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STUDIES IN JEWISH EDUCATION  
AND JUDAICA IN HONOR OF  
LOUIS NEWMAN

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Edited by  
ALEXANDER M. SHAPIRO  
and  
BURTON I. COHEN

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# THE IMAGE OF GOD AND THE FLOOD: Some New Developments

JEFFREY H. TIGAY

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Those who were privileged to spend some of their formative years in association with Lou Newman came to understand what the rabbis sought in *shimmush talmidei chachamim*: not only to learn the master's teachings, but to observe his personal qualities in the hope of emulating him, not only as an educator, but as a human being. Few of us may be so bold as to claim success in emulating Lou, but I think we would all gladly admit that we have tried.

One of the constants of Lou Newman's career as an educator has been the way he approaches important texts. If Moses stormed heaven and captured the Torah, as the *paytan* puts it, Lou would lay siege to the text and methodically force it to surrender its meaning and implications. Few skills are of equal importance in Jewish education. Judaism has been described as "a religion which expects each adherent to develop judicial qualities."<sup>1</sup> This definition explains why the study of legal texts has always been at the core of Jewish education: To make informed behavioral decisions, the Jew must know the law and how it has been applied in concrete situations. As a prerequisite to disciplined decision-making, one had to study classical Jewish texts and extract their implications.

In the sixties, much of Lou's effort was devoted to just such

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study of Genesis and Exodus as part of the Melton Research Center's project on the teaching of the Torah. It was my privilege to be part of the first experimental groups that assembled at Camp Ramah in the Poconos under Lou's direction in the summers of 1963 and 1964, and to work closely with him for the next several years. In the years since, I have come to realize that few experiences did as much to prepare me for a career in biblical studies as the experience of reading these texts with Lou.

The intervening years have also brought some new discoveries concerning some of the texts which demanded most of our attention. I would like to discuss two of these discoveries here as my expression of gratitude to a teacher who did so much to help me understand Genesis and learn how to read a text.

### The Image of God

The passages in Genesis (1:26, 27; 5:1 [cf. 3]; 9:6) which state that man was created in God's image and likeness have been subject to as great a variety of interpretations as any in the Bible. That the Hebrew words in question (*šelem* and *d'mut*) normally refer to statues and physical appearances is clear from their usage throughout the Bible<sup>2</sup> and has been underscored by a recently discovered Aramaic inscription on a statue which refers to the statue itself in these very terms (*d'muta', š'lem*).<sup>3</sup> As late as the time of Maimonides there were Jews who interpreted the image of God as referring to man's (and God's) bodily form, as Maimonides indicates in the opening statement of the *Guide of the Perplexed* I, 1.<sup>4</sup> Rabbinic texts reflect such an interpretation by some (but not all) sages of the talmudic period, such as the famous tale about Hillel, who considers bathing a commandment since man was created in the image of God and even statues of human kings are washed.<sup>5</sup> Such a literal interpretation of the terms in Genesis seemed compatible with the fact that the Bible does indeed consider God corporeal and visible (Ex. 33:20–23; Num. 12:8).<sup>6</sup> It is true that since Hellenistic times there have also been writers, such as

Philo, who interpreted the image of God as a metaphor referring to man's mind or other incorporeal qualities,<sup>7</sup> but such interpretations could be dismissed as reflecting the philosophic allegorization typical of the Hellenistic period rather than the original meaning of the phrase.

