

A New Flood Chronology Based on Seven-Day Creation Cycles

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Abstract

Many attempts have been made to decipher the chronology of the Flood by uncovering the calendar behind the detailed dating of key Flood events. This study begins by linking Flood chronology with Creation chronology, which simply has a sequence of seven literal days ending with a sabbath day. The seven-day cycle becomes the key to establishing Flood chronology with its seven-day cycles throughout the narrative. Four times the seven-day Creation cycles are mentioned in the Flood account (Genesis 7:4, 10; 8:10, 12). These are interpreted as weekly cycles starting with a first day (Sunday) and ending with a seventh day (sabbath). This means that the last day of a seven-day wait for the Flood, according to 7:4, 10, was a sabbath of rest, the last day before the fury of the Flood was unleashed. Based on this template of seven-day cycles, the Flood started on a Sunday and ended on a sabbath (Saturday) 370 full days later. The final sabbath in the Flood account was marked by an animal sacrifice and the establishment of the everlasting covenant signified by a rainbow (Genesis 9:15–21). All datable events are then assigned to days of the week. The assigning of days of the week to important Flood events has possible implications for the developing new Flood models or modifying existing Flood models. Chapters 1–2 of Genesis are then inextricably linked to chapters 6–9. The Flood narrative cannot be correctly interpreted without interpreting the seven Creation days as literal days because of seven-day cycles being buried throughout the Flood narrative.

Keywords: Chiasmus, chiasmic, *mabbul*, *kataklusmos*, 7-day cycles, Creation week, de-creation, literal days, chronology, dischronologization, covenant, historicity, Masoretic Text (MT), Septuagint (LXX)

Introduction

Previous studies have not presented the Flood chronology being proposed in this paper. It fills an important vacuum left by all previous studies, including creationist studies. It takes all the chronological data in the Flood account seriously, demonstrating how they have a harmonious fit when interpreted on the basis of sound principles of hermeneutics. For a brief review the six multi-day timespans are as follows:

1. Days of waiting for the Flood—7 days (Genesis 7:4, 10)
2. Duration of heavy rains and Flood proper (Heb. *mabbul*)—40 days (7:12, 17)
3. Time to the grounding of the ark—150 days (7:24)
4. Time for the receding of Flood waters—150 days (8:3)
5. Waiting period for sending out the birds—40 days (8:6)
6. Intervals for sending out the dove—7 days each (8:10–12)¹

Besides these six timespans the narrative has specific dates tied to Noah's life in terms of years, months, and days (7:6, 11; 8:4, 5, 13, 14).

Previous scholarly, non-creationist studies generally have followed a historical-critical approach

that divides the Flood narrative into two major sources: J (Yahwist) and P (Priestly). The chronological data is assigned to the priestly source because of Old Testament priests being preoccupied with dates in their festal calendars. This study disdains the use of historical-critical studies for assembling a Flood chronology. Nevertheless, all chronological studies must start with the work done by previous Old Testament scholars, even those who are not creationists. The best, fairly-recent review study of scholarly works on Flood chronology is by L.M. Barré (1988), who analyzes the three most important studies on Flood chronology up until that time. First, August Dillmann in his 1875 commentary (in German) on Genesis set the stage by dividing the Flood narrative into two equal halves with the first half ending with the peaking of Flood waters on 7/17/600 (dated in terms of Noah's life) and the second half on 12/17/600. Second, N.P. Lemche's 1980 study argued that a Redactor [R] of the J and P materials changed the original 30-day monthly calendar to a lunar calendar, which explains the reason why the dating of the end of the Flood on 2/27/601 was supposed to have been originally 2/17/601 to match the start of the Flood in 2/17/600. Third, F.W. Cryer's 1985 study correctly noted the doublets with the Flood's time periods: 7 days, 40

¹ The biblical text has some ambiguity about how long it was between the sending out of the raven and the first dove. Lange (1915, 308) has emphasized this very point in his commentary. What is known for sure is that the three doves were sent out in seven-day intervals without breaks in between.

days, and 150 days, but attempted (unsuccessfully) to fit the Flood chronology into a 365-day yearly calendar. The contribution of Barré (1988) is that he correctly assigns the dates for the sending out of the three doves to 12/17/600, 12/24/600, and 1/1/601 to coincide with the opening of the ark's covering by Noah on 1/1/601 (Genesis 8:13).² The following study will rely heavily on Barré's insights on this one point.

Justification for the Present Study

Only one comprehensive study on Flood chronology has been produced by creationists to date (2021): *Grappling with the Chronology of the Genesis Flood* (Boyd and Snelling 2014, 756). This book is the first in a three-part series. Its value is that it sets forth a proposed exegetical and methodological foundation useful for subsequent creationist studies on Flood chronology. The second promised part will develop a complete internal chronology of the Flood, and the third part will root the date of the Flood in external history. The rationale for this Flood project is to uphold the 500-year-old Reformation principle of *sola scriptura* and thus defend the inerrancy of the Flood account (Boyd 2010). The foundational book for modern creationism, *The Genesis Flood* by John C. Whitcomb and Henry M. Morris (1961, 3), has a detailed chart on Flood chronology taken from E. F. Kevan. A Whitcomb and Morris footnote makes an important observation for all Flood geology studies to take into consideration: "the Flood probably reached its maximum depth after the first forty days, instead of rising throughout the 150 days as Kevan indicates." This raises the issue of when did the peaking of Flood waters occur: at 40 days or at 150 days or somewhere in between, from the start of the Flood? The following study will attempt to settle that issue and other related issues in view of a newly-proposed Flood chronology.

A comprehensive review of books, mostly commentaries, that deal extensively with the Flood account has been produced by Lee A. Anderson, Jr. (2014) in a quest to discover if any offer a definitive study of when the Flood waters peaked. The results: 21 works have the Flood peaking at 40 days, 36 works have it peaking at 150 days, and 87 works, many of which are conservative, do not state when the Flood peaked. This is in addition to 20 works that follow a historical-critical approach and thus would be a little value in settling the issue because of their adherence to the documentary hypothesis (based on the J-E-D-P hypothesis of different sources for Genesis). Anderson for obvious reasons does not state which view is the correct one. A theological conclusion should not be based solely on majority opinion.

The following study will not rely on the J-E-D-P theory because it results in a chronology or chronologies that involve a wholesale rearrangement of the biblical narrative. A Noachian Flood chronology that is both consistent and coherent can be constructed without resorting to that hypothesis. One creationist commentary, of which there are very few, was produced the year after *Grappling with the Chronology of the Genesis Flood* was published: *The Genesis Account* by Jonathan D. Sarfati (2015; 2018). Sarfati (2018, 556–557) has taken the position that rains ended and the fountains of the deep were closed on Day 40, when Flood waters began to subside. This stands in contrast to many Flood geologists' views that the Flood peaked, and all land life was destroyed at the end of the 150 days (Barrick and Sigler 2003) or sometime between Days 40 and 150 (Walker 1994). An interesting view, not held by many, is that the waters initially peaked enough on Day 40 to destroy all land creatures, but as the mountains were eroding the waters continued to rise and peaked "sometime between the 40th day and the 150th day" (Hodge 2016, 176). Hodge's view seems to make allowance for the possibility of two peaking events of Flood waters, the date of the second one not being identified in Scripture. Whether one examines creationist books or creationist articles, heretofore there has not been a comprehensive study on Flood chronology that would settle the issues of the peaking of Flood waters and the destruction of all land life.

Starting Premises, Historical Background, and Methodology

Starting Premises

Six starting premises are being advanced at the beginning of this study.

1. *The Flood calendar is based upon 30-day months with a year of 360 days, not upon the 29.5 days of a lunar calendar with a lunar year of 354 days.* Scripture does offer some evidence in support of this assumption. The period between the start of the Flood on 2/17/600 and the resting of the ark on 7/17/600 is said to occupy "one hundred fifty days" (Genesis 7:11, 24; 8:4). This would hold true only if the months were 30 days long.
2. *The seven-day cycles of the Flood chronology are Creation cycles based upon a seven-day week that starts with a first day and ends with a seventh day or sabbath day (Genesis 1:3–2:3).* This is true of the seven-day wait for the start of the Flood and the seven days for the sending out of the birds in seven-day cycles. On this basis each of these seven-day periods should have ended on a Saturday/sabbath. This becomes the most important of the six

² The tripartite dating of the Flood events is based upon Noah's life. The day is followed by the month, which is followed by the year of Noah's life.

- presuppositions. The remainder of the article will offer several lines of evidence that this assumption is sound.
3. *All chronologically-dated Flood events can be linked with particular days of the week and thus linked with the Creation days as well in most cases.* Apparently, only one modern evangelical commentary assigns the dates in the Flood account to particular days of the week (Wenham 1987, 180). In doing so, Wenham follows the lead of a Dead Sea Scroll (4Q252) that advocates a Book of Jubilees system of chronology, but the following study will reject that calendar because it has months fluctuating between 30 and 31 days and produces a scheme that is too artificial to be historical in application to the Flood narrative. (It has other deficiencies that will be discussed later in the paper.)
 4. *The three sets of chronological doublets (seven days, 40 days, 150 days) refer to distinct time periods.* This means that Flood chronology has two 150-day time periods whereby the first one ends at exactly the point that the second one begins.
 5. *The Flood account begins with the first day of the first month of Noah's 600th year; thus, any reconstructed Flood chronology must start with that date, and not with the traditional start on 2/17/600 of Noah's life.* This implies that the Flood dates in terms of days and months are not following a civil or religious lunar calendar in use at that time but appear to be pegged to Noah's life. The issue of how the Flood's events were dated, whether pegged to Noah's life or to an independent calendar, is not germane to this study however, as long as a reconstructed chronology begins with 1/1/600 and ends with 2/27/601 (Genesis 7:6; 8:14).
 6. *Many of the events assigned to a particular date were possibly calculated by Noah himself.* He did not need divine commands for establishing his chronology, except for the command to enter the ark and a parallel command to leave the ark. All the other dated events are derived from Noah's astute observations and calculations, which possibly have been passed along orally to Moses through the sixteen unbroken generations between Noah and Moses.³

At this point no attempt is made to give thorough, scholarly justification for each of these six points, but the ensuing article will help to illuminate the importance of all six points. One suggested quest for this study is to "prove" each of the six points, but especially point no. 2 because it is actually the theme of this paper. The first assumption, a 360-day calendar, also merits further in-depth examination, for example.⁴ Instead of "proving" the major points, this study will demonstrate the consistency and coherence of all the data when the above six points are allowed to lay the foundation for the remainder of the study.⁵

Historical Background

Prior to the mid-1900s most scholarly studies viewed Genesis 1–11 as a collection of disparate documents by different authors or sources. But by the 1970s there was a reaction against the extremism of source criticism as Old Testament scholars began to treat Genesis 1–11 as a literary unity with a single theme, "creation—uncreation—re-creation" (Clines 1976). But even though they recognized an overarching unity, they rejected the historicity of those chapters, relegating them to the realm of mythology. Now there are several non-

³ Perhaps Noah's calculations were passed along orally from father to son in the patriarchal line ending with Moses. An unbroken genealogy connects Noah with Moses (Genesis 10:1; 11:10–32; 25:19–26; 46:8–11; Exodus 6:16–20). All the genealogical links have at least some chronological data, the memory of which has been preserved and passed along accurately. The accuracy of memories in constructing biblical chronogenealogies could likewise be applied to recording and preserving all the chronological data of the Flood narrative. However it was done, the important point is that divine inspiration has preserved the account even in its smaller details.

⁴ Barrick and Sigler (2003, 398) as in the present study, feel there is no need for scholarly justification for a 360-day Flood year: "For the purpose of this paper no detailed defense of the 30-day month will be presented. Support for the 30-day month (and the 360-day year) can be found in the available literature, citing the 1988 study of Barré which will be summarized later in the present study."

