

The Book of Beginnings – Studies in Genesis

LESSON XXVII : GENESIS 5:1–6:8 – THE BOOK OF THE HISTORY OF ADAM – PART I

“This tôl’dôth section (5:1-6:8) advances the theological interests of chaps. 1-11 in at least four ways. (1) It presents a convincing case for the interconnectedness of all mankind and the hope for universal blessing, since the genealogy takes us from the beginnings (Adam) to the diluvian world of Noah (the new Adam). (2) It demonstrates the results of Adam’s sin (‘death reigned,’ Rom 5:17) and despite this harsh reality, the continuation of God’s promise of preservation through the gift of procreation. (3) It contributes to the unfolding motif of conflict as anticipated in 3:15, where there is rivalry between an unrighteous offspring and a righteous lineage reflected by the genealogies of chaps. 4 and 5 as well as 6:1-8, which contrasts Noah with his generation. (4) It shows the evolution and universality of human wickedness, which deserves God’s angry reprisal (6:1-7), but again, despite this, the hope that rests in God’s favor toward Noah (5:29 w/6:8-9).” [Mathews, 1:295f]

Introduction

NOTE WHERE THIS SECTION ENDS — *One of the most striking things of this portion of Scripture is that this genealogy section does not terminate at the end of chapter 5 but rather the tôl’dôth runs from 5:1 to 6:8, with 6:9 beginning a new tôl’dôth (‘these are the tôl’dôth of Noah’).* What difference does this make? For most people whenever they read through Genesis, chapter 5 is a quick chapter to read: they touch the highlights, they may read a few of the detail verses, etc.; but other than that chapter 5 is a repetitious ‘so-and-so had a son, he lived so long, and he died,’ then on to the Flood story. Without doubt many have gone directly to the Flood story without reading chapter 5 in their studies. But if one considers that 6:1-8 is best read as part of chapter 5, 6:1-8 acquires a different perspective. Try this for yourself: **Read 5:1 through 6:8, then stop and read it again, then again and again, several times. Separate 6:1-8 from the flood story; it makes a difference in your understanding of those verses! Then begin reading the flood story starting at 6:9; again, it makes a difference. After all, that is the division within Genesis itself!!**

Other than the tôl’dôth heading itself, there are additional reasons which support that these two sections (5:1-6:8 and 6:9 on) are truly separate sections [Cassuto, 1:249f]:

- the most important of course is that 6:9 begins a new section as announced with a new rubric, ‘*This is the history of Noah,*’ which corresponds to 5:1. [rubric – noun: a heading on a document]
- The last verse in chapter 5 does not give the impression of being the conclusion; it mentions Noah and the birth of his sons and then leaves the subject suspended, something to be completed later.
- On the other hand, 6:8 is a very fitting ending: ‘*But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord.*’ It states in general terms what will later be recounted in detail.
- 6:8 also provides the story with a happy ending, keeping with the previous technique of the previous sections.
- 6:5-8 also contains a number of parallels to the first paragraph of the section, 5:1-5: ‘*In the day that God created man ... He created them ... in the day they were created;*’ which

parallels with 6:7, *'man whom I have created.'* Again, *'He made him'* (5:1) with *'that He had made man on the earth ... whom I have created'* (6:6, 7). Again, *'and He blessed them'* (5:2) with *'But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord,'* an allusion to the fact that at the time of universal retribution the blessing bestowed upon Adam found fulfilment in Noah and his sons, as we are explicitly informed later, *'So God blessed Noah and his sons, and said to them: "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth"'* (9:1) – precisely the same terms in which the first man was blessed (1:28).

