

# GENESIS 1-11: PRIMEVAL PROLOGUE

## I. INTRODUCTION

### A. Literary Genre

1. "Anti-myth:" a polemic against Mesopotamian myths
2. Near Eastern Parallels: flood accounts, etc.
3. Literary Devices

### B. Structure of Genesis

\* Divided by formula with Hebrew word *toledoth*, meaning "history," "account," or "generations;" thus: "this is the history of . . ." or "these are the generations of . . ."

## II. CONTRASTING ANE LITERATURE

### A. *Enuma Elish* ("When on high")

1. Babylonian (Mesopotamian) Creation Account
2. Basic Outline
  - a. Goddess Tiamat and Lover Kingu Dominate other Gods
  - b. Marduk (chief god of Babylon) Chosen to Fight Tiamat
  - c. Tiamat Defeated
    - 1) Body cut in two: Earth and Heavens created
    - 2) Kingu's blood used to create mankind
3. Presents Mesopotamian World View:
  - a. Polytheism
  - b. Creation was an Accident of Other Events
  - c. World from Body of Evil Goddess (therefore . . .)
  - d. Mankind from Blood of Evil God (therefore . . .)

### B. Flood Accounts (see below)

## III. GEN 1-11: CONTENTS

### A. Creation (Gen 1:1-2:4a)

1. Some Distinct Anti-Mesopotamian/Canaanite Emphases
2. Theological Emphases
  - a. One God as a willful creator [not an accident]
  - b. Creation = Good (world, mankind) [not of evil substance]

### • *Toledoth* of Heavens and Earth (Gen 2:4a)

### B. The Origin and Fall of Man (Gen 2:4b-4:26)

1. NE Elements: Tree of Life; Serpent
2. Theology
  - a. God as Creator; Man = "living soul" from adamah + Spirit
  - b. man as sinner
  - c. God's judgement on sin
  - d. God's forbearance
3. Problem/Results of Sin
  - a. nakedness (3:7) = shame
  - b. flight from God (3:8) = separation
4. Cain and Able: Pictures Farmer vs. Shepherd (Canaanite vs. Israelite)

- C. *Toledoth* of Adam (Gen 5:1-6:8): Patriarchs Before the Flood
  - 1. Genealogy (5:1-32)
  - 2. Theology: Universality of Sin on Earth (6:1-8)
  
- D. *Toledoth* of Noah (Gen 6:9-9:28): The Flood
  - 1. Theology
    - a. God's judgement
    - b. God's sustaining grace (8:21-22)
  - 2. Near Eastern Parallels
  - 3. Evidences for the Flood
  
- E. *Toledoth* of Shem, Ham, and Japheth (Gen 10:1-11:9): The Sons of Noah
  - 1. Table of Nations (Gen 10); Peoples divided by
    - a. genealogy ("families")
    - b. speech ("languages")
    - c. physical location ("lands")
    - d. politics ("nations")
  
  - 2. The Tower of Babel (Gen 11:1-9) [chronological note: after Gen 10]
    - a. clearly a Mesopotamian setting (Plain of Shinar)
    - b. perhaps describes a ziggurat
    - c. play on words: *Babel* = Babylon; *balal* = confuse
    - d. a polemic against the Babylonian view/religious practice/dominance
    - e. Theology: God's judgement on mankind
      - 1) is God's relationship to the nations forever broken?
      - 2) sets the stage for the beginning of redemptive history
  
- F. *Toledoth* of Shem (Gen 11:10-26): Genealogy to Abram
  - \* God would use one man/family to reveal himself