⁵ The question of "proof" is a legitimate question that can be raised by the readers of this study. Classical systems of logic offer several examples of how proof can be achieved. This paper recommends using "the law of non-contradiction" which can be traced back to Aristotle. It states that two opposite or contradictory propositions cannot be true at the same time. As applied to the six starting principles, a reader will need to "prove" the opposite or negation of each of the six principles, but especially of principle no. 2, in order to reject this paper as valid. The negation of no. 2 would state: "Each of the four seven-day cycles cannot be viewed as Creation cycles, starting with the first day (Sunday) and ending with the seventh day (Saturday)." The burden of proof then is placed upon those who wish to defend this negative proposition. The negation of no. 6 is that God gave directly to Moses the information that appears in the Flood account without external transmission from any human sources. Even if it is not possible to prove or disprove either of the opposite propositions, the author has chosen another method for validating the trustworthiness of the conclusions—the "test of consistency and coherence." This may not be proof in the classical sense, but strong evidence. The author's doctoral dissertation (Johns 2005) has established that the seven days of Creation week are composed of literal days, best viewed as 24-hour days. One evangelical scholar who read the dissertation argued at the defense that one could have "literal day-ages" without compromising the accuracy of the Genesis account. But the negation of "literal 24-hour days" would be "day-ages." Both cannot be true at the same time without ending in a quagmire of illogic. The seven Creation days thus are consistent and coherent with literal 24-hour days, leading to the trustworthiness of Genesis. Hence, the same approach is valid in application to the seven-day cycles of the Flood account

creationist studies upholding not only the unity, but also the historicity of Genesis 1–11, while recognizing the over-arching theological message. A very good introduction to the various approaches to Genesis 1–11 while noting the shift towards their unity in their “final form” is by Andrew J. Schmutzer (2009) of Moody Bible Institute. The theme of creation/de-creation/re-creation is now being emphasized by creation scholars, which can be accomplished only if Genesis 1–11 have both a textual and a theological unity (Keiser 2013). One suggestion is that the “de-creation” be described simply as the “undoing of creation.” Additionally, several studies have defended the full unity of the Flood account in Genesis 6–9 based solely upon a tight literary structure (Kikawada and Quinn 1985; Wenham 1978). Finally, some scholars are proposing that Flood chronology is reflective of the intertestamental Jubilees calendar, which means that the priestly (P) chronology is dated at the earliest to the Exile, if not soon after the Exile (Wenham 1987). The following study takes exception to this interpretation and attributes the authorship of the Flood account to Moses, the traditional view.

Most studies on Genesis 1–11 ever since the advent of the Wellhausen historical-critical method in the nineteenth century have at times debated the question of the historicity of Genesis 1–11. Since scholars now acknowledge the structural unity of these chapters in “their final form,” one cannot divide the early chapters into some historical and some non-historical. A wide variety of approaches have been advocated by Old Testament scholars, who treat these chapters variously as saga, myth, parable, poetry, strictly theology, primeval history, or strictly history. This study adopts the approach of Kenneth A. Mathews (1996, 111), who first reviews the various interpretations, then makes this assessment: “Thus we conclude that the creation narrative claims historicity. It should not be interpreted allegorically or treated solely as literature. It also conveys discursive information about reality, using schematic ornamentation.” What is said here is true not only of Creation, but of the Flood narrative. The structure of the Flood narrative is schematic, but the narrative itself is historical. A recent study that takes into account the complex structure and symbolisms of Genesis 1–11 while at the same time upholding the historicity of those chapters is by James K. Hoffmeier (2015). The present study extends the author’s dissertation work on the literal nature of the seven Creation days to include the seven days in the Flood narrative (Johns 2005). Both accounts are viewed as historical; that is, are rooted in reality.

Methodology

The methodology for the following study will start

with analyzing the structure of the Flood account. In terms of structure the most obvious conclusion is that the Flood narrative in its entirety employs the literary method of chiasmus. Understanding the structure often leads to a clearer understanding of function, and function will ultimately lead to a better theological basis for the Flood account. The theological significance of the Flood account is that it is characterized as the reversal of creation or “uncreation” (Clines 1976). The account can be divided into two halves: chapters 6–7 form the first half, or the de-creation half, and chapters 8–9 comprise the re-creation half. This observation solidifies an even stronger link between Creation and the Flood. In the structural analysis the study will seek to uncover the significance of the chronological doublets for reconstructing Flood chronology. After the Flood chronology has been constructed, the next step is to identify the days of the week for all the important events in the Flood narrative. After the days are identified based upon the reconstructed chronology, they can be linked with corresponding days in the seven days of Creation. This becomes an external test for determining the accuracy of the reconstruction. And finally, alternate interpretations of Flood chronology by scholars, especially creationist scholars, are carefully considered. The most helpful point gleaned from recent studies is the principle of dischronologization, which makes it possible to reorganize the Flood chronology in perhaps a more accurate sequence.

The six major assumptions are more than mere assumptions; they are basic principles that will give guidance for the remainder of the study. The best evidence of the pertinence and importance of the assumptions is that the final product of their application is a sound chronology that is both consistent and coherent.

Structure and Its Application

Structure

The entire Flood narrative is organized around the use of a literary structure called “chiasmus.” A chiasm (or chiasmus) is reverse-order parallelism whereby the first literary sub-unit is in parallel with the last sub-unit; the second is parallel with the second to last; the third is parallel with the third to last, and so forth. The interesting fact is that chiasmus can be applied to a narrative that follows largely a chronological sequence. There is no limit on the number of distinct literary sub-units in a chiastic structure.

Old Testament scholars in the 1970s and 1980s began to recognize the significance of chiastic structure for developing a deeper understanding of the Flood narrative (Anderson 1978; Shea 1979;

Wenham 1978; 1987, 156). Studies that accept the historicity of Genesis 1–11 also recognize that historicity is not incompatible with a highly-organized structure (Hoffmeier 2015). A recent simplified chiasmic structure of the Flood narrative has been produced by Laurence Turner (2017, 55), which has been slightly modified here with wording from Shea’s similar chiasmic structure (Shea 1979, 11):

- A. Noah and his sons (Genesis 6:9–10)
- B. Violence in God’s creation (6:11–12)
- C. Resolution to destroy the earth (6:13–22)
- D. Command to enter the ark (7:1–10)
- E. Beginning of the Flood (7:11–16)
- F. The rising of Flood waters (7:17–24)
- G. **God remembered Noah** [apex] (8:1a)
- F’. The receding of Flood waters (8:1b–5)
- E’. The drying of the earth (8:6–14)
- D’. Command to leave the ark (8:15–19)
- C’. Resolution to preserve order (8:20–22)
- B’. Covenant blessing and peace (9:1–17)
- A’. Noah and his sons (9:18–19)

A similar chiasmic structure for the Flood narrative has been outlined by Lee A. Anderson Jr. (2014, 648) and James Hoffmeier (2015, 50). Scholars have demonstrated that Moses, the author of the Book of Genesis, has employed chiasmic structuring throughout the book. One example is found in Genesis 2–3 with its highly detailed chiasmic parallels (Ouro 2002). True, when scholars come to outlining Genesis 6–9, they differ as to its details of the chiasmic structuring. The above structure should be a start of scholarly discussions, rather than offering the definitive study on structure.⁶

Often with a chiasm the most important thought is sandwiched in the middle or apex of the chiasm. The apex divides the Flood narrative into its two halves marked by “crescendo” and “de-crescendo” in the words of Thomas Keiser (2013, 130). The apex in the Flood account reads: “But God remembered Noah” (8:1). In spite of the violence of the Flood and the mass destruction of living creatures and

even humans, the reassurance is that God had not forgotten Noah and his family, and his grace was being shown to them.⁷ This is just one example of how structure can illuminate the theology of the Flood. The following study will help to determine whether the chiasmic structure has been superimposed upon the Flood narrative, or whether it is an integral part of the narrative. The use of chiasmus does not automatically create a completed Flood chronology, but it becomes an important tool that leads in the direction of establishing a sound chronology.

The outer limits of the chiasm both at the beginning and ending are often significant. Not surprisingly, the Flood chiasm begins and ends with a genealogy. But even more significantly it is a split genealogy that starts with Noah and his three sons and ends with Noah’s death, as follows:

A—“And Noah was five hundred years old, and Noah begot Shem, Ham, and Japheth” (5:32).⁸

A’—“And Noah lived after the flood three hundred and fifty years. So all the days of Noah were nine hundred and fifty years; and he died” (9:28).

One can readily detect that this follows the pattern of all antediluvian genealogies in Genesis 5, except for the fact that this unusual genealogy is split in half. This is the first key indicator that the Flood account is chiasmic. The Noachian genealogy forms what scholars sometimes call “an envelope structure.” The outer portions of the account form “bookends” that delineate where the Flood story begins and ends. Most scholars who have outlined the Flood’s chiasmic structure have neglected to include these two outer envelopes.

The apex is the chronological center of the Flood narrative. Many exegetes suggest that the apex, which is centered at 8:1, is also the hydrological climax of the Flood, but that is an issue that needs discussing in greater depth. Nevertheless, all time periods more than one day in length are arranged chiasmically, as outlined by creationist Old Testament scholar, William H. Shea (1979):

- | | |
|---|---|
| The Flood crests, the ark rests, God remembers Noah (8:1) | |
| 4) 150 days waters prevail (7:24) | 5) 150 days waters abate/lessen (8:3) |
| 3) 40 days of the Flood (7:12, 17) | 6) 40 days the first birds sent out (8:6) |
| 2) 7 days until the Flood (7:10) | 7) 7 days next bird sent out (8:10) |
| 1) 7 days until the 40-day storm (7:4) | 8) 7 days last bird sent out (8:12) |

⁶ The setting forth of a definitive structure for the Flood chronology would require some type of “proof.” It’s not the object of this study to provide proof, but to open the door to some new possibilities. On the question of “proof,” see footnote 5.

⁷ God’s grace is one of the themes of the Flood narrative. This theme is introduced in Genesis 6:8: “But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord.” Scholars need to connect this statement with 8:1: “But God remembered Noah.” God’s remembrance of Noah is a powerful demonstration of his grace.

⁸ All scriptural quotations are from the New King James Version (NKJV), unless otherwise indicated.

Definitely the numbers have been arranged chiasmically, such that the last half duplicates the first half, but in reverse order. The numbers can be spread out as such: 7-7-40-150=150-40-7-7. The most obvious observation is that the numbers are in matching doublets. The figure of seven days is mentioned twice in the first half, which explains why the seven days are not mentioned three times with the sending out of the four birds in the last half of the narrative. By implication there is a third seven-day period for sending out the birds, when the record states: "And he [Noah] waited yet another seven days" (8:10). The sending out of the four birds are separated by three seven-day periods, but only two are specifically mentioned. One anomaly not discussed by Shea is the impression that the ark rested "at the end of the 150 days," while the waters were abating all during the 150 days "continually" (Genesis 8:3-4, RSV). This anomaly will be explained in the discussion of "dischronologization" below.

Application to the Doublets of the 150 Days

An additional observation is that all the multi-day time periods in the first half are distinct from those in the second half. The inference is that the Flood account has two separate 150-day periods, contrary to some Flood chronologies developed by many creationists (Barrick and Sigler 2003, 403; Boyd 2020; Sarfati 2018, 570). Andrew A. Snelling (2009, 22, n. 7) seems to equate the two 150-day periods when he observes: "Genesis 8:3 specifically states that after the end of the 150 days, the waters were abated." Without abatement at the end of the first 150 days (Genesis 7:24) the ark could not have landed on Ararat. Some creationist views on Flood chronology have been influenced by *The Genesis Flood* (1961) when it quotes from H.C. Leupold's commentary. Leupold (1942, 310-311) equates the two 150-day periods as being identical: "Comparing 7:24, we discern that the one hundred and fifty days here mentioned are the same here [in Genesis 8:3b] and there [in 7:24]." Barrick and Sigler (2003, 400) also equate the two periods of 150 days: "The mention of 150 days in 7:24 and 8:3 refer to the same period." Even one recent conservative commentary still asserts that "these 150 days [in 7:24] are the same as the 150 days of 8:4" (Steinmann 2019, 100). Because of the ambiguity of the question of whether there were one or two 150-day periods, this study has listed this issue as number 4 in the list of assumptions.

