cause it to rain³⁶⁵ on the earth for forty days and forty nights, and I will wipe from the face of the ground every living thing that I have made.

7:5 And Noah did all³⁶⁶ that the LORD commanded him.

7:6 Noah³⁶⁷ was six hundred years old when the floodwaters engulfed³⁶⁸ the earth. **7:7** Noah entered the ark along with his sons, his wife, and his sons' wives, because³⁶⁹ of the floodwaters. **7:8** Pairs³⁷⁰ of clean animals, of unclean animals, of birds, and of everything that creeps along the ground, **7:9** male and female, came into the ark to Noah,³⁷¹ just as God had commanded Noah. **7:10** And after seven days the floodwaters engulfed the earth.³⁷²

7:11 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 deep³⁷³ burst open and the floodgates of the heavens³⁷⁴ were opened. **7:12** And the rain fell³⁷⁵ on the earth forty days and forty nights.

7:13 On that very day Noah entered the ark, accompanied by his sons Shem, Ham and Japheth, along with his wife and his sons' three wives.³⁷⁶ **7:14** They entered,³⁷⁷ along with every living creature after its kind, every animal after its kind, every creeping thing that creeps on the earth after its kind, and every bird after its kind, everything with wings.³⁷⁸ **7:15** Pairs³⁷⁹ of all creatures³⁸⁰ that have the breath of life came into the ark to Noah. **7:16** Those that entered were male and female,³⁸¹ just as God commanded him. Then the LORD shut him in.

³⁴⁵ **tn** The Hebrew construction here is different from the previous two; here it is **רָחַץ הַיַּיִם** (*rúah hayyim*) rather than **נִשְׁמַח הַיַּיִם** (*nismach hayyim*). It refers to everything that breathes.

³⁴⁶ **tn** The Hebrew verb **וַיְחַמְדֵם** (*wahāqimōti*) is the Hiphil perfect with a *vav* consecutive (picking up the future sense from the participles) from **קָמַח** (*qūm*). This may refer to the confirmation or fulfillment of an earlier promise, but it is more likely that it anticipates the unconditional promise made to mankind following the flood (see Gen 9:9, 11, 17).

³⁴⁷ **tn** The perfect verb form with *vav* consecutive is best understood as specific future, continuing God's description of what will happen (see vv. 17-18a).

³⁴⁸ **tn** *Heb* “from all life, from all flesh, two from all you must bring.” The disjunctive clause at the beginning of the verse (note the conjunction with prepositional phrase, followed by two more prepositional phrases in apposition and then the imperfect verb form) signals a change in mood from announcement (vv. 17-18) to instruction.

³⁴⁹ **tn** The Piel infinitive construct **לְחַמְדֵם** (*l'haḥāyōt*) shows the purpose of bringing the animals into the ark—saving life. The Piel of this verb means here “to preserve alive.”

³⁵⁰ **tn** *Heb* “to keep alive.”

³⁵¹ **tn** The verb is a direct imperative: “And you, take for yourself.” The form stresses the immediate nature of the instruction; the pronoun underscores the directness.

³⁵² **tn** *Heb* “from all food,” meaning “some of every kind of food.”

³⁵³ **tn** Or “will be eaten.”

³⁵⁴ **tn** *Heb* “and gather it to you.”

³⁵⁵ **tn** *Heb* “according to all.”

³⁵⁶ **tn** The last clause seems redundant: “and thus [כֵּן, *kēn*] he did.” It underscores the obedience of Noah to all that God had said.

³⁵⁷ **tn** *Heb* “for you I see [as] godly before me in this generation.” The direct object (“you”) is placed first in the clause to give it prominence. The verb “to see” here signifies God's evaluative discernment.

³⁵⁸ **tn** Or “seven pairs” (cf. NRSV).

³⁵⁹ **sn** For a study of the leitical terminology of “clean” and “unclean,” see L. E. Toombs, “Clean and Unclean,” *IDB* 1:643.

³⁶⁰ **tn** *Heb* “a male and his female” (also a second time at the end of this verse). The terms used here for male and female animals (**זָכָר** [*zākār*] and **אִשָּׁה** [*iššāh*]) normally refer to humans.

³⁶¹ **tn** Or “seven pairs” (cf. NRSV).

³⁶² **tn** Here (and in v. 9) the Hebrew text uses the normal generic terms for “male and female” (**זָכָר וּנְקֵבָה**, *zākār ûneqēbāh*).

³⁶³ **tn** *Heb* “to keep alive offspring.”

³⁶⁴ **tn** *Heb* “for seven days yet,” meaning “after [or, “in”] seven days.”

³⁶⁵ **tn** The Hiphil participle **מַמְטִיר** (*mamētir*, “cause to rain”) here expresses the certainty of the act in the imminent future.

³⁶⁶ **tn** *Heb* “according to all.”

³⁶⁷ **tn** *Heb* “Now Noah was.” The disjunctive clause (conjunction + subject + predicate nominative after implied “to be” verb) provides background information. The age of Noah receives prominence.

³⁶⁸ **tn** *Heb* “and the flood was water upon.” The disjunctive clause (conjunction + subject + verb) is circumstantial/temporal in relation to the preceding clause. The verb **הָיָה** (*hāyāh*) here carries the nuance “to come” (BDB 225). In this context the phrase “come upon” means “to engulf.”

³⁶⁹ **tn** The preposition **כִּי** (*min*) is causal here, explaining why Noah and his family entered the ark.

³⁷⁰ **tn** *Heb* “two two” meaning “in twos.”

³⁷¹ **tn** The Hebrew text of vv. 8-9a reads, “From the clean animal[s] and from the animal[s] which are not clean and from the bird[s] and everything that creeps on the ground, two two they came to Noah to the ark, male and female.”

³⁷² **tn** *Heb* “came upon.”

³⁷³ **tn** The Hebrew term **תְּהוֹמוֹת** (*l'hôm*, “deep”) refers to the watery deep, the salty ocean—especially the primeval ocean that surrounds and underlies the earth (see Gen 1:2).

sn *The watery deep.* The same Hebrew term used to describe the watery deep in Gen 1:2, *l'hôm*, appears here. The text seems to picture here subterranean waters coming from under the earth and contributing to the rapid rise of water. The significance seems to be, among other things, that in this judgment God was returning the world to its earlier condition of being enveloped with water—a judgment involving the reversal of creation. On Gen 7:11 see G. F. Hasel, “The Fountains of the Great Deep,” *Origins* 1 (1974): 67-72; idem, “The Biblical View of the Extent of the Flood,” *Origins* 2 (1975): 77-95.

³⁷⁴ **sn** On the prescientific view of the sky reflected here, see L. I. J. Stadelmann, *The Hebrew Conception of the World*, 46.

³⁷⁵ **tn** *Heb* “was.”

³⁷⁶ **tn** *Heb* “On that very day Noah entered, and Shem and Ham and Japheth, the sons of Noah, and the wife of Noah, and the three wives of his sons with him into the ark.”

³⁷⁷ **tn** The verb “entered” is not in the Hebrew text, but is supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons.

³⁷⁸ **tn** *Heb* “every bird, every wing.”

³⁷⁹ **tn** *Heb* “two two” meaning “in twos.”

³⁸⁰ **tn** *Heb* “flesh.”

³⁸¹ **tn** *Heb* “Those that went in, male and female from all flesh they went in.”

7:17 The flood engulfed the earth for forty days. As the waters increased, they lifted the ark and raised it above the earth. **7:18** The waters completely overwhelmed³⁸² the earth and the ark floated³⁸³ on the surface of the waters. **7:19** The waters completely inundated³⁸⁴ the earth, so that even³⁸⁵ all the high mountains under the entire sky were covered. **7:20** The waters rose more than twenty feet³⁸⁶ above the mountains.³⁸⁷ **7:21** And all living things³⁸⁸ that moved on the earth died, including the birds, domestic animals, wild animals, all the creatures that swarm over the earth, and all mankind. **7:22** Everything on dry land that had the breath of life³⁸⁹ in its nostrils died. **7:23** So the LORD³⁹⁰ destroyed³⁹¹ every living thing that was on the surface of the ground, including people, animals, creatures that creep along the ground and birds of the sky.³⁹² They were wiped off the earth. Only Noah and those who were with him in the ark survived.³⁹³ **7:24** The waters prevailed over³⁹⁴ the earth for one hundred and fifty days.