Recently, however, the metaphoric interpretation of the image of God has been enhanced by evidence that even in the pagan cultures of the ancient Near East the phrase was sometimes applied to humans in a metaphoric sense. Certainly the phrase usually referred to statues of gods, but there were writers who went beyond the normal usage. Adad-shum-uşur, an exorcist-priest in the service of the Assyrian royal court (seventh century B.C.E.), often compared the kings he served to gods. The contexts of these comparisons, expressed in memoranda he wrote to one of the kings, make it clear that he is not referring to their appearance or bodily form. In one of these memoranda he responds to a letter in which the king had told him, "I heard from my father that you are a loyal family, but now I know it from my own experience." Adad-shum-uşur replies: "The father of the king, my lord, was the very image of the god Bel, and the king my lord is likewise the very image of the god Bel. This has fallen to me from the mouth of my two masters! Who will ever (be able to) repeat (it), who will match (it)?" In another memorandum, Adad-shum-uşur urges the king not to engage in certain mourning or apotropaic rites for more than half a day, since "the king, the lord of the world, is the very image of the sun god." In both of these notes, Adad-shum-uşur uses the Akkadian cognate of *şelem*, *şalmu*. In a third letter he uses *muşşulu* (related to Hebrew *mashal*), a synonym of Hebrew *d'mut*; after quoting a proverb stating that "man is a shadow of a god," Adad-shum-uşur observes that "the king [in contrast] is a likeness of a god." In a fourth note Adad-shum-uşur expresses the same idea without using any of the nouns meaning "image." After agreeing with a suggestion of the king's, he concludes: "What am I to say, an old man who has got no reason? (But) what the king, my lord, has said is as perfect as (the word) of a god." Finally, there is a memorandum

from another writer, Asharidu, apparently from Babylon, who uses the metaphor in the course of describing the royal officials' dependence on the king's favor: "The king of the world is the very image (*šalmu*) of Marduk: when you have been angry with your servants we have suffered the anger of the king, our lord, but we have also experienced the king's favor."<sup>8</sup> Comparison of the king's favor to that of a god can also be expressed without reference to image, as in "His lord, the king, looked favorably upon him, with a shining face, like a god." Clearly the point of all these comparisons is to say that the king is godlike in his qualities (cf. II Sam. 14:20), not his appearance, a conclusion which is underscored by the fact that some of the same compliments can be expressed by means of the simile "like a god" in place of the metaphor "image of god." Though the precise divine qualities the writers have in mind are not always specified, the contexts suggest that the king's authority, status, majesty, wisdom, anger, and favor are being described.

Something similar is suggested in an epic poem about an earlier Assyrian king named Tukulti-Ninurta (thirteenth century B.C.E.). There the king is described as one who:

By the fate (assigned by) Nudimmud (i.e., the god Ea) his  
form is reckoned as the flesh of the gods,  
By the decree of the lord of the lands he was successfully cast  
into/poured through the womb of the gods.  
He is the eternal image of (the god) Enlil, attentive to the  
voice of the people, to the mood of the land.<sup>9</sup>

Here, though the text had previously been describing Tukulti-Ninurta's physical form, the line describing him as the image (*šalmu*) of Enlil goes on to describe an intellectual quality, attentiveness to his subjects. Finally, a behavioral comparison is implied by a passage applying the phrase to an exorcist-priest: "the spell (recited) is the spell of Marduk, the exorcist-priest is the image (*šalmu*) of Marduk."<sup>10</sup> In this passage the exorcist lends strength to his spell by asserting that he represents, or is identified with, Marduk, the preeminent exorcist among the gods.<sup>11</sup>



The image of god is used metaphorically in Egyptian literature, too, in a passage strikingly reminiscent of Jewish philosophic usage. In an Egyptian wisdom text presenting a debate between a scribe and his son, the son tries to convince the father not to ignore what he, the son, is saying:

Do not be so overpowering in your severity; I am done violence by your intentions. Should it not happen to a man that he drops his arm and listens to an answer instead? Men are in the image of the god in their custom of hearing a man in regard to his reply. It is not the wise alone who is in his image, while the multitude are every kind of cattle. It is not the wise alone who is his pupil, having alone become intelligent, while all the mob is stupid.<sup>12</sup>

Here, as in the *Tukulti-Ninurta Epic*, the metaphor refers to attentiveness, understanding.