Two Old Testament scholars have been largely ignored by creationist scholars for their contributions towards resolving this issue. First, the eminent German scholar of the nineteenth century, August Dillmann (1897, 252), clearly separated the two 150-day periods: "Hence the expedient commends

itself of assuming that here, in the 150 days, we have the remnant of a divergent estimate, according to which the increase of the waters took 150 days, and, doubtless, their decrease also 150 days (that is, 2×75)." It is interesting that Dillmann used the word "assuming" and in this way our assumption number 4 is rightly characterized as an assumption.

Second, L.M. Barré (1988) takes the suggestion of Dillmann on the 150 days by tying the second 150 days much more closely with the Flood narrative, especially the sending out of the birds. For Barré these 150 days offer a significant terminal point that is dated as 12/17/600, which is exactly five months after the end of the first 150 days on 7/17/600 (Genesis 8:4). He correctly notes that this terminal point is exactly two weeks prior to Noah removing the ark's covering (8:13). The explicit mention of two seven-day periods, not three as previously discussed, fits perfectly the two-week window between the end of the 150 days and the removal of the ark's covering. Barré proposes the idea that the first dove was sent out on 12/17/600, the second on 12/24/600, and the third on 1/1/601 to coincide precisely with Noah removing the ark's covering and seeing that the earth was totally dry on 1/1/601 (8:8-13). Barré has taken the question of whether there is one or two 150-day periods out of the realm of guesswork and has put it on a sound exegetical basis.

Solution for the Two 150-Day Periods: Dischronologization

Having one 150-day period versus two 150-day periods could result in a scholarly impasse unless a new hermeneutic principle, "dischronologization," is brought to bear on the issue. This principle was introduced to the creationist community by scholars Thomas Laney Stroup, Kai M. Akagi, and Steven W. Boyd, all of whom contributed chapters in *Grappling with the Chronology of the Genesis Flood* (Boyd and Snelling 2014). Dischronologization simply means that Hebrew verbal tenses do not necessarily determine sequence in a narrative, whereas the verbs with identical verbal structure generally indicate sequence. For the purposes of our study dischronologization is an important consideration in Genesis 7:24-8:5. However, a previous study by Barrick and Sigler (2003) on the chronology of the Flood takes strong exception to the dischronologization rule, arguing that these critical verses are indeed in chronological sequence based upon the *wayyiqtol* form of the Hebrew verbs. But Stroup, Akagi, and Boyd have offered numerous examples of dischronologization elsewhere in Old Testament narrative literature. For a good summary of how dischronologization works with the Flood narrative, see Robert B. Chisholm (2003, 64-69).

The principle of dischronologization when applied to the two periods of 150 days can be taken in two completely different directions. First, the 150 days in 8:5 can refer *back* to the 150 days in 7:24, making the two periods essentially identical (Anderson 2014, 649–650). Second, the second 150 days can refer *forward* to a point near the end of the Flood narrative, resulting in the two periods of 7:24 and 8:5 being separate and distinct. How does one know which is the correct interpretation? Rearranging the sentences in the last verse of Genesis 7 and the first few verses of Genesis 8, which are full of chronological references, results in a clarification of what the original sequence of events may have been, as proposed in this rearrangement:

“And the waters prevailed on the earth one hundred and fifty days” (7:24). [cf. NRSV: “And the waters swelled on earth for one hundred fifty days.”]

“Then God remembered Noah” (8:1a)

“Then the ark rested in the seventh month, the seventeenth day of the month, on the mountains of Ararat” (8:4, cf. 7:24).

“Now the springs of the deep and the floodgates of the heavens had been closed, and the rain had stopped falling from the sky” (8:2, NIV, cf. 7:12)

“And God made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters subsided” (8:1b).

“And the waters receded continually from the earth. At the end of the hundred and fifty days the waters decreased [RSV, had abated]” (8:3).

(All biblical references in this study are from the NKJV, unless otherwise indicated.)

In the above approach the placement of the second 150 days is permissible under the principle of dischronologization, which also points to a type of recapitulation, and becomes a final statement at the end of these narrative sentences, all of which are *wayyiqtol* verbal statements. (One should keep in mind that there may be other ways to rearrange the sentence sequences.) The second of the two 150 days points forward to the time when Flood waters would be abated, not back to the beginning of the abatement signified by 7:24. If the rearrangement is legitimate, then it is legitimate to treat the second 150-days statement as a broad summary that covers everything from the grounding of the ark to the drying up of the waters just beyond the second 40-day period. At least one creationist has recently accepted the concept of two 150-day periods when he writes: “The Flood covered the tops of the highest mountains... and the waters prevailed for ten months [two 150-day periods] (Genesis 8:5)” (Garner 2009, 180–181). A chiasmic chronological arrangement intimates that the second 40 days should be placed at or near the end of the second 150-day period, just as the first 40 days are placed at the beginning of the first 150 days.

When outlined as a chiasm, this arrangement is A–B : B’–A’. The tight relationship between the 40 days and the 150 days offers additional evidence that the second 150 days should be treated as distinct from the first 150 days.

In the above approach the principle of dischronologization sheds light on another problem. If in the traditional view the windows of heaven (=rains) and the fountains of the deep were stopped on Day 150 of the Flood (Genesis 8:2), why does the earlier narrative state that “rain was on the earth forty days and forty nights” (7:12)? Here is an apparent discrepancy that sometimes is solved by having two different kinds of rain—the heavy rain (Hebrew *geshem*) of 7:12 and 8:2 and the gentle rain (Hebrew *matar*). But nowhere in the Flood account does the record talk about gentle rain using the Hebrew noun *matar*. Barrick (2008, 267) proposes that only the heavy rain was stopped after 40 days, thus interpreting 8:2 as pointing to the end of the 40 days of rain (7:12). But then Barrick makes an amazing statement: “Neither the single verse (7:4) nor the detailed expansion (7:11–27) claim that rain would cease after forty days” (269). Clearly this is an argument from silence. Arguments from silence should not be allowed to give the final word on such an important subject of how long the rains lasted. Scripture is clear how long they lasted: “And rain (*geshem*) was on the earth forty days and forty nights” (7:12). Scripture could not make it any clearer than this. To suggest that lighter rains (*matar*, etc.) continued after the 40 days is mere speculation—nothing in Scripture intimating that continued rains were falling. The argument is that waters continued to rise (or “swell”, RSV) or “were strong” all during the 150 days of 7:24. “Strong” waters were not dependent upon having “fountains of the deep” continue spewing out their contents during the 110 days after the rains were stopped (8:2).

The position of this study is that heavy rains and violent eruptions of fountains did not need to continue after the first 40 days. Genesis 7:17–23 presents an unbroken flow of events starting with mention of the “forty days”. No break is intimated in the narrative. Verses 17–23 form a complete paragraph that should not be parceled up piecemeal. The subject of the paragraph is given in v. 17: the “40 days”. At the end “all the high hills” were covered (v. 19) up to a depth of “15 cubits” (v. 20). There’s no break between verses 19 and 20. The result: “all flesh died that moved on the earth” (v. 21), all air-breathing creatures “died” (v. 22), and “every living thing” was “blotted out” (v. 23). The destruction of “all in whose nostrils was the breath of the spirit of life” (v. 22) points to the climax of rising waters being on Day 40, not Day 150. Their demise was clearly by drowning. To prevent

waters rising further it was important that the “fountains of the deep” and “windows of heaven” (8:2) be closed tight on Day 40, according to the principle of dischronologization.

Results

The Problem of When to End the Second 40-day Period

The application of the six starting principles plus insights gleaned from chiasmic structuring make it possible to offer specific dates for Flood chronology. Table 1 shows a newly-revised Flood chronology based upon the premise of there being two 150-day periods and based upon a chiasmic structure that puts the second 40-day period at or near the end of the second 150-day period. It becomes readily apparent that this new chronology differs on several key points from the traditional chronology outlined in table 2.⁹ For example, one will easily note that this new chronology has two back-to-back periods of 150 days each, which form the backbone for Flood chronology. A total period of 300 days starts with 2/17/600 and ends with 12/17/600, a period of exactly ten months (Garner 2009, 180–181). The RSV translation of the last verb in Genesis 8:3 is “had abated.” One should look for the abatement of the waters (waters lessened, but not necessarily totally removed) at about 12/17/600. The narrative of the three doves gives additional insight as to when the waters had fully abated. The second dove

bringing back a fresh olive leaf at 12/24/600 was the sign given to Noah that “the waters had receded from the earth,” not just locally but from around the world (Genesis 8:11, NKJV). Essentially the waning/lessening of Flood waters ended by 12/24/600, which means that sometime between 12/17 and 12/24 the waters had dissipated. A third dove sent out a week after the second was needed to confirm that indeed the waters were dry. The failure of the third dove to return on Saturday aligns closely with the statement that on 1/1/601 “the waters were dried up from the earth” (8:13). The wording here, “were dried up from the earth” is a close but not exact synonym to “had receded from the earth” in verse 11.

The non-return of the third dove was the signal for Noah to remove the ark’s covering, perhaps at the end of the day. The counter to these interpretations is that in the traditional view the third dove returned on 12/1/600, but it was another 30 days until the earth was pronounced dry (as noted in table 2). This conflicts with the statement that Noah knew “the waters had receded from the earth” when the second dove returned with an olive leaf (8:11). This also would place the drying of the earth 30 days or more before it was actually pronounced “dry” (8:14). The traditional view leaves a 30-day gap after the failed return of the last bird and Noah’s opening of the ark’s covering (8:12–13). Why did Noah need to wait an extra 30 days before opening the ark’s covering? The presence of this gap

Table 1. Newly-proposed Flood chronology.

Genesis	Event	Biblical Date	Day of the Week
7:6	Noah’s 600th birthday	1-1-600	Wednesday
7:7ff.	Starting to board the ark—humans and animals	2-10-600	Sunday
7:10	Seven days of waiting, the seventh being a Saturday	2-16-600	Saturday/sabbath
7:11	Beginning of the Flood	2-17-600	Sunday
7:12	40 days of rain ending	3-27-600	Friday
8:4	Ark rests on Mt. Ararat after 150 days	7-17-600	Wednesday
8:5	Water decreasing for another 150 days, ending on:	12-17-600	Saturday/sabbath
8:5	Tops of the mountains appear	11-1-600*	Tuesday
8:6	Raven sent out after 40 days (39 full days)	12-10-600	Saturday/sabbath
8:8	First dove sent out seven days later at end of 150 days	12-17-600	Saturday/sabbath
8:10	Second dove sent out after seven days; returns with leaf	12-24-600	Saturday/sabbath
8:12	Third dove sent out after seven days, but did not return	1-1-601	Saturday/sabbath
	<i>No delay after the 3rd dove sent and ark’s opening</i>		
8:13	Waters dried up; ark opened up on Noah’s birthday	1-1-601	Saturday/sabbath
8:14	Noah exits the ark with his family and animals	2-27-601	Saturday/sabbath

*Data from the Septuagint; the MT has 10-1-600.

Flood chronology with notation of days of the week. It is based upon a calendar of 360 days composed of 12 30-day months. Dead Sea Scroll 4Q252 also specifies the days of the week, but its calendar has 364 days in a calendar year. The above calendar is said to be the original Noachian calendar, which was modified in the intertestamental times to fit Qumran theology.