8:1 But God remembered³⁹⁵ Noah and all the wild animals and domestic animals that were with him in the ark. God caused a wind to blow over³⁹⁶ the earth and the waters receded. **8:2** The fountains of the deep and the floodgates of heaven were closed,³⁹⁷ and the rain stopped falling from the sky. **8:3** The waters kept receding steadily³⁹⁸ from the earth, so that they³⁹⁹ had gone down⁴⁰⁰ by the end of the hundred and fifty days. **8:4** On the seventeenth day of the seventh month, the ark came to rest on one of the mountains of Ararat.⁴⁰¹ **8:5** The waters kept on receding⁴⁰² until the tenth month. On the first day of the tenth month, the tops of the mountains became visible.⁴⁰³

8:6 At the end of forty days,⁴⁰⁴ Noah opened the window he had made in the ark,⁴⁰⁵ **8:7** and sent out a raven; it kept flying⁴⁰⁶ back and forth until the waters had dried up on the earth.

8:8 Then Noah⁴⁰⁷ sent out a dove⁴⁰⁸ to see if the waters had receded⁴⁰⁹ from the surface of the ground. **8:9** The dove could not find a resting place for its feet, because water still covered⁴¹⁰ the surface of the entire earth, and so it returned to Noah⁴¹¹ in the ark. He stretched out his hand, took the dove,⁴¹² and brought it back into the ark.⁴¹³ **8:10** He waited seven more days and then sent out the dove again from the ark. **8:11** When⁴¹⁴ the dove returned to him in the evening, there was⁴¹⁵ a freshly plucked olive leaf in its beak! Noah knew that the waters had receded from the earth. **8:12** He waited another seven days and sent the dove out again,⁴¹⁶ but it did not return to him this time.⁴¹⁷

8:13 In Noah's six hundred and first year,⁴¹⁸ in the first day of the first month, the waters had dried up from the earth, and Noah removed the covering from the ark and saw that⁴¹⁹ the surface of the ground was dry. **8:14** And by the twenty-seventh day of the second month the earth⁴²⁰ was dry.

³⁸²tn Heb and the waters were great and multiplied exceedingly." The first verb in the sequence is וַיִּגְבְּרוּ (wayyigb'ru, from גבר, meaning "to become great [or, "mighty"]." The waters did not merely rise; they "prevailed" over the earth, overwhelming it.

³⁸³tn Heb "went."

³⁸⁴tn Heb "and the waters were great exceedingly, exceedingly." The repetition emphasizes the depth of the waters.

³⁸⁵tn Heb "and."

³⁸⁶tn Heb "rose fifteen cubits." Since a cubit is considered by most authorities to be about eighteen inches, this would make the depth 22.5 feet. This figure might give the modern reader a false impression of exactness, however, so in the translation the phrase "fifteen cubits" has been rendered "more than twenty feet."

³⁸⁷tn Heb "the waters prevailed fifteen cubits upward and they covered the mountains." Obviously, a flood of twenty feet did not cover the mountains; the statement must mean the flood rose about twenty feet above the highest mountain.

³⁸⁸tn Heb "flesh."

³⁸⁹tn Heb "everything which [has] the breath of the spirit of life in its nostrils from all which is in the dry land."

³⁹⁰tn Heb "and he"; the referent (the LORD) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

³⁹¹tn Heb "wiped away" (cf. NRSV "blotted out").

³⁹²tn Heb "from man to animal to creeping thing and to the bird of the sky."

³⁹³tn The Hebrew verb נשׁוּ (šā'ar) means "to be left over; to survive" in the Niphal verb stem. It is the word used in later biblical texts for the remnant that escapes judgment. See G. F. Hasel, "Semantic Values of Derivatives of the Hebrew Root S'R," *AUSS* 11 (1973): 152-69.

³⁹⁴sn The Hebrew verb translated "prevailed over" suggests that the waters were stronger than the earth. The earth and everything in it were no match for the return of the chaotic deep.

³⁹⁵tn The Hebrew word translated "remembered" often carries the sense of acting in accordance with what is remembered, i.e., fulfilling covenant promises (see B. S. Childs, *Memory and Tradition in Israel* [SBT], especially p. 34).

³⁹⁶tn Heb "to pass over."

³⁹⁷tn Some (e.g., NIV) translate the preterite verb forms in this verse as past perfects (e.g., "had been closed"), for it seems likely that the sources of the water would have stopped before the waters receded.

³⁹⁸tn The construction combines a Qal preterite from שׁוּב (šûb) with its infinitive absolute to indicate continuous action. The infinitive absolute from שׁוּב (šûb) is included for emphasis, "the waters returned...going and returning."

³⁹⁹tn Heb "the waters." The pronoun ("they") has been employed in the translation for stylistic reasons.

⁴⁰⁰tn The vav consecutive with the preterite here describes the consequence of the preceding action.

⁴⁰¹tn Heb "on the mountains of Ararat." Obviously a boat (even one as large as the ark) cannot rest on multiple mountains. Perhaps (1) the preposition should be translated "among;" or (2) the plural "mountains" should be understood in the sense of "mountain range" (see E. A. Speiser, *Genesis* [AB], 53). A more probable option (3) is that the plural indicates an indefinite singular, translated "one of the mountains" (see GKC §124.o).

sn *Ararat* is the Hebrew name for Urartu, the name of a mountainous region located north of Mesopotamia in modern day eastern Turkey. See E. M. Yamachi, *Foes from the Northern Frontier* (SBA), 29-32; G. J. Wenham, *Genesis* (WBC), 1:184-85; C. Westermann, *Genesis*, 1:443-44.

⁴⁰²tn Heb "the waters were going and lessening." The perfect verb form הָיָה (hāyāh) is used as an auxiliary verb with the infinitive absolute הָסָר (hāsār, "lessening"), while the infinitive absolute הָלַךְ (hālāk) indicates continuous action.

⁴⁰³tn Or "could be seen."

⁴⁰⁴tn The introductory verbal form וַיָּבֹא (wayyehi), traditionally rendered "and it came to pass," serves as a temporal indicator and has not been translated here.

⁴⁰⁵tn Heb "opened the window in the ark which he had made." The perfect tense ("had made") refers to action preceding the opening of the window, and is therefore rendered as a past perfect. Since in English "had made" could refer to either the ark or the window, the order of the phrases was reversed in the translation to clarify that the window is the referent.

⁴⁰⁶tn Heb "and it went out, going out and returning." The Hebrew verb נָסַף (yāsā), translated here "flying," is modified by two infinitives absolute indicating that the raven went back and forth.

⁴⁰⁷tn Heb "he"; the referent (Noah) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

⁴⁰⁸tn The Hebrew text adds "from him." This has not been translated for stylistic reasons, because it is redundant in English.

⁴⁰⁹tn The Hebrew verb לָקַף (qālāl) normally means "to be light; to be slight"; it refers here to the waters receding.

⁴¹⁰tn The words "still covered" is supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons.

⁴¹¹tn Heb "him"; the referent (Noah) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

⁴¹²tn Heb "it"; the referent (the dove) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

⁴¹³tn Heb "and he brought it to himself to the ark."

⁴¹⁴tn The clause introduced by vav consecutive is translated as a temporal clause subordinated to the following clause.

⁴¹⁵tn The deictic particle הִנֵּה (hinneh) draws attention to the olive leaf. It invites readers to enter into the story, as it were, and look at the olive leaf with their own eyes.

⁴¹⁶tn The word "again" is not in the Hebrew text, but is supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons.