If the concept of the image of the god has such an extensive history as a metaphor in the pagan cultures of the ancient Near East, one can hardly deny the possibility that it could have been used in this way in Genesis as well. Many of the overtones noted in the Assyrian and Egyptian texts would fit the contexts of Genesis 1 and 9 well. It is true that a physical resemblance between God and man cannot be excluded from the picture. The Bible not only entertains a view of God as visible, but once uses "the image of God" in a context where it could refer to man's appearance: The statement in Gen. 5:1 that God made man "in the likeness (*d'mut*) of God" is followed by the statement that Adam later "begot a son in his likeness, after his image (*bidmuto k'salmo*)" (5:3). Here the possibility of a physical similarity, if not certainly present in the text, cannot be ruled out. But in 1:26, the statement that man is to be made in God's image immediately precedes his assignment to rule the earth, from which it has been inferred that the image refers to functional similarities or similarity of faculties with God, of the sort that will enable man to perform his role.<sup>13</sup> This interpretation was suggested even before the Assyrian and Egyptian examples were brought into the discussion, and these

certainly enhance its credibility. Gen. 9:6 seems to lend further support to this interpretation, though I'm not sure this has been noticed:

Whoever sheds the blood of man,  
By man shall his blood be shed;  
For in the image of God was man created.

The statement about the image of God in the third clause of the verse has generally been taken as explaining why the shedding of human blood is a capital crime: The divine image implies that human life is inviolable. But if this were the point, or the only point, of the statement, the first two clauses of the verse could have read simply "Whoever sheds the blood of man, his blood shall be shed." The additional phrase "by man," appearing in the emphatic position at the beginning of the second clause, stresses that the punishment is to be executed *by man*. Since the statement about the image of God follows immediately upon the second clause, it seems quite likely that it is especially this clause which is explained by that statement: Because man is made in the divine image, *he* is to punish murder. In other words, the divine image implies a functional similarity of man to God as governor and executor of justice in the world.

### The Flood

The passage just discussed, Gen. 9:6, takes on a deeper significance as the culmination of the flood story in the light of recent discoveries concerning the meaning of the flood story in Mesopotamia.

For almost a century since its discovery in 1872, the eleventh tablet of the *Gilgamesh Epic* remained the fullest version available of the Mesopotamian account of the great flood.<sup>14</sup> A few fragments of another Akkadian version, the *Atrahasis Epic*, were also known (as well as fragments of a Sumerian version), but it was not until 1965 that most of *Atrahasis* became accessible to modern scholars, and not until 1969 that a transliteration

and translation of the Akkadian text were published.<sup>15</sup> It soon became apparent that *Atrahasis* was the source from which an editor of *Gilgamesh* had borrowed the flood story for his own composition,<sup>16</sup> and only the version in *Atrahasis* showed the significance Mesopotamians attached to the flood story.<sup>17</sup>

The *Atrahasis Epic* begins several thousand years before the flood. It is actually a history of mankind covering several generations, from the creation of man through the flood, offering many parallels to the first eight and one-half chapters of Genesis. This epic is especially important in that, unlike the version in *Gilgamesh*, it describes the reason for which the flood was brought about and the steps taken by the gods after the flood to ensure that the problem caused by mankind would be kept under control in the future.

The first part of the epic describes the creation of man to be the slave of the gods, providing the gods with food so that they may live a life of ease. But after about twelve hundred years, the human population has increased to the point that the noise of their daily life has become to the gods an unbearable racket:

The land became wide, the people became numerous,  
 The land bellowed like wild oxen.  
 (The storm god) Enlil became disturbed by their uproar,  
 Enlil heard their clamor  
 And he said to the gods:  
 "Oppressive has become the clamor of mankind,  
 By their uproar I am deprived of sleep . . ." <sup>18</sup>

In an attempt to silence this noise, Enlil suggests that a plague be sent against mankind to reduce its numbers and thereby its noise. The gods agree, and they bring about a pestilence to silence man.