AN OVERVIEW OF THIS SECTION — In this chapter the genealogies for most of the antediluvian patriarchs follow an unvarying formula (**paragraphs 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8**):

- his name
- his age at the birth of the one through which the line would progress
- the name of his son
- the number of years he lived after the son's birth
- a general observation that he had other sons and daughters
- his age when he died

Its uniformity also provides the literary foil for highlighting four members (Adam, Enoch, Lamech and Noah) where the biographical pattern is altered for a special purpose. The record of the patriarch's age when his son was born is of interest in that it marks the date of the inauguration of the next generation. Thus by simple addition we are able to determine the time elapsed from the creation of the world to the Flood. According to the MT, the Flood began in the year 1656 after creation and ended in 1657 (for the varying dates between the ancient manuscripts, see below). The paragraphs that differ from the above formula are as follows:

Adam's paragraph (**the first paragraph**) differs by its special beginning (the second part of v. 1 and v. 2), as well as by a number of other expressions; e.g., *'and he begot a son in his own likeness, after his own image'* (v. 3); *'and he called his name'* (v. 3); *'and the days of Adam were'* (v. 4) instead of *'and Adam lived;'* and in the end, *'that he lived'* (v. 5).

Enoch's paragraph (**the seventh paragraph**) also uses distinctive phraseology: *'Enoch walked with God'* (vv. 22, 24); followed by *'and he was not, for God took him'* (v. 24).

Lamech's paragraph (**the ninth paragraph**) corresponds to the first paragraph in the use of expressions like *'and he begot a son'* (v. 28); *'and he called his name'* (v. 29); and in the mentioning of God (v. 29). Another distinguishing feature is the fact that the reason for the name given to the son is stated (v. 29).

According to Rabbi Cassuto [1:268] these three paragraphs also are differentiated by their exalted and almost poetic style.

Noah's paragraph (**the tenth paragraph**) is exceptional in that it commences with *'and Noah was ... old'* (v. 32) instead of *'and Noah lived....'* The rest of Noah's life-story is left untold so that the Scripture may return to it later (8:20-9:29). Also note that Noah's three sons are named instead of only the one in which the line continues, but after the naming of the three sons it records nothing more. The same happens in the genealogy recorded in chapter 11 with the naming of Terah's three sons (Abram, Nahor, and Haran; 11:26). In each triad of sons the first listed (Shem, Abram) fathers the chosen line of blessing.

The **eleventh paragraph** tells ‘*the story of the sons of God and the daughters of men*’ (6:1-4) and “is one of the obscurest in the Torah.” [Cassuto, 1:269] We will look at that in detail later in our studies.

The **twelfth paragraph** (6:5-8) tells of the Divine decision to bring retribution upon the generation of the Flood on account of their wickedness. “*Here the Bible informs us that not only the sons of Cain but even the sons of Seth were almost wholly, save for the elect few in their midst, men of violence. The world, which had been created with paternal love, was filled with enmity and wrong-doing to such a degree that it was impossible to reform it, and there was no option but to destroy it.*” [Cassuto, 1:270] However the section could not close thus but must end on a happy note; thus we read that ‘*Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord*’ (6:8).

An interesting side-bar: although not immediately obvious, it should be noted that Noah’s life and death is written in a format similar to what we find in Gen 5 (although there is a rather large narrative section in its midst, the story of the Flood, 6:9-9:27). But if we are to string together the two portions which talk about Noah’s life, we recognize the familiar format we have seen throughout chapter 5:

‘And Noah was five hundred years old, and Noah begot Shem, Ham, and Japheth.... 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.’ (Gen 5:32; 9:28, 29)

This is not to propose that the ‘tôl’dôth of Adam’ starting at 5:1 should have continued until 9:28, 29; that would go against the natural layout of Genesis as we know it. A new tôl’dôth section does begin in 6:9, ‘The tôl’dôth of Noah.’ But it is interesting that throughout the present genealogy of Gen 5 the repetitious ‘*so-and-so begat a son, lived so many years, and he died*’ does in fact continue with Noah.