⁹ One scholarly defense of the traditional Flood chronology from a recent-creation viewpoint is found in Barrick and Sigler (2003).

Table 2. Traditional dates for Flood chronology.

Genesis	Event	Biblical Date	Number of Days
7:6–11	Days of waiting after announcing the Flood	1-1-600	[40]
7:4	Starting to board the ark—humans and animals	2-10-600	
7:10	Seven days of waiting, ending at end of seventh day	2-16/17-600	7
7:11	Beginning of the 40 days of the <i>mabbul</i> /Flood	2-17-600	
7:12	40 days of the <i>mabbul</i> /heavy rain ending	3-27-600	40 (incl. in 150)
7:24	Beginning of the 150 days of waters prevailing	2-17-600	
8:4	Ending of first 150 days; ark rests on Mt. Ararat	7-17-600	150 (= 5 months)
8:3	End of the second 150-day period	7-17-600	
8:3	Waters abated at the end of the second 150 days	7-17-600	150 (1st 5 months)
8:5	Tops of the mountains appear; beginning of the second 40 days	10-1-600*	
8:5	End of the second 40-day period; first bird launched	11-10-600	40 (incl. in 150)
8:6	Raven did not return	11-10-600	
8:8	First dove sent out seven days after the raven	11-17-600	
8:10	Second dove launched seven days later; returns with leaf	11-24-600	7
8:12	Third dove sent out after seven days, but did not return	12-1-600	7
	<i>30-day gap between the third dove's launching and the ark's opening</i>		[30 = 1 mo.]
8:13	Waters entirely dried up; top of the ark opened	1-1-601	
8:14	Noah exits the ark with his family and animals after eight weeks of waiting	2-27-601	[56 = 8 weeks]

Flood chronology without notation of the days of the week. Data from the Masoretic Text.

can be considered a defect in the traditional Deluge chronology. Only the newly-proposed chronology resolves this problem.¹⁰

One possible solution to the 30-day gap is to adopt the reading of the Septuagint (LXX) for the mountains being seen. The traditional reading assigns a date of 10/1/600 (MT), but the LXX a date one month or 30 days later on 11/1/600 (LXX) rather than on 10/1/600. The result is the LXX eliminates the 30-day delay between the sending out of the last bird and the opening of the ark's covering on 1/1/601. Adopting the LXX reading in 8:5 assigns the start of the second forty days to 11/1/600 and ends the forty days on 12/10/600 inclusive reckoning.¹¹

Immediately one can seize on this and launch a criticism against the new chronology that it arbitrarily adopts this one chronological datum point

in the LXX while rejecting one other chronological figure in the Septuagint's Flood account. The LXX ends the Flood on 2/17/601, not on the traditional 2/27/601, in order to have a Flood year last exactly 360 days or 12 months because of the Flood's starting on 2/17/600 in both the MT and LXX.¹² In the MT the Flood lasted 370 days from 2/17/600 to 2/27/601. Having the Flood last 360 days or 12 months with 30 days each appears to be too contrived. This change is suspect. The number 360 could easily be broken down as 6×60, but the number 370 has a sense of randomness to it. More will be said later in this study on the second 40 days in the LXX (see the "Discussion" section). The adoption of just one LXX reading, however, is not arbitrary because it results in a more consistent Flood chronology with a better fit than the traditional Deluge chronology.

¹⁰ The question that will arise in many readers' minds is why would Noah know the point when the waters were dried up if he could simply observe it without the help of birds? Having a 30-day gap means that Noah would not rely upon birds to give the final word of when the earth was dry and when the ark's covering should be removed on 1/1/601. In that case perhaps God impressed Noah that it was the right time to open up the ark. The role of birds is critical in this narrative. Noah no doubt could observe events outside the ark much earlier than 1/1/601. He saw that "tops of the mountains" had appeared in 10/1/600 (MT) or on 11/1/600 (LXX). The ark's covering need not be removed for making such observations. Even when the ark "rested" on Ararat mountains on 7/17/600, in part this knowledge was based on actual observation, otherwise how would he know that there were surrounding "mountains", (plural, Genesis 8:4)? The sending out of birds four times gave Noah confirmation of what his limited observation could detect. Especially with the doves, the birds of lowlands in the O.T., they could observe valleys not within the ken of Noah.

¹¹ Some may question why, in some cases, inclusive reckoning is employed for reconstructing the Flood chronology and in other cases it is not employed. The possibility for inclusive reckoning for the second 40-day period is actually derived from an unmentioned 40-day period from the first chronological period in the Flood account to the beginning of the seven-day wait for the *mabbul* to begin. The Flood chronology allows 40 days (inclusive reckoning) between the first chronological record in the Flood narrative, which is 1/1/600 (Genesis 7:6), and the start of the first seven-day period on 1/10/600 (7:10). The first seven days ended when the Flood started on 2/17/600 (7:11). The inclusive reckoning for this 40-day period is strikingly parallel to the second 40-day period that is specifically mentioned—both starting on the first of a month and both ending on a tenth of a month.

¹² The Book of Jubilees (second century B.C.) also ends the Flood on 2/17/601 perhaps because of the influence of the LXX.

One Recent Scholarly Study with Relevance to the 40 Days

Before offering solutions to the problem of the second 40 days, one should consider carefully the novel approach offered by Steven W. Boyd (2020), who is one of the originators and the director of the Flood chronology project. The problem Boyd views with respect to the second 40-day period is the question of how Noah knew “the tops of the mountains were seen” (8:5). Did God give a divine revelation to Noah that the mountain tops could be seen? Probably not, or at least there is not even a hint of that in the sacred account. The first time the voice of God was heard was at the end of the Flood when Noah left the ark (8:15), so most likely God did not tell him when the mountain tops were seen. For Boyd the sending out of birds four times as scouts duly informed him of the progress of the drying of the Flood waters and the emerging of the mountain peaks nearby. Boyd comes up with an ingenuous solution: the beginning of the “forty days” must be moved 40 days earlier such that “the end of the forty days” was on “the first day of the tenth month” in contrast to have them begin at that point (8:5–6). The sending out of the first birds were thus 40 days earlier than in the traditional view. Hence, the mountains were first seen clearly between the sending out of the second dove and the third dove when the ark’s window had to be opened each time. This was dated in the Flood account to within the first seven days beginning with the first day of the tenth month of Noah’s six hundredth year (Genesis 8:5). In fact, the mountains were sufficiently exposed so that the first olive seedling could have sprouted by the time the second dove was sent out and returned with an “olive leaf” (8:11). Boyd’s solution works if, and only if, the principle of dischronologization is applied to this part of the Flood story. He moves the second “forty days” (8:6) back in time, so that they ended on 10/1/600, not on 11/10/600 as with the traditional view. For him, “Noah knew that the waters had receded from the earth” (8:11) sometime between the sending of the first two doves, seven days apart. How did Noah know when to start counting the 40 days? Boyd then suggests that the power of the 150 days of powerful Flood waters was broken sometime between Days 166 and 173 from the start of the Flood on 2/17/600 (7:11, 24). For him the 150 days, a single period mentioned twice, commenced between Days 16 and 23 from the start of the Flood; thus, the 150 days did not start simultaneously with the start of the first 40 days. Noah could have done the necessary calculations based upon when the most powerful part of the *mabbul* began 150 days earlier, which he could have detected from within the ark without opening the ark’s window (7:24). Interestingly, Boyd apparently does not have the 150 days end when the

ark landed on “the mountains of Ararat” on 7/17/600, as in most Deluge chronologies (7:24–8:4).

One should acknowledge that it is next to impossible to create a valid, coherent Flood chronology without marshalling forth the principle of dischronologization as applied to the Flood account. The chiasmic structure itself offers examples of dischronologization if the method of chiasmus as applied to the Flood account is valid. But two important criticisms can be directed towards Boyd’s chronology. The first is that many of the dates in his chronology are not precise to the day as in the new chronology of Table 1. For Boyd the ending of the 150 days is within a seven-day time frame—Days 166 to 173 from the start of the Flood. Additionally, the starting point of this 150-day period is also within a seven-day span and thus is imprecise. It would be impossible to determine accurate days of the week with his chronology or to link with specific days of Creation week. Second, Boyd shifts the second 40-day period in the wrong direction in contrast to the above proposed chronology that shifts the sending out of the birds 30 days later than what is done traditionally. There is a 70-day discrepancy between Boyd’s bird-modulated chronology and Johns’ bird-modulated chronology in terms of when the birds were launched. In both cases the birds are the key factor. Boyd’s reconstruction employs birds to inform Noah when the waters had receded to the point that the mountain-tops could be seen. Johns’ chronology has the sending out the three doves to ascertain whether the waters had dried up, as indicated in Genesis 8:8: “He [Noah] also sent out from himself a dove, to see if the waters had receded from the face of the ground.” The information the three doves provided Noah with the precise signal as to when to open the covering of the ark on 1/1/601. Boyd has a delay of 75 to 82 days between the sending out of the third dove and the removal of the ark’s covering (8:11, 13). That needs explaining. In the newly-proposed chronology there is no delay or gap, not even by one day. To summarize, both chronologies rely heavily on seven-day cycles for providing vital information to Noah apart from divine revelation, thus enabling today’s creationist scholars to construct Flood chronologies.

Scripture is silent as to how large a time interval was between the sending out of the raven and first dove.¹³ It simply states: “He also sent out from himself a dove, to see the waters had receded...” (8:8). Nothing is stated suggesting when the first dove was sent out. Instead of Noah waiting seven days after the raven for sending out the dove, Barré proposes a 30-day gap in the narrative because the raven was launched from the ark’s window on 11/10/600, which was 40 days after the tops of the mountains were observed (8:5–7). Barré does not

consider the possibility that the 40 days ended on 12/10 as suggested in the Septuagint (LXX) translation, instead of 11/10 as in the Masoretic Text (MT). Perhaps he was not even aware of the LXX reading. The following study will pursue that alternative. It is important to notice that Barré's dating of the two doves works only if the assignment of the two 150-day periods proposed by Dillmann is correct. Thus, Dillman's original proposal is more than a mere assumption.

The Possibility of the Traditional Chronology Being Partially Correct

The traditional Flood chronology is outlined in table 2. The first thing one should notice is that none of the chronological data points are assigned to particular days of the week. The advantage of the traditional chronology is that it has reduced the 75–82-day gap in Boyd's chronology down to 30 days as traditionally interpreted. But it has a major problem with the 150 days, which are merged into just one time period in harmony with most exegetes who comment on this period (Genesis 7:24; 8:3). Nevertheless, it still leaves a 30-day gap between the sending out of the last bird and the removal of the ark's covering on 1/1/601. This problem has yet to be addressed by scholars. It disrupts a seamless narrative that moves immediately from one event to another.

Assigning days of the week to the traditional chronology holds some possibilities. For example, the appearance of "the tops of the mountains" on the first day of the tenth month happened on a Sunday, and the end of the second 40 days (inclusive reckoning) was on a Thursday, if the traditional chronology has the correct interpretation of 8:5. Each of the birds then was sent out on a Thursday, which parallels the fifth day of Creation when birds were created. This is a good fit. But none of these seven-day cycles assigned to the sending out of birds were Creation-week cycles, whereas the first seven days prior to the beginning of the *mabbul* should be considered to be Creation cycles (7:4, 10). This is an inconsistency facing those who advocate for the traditional chronology. The way out of this dilemma is to deny altogether that any of the dated events in the Flood narrative have a connection with the days of Creation week.