At this point the human hero of the story, Atrahasis, appears. His name means "exceedingly wise."<sup>19</sup> Atrahasis turns to his personal god, Enki (also known as Ea), the god of wisdom and exorcism, to complain about the suffering caused by the pestilence. Enki suggests offering sacrifices to the god of

plagues, and apparently this remedy works and the plague ceases. But after another twelve hundred years mankind has multiplied to the point where its noise is again unbearable to Enlil, who determines to reduce its numbers with a new plague. After this happens several times, with Atrahasis saving the day each time on the basis of advice from Enki, Enlil gets the gods to agree to put an end to the nuisance once and for all by completely destroying the human race with a flood (this is the point at which the better-known narrative in the *Gilgamesh Epic* sets in). Enki (Ea) surreptitiously warns the hero to build a ship in which to ride out the flood with his family and various animals. The details of the story, and its similarities and differences in comparison to the biblical account, are much like those in the *Gilgamesh* version, which has been summarized by Sarna and need not be repeated here.<sup>20</sup> What the new fragments of *Atrahasis* reveal to us for the first time, however, is the immediate aftermath of the story. The versions in *Gilgamesh* and *Atrahasis* run parallel until Atrahasis and his wife are granted immortality. This is the point at which the excerpt in *Gilgamesh* ends, because this is what is relevant to the theme of *Gilgamesh*. But in *Atrahasis* there is more. Enlil is determined to prevent mankind from ever disturbing him with its noise again. He therefore takes steps to control the size of the human race: Henceforth some women are to be incapable of giving birth and others not legally allowed to, and there are to be demons to snatch away and kill some newborn infants.<sup>21</sup> These decrees reveal the point of the entire myth. It is to explain why some women are infertile and others are not allowed to give birth, and why there is infant mortality. The myth explains these as divine ordinances designed as population-control measures with the aim of reducing the noise produced by humanity to levels the gods find bearable.

To the Israelites, who undoubtedly learned of the flood story from Mesopotamians directly or indirectly,<sup>22</sup> this explanation of the event was inconceivable. Israelites were convinced that God never sleeps (Ps. 121:4; I Kings 18:27), and that God had explicitly ordained the multiplication of the human race both at

creation and after the flood (Gen. 1:28; 9:1, 7). The historicity of the flood itself was not doubted, but the Israelite view of the way God operates required that the event be understood in a way that was compatible with that view. And since that view held that God judges the human race for actions in the moral sphere, it followed that the human offense which led to the flood must have been a moral breach, not a violation of mythic divine repose.

In light of the *Atrahasis Epic*, covering the history of humanity from creation through the aftermath of the flood, Genesis 1:1–9:17 may likewise be understood as a single literary unit rather than a series of unconnected episodes.<sup>23</sup> In both Genesis and *Atrahasis* the account of the flood constitutes the climax of a series of episodes which describe the problem with humanity and the steps taken by, respectively, God and the gods to deal with that problem. In *Atrahasis* the problem with man is that he disturbs the rest of the gods with his noise;<sup>24</sup> the gods' solution is to reduce the population and prevent it from growing too much in the future. In the Bible, the problem of man is lawlessness, especially violence (the basic meaning of *hamas*;<sup>25</sup> note the killings in Gen. 4:8 and 23). God's solution is, first, to dispose of the guilty and then to establish laws against murder and to give man the responsibility for executing those laws (Gen. 9:6).<sup>26</sup>

Both of the issues we have been studying thus culminate in the same verse, Gen. 9:6. In light of the metaphoric usage of the image of God in the ancient Near East and the meaning of the flood story in *Atrahasis*, God seems to be saying the following in Gen. 9:6 "What I intended by creating you in my image was that you should rule the world as I would. You are to use your Godlike qualities—your authority, your status above the animals, your understanding—to limit violence by punishing it." Although a physical resemblance between God and man may also be part of the image, and although it may be the divine image which makes every person's life inviolable, the established metaphoric usage of the divine image suggests that to

the ancients the primary implication of the phrase, when applied to humans, had to do with behavior, status, and function. The flood story testifies that man's failure to perform his Godlike role upon himself is what most disturbs God about man.

