

Forgotten history

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Before the time of Darwin and Huxley, most history books used to begin with an introduction about the Creation of the world, the Flood, and the three sons of Noah. For example, John of Fordun in his *Chronicle of the Scottish Nation* records, 'The sons of Noah shared the world among themselves, after the Flood, in the following manner:- Shem, with his descendants, took possession of Asia, Japheth, of Europe, and Ham, of Africa.' These history books might contain a few lines about Greek mythology, if it was thought to have a historical basis, and then they would continue with the early migrations and the detailed history up to their own time. In modern history books, the introductory paragraphs have all been replaced with a few generalizations about the stone age, bronze age and iron age, with no mention of the names of actual people. Yet the people do exist, and the history of their deeds comes from a wide variety of sources. One of the major challenges facing the creationist movement today is to recover our early history that has been lost and forgotten because of the false science of evolution. This article covers just a few of the issues, but is intended to open up a much wider debate.

While working my way through a variety of creationist publications, mostly giving a scientific viewpoint, there was one book that particularly caught my interest. It was Bill Cooper's *After the Flood*.¹ This book gives the creationist argument, not from science, but from history, and traces a number of the nations of the world, back to the Flood, using historical records.

If Creation was only about 6,000 years ago, and the Flood was only about 4,300 years ago, it makes sense that it should be possible to find references to most of the major events during that whole period, even though some of the records have been destroyed by the ravages of time. In that case, why do we put so much emphasis on the use of science to tell us about Creation and the Flood? If we want to know about the past, surely the best place to look is the accumulation of records that have been left behind by our ancestors, so that alongside Creation Science, we should also be studying *Creation History*.²

History and mythology

One of the problems with the study of ancient history is that the further back you go in time the more mythological it becomes. Kings appear with supernatural powers, able

to call upon the gods to assist them instantly during the heat of battle. Aeneas, who fled from Troy and set up his new kingdom in Italy, could always rely on the assistance of Aphrodite (Venus) because she was his mother. His ancestor Dardanus, the founder of Troy, was the son of Zeus and Electra, but he was not a deathless god. He was a man, revered as a god-like figure. The Greeks and Romans did not always distinguish between gods and men, and this becomes confusing to the modern scientific mind that expects to see a difference.

Another problem is the multiple interpretations that can be derived from some of the events, as the mythology appears to have been drawn from a variety of sources. For example, the Titans were sons of Ouranos (Heaven) and Gaia (Earth), but they were at war against the other gods and were cast down to Tartarus. This could possibly be the Greek interpretation of the fall of the rebellious angels, described in 2 Peter 2:4 and Jude 6. John Fleming³ considers them to be the Nephilim, the children of the 'sons of God' and 'daughters of men', according to Genesis 6:1-4. However, the generations of the Greek gods (and their Babylonian prototypes) can also be interpreted as a family of ordinary humans, so that Ouranos represents Noah, and Kronus represents his son Ham, a suggestion made by Isaac Preston Cory⁴ in his Introduction to the *Ancient Fragments*. Note that the later version by Richmond Hodges⁵ misses out Cory's Introduction.

This confusing array of allegories denies us the luxury of a single answer to everything, but for those who wish to study the subject, the effort is worthwhile.

Euhemerism

Euhemerus was a Greek mythographer who lived at the court of Cassander, king of Macedonia, from about 301 to 297 BC. He believed that there was a historical basis for the Greek mythology, and the gods were just deified men. The Greek pagans considered him to be an atheist, and they hated him, but the later Christians liked him because they could use his ideas to oppose paganism. From his name we get the term '*Euhemerism*', the practice of relating mythology to real historical events.

A fragment of his work is quoted by Diodorus Siculus, then re-quoted by Eusebius, as follows:⁶

'In a subsequent part of his work, he relates that the first king was Ouranos, a man renowned for justice and benevolence, and well conversant with the motion of the stars; and, that he was the first who honoured the heavenly Gods with sacrifices, upon which account he was called Ouranos (Heaven). He had two sons by his wife Hestia, (Vesta),⁷ who were called Pan and Kronus; and daughters Rhea and Demetra. And Kronus reigned after Ouranos; and he married Rhea, and had by her Zeus, and Hera, and Poseidon. And when Zeus succeeded to the kingdom of Kronus he married Hera, and Demetra,



Could the account of Noah (and his family) be represented in ancient mythologies?

and Themis, by whom he had children; by the first, the Curetes; and Persephone, (Prosperine), by the second, and Athena, (Minerva), by the third.'