The Potential of the Book of Jubilees Chronology for Solutions

The calendar from the Book of Jubilees (second century B.C.) is the earliest extra-biblical calendar and the only one in ancient times to specify days of the week for all dated events in the Flood narrative. It is a highly-stylized chronology that enables sacred events every three months to repeat on the same day of the week. That's because the calendar has a month with an extra day every three months. The three-month cycles are composed of 91 days each (30+30+31), which is evenly divisible by 7 ($13 \times 7 = 91$). The only ancient explication of Flood chronology using this Jubilees system is found in Dead Sea Scroll Q252 (Lim 1992). Gordon Wenham (1987, 180) has adopted the Jubilees chronology as the most likely chronology for the Flood. See table 3. But he has to ignore the fact that at least early in the Flood narrative a 30-day month was in usage, resulting in a year of 360 days, not 364 days as in Jubilees (Genesis 7:24; 8:3–4). The Jubilees chronology is reflected in the only Dead Sea Scroll that has a Flood chronology (4Q 252). The major deficiency with Wenham's study is that he dates the Flood narrative to the Exilic or even post-Exilic periods in harmony with the JEDP theory. It denies the Mosaic authorship of Genesis 6–9 because it has a stylized chronological system that was not in use in early biblical history. The positive point is that such a chronology indicates that in ancient times scribes were accustomed to interpreting Flood events in terms of days of the week. Nevertheless, our study has a better chronology, one that is not artificially created such that every three months the calendar would repeat its weekly cycles. This is suspect and portrays a non-randomness in the Flood calendar.

A Better Solution to Th Problem of a Possible 30-day Gap

Assigning days of the week to all the chronologically-dated events during the Flood year offers the best solution for the 30-day gap, that is the traditional chronology's 30-day delay between the return of the third dove and the opening of the ark's covering. A significant problem is generated by Steven Boyd's chronology in which an approximately 75- to 82-day gap exists between the two events. The resolution of this problem is built on the theological

¹³ J.P. Lange (1915, 308) in his commentary has astutely noticed the fact that Scripture is silent on how many days elapsed between the sending out of the raven and the first dove. He has written: "It is not directly said how long after the flight of the raven was the first flight of the dove." He has concluded: "... the time between the flight of the raven and the flight of the first dove must have been longer than seven days." Noah most likely waited much longer than the seven days, expecting any day the return of the first avian inspector. The raven around the world is known as a bird of the rocks and the heights, while in the Middle East the (mourning) dove is a bird of the valleys. Isaiah 38:14, 59:11 describes the sound of the dove like that of "mourning." Canticles 5:12 puts the habitat of doves next to rivers, which would have been in Middle East lowlands, and Ezekiel 7:16 describes them as "doves of the valleys." The mention of doves flying over post-diluvian landscapes three times indicates that all three times must have happened when the waters had regressed to the point that they remained only in lowest valleys late in the Flood narrative, specifically within the twelfth month. Either the sending out of the raven must be shifted 30 days later or a one-month gap must be inserted between the raven and the doves.

Table 3. The Jubilees chronology summarized by Wenham.*

Genesis	Event	Biblical Date	Day of the Week
7:4	Announcement of the Flood	2-10-600	Sunday
7:11	Flood begins	2-17-600	Sunday
7:12	Flood lasts 40 days and ends	3-27-600	Friday
7:24, 8:4	Waters triumph and abate for 150 days (incl. the first 40 days) equivalent to five months till ark grounds**	7-17-600	Friday
8:5	Mountain tops appear	10-1-600	Wednesday
8:6	Raven sent out (after 40 days)	11-10-600	Sunday
8:8	First dove sent out seven days after a raven [not in Wenham]	11-17-600	Sunday
8:10	Second dove launched seven days later; returns with leaf	11-24-600	Sunday
8:12	Third dove sent out after seven days, but did not return	12-1-600	Sunday
	<i>Thirty-day gap between the third dove's launching and the ark's opening</i>		[30 d. = 1 mo.]
8:13	Waters dry up [and Noah removed ark's covering]	1-1-601	Wednesday
8:14	Noah leaves the ark [eight weeks after covering removed]	2-27-601	Wednesday

*Wenham (1987, 180)

**Wenham fails to point out that “the waters triumphed and abated” for 152 days, not 150 days if the ark was to ground on a Friday and if the Flood calendar consistently had 30-day months. In the Jubilees calendar one of every three months had an extra day; thus, there were two extra days during the “150 days.” The grounding of the ark on Ararat could not have happened on a Friday, but two days earlier on a Wednesday. Because of this discrepancy all of the remaining “days of the week” in the Flood chronology are in error in the Jubilees chronology.

foundation that the Creation and Flood narratives are inextricably bound together. Thus, the first step towards a solution is a theological one—the Flood can be considered as the reversal of creation, that is, a de-creation. Evangelical commentaries recognize this close connection between Creation and the early part of the Flood narrative, especially in connecting the bursting open of “the fountains of the deep” and “the windows of heaven” referring back to “the waters below the firmament” and “the waters above the firmament” that were separated on Day 2 (Genesis 1:7). For example, Victor P. Hamilton (1990, 291) in his commentary on Genesis states: “The Flood un-creates and returns the earth to a pre-creation period when there was only ‘waters.’” The undoing of creation by means of Flood waters followed by a re-creation necessitates a close correlation between Creation and Flood time periods.

The Flood narrative mentions the “seven days” four times (7:4, 10; 8:10–12). Each of these should be viewed as a repetition of Creation week, starting with a first day (Sunday) and ending with a seventh day (sabbath). The first seven-day period in the Deluge account was the time for having all the animals enter the ark and for stocking the ark with provisions for animals and humans (Boyd 2016). This presumably was completed by the first Saturday in the narrative, a day of divine rest (Genesis 2:1–3).

The first week of waiting for the Flood to begin, according to this view, started with a Sunday and ended with a sabbath/Saturday. It was fitting that the sabbath, which connotes “rest,” was the last day before the fury of the Flood was unleashed on the

antediluvian world and its inhabitants. With this interpretation the Flood year started on a Sunday and ended on a Saturday/sabbath. Commentators recognize that between 2/17/600 and 2/27/601 were exactly 370 days, which represents 53 weeks less one day. If the Flood occupied 371 full days, it would have started and ended early on a Sunday based on 53 seven-day cycles. The result is that Noah and family exited the ark on a Saturday/sabbath, which was marked with the offering of a sacrifice of thanksgiving (8:20–21) followed by a divine promise to never again destroy the entire earth. The giving of the covenant was accompanied by a “sign,” a rainbow, which can be related to later Israelite history whereby the sabbath became a “sign” of the “everlasting covenant” (9:8–17, cf. Exodus 31:16–17). Laurence Turner (1993) draws upon the rich theology of the covenant in the O.T. as related to the sign of the covenant, the rainbow. He also connects the arching of the rainbow like a crystal in Ezekiel 1:22–26 with the arching of the firmament, first described at Creation (Genesis 1:6–8, 14). Flood theology fits nicely with Flood chronology and its ties to Creation.

Potential Solutions to This Problem: Step Two

The drawing of parallels between the seven days of creation and the seven-day cycles in the Flood narrative has not been forced upon the biblical text but is inherent in the text itself. Flood chronology then is an expansion and variation of Creation chronology, tying the two accounts inseparably together. For other examples of exact verbal and thematic parallels between Creation, the Fall,

and the Flood, the reader is encouraged to read Laurence Turner's commentary on Genesis (2000), or his comprehensive essay (2017), which is available online. Ken Mathews' commentary on Genesis (1996) underscores the strong ties between Creation and the Flood.¹⁴

Firm Conclusions Thus Far

The seven days of creation are reflected in two general ways in the Flood narrative. First, all the seven-day cycles in the Flood account are Creation weekly cycles. Starting the Flood on a Sunday results in having the final climax of the Flood year being on a Saturday/sabbath when Noah, his family, and all the animals exited the ark, followed by the offering of an animal sacrifice. It was the first day of worship outside the ark in over a year. The sending out of the three doves in seven-day intervals means that each cycle started and ended on a Saturday, which is true if, and only if, the first dove was sent out on 12/17/600. Second, other seven-day cycles are buried in the Flood account that are not explicitly mentioned as seven-day intervals. For example, the time span between the removal of the ark's covering (1/1/601) and Noah's family exiting the ark (2/27/601) was exactly 56 days—unnoticed by many commentators. This reflects eight seven-day cycles, which again support the concept of Creation cycles in the Flood account. It also supports the conclusion that the months in the Noachian calendar were comprised of 30 days. But even more support for seven-day cycles will be found in the discussion section of this article.

Extending These Conclusions to Other Parts of the Narrative

These conclusions raise the possibility that other days in the Flood narrative can be linked with the actual days of the week. One wonders why there are several chronological notices in the Flood story that include the months and days of the month being given. Could it be that these exact notices can be tied with certain days of the week? When all the chronological notices of the Flood record are tabulated as done in this article's introduction, they can be linked with days of the week. See table 1 for the results. This new Flood chronology is assembled with the help of all the above hermeneutical principles, many of which are assumed to be true. No attempt is made to prove the correctness of those principles, other than to note the amazing fit between all the chronological data points. This new chronology is both coherent and consistent, passing the test of consistency and coherence.

In correlating the days of Creation with the Flood narrative, we start with Genesis 8:5: "And the waters decreased continually until the tenth month. In the tenth *month* on the first *day* of the month, the tops of the mountains were seen." The second usage of "month" here is italicized, as is the only mention of "day," indicating these words are not in the original. This date is exactly 224 days since the start of the Flood on 2/17/600, based on the 30-day calendar. The 224 days are equal to 30 weeks, which means that the mountains appeared on a Sunday. But that suggestion clashes with the third day of Creation, a Tuesday, when the mountains and dry land first "appeared" (Genesis 1:9). Also, as noted above, the verb used for the appearing of mountains is Hebrew *ra'ah* in both 1:9 and 8:5. The appearance of the mountains on the "first day of the tenth month" should have been on a Tuesday to correlate with Creation week. This problem is resolved when the Septuagint translation of 8:5 is followed: "On the eleventh month, the first of the month the mountains were seen" (literal translation by W. Johns). If the LXX is adopted as having a superior reading of 8:5 over the MT, the revised chronology for the first day of the eleventh month places it on a Tuesday, not a Sunday. Again, see this confirmed in Table 1.

The traditional chronology as outlined in Table 2 is problematic in this scenario. Traditionally, the 40 days ended on 11/10/600 (inclusive reckoning) at which time the raven was sent out. The sending out of the raven was on a Thursday, traditionally, which is a problem if the other birds were sent out in seven-day cycles centering around the Creation week, ending on a Saturday. All the final chronological notices towards the end of the Flood narrative revolve around Saturdays/sabbaths, including the removal of the ark's covering. Again, review the newly-proposed chronology in Table 1..

Discussion and Implications

Major Objections to This Study: MT versus LXX

One major objection to this newly-reconstructed Flood chronology is that the Masoretic Text appears to differ with the chronology as presented in table 2 because the second 40 days in the MT commenced on 10/1/600, not on 11/1/600 as in the LXX. For a defense of the traditional reading of 10/1/600 in the MT, rather than in the LXX alternate which this study adopts, the reader is advised to consult Drew G. Longacre (2014, 254–258). Longacre sets forth rebuttals for the four main arguments in support of the LXX reading. For an explanation of why and how the LXX reading

¹⁴ Mathews (1996, 351) has a fairly extensive discussion of the verbal and thematic links between Creation and the Flood. The heart of his discussion is as follows: "Noah is depicted as Adam *redivivus* (revived). He is the sole survivor and successor to Adam; both 'walk' with God; both are recipients of the promissory blessing; both are caretakers of the lower creatures; both father three sons; both are workers of the soil; both sin through the fruit of a tree [or vine]; and both father a wicked son who is under a curse."

reflects the original, one should then consult Wevers (1993, 102–103), whose views are discussed in Longacre. The problem is that Longacre has failed to discuss the full force of Wevers' argument, who is proposing that the original reading (translated from the Hebrew) of 8:5 is as follows: "And the waters decreased continually until the tenth month. In the eleventh month, on the first day of the month, the tops of the mountains were seen." The first half of this verse shows complete agreement between the MT and LXX. Wevers adds the comment: "Gen [LXX] considered 'until the tenth month' to mean to the end of the tenth month." The word "until" in the Hebrew is *ad*. The question is raised whether it means "until the beginning of the tenth month" or "until the end of the tenth month"? When the word "until" is applied to specific days, it can mean towards the end of the day (see Exodus 12:18; 1 Samuel 20:5). In Genesis 8:5 the interpretation of "until the end of the tenth month" means that the next part of the verse cannot refer to "the first day of the tenth month." The conclusion of this detailed discussion on the meaning of Genesis 8:5 is that the LXX interpretation of this verse is that the day for the "appearing" of the mountains must have been a Tuesday, exactly matching the Tuesday of Creation week when the "dry land [and thus mountains] appeared" (Genesis 1:9).