Seen in this light, it is no accident that the rabbis inferred that the Noachide laws required man to establish courts of justice in every human settlement.<sup>27</sup> To Judaism, law has always been an essential component of man's relationship to God. One of the great achievements of the Torah in this sphere was not simply the individual laws, many of which were paralleled in the ancient world,<sup>28</sup> but the teaching that moral laws were the command of God, not merely expressions of wisdom or good citizenship.<sup>29</sup> Judaism, as we have noted, expects each of its adherents to develop the judicial skills necessary to apply these laws in daily life. In the universal context of Gen. 1:1–9:17, the Bible implies that this is the obligation of mankind as a whole.

## Notes

1. Thus Solomon Schechter's view of Judaism is characterized by L. Finkelstein in his introduction to Schechter's *Aspects of Rabbinic Theology* (New York: Schocken, 1961), p. xiv.

2. E.g., I Sam. 6:5, 11; Dan. 3:1; II Chron. 4:3.

3. A. R. Millard and P. Bordreuil, "A Statue from Syria with Assyrian and Aramaic Inscriptions," *Biblical Archaeologist* 45 (1982): 135–141.

4. Note the comment of M. Friedländer, *The Guide of the Perplexed of Maimonides* (New York: Hebrew Publishing Co., n.d.), p. 28, n. 2.

5. Vayyikra Rabba 34:3. To paraphrase Morton Smith: Hillel was not going to wash his intellect or his immortality. See Smith's comments, "On the Shape of God and the Humanity of Gentiles," in J. Neusner (ed.), *Religions in Antiquity: Essays in Memory of Erwin Ramsdell Goodenough* (Supplements to *Numen*, XIV; Leiden: Brill, 1970), p. 319, and especially his survey of midrashic texts on the subject, "The Image of God," *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 40 (1958): 473–512. Smith concludes "that the Biblical statements concerning man's likeness to God were interpreted in many different ways which were not thought to be mutually exclusive, and that among the interpretations was the opinion, held by some very important rabbis, that man's body was made as an image of God" ("On the Shape of God," p. 320).

6. What is denied in the Bible is not that God has a visible form but that man can survive seeing that form (Ex. 33:20; cf. Ex. 3:6; Isa. 6:5).

7. Philo, *On the Creation of the World* XXIII, §69 (in F. H. Colson and G. H. Whitaker, *Philo I* [Loeb Classical Library; Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1971], p. 55). In the Wisdom of Solomon 2:23 (in the Apocrypha) God's image is taken to refer to his immortality, as in B'midbar Rabba 16:15.

8. The latest edition of the Adad-shum-ušur texts is in S. Parpola, *Letters from Assyrian Scholars to the Kings Esarhaddon and Assurbanipal*, pt. I, *Texts* (Kevelaer: Butzon & Bercker, and Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1970), nos. 125, obverse 15–21; 143, reverse 4–6; 145, reverse 10–13; 144, reverse 2–7. The memorandum from Asharidu is from R. Campbell Thompson, *Reports of the Magicians and Astrologers of Nineveh and Babylon*, vol. I (London: Luzac, 1900), p. 49, no. 170, reverse 2, quoted in A. L. Oppenheim, "Divination and Celestial Observation in the Last Assyrian Empire," *Centaurus* 14 (1969): 116. The last text cited is quoted from I. J. Gelb et al. (eds.), *The Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago*, vol. 7: I and J (Chicago: Oriental Institute; Glückstadt: Augustin, 1960), p. 92. This dictionary is cited below as CAD.

9. W. G. Lambert, "Three Unpublished Fragments of the Tukulti-Ninurta Epic," *Archiv für Orientforschung* 18 (1957–58): 50–51, lines 8–10; P. B. Machinist, "Literature as Politics: The Tukulti-Ninurta Epic and the Bible," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 38 (1976): 465–466.

10. G. Meier, "Die Zweite Tafel der Serie bit mēseri," *Archiv für Orientforschung* 14 (1941–44): 150–151, lines 225–226.