The striking thing about this account is the way that Euhemerus strips the Greek gods of all their deity. None of them are gods in his opinion, not even Zeus. Ouranos is a king who offers sacrifices to the gods, so he cannot be a god himself. If we take the suggestion of Cory, that Ouranos is Noah, then these could be the sacrifices that he made when he came out of the Ark.

Also the 'Curetes' cannot be gods, even though they are the children of Zeus and Hera. According to Richmond Hodges,⁸ they are the priests of Jupiter on the island of Crete, and of the goddess Cybele (Rhea).

Survivors of the Flood

The Babylonian history has a great deal in common with the Bible, especially the description of the Flood. It tells us how Xisuthrus, the Babylonian Noah, was warned of the Flood by Kronus (a god on this occasion, not a man). He built a boat and took on board his family and friends and all species of animals. The Flood came upon the Earth, and when it had subsided he sent out birds on three successive occasions. When the last flight of birds failed to return, he opened the Ark and discovered it had landed on the side of a mountain. Then, accompanied by his wife, daughter and the boatman, he built an altar and offered sacrifices to the gods. All four of them were translated to the gods for their piety, while the others who remained in the boat were left behind, to re-populate the Earth. This story is told by Berossus,⁹ the Babylonian (Chaldean) priest who went to Asia Minor during the early 3rd century BC. It is similar to the Biblical account in substance but not in all the details. The most important difference is the translation of Noah to

the gods, when the Bible tells us that he lived on the Earth for another 350 years.

Moving on to the Tower of Babel, we have the following Chaldean fragment from Alexander Polyhistor during the first century BC.

'The Sibyl says, that when all men formerly spoke the same language, some among them undertook to erect a large and lofty tower, in order to climb into heaven. But God, (or the gods), sending forth a whirlwind, frustrated their design and gave to each tribe a particular language of its own, which (*confusion of tongues*) is the reason that the name of that city is called Babylon.

After the Flood, Titan and Prometheus lived, and Titan undertook a war against Kronus.'¹⁰

This passage identifies Titan and Prometheus as survivors of the Flood. The 'war against Kronus' could be a re-statement of the purpose of the Tower of Babel, to make an assault upon the gods who had sent the Flood. However, it could just as easily be a war between the survivors themselves, as part of the 'confusion of tongues'.

In the Greek mythology, the word 'Titan' is a collective term for some of the sons of Ouranos and Gaia, while the Babylonians refer to a specific person called 'Titan'. The Greek 'Kronus' is one of the Titans, so he is the brother of the Babylonian 'Titan', making him a third survivor of the Flood. At this point we have the obvious suggestion that Titan, Prometheus and Kronus represent the three sons of Noah, but who represents whom?

Prometheus appears in the Greek mythology as the son of Iapetus, one of the Titan sons of Ouranos and Gaia. He is best known from *Prometheus Bound*, the Greek tragedy by Aeschylus.¹¹ His father Iapetus is obviously the Biblical Japheth, so the Babylonian Prometheus can also be associated with Japheth, either as his son or as Japheth himself.

Kronus is identified in the Egyptian king lists of Manetho,¹² as a demi-god with the title of ‘Saturn’, and he has a son and successor called Osiris. However, the very ancient author Sanchoniathon, who lived before the Trojan war, describes how he gave some allegorised histories to a group of priests, and at the same time he describes Osiris (Isiris) as an ordinary man. He tells us how the priests passed on his histories, as follows:

‘... and they, perceiving the rage for these allegories increase, delivered them to their successors, and to foreigners: of whom one was Isiris, the inventor of the three letters, the brother of Chna, who is called the first Phoenician.’¹³

Chna can be identified as the Phoenician Caanan, therefore his brother Osiris must be the Egyptian Mizraim, and their father Kronus must be Ham.

This leaves only Titan to be accounted for, so he must be Shem. This is a surprising result, considering that the Titans are sometimes thought of as evil and associated with the devil. But if we can strip the gods of their deity, as Euhemerus suggests, we can also strip the Titans of their demonology. In that case, the Babylonian Titan is the monotheistic Shem, at war against the paganism of Ham.

There is a correspondence between the Egyptian, Greek and Roman mythologies, so that the same gods appear with different names. The Egyptians and Greeks both have a god called Kronus, but the Romans call him Saturn. The Egyptian Osiris is the same as the Greek Zeus and the Roman Jupiter. In that case, if Osiris is Mizraim, then Zeus is also Mizraim. So here we have the mighty Zeus, father of gods and men, with his thunderbolt in his hand, but stripped of all his deity just as Euhemerus would have wanted him.

From Noah to Dardanus

Taking into account all of the above, plus a few other relationships that are found in the Greek mythology,¹⁴ we have the genealogy from Noah to Dardanus, the founder of Troy, and his son and successor Erichthoneus (Figure 1).