The difference between the episodes of appearing (both based on the Hebrew verb *ra'ah*) is that in the first case God is the one who observes this appearing and all the acts of creation. The expression "God saw" occurs throughout Genesis one. The second appearing, related to the mountains on Day 11/1/600, was observed by Noah. But a tight parallel that links both accounts to specific days of creation would hold that most likely both "appearing" events would have been on a Tuesday, which they are if the LXX interpretation is correct. By contrast, the MT date of 10/1/600 would have been a Sunday, which was exactly 32 weeks after the Sunday of 2/17/600 when the *mabbul* began. A proper understanding of the key role of "mountains" in the Flood narrative offers additional evidence that the above interpretation of mountains appearing on a Tuesday is in full harmony with Creation week. (See discussion below in "Major Objections to This Study: Artificiality.")

Major Objections to This Study: Seven Days

The heart of this study on Flood chronology is the second assumption—that the seven-day cycles in the Flood account should match the seven-day

cycle in the Creation account. To prove the opposite premise, that the seven-day cycles in both Creation and the Flood are not related in terms of specifying days of the week, would result in describing this study as tentative if not speculative. The suggestion has been that the seven-day cycles for sending out the reconnaissance birds each ended on a Saturday/sabbath. The removal of the ark's covering would have been on a Saturday/sabbath if the *mabbul* commenced on a Sunday as proposed. Moreover, Noah and family exited the ark and offered burnt offerings as part of a sabbath worship service. The rainbow, which is proclaimed as a sign of "an everlasting covenant" (Genesis 9:13–16), has a close parallel with the sabbath, which is introduced in Exodus 31:15–16, as a sign of "a perpetual covenant." Both the rainbow and the sabbath are signs of God's creative power and the truth that God is Creator (v.17).

But the challenge is to demonstrate that the seven-day cycles each end on a sabbath. The starting point for understanding any seven-day cycle in Scripture is the Creation week of Genesis 1:1–2:3. One of the greatest points of debate between young-earth creationists (YECs) and old-earth creationists (OECs) has always been the nature of the Creation days. Are they literal? Are they literary? Are they symbolic? Are they day ages? The strongest argument in favor of young-earth creationism has always been the Fourth Commandment. Exodus 20:8–11 must be connected with Genesis 1–2 in order to settle the nature of the Creation days, according to YECs.

Tracing a trajectory from the sabbath at Sinai to the sabbath at Creation means that the trajectory ought to intersect with the Flood as well. That can be demonstrated, but it is complicated. Scholars have neglected to comment on the possibility that the seven days in Exodus 24:15–18 when Moses waited for God to appear in all his glory atop Mt. Sinai followed by 40 days when God gave instructions for building a sanctuary were both related to the Flood account. The seven days of Noah and his family were times of waiting for the Flood to begin followed by the 40 days of the Flood. If this parallel holds up, Moses is presented as a "second Noah."¹⁵ More specifically, the end of Moses' initial "seven days" was most likely on a Saturday/sabbath when God "on the seventh day called to Moses out of the midst of the cloud" (Exodus 24:16). The expression "the seventh day" here and in nearby chapters consistently denotes Saturday (Exodus 16:26–30; 20:10–11; 23:12; 31:17,

¹⁵ Scholars have noted that Moses took on a parallel with Noah when he recorded his being saved by means of an "ark of bulrushes" just as Noah's family was saved by means of an "ark" (Exodus 2:3; cf. Genesis 6:14–21). The Flood narrative presents the ark as a means of preservation or even salvation (Genesis 7:3). The word "ark" in both Genesis 6 and Exodus 2 has the same Hebrew word (*tebah*).

21; 35:2).¹⁶ God's silence when he showed his full glory for six days is contrasted with God speaking to Moses on the seventh, thus showing that day was special.

Furthermore, the seven days of Exodus 24:16 point to the uniqueness of the seven days in the Flood narrative (Genesis 7:4, 10). They revolve around a divine command and a human response to the command. Thrice, for emphasis, the record states: "And Noah did all that the Lord had commanded him" (vv.5, 9, 16). The weekly cycle of seven days culminating with the seventh day of worship is clearly given to Moses at Sinai as a command from the Lord: "These are the words that the Lord has commanded you to do. Work shall be done for six days, but the seventh day shall be a holy day for you, a sabbath of rest to the Lord" (Exodus 35:1–2, cf. 20:8–11, Deuteronomy 5:12). In the Flood narrative the only time period that is encapsulated with divine commands (or instructions) is the seven-day period. No divine commands are connected with the beginning of the first 40 days, the end of the first or second 150 days, or the beginning and end of the second 40 days. This is significant. Because of the first seven days in the Flood narrative being connected directly with divine commands, such can be legitimately linked with God's speaking on the seven days of Creation, which is a series of commands—"Let there be..." (Genesis 1:3–2:3). By extension the speaking of the Lord both at Creation and at the Flood in connection with a significant time period is rightly connected with the seven days of Mount Sinai. Scholars generally recognize that Noah was "a prototype for Moses and the practices of later Israel" (Mathews, 1996, 351). Moreover, the construction of the ark according to the detailed divine instructions has been compared with the detailed instructions given by Yahweh on top of Mt. Sinai for the construction of the sanctuary. In fact, the sanctuary is constructed with exactly seven divine commands viewed as parallel to Creation taking place with seven commands (Exodus 25:1; 30:11, 17, 22, 34; 31:1, 12, cf. Genesis 1:3–2:3). The seventh command of the seven sanctuary commands was directed towards sabbath observance: "Surely my sabbaths you shall keep" (31:12–13).

The juxtaposition of the seven days of Moses' waiting with the 40 days of his being instructed by

God on top of the mount is best understood as being linked with the seven days of Noah and his family waiting for the Flood to begin, followed by the forty days of the Flood. What seals that link is the fact that Flood language is used here—"40 days and 40 nights," not simply "40 days" (Exodus 24:18, cf. Genesis 7:4, 12). If that is a legitimate connection, then by extension one could propose that the end of the 40 days when Noah descended from the mount was on a Friday, just as in the Flood account "the 40 days and 40 nights" ended on a Friday. It was then at Sinai that Moses was shocked to see his fellow Israelites dancing around a golden calf, whom the Lord had pointed out had "corrupted themselves" (32:7). This mimics the expression used by the Lord in Genesis 6:12: "So God looked upon the earth, and indeed it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way..." (see also Deuteronomy 32:5). Creation language is applied twice to the production of the calf using the major creation verb "make" (Hebrew *'asah*), when originally the record simply states that Aaron "fashioned" the golden calf (Exodus 32:4, 8, 20; cf. 20:11; Genesis 2:2–3). It may be only a coincidence, but it was a Friday that the calf idol was ground up into powder, while it was a Friday that the Genesis kind that included calves (Hebrew *behemah*) were created on a Friday (Exodus 32:20, cf. Genesis 1:24). At any rate, if our reconstruction stands, it was on a Friday that the cattle kinds, including calves, were destroyed at the end of the 40 days of the Flood (Genesis 7:21). This last fact solidifies the link between the 40 days and 40 nights on Mt. Sinai with the first 40 days and 40 nights of the Flood. The experience then involving Moses, as "the second Noah," on Mt. Sinai is a recapitulation of Flood chronology, adding another good argument that the "7–40" pattern of the Flood account is oriented towards a Creation weekly cycle.

With the above insights, young-earth creationists no longer have to skip over millennia of later history to "prove" that the Creation days were literal days. The one major argument consistently relied upon by all is that the Fourth Commandment offers the best way to illuminate the meaning of the six Creation days. The present study offers, perhaps for the first time, a seamless connection between the seven Creation days, the seven days in the Flood narrative, and the seven days of Moses on Sinai.

¹⁶ The "seven days" of Genesis 31:22–23 have nothing to do with the weekly cycle from Creation; it describes seven days of Jacob's fleeing the wrath of Laban. Jacob would not have waited until a Sunday to begin his flight. Likewise, the passing of "seven days" during the episode of the plagues has nothing to do with possibly ending on a Saturday (Exodus 7:25). Since the Hebrew has no single word for "week", the "seven days" in both cases can be translated as "week." Besides, in these two passages it does not utilize the term "seventh day". The 11 usages of "the seventh day" in Exodus are specifically directed towards Saturday/sabbaths. How do we know? The first reference of the 11 (16:26) sets the tone for the other ten when it states: "Six days you shall gather it [the manna], but on the seventh day, the sabbath, there shall be none." In only four other places in the O.T. does it describe the "seventh day" as the "sabbath" (Exodus 20:10; 35:2; Leviticus 23:3; Deuteronomy 5:14). Not every "seventh day" in Scripture is a reference to "the sabbath".

Major Objections to This Study: Artificiality

For key events in the Flood narrative to be centered on favored days of the week (Sundays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays) can be argued in favor of non-randomness. The underlying issue is whether the biblical exegete has superimposed a “modern” system on the Flood narrative that is foreign to the narrative itself. This same question can be raised with respect to viewing the Flood narrative as one grand chiasm, as in Kikawada and Quinn (1985). Generally, scholars, including conservative scholars, agree that the use of chiasmus in the Flood narrative can be documented and is not a modern construct forced upon the narrative. Chiasmus in that narrative is largely based upon exact verbal parallels as well as general thematic parallels.

The usage of verbal parallels is essential in assigning major Flood events to specific days of the week. One example should suffice. One theme of the Flood narrative is the theme of “mountains.” Three times key events are centered upon mountains (Genesis 7:19–20; 8:4; 8:5). The Hebrew word for “mountain” (*har*) is what ties the three events together. The covering of the mountains in 7:19–20 is in antithetical parallelism with the uncovering of the mountains in 8:5. The key to this discovery is the usage of the two verbs in those two different passages: “cover” and “were seen” respectively. Another example of this antithetical parallelism is at the end of the Flood narrative: “Then Shem and Japheth...covered the nakedness of their father;...and they *did not see* their father’s nakedness” (9:23, emphasis added). In O.T. narrative the covering of something was done so that it was not seen, and vice versa the uncovering of something enabled it to be seen (Genesis 38:14–15, Exodus 10:5; 33:22–23; 2 Samuel 6:20; 22:16; Job 22:11,14; Psalm 18:15; Isaiah 20:4; 47:3; 57:8; 58:7; Jeremiah 13:26; Ezekiel 12:6,12; 16:36–37; 23:10–11). The two verbs are antonyms. Three examples taken from this list of references should suffice: “Thick clouds cover him, so that he cannot see” (Job 22:14); “then the channels of the sea were seen, the foundations of the world were uncovered” (Psalm 18:15); “you shall cover your face, so that you cannot see the ground” (Ezekiel 12:6).