11. Cf. CAD, vol. 1: A, pt. II (1968), pp. 431–432, sec. 2'; G. Contenau, *Everyday Life in Babylon and Assyria* (New York: Norton, 1966), p. 291.

12. R. J. Williams, "Scribal Training in Ancient Egypt," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 92 (1972): 221. Note also, with reference to the pharaoh: "Thou art the living likeness of thy father (the god) Atum of Heliopolis (for) Authoritative Utterance is in thy mouth, Understanding is in thy heart, thy speech is the shrine of Truth" (Kubban stele of Ramses II [1290–1224], quoted in Henri Frankfort, *Kingship and the Gods* [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958], p. 149).

Another Egyptian text uses the image of god in connection with the creation of man:

Well tended is mankind—God's cattle  
 He made sky and earth for their sake,  
 He subdued the water monster,  
 He made breath for their noses to live.  
 They are his images, who came from his body;  
 He shines in the sky for their sake;  
 He made for them plants and cattle,  
 Fowl and fish to feed them

✓ (Miriam Lichtheim, *Ancient Egyptian Literature*, vol. I, *The Old and Middle Kingdoms* [Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1975], p. 106). Here a reference to the physical form of man is possible.

13. See Nahum M. Sarna, *Understanding Genesis* (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary and McGraw-Hill, 1966), pp. 14–16.

14. This version is translated by E. A. Speiser in *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament*, ed. James B. Pritchard (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969), pp. 93–95, lines 11–296.

15. The cuneiform text was published by W. G. Lambert and A. R. Millard in *Babylonian Literary Texts: Cuneiform Texts from Babylonian Tablets in the British Museum*, vol. 46 (London: British Museum, 1965), nos. 1–15. The transliteration and translation were published by the same authors in *Atra-ḥasis: The Babylonian Story of the Flood* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969).

16. See J. Tigay, *The Evolution of the Gilgamesh Epic* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1982), pp. 215–217.

17. The following summary is based on several studies, including one which preceded the publication of the full text of the epic. See: J. Laessøe, "The Atrahasis Epic: A Babylonian History of Mankind," *Bibliotheca Orientalis* 13 (1956): 90–102; A. R. Millard, "A New Babylonian 'Genesis' Story," *Tyndale Bulletin* 18 (1967): 3–18; E. V. Leichty, "Demons and Population Control," *Expedition* 13 (1971): 22–26; W. L. Moran, review of *Atra-ḥasis*, by Lambert and Millard, *Biblica* 52 (1971): 51–61; A. D. Kilmer, "The Mesopotamian Concept of Overpopulation and Its Solution as Reflected in the Mythologies," *Orientalia* 41 (1972): 160–177; T. Frymer-Kensky, "The Atrahasis Epic and Its Significance for Our Understanding of Genesis 1–9," *Biblical Archaeologist* 40 (1977): 147–155.

18. Lambert and Millard, *Atra-ḥasis*, p. 67, lines 352–60; p. 73, lines 1–8; p. 107, lines 1–8; etc. Although some have tried to interpret the noise as a metaphor for sin, the fact that the noise always comes with the increase in population shows that it is meant literally as referring to the hustle-bustle of human life. See Moran (above, n. 17), pp. 55–57, especially p. 57 n. 4, and other references to the characteristic noise of human life in Isa. 22:2; Jer. 51:55; Pritchard, *Ancient Near Eastern Texts*, p. 442, line vi, 1 and preceding line; pp. 612–613, lines 43, 46; CAD, vol. 6; H, pp. 15–16; vol. 7: I and J, p. 58, upper left. In talmudic literature the noise of Rome was proverbial, audible from 120 miles away and drowning out the noise of the sun sawing through the sky (Yoma 20b–21a; Makkot 24a).

19. The survivor of the flood is known from other texts to have been the king of his city. While he is called Atrahasis in the myth of that name, in *Gilgamesh* and elsewhere he is known as Utnapishtim, meaning "he found life," while in the Sumerian version he is known as Ziusudra, "life of long days."