Titan (Shem) is omitted from the genealogy (Figure 1) because he does not appear as an individual in the Greek mythology, and in any case he does not contribute to the descent of the Trojan kings. However, there are two other children, a son called Oceanus (one of the Titans) and a daughter called Tethys. In that case, there is the suggestion that Noah and his wife had additional children, born after the Flood. While none of these are mentioned in the Bible, their existence is entirely feasible. The commandment to multiply and fill the Earth, in Genesis 9:1, was given to the whole family, not just to Shem, Ham and Japheth. If Noah and his wife were capable of producing children, they would

surely have done so. The descendants of Shem, Ham and Japheth are given in Genesis 10, but in verse 32 it says ‘by these were the nations divided in the earth after the flood’. In other words, this is a list of kings and their successors, not necessarily a complete list of descendants. Of course, the notion of additional children, born after the Flood, is a negation of the Babylonian idea that Noah and his wife were translated to the gods.

From Dardanus to the Welsh kings

The line of Trojan kings begins with Dardanus and ends with Priam, when the city was destroyed. From these kings descended Aeneas, who fled from the burning city of Troy and set up his new kingdom in Italy. All this is well documented by the Greeks and Romans, most notably the poets Homer¹⁵ and Virgil.¹⁶

The history continues with the British Chronicle attributed to Tysilio.¹⁷ Brutus the great-grandson of Aeneas came to an island called Albion, to the north of Gaul, and he called it Britain. A long list of British (Welsh) kings descended from him, giving a continuous line of descent from Noah.

Problems with the histories

The most difficult section of this continuous history is the genealogy from Noah to Dardanus, as a number of different texts have to be brought together to identify the characters as real people. There is also a problem with the timescale. The Flood was during the 24th century BC, ac-

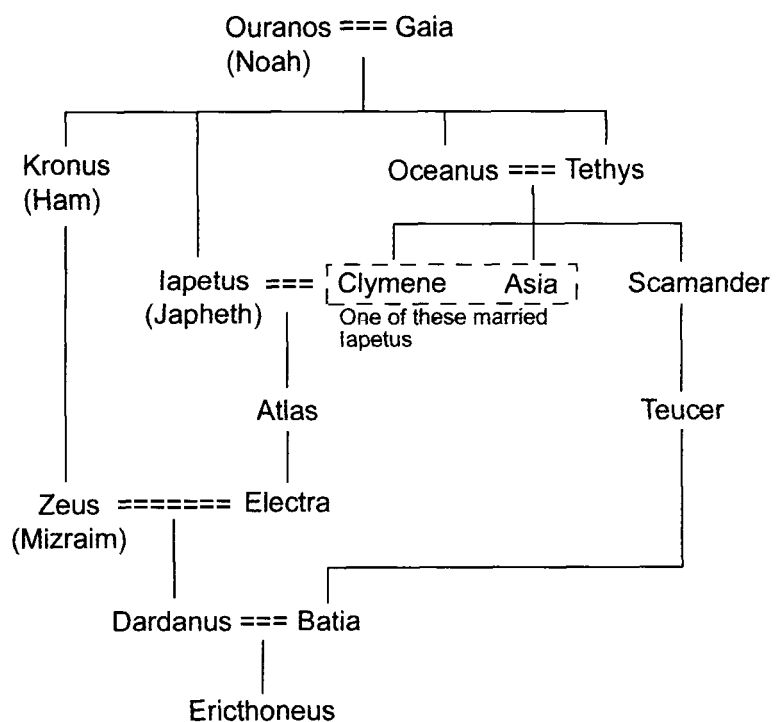


Figure 1. Genealogy from Noah to Dardanus and Erichthoneus.

According to Biblical chronology, but the reign of Dardanus was in the 15th century BC,¹⁸ so we have nine centuries from the Flood to Dardanus. Even with the great longevity of the early patriarchs, it is difficult to see how nine centuries can elapse between Noah and his great-grandson Dardanus.

The best approach to this type of problem is to accept it the way it is. We are dealing with embellished mythologies, based on an imperfect memory of actual events, and there are no exact solutions. If we try to make improvements, we might find ourselves making the same mistakes as a certain Anniius of Viterbo.

False histories

Annius was a Dominican Friar living in the town of Viterbo about 100 km north of Rome. In 1498 he published a set of fragments attributed to Berosus and Manetho, and the text and translation have been made available by Asher.¹⁹ He describes a much more elaborate history, from Noah to Dardanus, inserting a number of additional generations.