The use of the antonyms “covered” and “seen” in the Flood narrative suggests that the “40 days” connected with those actions should be in precise parallel. The covering and uncovering (or seeing) is the essence of these two passages: “...all the high hills were covered” (Genesis 7:19) and “the tops of the mountains were seen” (8:5). The first occurred at the end of the first “40 days” and the second at the beginning of the second “40 days.” This reveals a chiasmic structure here. Reverse parallelism means

that what is in the beginning of an overall chiasmic structure should be found at the end of the chiasm. In fact, this suggests that the first 40 days should be at the beginning of the “150 days” as it rightfully is, and the second 40 days should be at the end or close to the end of the second “150 days.” Only in the newly-proposed chronology is this true. The presence of the 30-day gap in the traditional chronology separates the second 40 days by an extra month from the end of the 150 days further than it should be. The Boyd chronology is even more problematic in this respect. As noted earlier, his chronology has a gap of about 70 days (40+30) at the end of the second 40 days. This is not acceptable if the chiasmic structuring is valid. That structure as already noted is 7–7–40–150–150–40–7–7. In both cases the 40 days are sandwiched within the 150 days. This seamless chiasmic structure does not allow for any major chronological gaps, especially between the last 40 days and the sending out of the birds. Here is independent confirmation, using both a chiasmic chronology and verbal parallels (antithetical), to solidify the sequence, regardless of what days of the week are assigned to the beginning and ending of each of these time periods. This is not a modern superimposition upon an ancient chronology, but this structure employing 7, 40, and 150 days in a tight chiasmic relationship appears to be embedded in the original narrative itself.

The observation of the mountain-tops need not even rely on the LXX to have that event on 11/1/600. Two independent lines of reasoning arrive at that conclusion. First, working back from the end of the Flood to the time of the 40 days allows exactly two weeks between the end of the second 150 days and the sending out of the three doves, all of which took place on Saturdays. This approach follows the lead of the Old Testament scholar L.M. Barré (1988). Second, one can work from the beginning of the Flood narrative and by going forward arrive at the exact date for the end of the second 40 days. Scholars pay almost no attention to the first chronological date in the Flood narrative: “Noah was six hundred years old when the floodwaters were on the earth” (Genesis 7:6). The assumption is that this date was Noah’s sixtieth birthday. Even if it was not related to Noah’s birthday but related to New Year’s Day in an ancient calendar, this reference is significant for reconstructing Flood chronology simply from the fact that this passage says “the floodwaters were on the earth,” meaning that during Noah’s sixtieth year “the floodwaters were on the earth,” not after the sixtieth year. The Flood year and Flood chronology starts with 1/1/600 and ends with 1/1/601 when the earth was pronounced “dry”, even though the actual *mabbul* started on 2/17/600.

What happened between 1/1/601 and 2/17/600? It was a time of final preparations to board the ark, especially to make sure adequate food supplies were gathered. The actual boarding of the ark began on 2/10/600 at the beginning of the final seven days before the Flood (Genesis 7:4, 10). That leaves 40 days inclusive reckoning between 1/1/600 and 2/10/600. Is the discovery of another 40-day period just a matter of chance, or does it have a special purpose? The discovery of an initial 40-day period unmentioned in Scripture demonstrates the importance of 40-day cycles in addition to 7-day cycles in the Flood narrative. None of these can be treated with impunity.

Implications of This Study:

The First Forty-Day Period as the *Mabbul*

The first 40-day period has theological significance in the narrative as does the second 40-day period. The end of the first 40-day period marked the destruction of all terrestrial air-breathing creatures in the 40-day *mabbul* (Genesis 7:17–23). The naming of specific types of creatures—“cattle and beasts and every creeping thing”—harks back to the work of Day 6 of creation when “God made the beast of the earth according to its kind, cattle according to its kind, and everything that creeps on the earth according to its kind” (1:25). If the Flood began on a Sunday, this results in the 40-day Flood (*mabbul*) ending on a Friday. The links between the Flood and Creation accounts could not have been made more specific. The use two times of the expression “forty days and forty nights” in 7:4, 12 suggests 40 full days and excludes inclusive reckoning.¹⁷ That means the rains could not have ended before a Friday.

A further link between the Flood and Creation is made when Genesis 1:30 references the giving of a plant diet to “every beast of the earth, to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, in which is life [that is, the breath of life].” In both cases the narrative focuses upon “air-breathers,” or air-

breathing creatures. Genesis 7:21–22 is clear: “And all flesh died that moved on the earth... All in whose nostrils was the breath of life.” This cannot refer to animals that inhabited the oceans. Young-earth creationists are moving in the direction of having the finale of the first 40 days end with the destruction of all terrestrial, air-breathing creatures (Boyd 2016), with the highest mountains being covered (Hodge 2016, 176), and with the windows of heaven and presumably the fountains of the deep being sealed (Sarfati 2018, 556). Now creationists must take a step further to have the mass destruction of air-breathing creatures happen on a Friday.

The above interpretations of the first 40 days actually enhance the true meaning of the word for Flood (*mabbul*). Scripture is unambiguous: “Now the flood [Heb. *mabbul*] was on the earth forty days” (Genesis 7:17). The word for *mabbul* is unique to the Flood narrative and denotes a storm of such magnitude that nothing since has even approached its strength (Genesis 7:17; 9:11). If the *mabbul* is extended beyond the first 40 days, the *mabbul* concept would be weakened and the uniqueness of the Flood undermined. The *mabbul* concept is even greatly enhanced with its New Testament equivalents. The N.T. depicts a Flood catastrophe so great that it has happened only once in human history and will be matched only with the destruction of the earth by fire in the last days (2 Peter 2:4–5; 3:5–10). If humans had lived beyond the 40 days of the *mabbul*, this would have maligned the omnipotence of God. To have humans wiped out much sooner than 40 or even 30 days would reveal the mercy of a God who is “merciful and gracious, longsuffering” (Exodus 34:6), “not willing that any should perish” (2 Peter 3:9). This latter statement is made within the context of the Flood (v. 5–6). This study rejects the many efforts of scholars to extend the work of the Flood to a full 370 days on the basis of references to the Flood after it was over, especially in Genesis 9–11.¹⁸

¹⁷ Eleven times the expression “40 days and 40 nights” appears in Scripture. In only two cases it is used totally independent of connections with the Deluge: 1 Kings 19:8 and Matthew 4:2.

¹⁸ Thirteen times the word *mabbul* (“Flood”) appears in the O.T. The last four usages in Genesis all incorporate the word into the phrase, “after the Flood.” The four usages are Genesis 9:28—“And Noah lived after the Flood 350 years;” Genesis 10:1—“And sons were born to them [Noah’s sons] after the Flood;” Genesis 10:32—... “and from these [Noah’s sons] the nations on the earth were divided after the Flood;” and Genesis 11:10—“Shem... begot Arphaxad two years after the Flood.” The reasoning is that none of these can be applied directly to the end of the first 40 days of the Flood if it ended after just 40 days. However, a strict application of biblical chronology can demonstrate that “after the Flood” applies to the end of the first 40 days, especially with Genesis 11:10. The issue is complex and revolves around Shem’s age at the time of the Flood, if he was born when Noah was 500 years old: “Noah was five hundred years old, and Noah begot Shem, Ham, and Japheth” (Genesis 5:32). Of the three sons Shem was the important in later O.T. and even N.T. history and thus is the focus of this statement. Shem was born when Noah was 500; the three sons were not triplets (Genesis 9:24). Many scholars surmise that Shem born when Noah was 502, not 500 as the text clearly states. That’s because according to Genesis 11:10 Shem was 100 years old when his son Arphaxad was born two years after the *mabbul*. But that is fallacious reasoning. The *mabbul* ended when Noah was 3 months and 27 days into his “600th year” (7:11, 17). Shem was thus 3 months and 27 days into his 99th year when the *mabbul* ended. Two years later he would have been 100 full years old plus 3 months and 27 days, which means he was just into his 101st year. This approximates the time when Arphaxad was born. Shem was not born two years after his oldest sibling (Japheth) was born when Noah was 500 years old as many scholars suggest. The perspective of the four passages displaying the words “after the Flood” is that the Flood ended at the end of the first 40 days. A chronological reconstruction of Shem’s birth in connection with his son’s birth and his father’s life fits only with a 40-day *mabbul*. Further discussion needs to focus on the usage of *mabbul* in Genesis 9:11, 15, both of which have the only anarthrous use of *mabbul*. No longer would there ever be a flood “to destroy” the earth or every living creature, according to these two verses. These two verses define the essence of *mabbul*. It is described as the event that destroys. These must be juxtaposed with Genesis 7:4: “I will cause it to rain on the earth forty days and forty nights, and I will destroy from the earth all living things.” Creatures were not being destroyed after the first 40 days, otherwise the *mabbul* is not the only mechanism of destruction and the only unique event at the heart of catastrophism.

The New Testament Greek offers reliable evidence that rebellious antediluvians died in a world catastrophe, equivalent to the 40-day *mabbul* of Genesis 7. The Greek word for “flood” is *kataklusmos*, from which we derive our word “cataclysm.” It is used four times in the N.T., all of them being a reference to Noah’s Flood (Matthew 24:38, 39; Luke 17:27; 2 Peter 2:5). In addition, the verbal form of this noun is *katakluzo*, which is used just once, also in reference to Noah’s Flood (2 Peter 3:6). Matthew 24:38–39 applies *kataklusmos* to the deaths of the corrupt antediluvians: “For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, . . . and did not know until the flood came and took them all away.” And Luke 17:27 says the same, but with even stronger language: “They ate, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all.” By using the verbal form of *kataklusmos*, the apostle Peter extends the destruction of the Flood to all the world: “By which the world (Greek *kosmos*) that then existed perished, being flooded with water.” It did not take 150 days for the cosmos to be destroyed in the time of Noah. Whatever the Creator does, he does quickly and efficiently (Genesis 1:1–2:3).

The significant fact that has been neglected by many creationist scholars is that the Greek *kataklusmos* is applied almost exclusively to the Flood in the O.T., the two exceptions being Psalm 32:6 and Nahum 1:8. This word is the exact equivalent of the Hebrew *mabbul*, which is applied solely to Noah’s Flood. In the minds and words of both Jesus and Peter Noah’s Flood (Greek *kataklusmos*=Hebrew *mabbul*) which destroyed antediluvians and the cosmos itself, must have taken place within the timeframe marked out by the *mabbul* in the Flood narrative. Genesis 7:17 states it unambiguously: “Now the Flood (Hebrew *mabbul*=Greek *kataklusmos*) was on the earth forty days.” The O.T. and N.T. narratives could not have made it clearer that it took no longer than 40 days for the antediluvians and the antediluvian world to perish. While a few creationist scholars have noted the equivalency between the Hebrew and Greek words for “Flood,” most have appeared to have overlooked the significance of equating the Greek *kataklusmos* with the Hebrew *mabbul* in terms of providing conclusive evidence as to how long it took for terrestrial creatures including humans to meet their demise (McIntosh, Edmonson, and Taylor 2000; Morris 1976, 183–184; 1998; Mortenson 2020). It did not take 150 days for God to complete the work of the near annihilation of the human race. To extend the *mabbul* to 150 days maximum is to have a Flood approximately one-fourth the strength of a 40-day Flood because of it taking nearly four times as long (note the ratio of 40 to 150). By bringing *kataklusmos*

into the picture as an exact synonym of *mabbul* eliminates the possibility of God taking 150 days to destroy the rebellious race. Both words need to be fully integrated into a new Flood chronology.

Logical Progress of This Study to Its Conclusions

The value of chiasmus as an interpretive tool is viewed throughout the study, but especially in delineating the relationship between the two sets of 40 and 150 days. Chiastic structure, which is found to be imbedded in the narrative, puts the first 40 days at the beginning of the first 150 days and the second 40 days near the end of the second 150 days. In doing so, it eliminates the problem of having a 30-day gap between the sending out of the last bird and the uncovering of the ark. Of itself chiastic structure, however, does not dictate what days of the week each important event could have occurred.