NOTE THE ‘SON’ WHICH IS BEGOTTEN IS NOT NECESSARILY THE FIRSTBORN — While this may not be able to be proven in most of the instances, *it cannot be assumed all those sons listed are the firstborn*; we know that to be true based upon the son begotten by Adam: ‘*And Adam lived one hundred and thirty years, and begot a son in his own likeness, after his image, and named him Seth.*’ At least in this instance we know that prior to Seth, Adam and Eve had both Cain and Abel (as well as other sons and daughters; after all, who did Cain marry?). *So the sons listed in this genealogy are named because they form the single line from Adam to Noah (in chapter 5) and ultimately to the chosen seed of Abraham (Gen 11:10-26).* In my opinion, this also answers the difficulty of sons begotten later in life; e.g., Adam begot Seth when he was 130 years old, Seth begot Enosh when he was 185 years old, Enosh begot Cainan when he was 90 years old, and so on. *Who are we to say how many other sons and daughters were born to each of these antediluvian patriarchs before the son named in the genealogy?* “Since, moreover, there is mentioned in each case the begetting of other sons and daughters, it becomes very questionable whether we are to understand all these genealogical heads as being first-born.... There is no proof that these were all first-born sons.” [Lange, 1:271, 272]

THE LONGEVITY OF THE ANTEDILUVIAN PATRIARCH’S LIFE SPANS — Everyone reading our current passage is amazed at the great ages attained by the antediluvian patriarchs which far exceed the normal bounds of human life today. There have been several hypotheses to explain this:

- Rabbi Cassuto suggests one possible solution as being the numbers are based upon the Sumerian and Babylonian sexagesimal system (base 60) instead of our twelve months *(before rolling your eyes in unbelief at a system based on the number 60, did you ever stop to think why we have sixty seconds in a minute? Sixty minutes in an hour? A circle is 360 degrees, or six times sixty? The sexagesimal system is still widely used in our modern measuring of time, angles and geographic coordinates)*. But while the Rabbi spends a lot of time explaining his reasoning (Cassuto, 1:252-264) and while it does answer some questions, it also causes other problems and has never been adopted by most.
- Some suggest the years given are not years of twelve months each but much shorter periods of time; but apart from creating fresh difficulties in vv. 12, 15, 21, it breaks down in the detailed chronology between 7:6 and 8:13.
- Some suggest the numbers are symbolic, but there is nothing in the passage which appears to have a symbolic value. “[It] would be mischievous to pit this possibly symbolic use of numbers against their historical use. In [Gen 1:1-4:26] the narrator showed himself competent to present a story as both historical and symbolic. We have no reason to think that his artistic use of numbers is not restrained by real history.” [Waltke, 112]
- Others suggest the numbers have no meaning but are simply to say the distant past is so far removed that no present means can account for their antiquity; moreover, the remarkable life spans were intended to “magnify the breadth of God’s blessing.” But again there is nothing in the passage which suggest these are not real numbers.
- Still others suggest each name represents not just a single person but rather an individual and his tribe; but Noah and Enoch are fatal exceptions for they are clearly portrayed as individuals to the end.
- The hypothesis to which I adhere is well summarized by Kenneth Mathews (although he does not adhere to this himself): *“Traditionally, the genealogy has been understood as a ‘closed’ genealogy, an inclusive listing of descendants, and the numbers have been taken as they stand. Modern proponents of this view maintain that the numbers reflect an uncommon era when agreeable climatic conditions enabled the exceptional duration of the antediluvian patriarchs. Further contended is that sin had not yet achieved its full deleterious effects on human society, shortening human life expectations. This traditional opinion has the advantage of taking the text straightforwardly since there is nothing explicit in the passage to indicate otherwise.”* [Mathews, 1:302]

There are other scholars who agree and accept the long length of lives as genuine:

“[Every] attack upon the historical character of [the MT Hebrew text’s] numerical statements has entirely failed, and no tenable argument can be adduced against their correctness. The objection, that such longevity as that recorded in our chapter is inconceivable according to the existing condition of human nature, loses all its force if we consider ‘that all the memorials of the old worlds contain evidence of gigantic power; that the climate, the weather, and other natural conditions, were different from those after the flood; that life was much more simple and uniform; and that the after-effects of the condition of man in paradise would not be immediately exhausted’ (Delitzsch).”
[Keil, 1:123]

“With regard to the extreme longevity attributed to the early patriarchs, it must be frankly recognized that the statements are meant to be understood literally, and that the author had in his view actual individuals. The attempts to save the historicity of the record by supposing (a) that the names are those of peoples or dynasties, or (b) that many links of the genealogy have been omitted, or (c) that the word *shānāh* [‘year’] denotes a space of time much shorter than twelve months, are now universally discredited. The text admits of no such interpretation.” [Skinner, 128f; it should be noted Skinner continues by stating that it is true that ‘the study of science precludes the possibility of such figures being literally correct;’ but ‘the comparative study of literature leads us to expect exaggerated statements in any work incorporating the primitive traditions of people.’]