⁴¹⁷tn Heb "it did not again return to him still." For a study of this section of the flood narrative, see W. O. E. Oesterley, "The Dove with the Olive Leaf (Gen VIII 8-11)," *Exp Tim* 18 (1906/07): 377-78.

⁴¹⁸tn Heb In the six hundred and first year." Since this refers to the six hundred and first year of Noah's life, the word "Noah's" has been supplied in the translation for clarity.

8:15 Then God spoke to Noah and said, **8:16** “Come out of the ark, you, your wife, your sons, and your sons’ wives with you. **8:17** Bring out with you all the living creatures that are with you. Bring out⁴²¹ every living thing, including the birds, animals, and every creeping thing that creeps on the earth. Let them increase⁴²² and be fruitful and multiply on the earth!”⁴²³

8:18 Noah went out along with his sons, his wife, and his sons’ wives. **8:19** Every living creature, every creeping thing, every bird, and everything that moves on the earth went out of the ark in their groups.

8:20 Noah built an altar to the LORD. He then took some of every kind of clean animal and clean bird and offered burnt offerings on the altar.⁴²⁴ **8:21** And the LORD smelled the soothing aroma⁴²⁵ and said⁴²⁶ to himself,⁴²⁷ “I will never again curse⁴²⁸ the ground because of mankind, even though⁴²⁹ the inclination of their minds⁴³⁰ is evil from childhood on.⁴³¹ I will never again destroy everything that lives, as I have just done.

8:22 “While the earth continues to exist,⁴³²
planting time⁴³³ and harvest,
cold and heat,
summer and winter,
and day and night will not cease.”

God’s Covenant with Mankind through Noah

9:1 Then God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth. **9:2** Every living creature of the earth and every bird of the sky will be terrified of you.⁴³⁴ Everything that creeps on the ground and all the fish of the sea are under your authority.⁴³⁵ **9:3** You may eat any moving thing that lives.⁴³⁶ As I gave you⁴³⁷ the green plants, I now give⁴³⁸ you everything.

9:4 But⁴³⁹ you must not eat meat⁴⁴⁰ with its life (that is,⁴⁴¹ its blood) in it.⁴⁴² **9:5** For your lifeblood⁴⁴³ I will surely exact punishment,⁴⁴⁴ from⁴⁴⁵ every living creature I will exact punishment. From each person⁴⁴⁶ I will exact punishment for the life of the individual,⁴⁴⁷ since the man was his relative.⁴⁴⁸

9:6 “Whoever sheds human blood,⁴⁴⁹
by other humans⁴⁵⁰
must his blood be shed;
for in God’s image⁴⁵¹
God⁴⁵² has made mankind.”

⁴¹⁹tn Heb “and saw and look.” As in v. 11, the deictic particle הִנֵּה (*hinnēh*) invites readers to enter into the story, as it were, and look at the dry ground with their own eyes.

⁴²⁰tn In v. 13 the ground (הָאָדָמָה [*hā’ādāmāh*]) is dry; now the earth (הָאָרֶץ [*hā’āreṣ*]) is dry.

⁴²¹tn The words “bring out” are not in the Hebrew text, but are supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons.

⁴²²tn Following the Hiphil imperative, “bring out,” the three perfect verb forms with *vav* consecutive carry an imperatival nuance. For a discussion of the Hebrew construction here and the difficulty of translating it into English, see S. R. Driver, *A Treatise on the Use of the Tenses in Hebrew*, 124-25.

⁴²³tn Heb “and let them swarm in the earth and be fruitful and multiply on the earth.”

⁴²⁴sn Offered burnt offerings on the altar. F. D. Maurice includes a chapter on the sacrifice of Noah in his *The Doctrine of Sacrifice Deduced from the Scriptures*. The whole burnt offering, according to Leviticus 1, 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.

⁴²⁵tn The LORD “smelled” (וַיִּשְׁׁחַח [wayyārah]) a “soothing smell” (רִיחַ הַנְּיִחָה [*rēah hannihōah*]). The object forms a cognate accusative with the verb. The language is anthropomorphic. The offering had a sweet aroma that pleased or soothed. The expression in Lev 1 signifies that God accepts the offering with pleasure, and in accepting the offering he accepts the worshiper.

⁴²⁶tn Heb “and the LORD said.”

⁴²⁷tn Heb “in his heart.”

⁴²⁸tn Here the Hebrew word translated “curse” is קָלַל (*qālāl*), used in the Piel verbal stem.

⁴²⁹tn The Hebrew particle כִּי (*ki*) can be used in a concessive sense (see BDB 473), which makes good sense in this context. Its normal causal sense (“for”) does not fit the context here very well.

⁴³⁰tn Heb “the inclination of the heart of mankind.”

⁴³¹tn Heb “from his youth.”

⁴³²tn Heb “yet all the days of the earth.” The idea is “[while there are] yet all the days of the earth,” meaning, “as long as the earth exists.”

⁴³³tn Heb “seed,” which stands here by metonymy for the time when seed is planted.

⁴³⁴tn Heb “and fear of you and dread of you will be upon every living creature of the earth and upon every bird of the sky.” The suffixes on the nouns “fear” and “dread” are objective genitives. The animals will fear humans from this time forward.

⁴³⁵tn Heb “into your hand are given.” The “hand” signifies power. To say the animals have been given into the hands of humans means humans have been given authority over them.

⁴³⁶tn Heb “every moving thing that lives for you will be for food.”

⁴³⁷tn The words “I gave you” are not in the Hebrew text, but are supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons.

⁴³⁸tn The perfect verb form describes the action that accompanies the declaration.

⁴³⁹tn Heb “only.”

⁴⁴⁰tn Or “flesh.”

⁴⁴¹tn Heb “its life, its blood.” The second word is in apposition to the first, explaining what is meant by “its life.” Since the blood is equated with life, meat that had the blood in it was not to be eaten.

⁴⁴²tn The words “in it” are supplied in the translation for stylistic reasons.

⁴⁴³sn You must not eat meat with its life...in it. Because of the carnage produced by the flood, people might conclude that life is cheap and therefore treat it lightly. But God will not permit them to kill or even to eat anything with the lifeblood still in it, serving as a reminder of the sanctity of life.

⁴⁴⁴tn Again the text uses apposition to clarify what kind of blood is being discussed: “your blood, [that is] for your life.” See C. L. Dewar, “The Biblical Use of the Term ‘Blood,’” *JTS* 4 (1953): 204-208.

⁴⁴⁵tn The word “punishment” is not in the Hebrew text, but is supplied in the translation for clarification. The verb דָּרַשׁ (*dārās*) means “to require; to seek; to ask for; to exact.” Here it means that God will exact punishment for the taking of a life. See Ralph Mawdsley, “Capital Punishment in Gen. 9:6,” *Central Bible Quarterly* 18 (1975): 20-25.

⁴⁴⁶tn Heb “from the hand of,” which means “out of the hand of” or “out of the power of” and is nearly identical in sense to the preposition מִן (*min*) alone.

⁴⁴⁷tn Heb “and from the hand of the man.” The article has a generic function, indicating the class, i.e., mankind.

⁴⁴⁸tn Heb “of the man.”

⁴⁴⁹tn Heb “from the hand of a man, his brother.” The point is that God will require the blood of someone who kills, since the person killed is a relative (“brother”) of the killer. The language reflects Noah’s situation (after the flood everyone would be part of Noah’s extended family), but also supports the concept of the brotherhood of mankind. According to the Genesis account the entire human race descended from Noah.

⁴⁵⁰tn Heb “the blood of man.”

⁴⁵¹tn Heb “by man,” a generic term here for other human beings.

⁴⁵²sn See the notes on the words “mankind” and “likeness” in Gen 1:26, as well as J. Barr, “The Image of God in the Book of Genesis—A Study of Terminology,” *B/JRL* 51 (1968/69): 11-26.