Four major lines of reasoning aid the researcher in uncovering the precise days of the week in the narrative. The first step is to determine which day of the week Noah and his family exited the ark. The sabbath/Saturday is identified on the basis that Noah’s first act was to offer up “burnt offerings.” This was a sabbath offering (Genesis 8:20; cf. Ezekiel 46:4). An “everlasting covenant” was made with Noah that same day, and the rainbow was displayed as a sign of that covenant, just as the Sabbath was a sign of “the perpetual covenant” in Exodus 32:16–17. These two sets of evidence, the burnt offering and the rainbow, help to anchor the date of 2/27/601 as a Saturday/sabbath.

The second step is to proceed backwards in time to 1/1/601, which by necessity would have been a Saturday/sabbath because of it being exactly 56 days or eight weeks prior to the Sabbath covenant on 2/27/601. The removal of the “covering” of the ark on 1/1/601 has sanctuary implications. The Hebrew word here (*mikseh*) in all other usages refers to the “covering” of the wilderness tabernacle consisting of “ram skins dyed red” and “badger skins” (Exodus 26:14). The tabernacle stood for worship, and the high point of worship was the weekly sabbath; thus, it is possible to view 1/1/601 as being connected to sanctuary worship. The two last dated events in the Flood narrative are considered to be anchor dates for establishing days of the week. Such an interpretation is verified by having the last two seven-day cycles for sending out of doves end on a Saturday/sabbath, provided that the 30-day gap mentioned above is totally removed.

The third step is to determine which day of the week the Flood (*mabbul*) commenced. A total of 370 days between the start of the *mabbul* and the exiting from the ark can hold true only if the Flood started on a Sunday. If there had been 371 full days or 53 weeks, the Flood would have started on a Saturday.

Finally, the fourth step is to identify which day of the week the Flood narrative began. Genesis 7:6 states: “Noah was 600 years old when the floodwaters [RSV, flood of waters] were on the earth.” This cannot mean that the Flood (*mabbul*) started then because in reality it started on 2/17/600 (v. 11). But what it is implying is that the narrative of the Flood commenced on 1/1/600. All Flood dates are in terms of Noah’s life, and thus this one likewise. It holds a precise parallel with 1/1/601, which already has been identified as a Saturday. The year in the Flood narrative is said to occupy 360 days. With a 360-day year and working backwards from 1/1/601, the Flood narrative had to have commenced with a Wednesday, not a Sunday. Surprisingly, this conclusion agrees with the Jubilees chronology, which has New Year’s dates begin on a Wednesday. Possibly, the Jubilees chronologists were aware that 1/1/600 should be assigned to a Wednesday. But more likely their main argument for a Wednesday New Year was derived from Genesis 1. Up until the fourth day of Creation there were no months or years, only days. The Creation calendar was inaugurated on the fourth day when the “greater” and “lesser lights” were established “for signs and seasons, and for days and years” (Genesis 1:14). Thus, the Creation week of Genesis 1:1–2:3 helps to determine both the commencement and completion of the Flood narrative in terms of precise days of the week.

In summation, five out of the seven days of Creation week are linked to specific dates and events in the Flood narrative—Sunday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday. In the newly-proposed chronology all the dated events in Genesis 7–9 can be correlated with Creation days. The only two Creation days that were not connected with Flood events are Monday and Thursday. Even if the traditional view of the second 40-days is defended, all dated events are on significant days. The traditional view has both 40-day periods starting on the same day of the week, a Sunday. The second 40-day period using inclusive reckoning ended on a Thursday, the same day each of the birds were launched on their flight. Such would harmonize with their created origin on the Thursday of Creation week. This study leaves the door open to the possibility that the MT reading for Genesis 8:5 is the original reading. Nevertheless, the second 40 days would need to be shifted in some way to start on 11/1/600 and end on 12/10/600 (inclusive reckoning, as in the time span between 1/1/600 and 2/10/600) in order to eliminate an unexplained 30-day gap in the narrative.

The Creation days are reflected in the Flood narrative as follows:

1. Sunday, as the first day of Creation week, is reflected in 12 seven-day cycles that can be easily identified, so long as the 30-day gap after the second forty days is eliminated. The Flood as being the opposite of Creation, or de-creation, started its destructive work at the beginning of the first seven-day cycle. Each flight of the birds started on a Sunday on the dates of 12/10/600, 12/17/600, and 12/24/600. Eight seven-day cycles commenced as soon as the last dove failed to return on 1/1/601.
2. Saturday, as the completion of Creation week, is discovered in the first full day after the 40-days’ *mabbul* when the inhabitants of the ark had rest. At or near the end of the second 40 days each of the four birds returned or failed to return on a Saturday. Noah removed the covering of the ark on a Saturday, the covering having symbolic value for the covering of the wilderness tabernacle. The tabernacle was the place of worship, and the day was the time of worship, or the sabbath. Noah’s sacrifice of a “burnt offering” is linked to the burnt offerings offered especially on a sabbath.
3. Tuesday was the day the “tops of the mountains” were first observed; thus, Tuesday pointed back in time to the third day of Creation (Genesis 1:9; cf. Psalm 104:6, 8, 13). According to O.T. poetry, the “mountains” were definitely formed at the very beginning during Creation week (Genesis 49:26; Deuteronomy 33:15; Psalm 90:2; Proverbs 8:25). With this insight mountains must have been created on the third day.
4. Wednesday is the day of beginnings. On Wednesday the days and years were to be observed; thus, commencing the science of calendration, especially if the insights from the Book of Jubilees have any validity. The ark landed on the Ararat mountains on a Wednesday, which began the re-creation of the earth following the agency of the wind/spirit (Genesis 8:1). With the help of a chiasmic structure that divides the Flood narrative into two halves, the Flood waters began a steady retreat (Genesis 8:4–5) in keeping with Creation week starting with chaos and ending with a completed creation.
5. Friday is the day of destruction after the end of “the forty days and forty nights”. The undoing of Creation was when all the air-breathing animals had met their demise by a Friday, the direct opposite of their being given their breath of life originally on a Friday.

Future Studies

Nothing in this study at present can be used to determine which Flood model best explains the geological strata of the earth. Also, this study is not geared to settle the question once and for all on the “universality of the Flood.” The term “universality” implies geographical extent, and geographical extent implies that one could explore below the surface of

the earth to determine geological extent of the Flood. Which strata are Flood strata and which are not?—this is the issue. The above study is not a geological study. For those wishing to begin exploring the geological issues relative to the Flood account, one should consult William Barrick (2008) and his study, “Noah’s Flood and Its Geological Implications.” But one should remember that five years earlier Barrick and Sigler (2003, 289) were reluctant to explore the geologic aspects of Flood chronology.¹⁹ For those wishing to do additional exegetical work on the universality of the Flood, one should be referred to Richard Davidson’s study, “Biblical Evidence for the Universality of the Flood” (Davidson 1995).²⁰ Another issue well outside of this study is whether the Flood year began in the spring or the autumn, but the latest very brief study by Jim Seward (2021) addresses this. And finally, for those wishing to explore the Flood narrative in relation to ancient Mesopotamian Flood stories, they are referred to Gordon Wenham (2015).

This study on a newly-proposed Flood chronology should be viewed as merely an introduction to the possibility of there being more than one alternate chronology to the traditional one. Its goal is to spur others into going much deeper into this field that offers much potential for illuminating and substantiating as historical the early chapters of the Bible.

Conclusion

The seven days of Creation week are the key to unlocking the chronology of the Flood. To be consistent, those who hold to the seven literal days of Creation week must also hold to the honoring of seven-day cycles in the Flood narrative because of the inseparable connection between the Creation and Flood narratives, between Genesis 1–2 and 6–9. The knowledge of a chiasmic structure in the Flood account is a major help, not a hindrance, to better understanding the way the Flood chronology is structured. The result of having two 150-day cycles, not one as traditionally taught within creationism, is that the three seven-day intervals are properly lined up with Creation weekly cycles that culminate with the opening of the cover of the ark on a Saturday/sabbath. Exactly eight weeks later Noah, his family, and the rest of the ark’s inhabitants exited from the ark, also on a Saturday/sabbath. Exactly 56 days or eight weeks fill the gap between 1/1/60 when the ark’s covering was removed and 2/27/601 when Noah was instructed to leave the ark. If this is true, then the Flood began on a Sunday after Noah waited for

its commencement during the first Creation cycle of seven days. The start of the Flood on a Sunday was exactly 370 days (53 weeks less one day) prior to the end of the Flood on a Saturday. It was fitting that the last day before the fury of the Flood broke loose was a sabbath of rest and of peace for Noah, his family, and the ark’s animals. The first 40 days of the Flood marked the destruction of all terrestrial, air-breathing creatures, including humans, outside the ark, in keeping with the New Testament interpretation of the Flood cataclysm. The end of the catastrophic destruction of Flood waters was marked by the end of the *mabbul* (LXX *kataklusmos*) on a Friday, which now can be correlated with the Friday of Creation week when all terrestrial, air-breathers were created. Thus, the Flood can be described as an “undoing” of the work of creation. The implication is that the air-breathers met their end by drowning. The Flood waters, however, may not have peaked on the fortieth day. Scripture is silent as to when exactly the waters may have peaked, perhaps peaking at several times during the rest of the first 150 days. The peaking of waters is irrelevant for our study and need not be a major concern in subsequent studies. However, in the future thorough studies will need to address the universality of the Flood, a topic not addressed in this study. Having a newly-revised, more reliable Flood chronology of itself does not provide enough data to solve the issue of the universality of the Flood. Future studies will also need to tackle the suggestion of a date or possible dates for the Flood. One important result of this study is that it offers a powerful argument in favor of the Creation days being literal and historical if the seven-day cycles in the Flood narrative are Creation-week cycles. But it goes beyond that to include the seven days and the 40 days of Moses on Mt. Sinai being a reflection of the seven and 40 days in the Flood account (Exodus 24:15–18, cf. Genesis 7:10–12). The “7–40” pattern at Sinai is a recapitulation of the “7–40” pattern of the Flood narrative. This is in keeping with the scholarly suggestion that Noah was a “second Adam,” and Moses was a “second Noah.” Young-earth creationists will now have a new link tying together Creation, the Flood, and the events of Mt. Sinai as one seamless narrative.

Dedication

The author dedicates this study to the memory of his father, Alger F. Johns, Professor of Old Testament and Hebrew Exegesis at the Seventh-day Adventist

¹⁹ Apparently, Barrick and Sigler (2003, 298) feel that the Flood account does have implications for geologic conclusions, but its implications are ambiguous, when they write: “A semantic analysis of the Flood narrative is inconclusive when it comes to determining the geologic consequences of Flood mechanisms.”

²⁰ Universalistic expressions are found throughout both the Creation and the Flood records. See Genesis 1:29; 2:6; 7:3,23; 8:8,9,13. The use of the expression “the face of the whole earth/ground” in the above texts is an additional argument tying the Creation and Flood accounts tightly together.

Theological Seminary, Andrews University, before his untimely death in 1972. Dr. Johns received his Ph.D. under the eminent Near Eastern archeologist, William F. Albright, at Johns Hopkins University. The author states: “My father receives credit for sparking some ideas for the current *ARJ* article when he published an article in *Vetus Testament* (1963) on the military strategy of “Sabbath attacks” on the Jews in Palestine by foreign powers. My father was able to determine not only the exact dates for Nebuchadnezzar’s two attacks on Jerusalem using both biblical and Babylonian records, but also the day of the week of the attacks, which was always Saturday/Sabbath. Although he never discussed with me the possibility of identifying days of the week for significant events elsewhere in the O.T., decades later his influence is now felt in my personal quest to identify days of the week throughout the Flood narrative.”

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