“Many writers have noted that life spans begin a slow and steady decline after the Flood, showing evidently that they were connected with the antediluvian climatological and environmental conditions.... ***All in all, there is no reason whatever not to take this list in Genesis 5 as sober history in every way. The names are, of course, repeated in 1 Chronicles 1:1-4 and Luke 3:36-38. This confirms that they were accepted as historical by the later Biblical writers, of both Old and New Testaments.***” [Morris, 155]

“We find out that the patriarchs (heads of families – men who were fathers of the human race) before the Flood lived for what we today would call very long ages. After the Flood, people’s length of life began to drop until we get to around 70 on average. We don’t know why people’s ages dropped so rapidly after the Flood. There are many possibilities, including possible biological and environmental changes.” [Ham, 157] Ken Ham also quotes Jude 1:14, ‘Now Enoch, the seventh from Adam...’, to show ***there are no gaps in these genealogies.***

OTHER ANCIENT PAGAN MYTHS OF LONG LIFE — It should be noted that other ancient traditions likewise attribute longevity of life to their monarchs before the flood, but are so greatly exaggerated that once again Moses may have been writing in a passive polemic fashion to correct the myths of which he was surrounded. For example, the reigns of the antediluvian kings according to the Greek text of Berossus is a total of 432,000 years (Berossus was an early 3rd century BC Babylonian writer). The Sumerian ‘*King List*’ (ca. 2000 BC) is one other ancient genealogical listing. Its beginning states that ‘*kingship was lowered from heaven,*’ then follows with eight kings, the cities over which they ruled, and the length of their reigns (all totaled being 241,200 years; of special interest is that following the last king’s reign is the notation, ‘*[Then] the Flood swept over [the earth]*’)! ***“Scripture is silent regarding the reasons for the great length of life, but merely states that people lived long lives. The recorded ages may also be a polemic against Mesopotamian mythology.*** There are Babylonian texts that record the lives of ten ancient kings from the pre-flood era. They are kings who are part deities, and they lived exceptionally long lives – tens of thousands of years of life are attributed to each king. ***The Bible criticizes such teaching – yes, humans lived longer in those days, but they were not gods and they did not live an exaggerated, inordinate amount of time. In addition, there is no mention in Genesis 5 of kingship. These people were mere mortals and, indeed, they died.***” [Currid, 1:168] ***So even the ancient pagan myths attribute long life to those living before the Flood which gradually decreases after the flood until it reaches the normal life span of today. This accords with the data found within our Scriptures.***

ARE WE ABLE TO USE GENEALOGIES AS AN UNBROKEN TIME LINE? — Many would quickly reply to that question, ‘No, we cannot use any genealogy to prove an unbroken time

line,’ and most of the time that would be the correct answer. This can be proven by comparing a couple genealogies of our Lord Jesus; e.g., in Matthew’s genealogy there are three kings missing between Joram and Uzziah (Ahaziah, Joash, and Amaziah; Matt 1:8). This can also be seen when we compare the priestly genealogy in Ezra with that found in 1 Chronicles where Ezra omits six generations of priests (Ezra 7:1-5; 1 Chron 6:3-15). ***“It should be clear that genealogies are not necessarily complete, the main point being legitimate descent rather than inclusion of all the links in the genealogy.”*** [Walvoord, quoted by Gromacki, *Virgin Birth*]