9:7 But as for you,⁴⁵³ be fruitful and multiply; increase abundantly on the earth and multiply on it.”

9:8 God said to Noah and his sons,⁴⁵⁴ 9:9 “Look! I now confirm⁴⁵⁵ my covenant with you and your descendants after you⁴⁵⁶ 9:10 and with every living creature that is with you, including the birds, the domestic animals, and every living creature of the earth with you, all those that came out of the ark with you—every living creature of the earth.⁴⁵⁷ 9:11 I confirm⁴⁵⁸ my covenant with you: Never again will all living things⁴⁵⁹ be wiped out⁴⁶⁰ by the waters of a flood,⁴⁶¹ never again will a flood destroy the earth.”

9:12 And God said, “This is the guarantee⁴⁶² of the covenant I am making⁴⁶³ with you⁴⁶⁴ and every living creature with you, a covenant⁴⁶⁵ for all subsequent⁴⁶⁶ generations: 9:13 I will place⁴⁶⁷ my rainbow⁴⁶⁸ in the clouds, and it will become⁴⁶⁹ a guarantee of the covenant between me and the earth. 9:14 Whenever⁴⁷⁰ I bring clouds over the earth and the rainbow appears in the clouds, 9:15 then I will remember my covenant with you⁴⁷¹ and with all living creatures of all kinds.⁴⁷² Never again will the waters become a flood and destroy⁴⁷³ all living things.⁴⁷⁴ 9:16 When the rainbow is in the clouds, I will notice it and remember⁴⁷⁵ the perpetual covenant between God and all living creatures of all kinds that are on the earth.”

9:17 So God said to Noah, “This is the guarantee of the covenant that I am confirming between me and all living things⁴⁷⁶ that are on the earth.”

The Curse of Canaan

9:18 The sons of Noah who came out of the ark were Shem, Ham, and Japheth. (Now Ham was the father of Canaan.)⁴⁷⁷ 9:19 These were the sons of Noah, and from them the whole earth was populated.⁴⁷⁸

9:20 Noah, a man of the soil,⁴⁷⁹ began to plant a vineyard.⁴⁸⁰ 9:21 When he drank some of the wine, he got drunk and uncovered himself⁴⁸¹ inside his tent. 9:22 Ham, the father of Canaan,⁴⁸² saw his father’s nakedness⁴⁸³ and told his two brothers who were outside.

⁴⁵²tn Heb “he”; the referent (God) has been specified in the translation for clarity.
⁴⁵³sn The disjunctive clause (conjunction + pronominal subject + verb) here indicates a strong contrast to what has preceded. Against the backdrop of the warnings about taking life, God now instructs the people to produce life, using terms reminiscent of the mandate given to Adam (Gen 1:28).
⁴⁵⁴tn Heb “to Noah and to his sons with him, saying.”
⁴⁵⁵tn Heb “I, look, I confirm.” The particle הִנְנִי (*hin’eni*) used with the participle מְצַמֵּם (*mēzqim*) gives the sense of immediacy or imminence, as if to say, “Look! I am now confirming.”
⁴⁵⁶tn The three pronominal suffixes (translated “you,” “your,” and “you”) are masculine plural. As v. 8 indicates, Noah and his sons are addressed.
⁴⁵⁷tn The verbal repetition is apparently for emphasis.
⁴⁵⁸tn The verb וַיִּצְמַח (*vahāqimōti*) is a perfect with the *vav* consecutive and should be translated with the English present tense, just as the participle at the beginning of the speech was (v. 9). Another option is to translate both forms with the English future tense (“I will confirm”).
⁴⁵⁹tn Heb “all flesh.”
⁴⁶⁰tn Heb “cut off.”
⁴⁶¹tn Heb “and all flesh will not be cut off again by the waters of the flood.”
⁴⁶²tn Heb “sign.”
⁴⁶³sn On the making of covenants in Genesis, see W. F. Albright, “The Hebrew Expression for ‘Making a Covenant’ in Pre-Israelite Documents,” *BAOR* 121 (1951): 21-22.
⁴⁶⁴tn Heb “between me and between you.”
⁴⁶⁵tn The words “a covenant” are supplied in the translation for clarification.
⁴⁶⁶tn The Hebrew term אֲדָמָה (*ōlām*) means “ever; forever; lasting; perpetual.” The covenant would extend to subsequent generations.
⁴⁶⁷tn The translation assumes that the perfect verbal form is used rhetorically, emphasizing the certainty of the action. Other translation options include “I have placed” (present perfect; cf. NIV, NRSV) and “I place” (instantaneous perfect; cf. NEB).
⁴⁶⁸tn The Hebrew word קַשְׂפָּה (*qeset*) normally refers to a warrior’s bow. Some understand this to mean that God the warrior hangs up his battle bow at the end of the flood, indicating he is now at peace with mankind, but others question the legitimacy of this proposal. See C. Westermann, *Genesis*, 1:473, and G. J. Wenham, *Genesis* (WBC), 1:196.
⁴⁶⁹tn The perfect verbal form with *vav* consecutive here has the same aspectual function as the preceding perfect of certitude. See A. B. Davidson, *Hebrew Syntax*, 75, remark 2.
⁴⁷⁰tn The temporal indicator (וַיִּהְיֶה) [*wēhāyāh*], conjunction + the perfect verb form, often translated “it will be,” anticipates a future development.
⁴⁷¹tn Heb “which [is] between me and between you.”
⁴⁷²tn Heb “all flesh.”
⁴⁷³tn Heb “to destroy.”
⁴⁷⁴tn Heb “all flesh.”
⁴⁷⁵tn The translation assumes that the infinitive לִזְכֹּר (*lizkōr*, “to remember”) here expresses the result of seeing the rainbow. Another option is to understand it as indicating purpose, in which case it could be translated, “I will look at it so that I may remember.”
⁴⁷⁶tn Heb “all flesh.”
⁴⁷⁷sn The concluding disjunctive clause is parenthetical. It anticipates the following story, which explains that the Canaanites, Ham’s descendants through Canaan, were cursed because they shared the same moral abandonment that their ancestor displayed. See A. van Selms, “The Canaanites in the Book of Genesis,” *OTS* 12 (1958): 182-213.
⁴⁷⁸tn Heb “was scattered.” The verb פָּצַח (*pāṣāh*, “to scatter” [Niphal, “to be scattered”]) figures prominently in story of the dispersion of mankind in chap. 11.
⁴⁷⁹sn The epithet *a man of the soil* indicates that Noah was a farmer.
⁴⁸⁰tn Or “Noah, a man of the soil, was the first to plant a vineyard”; Heb “and Noah, a man of the ground, began and he planted a vineyard.”
⁴⁸¹tn The Hebrew verb גָּלָה (*gālāh*) in the Hitpael verbal stem (וַיִּגְלֵל), *wayyitlēgal* means “to uncover oneself” or “to be uncovered.” Noah became overheated because of the wine and uncovered himself in the tent.
⁴⁸²sn For the second time (see v. 18) the text informs the reader of the relationship between Ham and Canaan. Genesis 10 will explain that Canaan was the ancestor of the Canaanite tribes living in the promised land.
⁴⁸³tn Some would translate “had sexual relations with,” arguing that Ham committed a homosexual act with his drunken father for which he was cursed. However, the expression “see nakedness” usually refers to observation of another’s nakedness, not a sexual act (see Gen 42:9, 12 [where “nakedness” is used metaphorically to convey the idea of “weakness” or “vulnerability”], Deut 23:14 [where “nakedness” refers to excrement], Isa 47:3, Ezek 16:37, Lam 1:8). The following verse (v. 23) clearly indicates that visual observation, not a homosexual act, is in view here. In Lev 20:17 the expression “see nakedness” does appear to be a euphemism for sexual intercourse, but the context there, unlike that of Gen 9:22, clearly indicates that in that passage sexual contact is in view. The expression “see nakedness” does not in itself suggest a sexual connotation. Some relate Gen 9:22 to Lev 18:6-11, 15-19, where the expression “uncover [the Piel form of גָּלָה (*gālāh*)] [another’s] nakedness” refers euphemistically to sexual intercourse. However, Gen 9:22 does not say Ham “uncovered” the nakedness of his father. According to the text, Noah uncovered himself; Ham merely *saw* his father naked. The point of the text is that Ham had no respect for his father. Rather than covering his father up, he told his brothers. Noah then gave an oracle that Ham’s descendants, who would be characterized by the same moral abandonment, would be cursed. Leviticus 18 describes that greater evil of the Canaanites (see vv. 24-28).
⁴⁸⁴sn *Saw the nakedness*. It is hard for modern people to appreciate why seeing another’s nakedness was such an abomination, because nakedness is so prevalent today. In the ancient world, especially in a patriarchal society, seeing another’s nakedness was a major offense. (See the account in Herodotus, *Histories* 1.8-13, where a general saw the nakedness of his master’s wife, and one of the two had to be put to death.) Besides, Ham was not a little boy wandering into his father’s bedroom; he was over a hundred years old by this time. For fuller discussion see A. P. Ross, “The Curse of Canaan,” *BSac* 137 (1980): 223-40.