According to this history, Noah went to Italy and ruled the country for a while. Osiris had a son called Hercules who married a Scythian lady called Araxa, and they had a son called Tuscus who became king of Italy. Hercules also married a Celtic princess called Galathea and they had a son called Galatheus who became king of France (Celtica). I will not relate the whole story here, as it is available on my web site,²⁰ but it is important for any serious student of early history to understand it.

Annius of Viterbo never produced the source documents on which his histories are based, and it is widely believed that he made it all up. His alleged fragments of Berosus and Manetho are called '*pseudo-Berosus*' and '*pseudo-Manetho*'. Nevertheless, his work had considerable influence on Renaissance literature, and has to be recognised where it occurs. Anything that resembles the work of Anniius has to be proved from other sources, or else discarded.

The Greek Flood stories

Setting aside the work of Anniius and returning to something more reliable, we find that there are at least three Flood stories, according to the Greeks.

- The flood of Atlantis, allegedly about 9,000 years before the time of Plato (c.427–c.347 BC), related in his *Dialogues* with Timaeus and Critias.²¹ The story comes originally from an Egyptian priest who claims there was a great island in the Atlantic Ocean, called Atlantis, but it disappeared into the sea in a single day. It is called the 'great deluge of all', and is very probably an Egyptian account of Noah's Flood.
- The flood of Ogygus, which wiped out Attica in 1764 BC²² and made it into a wasteland for 200 years. Ogygus was king of Thebes in Boeotia, at the time when Phoroneus was king of Argos.

- The flood of Deucalion, king of Thessaly, in 1503 BC. This flood was sent by Zeus, because of the impiety of the human race. Deucalion was warned about it by his father Prometheus (who we have already mentioned), so he got into a chest with his wife Pyrrha. They floated for nine days and nights, and then the rain stopped and they landed on Mount Parnassus, in Phocis. When the waters subsided, Deucalion and Pyrrha worshipped the Corycian Nymphs, who lived in the mountain, and Themis who kept the oracles. The animals were completely wiped out, but they were spontaneously regenerated from the Earth (where have we heard that before?). Deucalion and Pyrrha created new men and women by throwing stones behind them, then they began to have children in the usual way. They had a number of sons who became kings, including Hellen, the patriarch of the Hellenes (Greeks). This story contains a number of features that resemble Noah's Flood, although it was only local and there are stories of other people who survived it by climbing mountains.²³ Possibly the Greeks remembered Noah's Flood, and they included a few of the features, somewhat distorted, in their story of the flood of Deucalion.

Ten kings before the Flood

Having already made the generalisation that history becomes more and more mythical as you go back in time, we now have a pleasant surprise. Among the surviving fragments of Berosus we have a list of ten kings who lived before the Flood²⁴ and who correspond to the ten Biblical patriarchs from Adam to Noah (Table 1).

This is presented as a purely historical king list, without any of the problems of the Greek mythology, although their longevity is exaggerated. The total period of all their reigns adds up to 432,000 years, compared with the Biblical period of 1,656 years from Creation to the Flood. The timescales differ greatly, but the Biblical and Babylonian accounts agree in principle, that people had long lifetimes before the Flood.

Table 1. Ten kings before the Flood.

Bible	Berosus
Adam	Alorus
Seth	Alaparus
Enos	Amelon
Cainan	Ammenon
Mahalaleel	Megalarus
Jared	Daonus
Enoch	Euedoreschus
Methuselah	Amempsinus
Lamech	Otiartes
Noah	Xisuthrus

Conclusion

This article is just a brief summary of ancient histories that have been forgotten through neglect, or deliberately discarded for reasons that creationists will consider to be obvious. There is a lot more that could be said, and the histories will be covered in much more detail in my forthcoming book.²⁵

For the most part, the ancient world appears to have remembered its history by the perpetuation of myths rather than straightforward narrative. Myths are much more interesting, easier to remember, and more enduring over long periods of time. However, the real stories behind the myths are difficult to recover if they ever become forgotten, and we need the wisdom of ancient authors who can tell us something about them. The most valuable of these are Sanchoniathon, Berossus and Euhemerus, and their surviving works are available in *Cory's Ancient Fragments*.^{4,5}

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- The question is about science in general, not just Creation Science. For example, suppose a forensic scientist finds a fingerprint on a lamp post and concludes, 'A horrible murder must have happened here'. Obviously his conclusion is nonsense. First you have to know that there has been a murder, then you can use forensic science to fill in the details and find out 'whodunnit'. It's the same with Creation Science. First you need some historical evidence (mostly from the Bible), then you can use science to support it.
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- Hodges, Ref. 5, p. 173.
- This Hestia must be an alternative name for Gaia, and should not be confused with Hestia, first of the Olympians, the daughter of Kronus and Rhea.
- Hodges, Ref. 5, p. 173, footnote.
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