1 Chron 6:3	Aaron	Aaron	Ezra 7:5
1 Chron 6:3,4	Eleazar	Eleazar	Ezra 7:5
1 Chron 6:4	Phinehas	Phinehas	Ezra 7:5
1 Chron 6:4,5	Abishua	Abishua	Ezra 7:5
1 Chron 6:5	Bukki	Bukki	Ezra 7:4
1 Chron 6:5,6	Uzzi	Uzzi	Ezra 7:4
1 Chron 6:6	Zerahiah	Zerahiah	Ezra 7:4
1 Chron 6:6,7	Meraioth	Meraioth	Ezra 7:3
1 Chron 6:7	Amariah		
1 Chron 6:7,8	Ahitub		
1 Chron 6:8	Zadok		
1 Chron 6:8,9	Ahimaaz		
1 Chron 6:9	Azariah		
1 Chron 6:9,10	Johanan		
1 Chron 6:10,11	Azariah	Azariah	Ezra 7:3
1 Chron 6:11	Amariah	Amariah	Ezra 7:3
1 Chron 6:11,12	Ahitub	Ahitub	Ezra 7:2
1 Chron 6:12	Zadok	Zadok	Ezra 7:2
1 Chron 6:12,13	Shallum	Shallum	Ezra 7:2
1 Chron 6:13	Hilkiah	Hilkiah	Ezra 7:1
1 Chron 6:13,14	Azariah	Azariah	Ezra 7:1
1 Chron 6:14	Seraiah	Seraiah	Ezra 7:1
1 Chron 6:14,15	Jehozadak		
		Ezra	Ezra 7:1

But I also believe it would be incorrect to apply those facts to the genealogy before us in chapter 5, the reason being that this genealogy is formatted differently than the typical genealogy. For example, the typical format in the above genealogy of our Lord Jesus would be something like the following:

‘Now Jesus Himself began His ministry at about thirty years of age, being (as was supposed) the son of Joseph, the son of Heli, the son of Matthat, the son of Levi, the son of Melchi, the son of Janna ...’, and so forth. (Luke 3:23, 24)

‘The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham: Abraham begot Isaac, Isaac begot Jacob, and Jacob begot Judah and his brothers. Judah begot Perez and Zerah by Tamar, Perez begot Hezron, and Hezron begot Ram...’, and so forth. (Matt 1:1-3)

In genealogies such as these the only way we could say with any degree of confidence that there are no gaps is when we compare them with other similar genealogies (and even then there may be gaps of which we are unaware). ***But the genealogies in Gen 5 and 11 are written in a different format:***

‘Seth lived one hundred and five years, and begot Enosh. After he begot Enosh, Seth lived eight hundred and seven years, and had sons and daughters. So all the days of Seth were nine hundred and twelve years; and he died. Enosh lived ninety years, and begot Cainan. After he begot Cainan, Enosh lived eight hundred and fifteen years, and had sons and daughters. So all the days of Enosh were nine hundred and five years; and he died,’ and so forth. (Gen 5:6-11)

This is not a mere ‘so-and-so begat someone, that person begat someone else,’ and so forth, but the genealogies in Gen 5 and 11 not only lists who begat who but when he was begotten and how long each of them lived. Taking the Scripture as it is plainly written does not allow for gaps!

Several scholars agree:

“Another suggestion [by W. H. Green] is that the genealogy is not intended to be complete, that generations have been omitted, and therefore it should not be used for chronological purposes. ***However, the Hebrew gives no hint that there were large gaps between father and son in this genealogy.***” [Wenham, 1:133]

“After completing the genealogy of the sons of Cain, who are not to appear again in the rest of the book, nor even to exist in the world, Scripture proceeds to give a detailed account of the descendants of Seth, the ancestor of all those who will henceforth be mentioned in the book and of all postdiluvian humanity throughout the generations.”
[Cassuto, 1:244]

Why is this genealogical record’s dates rejected by some? Many of today’s students of history (both secular and unfortunately Christian) reject the dates given because of modern archaeological discoveries; e.g., “*Sites in Palestine and Mesopotamia show human settlements and developing civilization as early as 9000 BC.*” [Mathews, 1:302] I am not a scholar nor do I have all the answers to their questions, but I believe (as do others) the text before us does not allow for additional ages to be added.