9:23 Shem and Japheth took the garment⁴⁸⁴ and placed it on their shoulders. Then they walked in backwards and covered up their father's nakedness. Their faces were turned⁴⁸⁵ the other way so they did not see their father's nakedness.

9:24 When Noah awoke from his drunken stupor⁴⁸⁶ he learned⁴⁸⁷ what his youngest son had done⁴⁸⁸ to him. **9:25** So he said, "Cursed⁴⁸⁹ be Canaan!⁴⁹⁰
The lowest of slaves⁴⁹¹
he will be to his brothers."

9:26 He also said,
"Worthy of praise is⁴⁹² the LORD, the God of Shem!
May Canaan be the slave of Shem!⁴⁹³

9:27 May God enlarge Japheth's territory and numbers!⁴⁹⁴
May he live⁴⁹⁵ in the tents of Shem
and may Canaan be his slave!"

9:28 After the flood Noah lived three hundred and fifty years. **9:29** The entire lifetime of Noah was nine hundred and fifty years, and then he died.

The Table of Nations

10:1 This is the account⁴⁹⁶ of Noah's sons Shem, Ham and Japheth. Sons⁴⁹⁷ were born⁴⁹⁸ to them after the flood.

10:2 The sons of Japheth⁴⁹⁹ were Gomer,⁵⁰⁰ Magog,⁵⁰¹ Madai,⁵⁰² Javan,⁵⁰³ Tubal,⁵⁰⁴ Meshech,⁵⁰⁵ and Tiras.⁵⁰⁶ **10:3** The sons of Gomer were⁵⁰⁷ Askenaz,⁵⁰⁸ Riphath,⁵⁰⁹ and Togarmah.⁵¹⁰ **10:4** The sons of Javan were Elishah,⁵¹¹ Tarshish,⁵¹² the Kittim,⁵¹³ and the Dodanim.⁵¹⁴ **10:5** From these the coastlands of the nations were separated into their lands, every one according to its language, according to their families, by their nations.

10:6 The sons of Ham were Cush,⁵¹⁵ Mizraim,⁵¹⁶ Put,⁵¹⁷ and Canaan.⁵¹⁸ **10:7** The sons of Cush were Seba,⁵¹⁹ Havilah,⁵²⁰ Sabtah,⁵²¹ Raamah,⁵²² and Sabteca.⁵²³ The sons of Raamah were Sheba⁵²⁴ and Dedan.⁵²⁵

⁴⁸⁴tn The word translated "garment" has the Hebrew definite article on it. The article may simply indicate that the garment is definite and vivid in the mind of the narrator, but it could refer instead to Noah's garment. Did Ham bring it out when he told his brothers?

⁴⁸⁵tn Heb "their faces [were turned] back."

⁴⁸⁶tn Heb "his wine," used here by metonymy for the drunken stupor it produced.

⁴⁸⁷tn Heb "he knew."

⁴⁸⁸tn The Hebrew verb עָשָׂה ('āśāh, "to do") carries too general a sense to draw the conclusion that Ham had to have done more than look on his father's nakedness and tell his brothers.

⁴⁸⁹sn For more on the curse, see H. C. Brichto, *The Problem of "Curse" in the Hebrew Bible* (Philadelphia: SBL, 1963), and J. Scharbert, *TDOT* 1:405-418.

⁴⁹⁰sn *Cursed be Canaan*. The curse is pronounced on Canaan, not Ham. Noah sees a problem in Ham's character, and on the basis of that he delivers a prophecy about the future descendants who will live in slavery to such things and then be controlled by others. (For more on the idea of slavery in general, see E. M. Yamauchi, "Slaves of God," *BETS* 9 [1966]: 6-9). In a similar way Jacob pronounced oracles about his sons based on their revealed character (see Gen 49).

⁴⁹¹tn Heb "a servant of servants" (עֲבָדֵי עֲבָדִים [ʿēbēdē ʿābādīm]), an example of the superlative genitive. It means Canaan will become the most abject of slaves.

⁴⁹²tn Heb "blessed be."

⁴⁹³tn Heb "a slave to him;" the referent (Shem) has been specified in the translation for clarity.

⁴⁹⁴tn Heb "may God enlarge Japheth." The words "territory and numbers" are supplied in the translation for clarity.

⁴⁹⁵sn There is a wordplay (paronomasia) on the name *Japheth*. The verb יָגַד ('yāgād), "may he enlarge," sounds like the name יַפֶּתֿ ('yēpēṭ), "Japheth." The name itself suggested the idea. The blessing for Japheth extends beyond the son to the descendants. Their numbers and their territories will be enlarged, so much so that they will share in Shem's territories. Again, in this oracle, Noah is looking beyond his immediate family to future generations. For a helpful study of this passage and the next chapter, see T. O. Figart, *A Biblical Perspective on the Race Problem*, 55-58.

⁴⁹⁶tn In this context the prefixed verbal form is a jussive (note the distinct jussive forms both before and after this in vv. 26 and 27).

⁴⁹⁷tn The title תַּבְּלֵיט הַגּוֹיִם ('ēlēh tōl'gōyīm) here covers 10:1–11:9, which contains the so-called Table of Nations and the account of how the nations came to be dispersed.

⁴⁹⁸sn *Sons were born to them*. A vertical genealogy such as this encompasses more than the names of sons. The list includes cities, tribes, and even nations. In a loose way, the names in the list have some derivation or connection to the three ancestors.

⁴⁹⁹tn It appears that the Table of Nations is a composite of at least two ancient sources: some sections begin with the phrase "the sons of" (בְּנֵי [bēnē]) while other sections use "begot" (יָלַד [yālād]). It may very well be that the "sons of" list was an old, "bare bones" list that was retained in the family records, while the "begot" sections were editorial inserts by the writer of Genesis, reflecting his special interests. See A. P. Ross, "The Table of Nations in Genesis 10—Its Structure," *BSac* 137 (1980): 340-53; idem, "The Table of Nations in Genesis 10—Its Content," *BSac* 138 (1981): 22-34.

⁵⁰⁰sn The Greek form of the name Japheth, *Iapetos*, is used in Greek tradition for the ancestor of the Greeks.

⁵⁰¹sn *Gomer* was the ancestor of the Cimmerians. For a discussion of the Cimmerians see E. M. Yamauchi, *Foes from the Northern Frontier* (SBA), 49-61.

⁵⁰²sn For a discussion of various proposals concerning the descendants of *Magog* see E. M. Yamauchi, *Foes from the Northern Frontier* (SBA), 22-24.

⁵⁰³sn *Madai* was the ancestor of the Medes, who lived east of Assyria.

⁵⁰⁴sn *Javan* was the father of the Hellenic race, the Ionians who lived in western Asia Minor.