20. Sarna, *Understanding Genesis*, chap. 2; see also W. G. Lambert, "A New Look at the Babylonian Background of Genesis," *Journal of Theological Studies*, n.s. 16 (1965): 291–292, and Frymer-Kensky (above, n. 17).



21. Lambert and Millard, *Atra-ḥasis*, p. 103, lines 1-8.

22. See Sarna, *Understanding Genesis*, pp. 38-40; Lambert, "New Look," pp. 298-300; Tigay, *Evolution*, p. 215; cf. p. 119 n. 35.

23. The echoes of Gen. 1 (particularly vv. 26-30) in Gen. 9:1-17 (particularly vv. 1-6) form a literary frame marking off these eight and one-half chapters as a unit. This demarcation of the first large unit in Genesis is supported not only by the parallel of *Atra-ḥasis*, which covers the same ground, but also by the recurrent phrase "after the flood" which appears in the succeeding sections of Genesis (9:28; 10:1, 32; 11:10). In ancient Near Eastern literature the periods before and after the flood were the two main periods into which human history was divided, and the phrase "after the flood" was used to mark the turning point between these periods (see Lambert and Millard, *Atra-ḥasis*, pp. 15-21, 25-26). This division of the material implies that the "universal history" at the beginning of Genesis ends at 9:17, not at the end of chapter 11, as is usually thought. In fact the function of 9:18 through the end of chap. 11 is to narrow the focus of Genesis from mankind as a whole to Israel in particular by showing how humanity came to be divided into separate nations. In this context 9:18-27 functions as an introduction to this transitional section by foreshadowing the special status which will be accorded to the Shemites, from whom Israel will ultimately emerge.

24. The description of the divine response to man's behavior in both texts invites comparison: in *Atra-ḥasis*, "Enlil became disturbed by their uproar . . . and he said to the gods: 'Oppressive has become the clamor of mankind, by their uproar I am deprived of sleep' "; in Genesis 6:5-6: "The Lord saw how great was man's wickedness on earth, and how every plan devised by his mind was nothing but evil all the time. And the Lord regretted that he had made man on earth, and His heart was saddened."

25. Though the broader meaning "injustice" is not to be denied, the underlying meaning of "violence" is visible in the use of the verb *ḥamas* for "tearing down," "knocking off," in Job 15:33 and Lam. 2:6.

26. The prohibition against eating blood is also technically a prohibition against murder in that it removes the slaughter of an animal from the category of murder to the permissible category of procuring food; see J. Milgrom, "A Prolegomenon to Leviticus 17:11," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 90 (1971): 149-156.

The new order established in Gen. 9:4-6 follows God's resolution in 8:21-22 not to destroy the world again because of man's behavior, since human sinfulness is to be expected. This implies that as a method of controlling sin, eradication of the sinners is futile; note Josephus' observation on why God punished the next generation of sinners (at the Tower of Babel) differently: "God was not minded to exterminate them utterly, because even the destruction of the first victims [the flood generation] had not taught their descendants wisdom" (Josephus, *Antiquities* I, iv, 3, §117, in H. St. J. Thackeray, *Josephus* IV [Loeb Classical Library; Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University

Press, 1967], p. 57). From now on it is not expected that sin will be eliminated but rather that it will be controlled with punishment.

27. Though the requirement is not based on Gen. 9:6; see the discussion of the Noachide laws in Sanhedrin 56a(end)–56b.

28. Many, but not all. For characteristic differences even in laws which are superficially similar, see M. Greenberg, "Some Postulates of Biblical Criminal Law," in *Yehezkel Kaufmann Jubilee Volume*, ed. M. Haran (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1960), pp. 5–28 (reprinted in J. Goldin [ed.], *The Jewish Expression* [New York: Bantam, 1970], pp. 18–37).

29. Y. Kaufmann, *The Religion of Israel* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960), pp. 233–234; cf. Greenberg, cited in the previous note.