THE JEWISH CALENDAR — As we consider the dating of the flood as calculated from the genealogical record found in Genesis 5, it is interesting how the present Jewish calendar coincides with those calculations. First, consider the calendar used in Western Christian civilizations: we center our years around the person of our Lord Jesus, thus dividing history as **BC** (*‘before Christ’*) and **AD** (*‘Anno Domini,’* Latin for *‘in the year of the Lord;’*). For example, the date at the time of this lesson is 2026, meaning this is the 2026th year after the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ.

A couple items worth noting: our current Western dating system originated with **James Ussher**, Anglican Archbishop and Ecclesiastical head of the Church of Ireland. He originally published his dates in his seminal work, *‘The Annals of the World,’* first published in 1650. While doing his best to be accurate, modern archaeologists and historians now date the death of King Herod at 4 BC according to Ussher’s chronology. But this was the King Herod who attempted to kill Christ, thus Ussher’s dates are off by several years at least. As for creation, the date according to Bishop Ussher is 4004 BC.

Also note in our modern culture it is not unusual to see **BCE** (*‘before common era’*) instead of BC and **CE** (*‘common era’*) instead of AD. This is just another attempt of our secular

pagan society to reject the Person of our Lord Jesus and erase Him from history (unfortunately I have even read those designations in good commentaries).

But the Jews of course do not recognize our Lord Jesus as their Messiah and thus do not follow our Western calendar. To the Jews, our year 2026 is their year AM 5786 (**AM** = *Anno Mundi*, Latin for 'in the year of the world'). This follows the calendar created in AD 160 by **Rabbi Jose Ben Halafta**, which was updated and corrected in the 12th century by Rabbi Maimonides (note the calendar used by the Jews is called a 'lunisolar' calendar, being a hybrid system that tracks both lunar phases and the solar year, and adds an extra 13th 'leap month' every 2-3 years). **According to their calendar, creation is dated at BC 3761.** Because the Hebrew calendar does not follow our **Gregorian calendar** (named after Pope Gregory XIII who issued a papal bull in 1582 setting our months and days), their year AM 5786 began at sunset on September 22, 2025 and the next year AM 5787 will begin at sunset September 11, 2026. To the Jews, the Jewish Civil New Year is 'Rosh Hashanah' which (for the last 100 years) has occurred between September 5th and October 5th. The Jews believe 'Rosh Hashanah' is the birthday of the universe and is observed the first two days of their new year, Tishrei 1 and 2, beginning at sundown on the eve of Tishrei 1.

THE DIFFERENCE IN DATES BETWEEN THE MANUSCRIPTS — There are three ancient manuscripts available which pertain to our portion of Scripture: the Masoretic Text (MT), the Samaritan Pentateuch (SamPent) and the LXX. The dates within this chapter according to the different manuscripts are given in the table below:

	<i>MT</i>				<i>SamPent</i>				<i>LXX</i>			
	<i>son born</i>	<i>other years</i>	<i>age at death</i>	<i>date of death</i>	<i>son born</i>	<i>other years</i>	<i>age at death</i>	<i>date of death</i>	<i>son born</i>	<i>other years</i>	<i>age at death</i>	<i>date of death</i>
<i>Adam</i>	130	800	930	930	130	800	930	930	230	700	930	930
<i>Seth</i>	105	807	912	1042	105	807	912	1042	205	707	912	1142
<i>Enosh</i>	90	815	905	1140	90	815	905	1140	190	715	905	1340
<i>Cainan</i>	70	840	910	1235	70	840	910	1235	170	740	910	1535
<i>Mahalalel</i>	65	830	895	1290	65	830	895	1290	165	730	895	1690
<i>Jared</i>	162	800	962	1422	62	785	847	1307	162	800	962	1922
<i>Enoch</i>	65	300	365	987	65	300	365	887	165	200	365	1487
<i>Methuselah</i>	187	782	969	1656	67	653	720	1307	167	802	969	2256
<i>Lamech</i>	182	595	777	1651	53	600	653	1307	188	565	753	2207
<i>Noah</i>	500	450	950	2006	500	450	950	1657	500	450	950	2592
<i>(till the Flood)</i>	100				100				100			
<i>(date of Flood)</i>	1656				1307				2242			