⁵⁰⁵sn *Tubal* was the ancestor of militaristic tribes that lived north of the Black Sea. For a discussion of ancient references to Tubal see E. M. Yamauchi, *Foes from the Northern Frontier* (SBA), 24-26.

⁵⁰⁶sn *Meshech* was the ancestor of the people known in Assyrian records as the *Musku*. For a discussion of ancient references to them see E. M. Yamauchi, *Foes from the Northern Frontier* (SBA), 24-26.

⁵⁰⁷sn *Tiras* was the ancestor of the Thracians, some of whom possibly became the Pelasgian pirates of the Aegean.

⁵⁰⁸sn The descendants of *Gomer* were all northern tribes of the Upper Euphrates.

⁵⁰⁹sn *Ashkenaz* was the ancestor of a northern branch of Indo-Germanic tribes, possibly Scythians. For discussion see E. M. Yamauchi, *Foes from the Northern Frontier* (SBA), 63.

⁵¹⁰sn The descendants of *Riphath* lived in a district north of the road from Haran to Carchemish.

⁵¹¹sn *Togarmah* is also mentioned in Ezek 38:6, where it refers to Til-garimmu, the capital of Kammanu, which bordered Tabal in eastern Turkey. See E. M. Yamauchi, *Foes from the Northern Frontier* (SBA), 26, n. 28.

⁵¹²sn The descendants of *Elishah* populated Cyprus.

⁵¹³sn The descendants of *Tarshish* settled along the southern coast of what is modern Turkey. However, some identify the site Tarshish (see Jon 1:3) with Sardinia or Spain.

⁵¹⁴sn The name *Kittim* is associated with Cyprus, as well as coastlands east of Rhodes. It is used in later texts to refer to the Romans.

⁵¹⁵tc Most of the MT MSS read "Dodanim" here, but 1 Chr 1:7 has "Rodanim," perhaps referring to the island of Rhodes. But the Qere reading in 1 Chr 1:7 suggests "Dodanim." Dodona is one of the most ancient and revered spots in ancient Greece.

⁵¹⁶sn The descendants of *Cush* settled in Nubia (Ethiopia).

⁵¹⁷sn The descendants of *Mizraim* descendants settled in Upper and Lower Egypt.

⁵¹⁸sn The descendants of *Put* settled in Libya.

⁵¹⁹sn The descendants of *Canaan* lived in the region of Phoenicia (Palestine).

⁵²⁰sn The descendants of *Seba* settled in Upper Egypt along the Nile.

⁵²¹sn The Hebrew name *Havilah* apparently means "stretch of sand" (see *HALOT* 1:297). Havilah's descendants settled in eastern Arabia.

10:8 Cush was the father of⁵²⁶ Nimrod; he began to be a valiant warrior on the earth. **10:9** He was a mighty hunter⁵²⁷ before the LORD.⁵²⁸ That is why it is said, “Like Nimrod, a mighty hunter before the LORD.” **10:10** The primary regions⁵²⁹ of his kingdom were Babel,⁵³⁰ Erech,⁵³¹ Akkad,⁵³² and Calneh⁵³³ in the land of Shinar.⁵³⁴ **10:11** From that land he went⁵³⁵ to Assyria,⁵³⁶ where he built Nineveh,⁵³⁷ Rehoboth-Ir,⁵³⁸ Calah,⁵³⁹ **10:12** and Resen, which is between Nineveh and the great city Calah.⁵⁴⁰

10:13 Mizraim⁵⁴¹ was the father of⁵⁴² the Ludites,⁵⁴³ Anamites,⁵⁴⁴ Lehabites,⁵⁴⁵ Naphtuhites,⁵⁴⁶ **10:14** Pathrusites,⁵⁴⁷ Casluhites⁵⁴⁸ (from whom the Philistines came),⁵⁴⁹ and Caphtorites.⁵⁵⁰

10:15 Canaan was the father of⁵⁵¹ Sidon his firstborn,⁵⁵² Heth,⁵⁵³ **10:16** the Jebusites,⁵⁵⁴ Amorites,⁵⁵⁵ Girgashites,⁵⁵⁶ **10:17** Hivites,⁵⁵⁷ Arkites,⁵⁵⁸ Sinites,⁵⁵⁹ **10:18** Arvadites,⁵⁶⁰ Zemarites,⁵⁶¹ and Hamathites.⁵⁶² Eventually the families of the Canaanites were scattered **10:19** and the borders of Canaan extended⁵⁶³ from Sidon all the way to⁵⁶⁴ Gerar as far as Gaza, and all the way to⁵⁶⁵ Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboim, as far as Lasha. **10:20** These are the sons of Ham, according to their families, according to their languages, by their lands, and by their nations.

10:21 And sons were also born⁵⁶⁶ to Shem (whose older brother was Japheth), the father of all the sons of Eber.

10:22 The sons of Shem were Elam,⁵⁶⁷ Asshur,⁵⁶⁸ Arphaxad,⁵⁶⁹ Lud,⁵⁷⁰ and Aram.⁵⁷¹ **10:23** The sons of Aram were Uz, Hul, Gether, and Mash.⁵⁷² **10:24** Arphaxad was the father of⁵⁷³ Shelah,⁵⁷⁴ and Shelah was the father of Eber.⁵⁷⁵ **10:25** Two sons were born to Eber: one was named Peleg, because in his days the earth was divided,⁵⁷⁶ and his brother’s name was Joktan. **10:26** Joktan was the

⁵²¹sn The descendants of *Sabtah* settled near the western shore of the Persian Gulf in ancient Hadhramaut.

⁵²²sn The descendants of *Raamah* settled in southwest Arabia.

⁵²³sn The descendants of *Sabteca* settled in Samudake, east toward the Persian Gulf.

⁵²⁴sn *Sheba* became the name of a kingdom in southwest Arabia.

⁵²⁵sn The name *Dedan* is associated with ‘Ula in northern Arabia.

⁵²⁶tn *Heb* “fathered.” Embedded within Cush’s genealogy is an account of Nimrod, a mighty warrior. There have been many attempts to identify him, but none are convincing.

⁵²⁷tn The Hebrew word for “hunt” is יָצַד (*sayid*), which is used on occasion for hunting men (1 Sam 24:12; Jer 16:16; Lam 3:15).

⁵²⁸tn Another option is to take the divine name here, יְהוָה לִפְנֵי (liphnē yhw̄h, “before the LORD [YHWH]”) as a means of expressing the superlative degree. In this case one may translate, “Nimrod was the greatest hunter in the world.”

⁵²⁹tn *Heb* “beginning.” E. A. Speiser, *Genesis* (AB), 67, suggests “mainstays,” citing Jer 49:35 as another text where the Hebrew noun is so used.

⁵³⁰tn Or “Babylon.”

⁵³¹sn *Erech* (ancient Uruk, modern Warka), one of the most ancient civilizations, was located southeast of Babylon.

⁵³²sn *Akkad*, or ancient Agade, was associated with Sargon and located north of Babylon.

⁵³³tn No such place is known in Shinar (i.e., Babylonia). Therefore some have translated the Hebrew term כָּלְנֵה (*kalnēh*) as “all of them,” referring to the three previous names (cf. NRSV).

⁵³⁴sn *Shinar* is another name for Babylonia.

⁵³⁵tn The subject of the verb translated “went” is probably still Nimrod. However, it has also been interpreted that “Ashur went,” referring to a derivative power.

⁵³⁶tn *Heb* “Asshur.”

⁵³⁷sn *Nineveh* was an ancient Assyrian city situated on the Tigris River.

⁵³⁸sn The name *Rehoboth-Ir* means “and broad streets of a city,” perhaps referring to a suburb of Nineveh.

⁵³⁹sn *Calah* (modern Nimrud) was located twenty miles north of Nineveh.

⁵⁴⁰tn *Heb* “and Resen between Nineveh and Calah; it [i.e., Calah] is the great city.”

⁵⁴¹sn *Mizraim* is the Hebrew name for Egypt (cf. NRSV).

⁵⁴²tn *Heb* “fathered.”

⁵⁴³sn The *Ludites* were African tribes west of the Nile Delta.

⁵⁴⁴sn The *Anamites* lived in North Africa, west of Egypt, near Cyrene.

⁵⁴⁵sn The *Lehabites* are identified with the Libyans.

⁵⁴⁶sn The *Naphtuhites* lived in Lower Egypt (the Nile Delta region).

⁵⁴⁷sn The *Pathrusites* are known in Egyptian as *P-to-reshi*; they resided in Upper Egypt.

⁵⁴⁸sn The *Casluhites* lived in Crete and eventually settled east of the Egyptian Delta, between Egypt and Canaan.

⁵⁴⁹tn Several commentators prefer to reverse the order of the words to put this clause after the next word, since the Philistines came from Crete (where the Caphtorites lived). But the table may suggest migration rather than lineage, and the Philistines, like the Israelites, came through the Nile Delta region of Egypt. For further discussion of the origin and migration of the Philistines, see D. Howard, “Philistines,” *Peoples of the Old Testament World*, 232.

⁵⁵⁰sn The *Caphtorites* resided in Crete, but in Egyptian literature Caphtor refers to “the region beyond” the Mediterranean.

⁵⁵¹tn *Heb* “fathered.”

⁵⁵²sn Sidon was the foremost city in Phoenicia; here *Sidon* may be the name of its founder.

⁵⁵³tn Some see a reference to “Hittites” here (cf. NIV), but this seems unlikely. See the note on the phrase “sons of Heth” in Gen 23:3.

⁵⁵⁴sn The *Jebusites* were the Canaanite inhabitants of ancient Jerusalem.

⁵⁵⁵sn Here *Amorites* refers to smaller groups of Canaanite inhabitants of the mountainous regions of Palestine, rather than the large waves of Amurru, or western Semites, who migrated to the region.

⁵⁵⁶sn The *Girgashites* are an otherwise unknown Canaanite tribe, though the name is possibly mentioned in Ugaritic texts (see G. J. Wenham, *Genesis* [WBC], 1:226).

⁵⁵⁷sn The *Hivites* were Canaanite tribes of a Hurrian origin.

⁵⁵⁸sn The *Arkites* lived in Arka, a city in Lebanon, north of Sidon.

⁵⁵⁹sn The *Sinites* lived in Sin, another town in Lebanon.

⁵⁶⁰sn The *Arvadites* lived in the city Arwad, located on an island near the mainland close to the river El Kebir.

⁵⁶¹sn The *Zemarites* lived in the town Sumur, north of Arka.

⁵⁶²sn The *Hamathites* lived in Hamath on the Orontes River.

⁵⁶³tn *Heb* “were.”

⁵⁶⁴tn *Heb* “as you go.”

⁵⁶⁵tn *Heb* “as you go.”

⁵⁶⁶tn *Heb* “And to Shem was born.”

⁵⁶⁷sn The Hebrew name *Elam* (*‘ēlām*) means “highland.” The Elamites were a non-Semitic people who lived east of Babylon.

⁵⁶⁸sn *Asshur* is the name for the Assyrians. Asshur was the region in which Nimrod expanded his power (see v. 11, where the name is also mentioned). When names appear in both sections of a genealogical list, it probably means that there were both Hamites and Shemites living in that region in antiquity, especially if the name is a place name.

⁵⁶⁹sn The descendants of *Arphaxad* may have lived northeast of Nineveh.

⁵⁷⁰sn *Lud* may have been the ancestor of the Ludbu, who lived near the Tigris River.

⁵⁷¹sn *Aram* became the collective name of the northern tribes living in the steppes of Mesopotamia and speaking Aramaic dialects.

⁵⁷²tc The MT reads “Mash”; the LXX and 1 Chr 1:17 read “Meshech.”

⁵⁷³sn *Uz, Hul, Gether, and Mash*. Little is known about these descendants of Aram.

⁵⁷⁴tn *Heb* “fathered.”

⁵⁷⁵tc The MT reads “Arphaxad fathered Shelah”; the LXX reads “Arphaxad fathered Cainan, and Cainan fathered Sala [= Shelah].” The LXX reading also appears to lie behind Luke 3:35-36.

⁵⁷⁶sn Genesis 11 traces the line of Shem through *Eber* (*‘ēber*, עֵבֶר) to Abraham the “Hebrew” (*ib̄eriy*, עִבְרִי).

⁵⁷⁷tn The expression “the earth was divided” may refer to dividing the land with canals, but more likely it anticipates the division of languages at Babel (Gen 11). The verb פָּלַג (*pālāg*) is used in Ps 55:9 for a division of languages.

father of⁵⁷⁷ Almodad,⁵⁷⁸ Sheleph,⁵⁷⁹ Hazarmaveth,⁵⁸⁰ Jerah,⁵⁸¹ **10:27** Hadoram, Uzal,⁵⁸² Diklah,⁵⁸³ **10:28** Obal,⁵⁸⁴ Abimael,⁵⁸⁵ Sheba,⁵⁸⁶ **10:29** Ophir,⁵⁸⁷ Havilah,⁵⁸⁸ and Jobab. All these were sons of Joktan. **10:30** Their dwelling place was from Mesha all the way to⁵⁸⁹ Sephar in the eastern hills. **10:31** These are the sons of Shem according to their families, according to their languages, by their lands, and according to their nations.

10:32 These are the families of the sons of Noah, according to their genealogies, by their nations; and from these the nations spread⁵⁹⁰ over the earth after the flood.

The Dispersion of the Nations at Babel

11:1 The whole earth⁵⁹¹ had a common language and a common vocabulary.⁵⁹² **11:2** When the people⁵⁹³ moved eastward,⁵⁹⁴ they found a plain in Shinar⁵⁹⁵ and settled there. **11:3** Then they said to one another,⁵⁹⁶ “Come, let’s make bricks and bake them thoroughly.”⁵⁹⁷ (They had brick instead of stone and tar⁵⁹⁸ instead of mortar.)⁵⁹⁹ **11:4** Then they said, “Come, let’s build ourselves a city and a tower with its top in the heavens⁶⁰⁰ so that⁶⁰¹ we may make a name for ourselves. Otherwise⁶⁰² we will be scattered⁶⁰³ across the face of the entire earth.”

11:5 But the LORD came down to see the city and the tower that the people⁶⁰⁴ had started⁶⁰⁵ building. **11:6** And the LORD said, “If as one people all sharing a common language⁶⁰⁶ they have begun to do this, then⁶⁰⁷ nothing they plan to do will be beyond them.”⁶⁰⁸ **11:7** Come, let’s go down and confuse⁶⁰⁹ their language so they won’t be able to understand each other.”⁶¹⁰

11:8 So the LORD scattered them from there across the face of the entire earth, and they stopped building⁶¹¹ the city. **11:9** That is why its name was called⁶¹² Babel⁶¹³—because there the LORD confused the language of the entire world, and from there the LORD scattered them across the face of the entire earth.

The Genealogy of Shem

11:10 This is the account of Shem.

Shem was one hundred years old when he became the father of Arphaxad, two years after the flood. **11:11** And after becoming the father of Arphaxad, Shem lived five hundred years and had other⁶¹⁴ sons and daughters.