Some items to note:

There are two lines of Septuagint manuscripts with different years in each line: the typical Greek LXX that is normally referenced and the LXX^A (Codex Alexandrinus). The differences in the LXX^A dates are as follows:

Methuselah's age of the son born is changed from 167 to 187 (adding 20 years). Because his son is born 20 years later, the years lived after the son is born is changed from 802 to 782, to make sure that the length of Methuselah's life remains the same, 969 years.

Lamech, Methuselah's son, year of birth now changes from 1454 to 1474, which in turn changes the year that Lamech dies from 2207 to 2227.

Since Lamech's year of birth has 20 years added to it, the year Noah was born likewise changes from 1642 to 1662; and the year Noah dies changes from 2592 to 2612.

Since Noah was 600 years old when the Flood started, the year the Flood started is likewise changed from 2242 to 2262. Note that if true, Methuselah dies in the year 2256, 6 years before the start of the flood.

The year of the Flood differs between the three lines of manuscripts: the Flood begins in 1656 MT, 1307 SamPent, and 2242 LXX (2262 LXX^A). According to Mathews [1:301], the earlier versions of the LXX had Methuselah surviving the Flood (!) by the Flood happening in 2242 but Methuselah dying in 2256. Recognizing the problem, later LXX manuscripts adjusted the numbers as to put his death before the Flood.

The SamPent differs from the MT in the following ways: Jared's life is given as 847 years with 62 preceding the birth of his son and 785 following; Methuselah's life is given as 720 years with 67 preceding the birth of his son and 653 following; Lamech's life is given as 653 years with 53 preceding the birth of his son and 600 following. Note that with the patriarchs Jared, Methuselah and Lamech being born at a much younger date than the MT or LXX, each of these patriarchs die in 1307, the year that the SamPent says the Flood began.

The LXX differs from the MT in the following ways: the total years of each life span does not differ except for Lamech which the LXX says is 753 years. On the other hand the number of years prior to the birth of the son shows divergences in most instances, with only Jared, Methuselah and Noah being the same in both manuscripts. For most of the rest of the names on the list the LXX adds 100 years to the birth of the son (Adam, 130 vs 230; Seth, 105 vs 205; Enosh, 90 vs 190; Cainan, 70 vs 170; Mahalalel, 65 vs 165; and Enoch, 65 vs 165) and the LXX adds six years to Lamech before the birth of the son (182 vs 188).

Other ancient sources also give divergences but according to Cassuto [1:265] there is no reason to examine them because the Book of Jubilees is dependent upon the Samaritan recension and Josephus Flavius is dependent upon the LXX.

All those I am using in my studies admit the difficulties but generally agree the MT is probably the most correct manuscript.

“What is the cause of the divergences between the three texts, and which recension has preserved the original figures? Much has been written on this subject, and the answer

remains in dispute.... *[We] may conclude, it would seem, that it is the Masoretic chronology that is the original, and that the differences in the other recensions were brought about by later alterations.*" [Cassuto, 1:265]

"There is no easy solution for discerning which is the original system of numbers. The LXX has on the whole larger numbers so as to give longer generations and thus a greater period between creation and the flood. This may have been designed to bring the Jewish system of numbers into agreement with Egyptian chronology. *The MT's system is preferable* since by its reckoning all Noah's ancestors died before the flood (Methuselah dying in the same year). Nevertheless, problems remain, and there is no consensus about how to understand the cluster of numbers.... We think G. Larsson ['The Chronology of the Pentateuch: A Comparison of the MT and LXX,' Journal of Biblical Literature 102, 1983, 401-9] appears closer to the right solution, however, when *he shows how the LXX (and sometimes SP) altered the numbers in the MT, which he takes as the original.*" [Mathews, 1:301]