⁵⁷⁷tn Heb “fathered.”
⁵⁷⁸sn The name *Almodad* combines the Arabic article *al* with *modad* (“friend”). Almodad was the ancestor of a South Arabian people.
⁵⁷⁹sn The name *Sheleph* may be related to Shilph, a district of Yemen; Shalph is a Yemenite tribe.
⁵⁸⁰sn The name *Hazarmaveth* should be equated with Hadramaut, located in Southern Arabia.
⁵⁸¹sn The name *Jerah* means “moon.”
⁵⁸²sn *Uzal* was the name of the old capital of Yemen.
⁵⁸³sn The name *Diklah* means “date-palm.”
⁵⁸⁴sn *Obal* was a name used for several localities in Yemen.
⁵⁸⁵sn The name *Abimael* is a genuine Sabaean form which means “my father, truly, he is God.”
⁵⁸⁶sn The descendants of *Sheba* lived in South Arabia, where the Joktanites were more powerful than the Hamites.
⁵⁸⁷sn *Ophir* became the name of a territory in South Arabia. Many of the references to Ophir are connected with gold (e.g., 1 Kgs 9:28, 10:11, 22:48; 1 Chr 29:4; 2 Chr 8:18, 9:10; Job 22:24, 28:16; Ps 45:9; Isa 13:12).
⁵⁸⁸sn *Havilah* is listed with Ham in v. 7.
⁵⁸⁹tn Heb “as you go.”
⁵⁹⁰tn Or “separated.”
⁵⁹¹sn *The whole earth*. Here “earth” is a metonymy of subject, referring to the people who lived in the earth. Genesis 11 begins with everyone speaking a common language, but chap. 10 has the nations arranged by languages. It is part of the narrative art of Genesis to give the explanation of the event after the narration of the event. On this passage see A. P. Ross, “The Dispersion of the Nations in Genesis 11:1-9,” *BSac* 138 (1981): 119-38.
⁵⁹²tn Heb “one lip and one [set of] words.” The term “lip” is a metonymy of cause, putting the instrument for the intended effect. They had one language. The term “words” refers to the content of their speech. They had the same vocabulary.
⁵⁹³tn Heb “they;” the referent (the people) has been specified in the translation for clarity.
⁵⁹⁴tn Or perhaps “from the east” (NRSV) or “in the east.”
⁵⁹⁵sn *Shinar* is the region of Babylonia.
⁵⁹⁶tn Heb “a man to his neighbor.” The Hebrew idiom may be translated “to each other” or “one to another.”
⁵⁹⁷tn The speech contains two cohortatives of exhortation followed by their respective cognate accusatives: “let us brick bricks” (לְבַנְנָה לְבָנִים) [*nilbēnāh lēbēnim*] and “burn for burning” (נִשְׂרֶפֶה לְשֶׂרֶפֶה) [*nīsēpāh līsēpāh*]). This stresses the intensity of the undertaking; it also reflects the Akkadian text which uses similar constructions (see E. A. Speiser, *Genesis* [AB], 75-76).
⁵⁹⁸tn Or “bitumen” (cf. NEB, NRSV).
⁵⁹⁹tn The disjunctive clause gives information parenthetical to the narrative.
⁶⁰⁰tn A translation of “heavens” for שָׁמַיִם (*sāmāyim*) fits this context because the Babylonian ziggurats had temples at the top, suggesting they reached to the heavens, the dwelling place of the gods.
⁶⁰¹tn The form וְנַעֲשֶׂה (*wēna‘āseh*) could be either the imperfect or the cohortative with a *vav* conjunction (“and let us make...”). Coming after the previous cohortative, this form expresses purpose.
⁶⁰²tn The Hebrew particle פֶּן (*pen*) expresses a negative purpose; it means “that we be not scattered.”
⁶⁰³sn The Hebrew verb *pāwāṣ* (פָּוַס), translated “scatter,” is a key term in this passage. The focal point of the account is the dispersion (“scattering”) of the nations rather than the Tower of Babel. But the passage also forms a polemic against Babylon, the pride of the east and a cosmopolitan center with a huge ziggurat. To the Hebrews it was a monument to the judgment of God on pride.
⁶⁰⁴tn Heb “the sons of man.” The phrase is intended in this polemic to portray the builders as mere mortals, not the lesser deities that the Babylonians claimed built the city.
⁶⁰⁵tn The Hebrew text simply has בָּנָה (*bānū*); but since v. 8 says they left off building the city, an ingressive idea (“had started building”) should be understood here.
⁶⁰⁶tn Heb “and one lip to all of them.”
⁶⁰⁷tn Heb “and now.” The foundational clause beginning with הֵן (*hēn*) expresses the condition, and the second clause the result. It could be rendered “If this... then now.”
⁶⁰⁸tn Heb “all that they purpose to do will not be withheld from them.”
⁶⁰⁹tn The cohortatives mirror the cohortatives of the people. They build to ascend the heavens; God comes down to destroy their language. God speaks here to his angelic assembly. See the notes on the word “make” in 1:26 and “know” in 3:5, as well as *Jub.* 10:22-23, where an angel recounts this incident and says “And the LORD our God said to us... And the LORD went down and we went down with him. And we saw the city and the tower which the sons of men built.” On the chiasmic structure of the story, see G. J. Wenham, *Genesis* (WBC), 1:235.
⁶¹⁰tn Heb “they will not hear, a man the lip of his neighbor.”
⁶¹¹tn The infinitive construct here לִבְנוֹת [*libnōt*, “building”) serves as the object of the verb “they ceased, stopped,” answering the question of what they stopped doing.
⁶¹²tn The verb has no expressed subject and so can be rendered as a passive in the translation.
⁶¹³sn *Babel*. Here is the climax of the account, a parody on the pride of Babylon. In the Babylonian literature the name *bab-ili* meant “the gate of God,” but in Hebrew it sounds like the word for “confusion,” and so retained that connotation. The name “Babel” (*bābel* [בְּבֶל]) and the verb translated “confused” (*bālal* [בָּלַל]) form a paronomasia (soundplay). For the many wordplays and other rhetorical devices in Genesis, see J. P. Fokkelman, *Narrative Art in Genesis* (SSN).
⁶¹⁴tn The word “other” is not in the Hebrew text, but is supplied for stylistic reasons.

11:12 When Arphaxad had lived thirty-five years, he became the father of Shelah. **11:13** And after he became the father of Shelah, Arphaxad lived four hundred and three years and had other⁶¹⁵ sons and daughters.⁶¹⁶

11:14 When Shelah had lived thirty years, he became the father of Eber. **11:15** And after he became the father of Eber, Shelah lived four hundred and three years and had other⁶¹⁷ sons and daughters.

11:16 When Eber had lived thirty-four years, he became the father of Peleg. **11:17** And after he became the father of Peleg, Eber lived four hundred and thirty years and had other sons and daughters.

11:18 When Peleg had lived thirty years, he became the father of Reu. **11:19** And after he became the father of Reu, Peleg lived two hundred and nine years and had other sons and daughters.

11:20 When Reu had lived thirty-two years, he became the father of Serug. **11:21** And after he became the father of Serug, Reu lived two hundred and seven years and had other sons and daughters.

11:22 When Serug had lived thirty years, he became the father of Nahor. **11:23** And after he became the father of Nahor, Serug lived two hundred years and had other sons and daughters.

11:24 When Nahor had lived twenty-nine years, he became the father of Terah. **11:25** And after he became the father of Terah, Nahor lived one hundred and nineteen years and had other sons and daughters.

11:26 When Terah had lived seventy years, he became the father of Abram, Nahor, and Haran.

⁶¹⁵tn The word “other” is not in the Hebrew text, but is supplied for stylistic reasons.

⁶¹⁶tc The reading of the MT is followed in vv. 11-12; the LXX reads, “And [= when] Arphaxad had lived thirty-five years, [and] he fathered [= became the father of] Cainan. And after he fathered [= became the father of] Cainan, Arphaxad lived four hundred and thirty years and fathered [= had] [other] sons and daughters, and [then] he died. And [= when] Cainan had lived one hundred and thirty years, [and] he fathered [= became the father of] Sala [= Shelah]. And after he fathered [= became the father of] Sala [= Shelah], Cainan lived three hundred and thirty years and fathered [= had] [other] sons and daughters, and [then] he died.” See also the note on “Shelah” in Gen 10:24; the LXX reading also appears to lie behind Luke 3:35-36.

⁶¹⁷tn Here and in vv. 16, 19, 21, 23, 25 the word “other” is not in the Hebrew text, but is supplied for stylistic reasons.