

# The search for Noah and the Flood in ancient Egypt—part 1

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Was the concept of Noah and the Flood incorporated into ancient Egyptian religion and belief? Such a concept can be recognized in the “Hermopolitan Ogdoad”, a mythical Egyptian cosmology involving eight creator deities, comprising four males and their female consorts. This two-part article will explore this group of eight and their connections to Noah, his family, and the Flood. I will start my investigation with the most ancient evidence first, found in the 5<sup>th</sup> Dynasty Pyramid Texts and progress through history up to later stages, including a survey of the Coffin Texts (funerary spells), Book of the Dead, and Pharaonic temple inscriptions. My investigation will proceed based upon 10 search parameters, or predictions, for Egyptian history and religion, which will form the basis of this series of articles, based upon the implications of the biblical text of the Genesis 5 and 11 chronogenealogies and Flood narrative of Genesis 6–9.

## Why Egypt has not been the focus for the search for Noah and the Flood

Simply put, it is a matter of worldviews. Modern biblical scholarship abandoned any notion of regarding the early chapters of Genesis as anything other than legend. For more than a century, it has been maintained that Genesis borrowed its source material from Babylonian mythology, specifically the *Enuma elish*, for its Creation and Flood account, and that Genesis 1–11 represented the work of a priestly editor ‘P’, during or after the Babylonian Exile. In other words, why look for mythical people, like Noah and sons, or a mythical global Flood? And why look in any other place than Babylon for the source of these myths, when scholarship allegedly settled such questions long ago?

## Scripture: Noah and the Flood

The Hebrew Bible directly links Noah’s family with the name of the modern territory we know as Egypt, derived from its Greek name ‘Αίgyptos’ (Αἴγυπτος).<sup>1</sup> The Psalms calls Egypt by the name of Noah’s youngest son, Ham, four times (78:51; 105:23, 27; 106:22) and the Semitic designation for Egypt—‘Mizraim’—from the name of Noah’s grandson through Ham, appears some 680 times in the Hebrew Bible.

Outside of Genesis, Noah and the Flood appear within the following passages: 1 Chronicles 1:4; Isaiah 54:9; and Ezekiel 14:14, 20. In the New Testament, Noah and Shem appear within the genealogy of Jesus in Luke 3:36, as historic figures. Jesus draws on the reality of the Flood of Noah’s day to refer to His own second coming, and accompanying universal judgment of sin (Matthew 24:37–38; Luke 17:26–27). The New Testament writers treat Noah as a historic figure and the Flood as global (Hebrews 11:7; 1 Peter 3:20; 2 Peter 2:5). If Scripture consistently treats Noah and

the Flood as historical, then we must too. Therefore, an extra-biblical search for Noah and the Flood is in order, as they must have left their mark upon history in some recognizable form. Indeed, over 500 Flood legends around the world are known of,<sup>2</sup> but this study will proceed with a search in the history of ancient Egypt.

## Caution: a flood or the Flood?

The river Nile has flooded yearly ever since the existence of Egypt, and the annual flood was always seen in religious terms by the Egyptians due to their dependence upon it. The Pharaoh’s responsibility was to maintain balance in creation (*ma’at*), so that the Nile flood remained beneficial, rather than too high—devastating crops and buildings—or too low—leading to food shortages. Therefore, any text that mentions a ‘flood’ will need to be read closely in context so as to avoid importing notions of the biblical global Flood onto a local Nile flood.<sup>3</sup>

## Genesis chronogenealogies place Noah and Shem into Abraham’s era

From Genesis 5 and 11, the MT (Masoretic Text) chronogenealogical information places Noah and Shem into Abraham’s era. This is particularly evident when the information is graphed (see figure 1), demonstrating that at the time of Noah’s death, Abraham was born, and Shem outlived Abraham. That being the case, the incredible longevity of Noah and his family would have been seen as remarkable, even god-like, by those who knew them, but died before them. Furthermore, Noah’s family were sole survivors of the Flood, carrying with them all pre-Flood knowledge, technology, history, and the true faith of God. We can therefore ask relevant questions (based on the

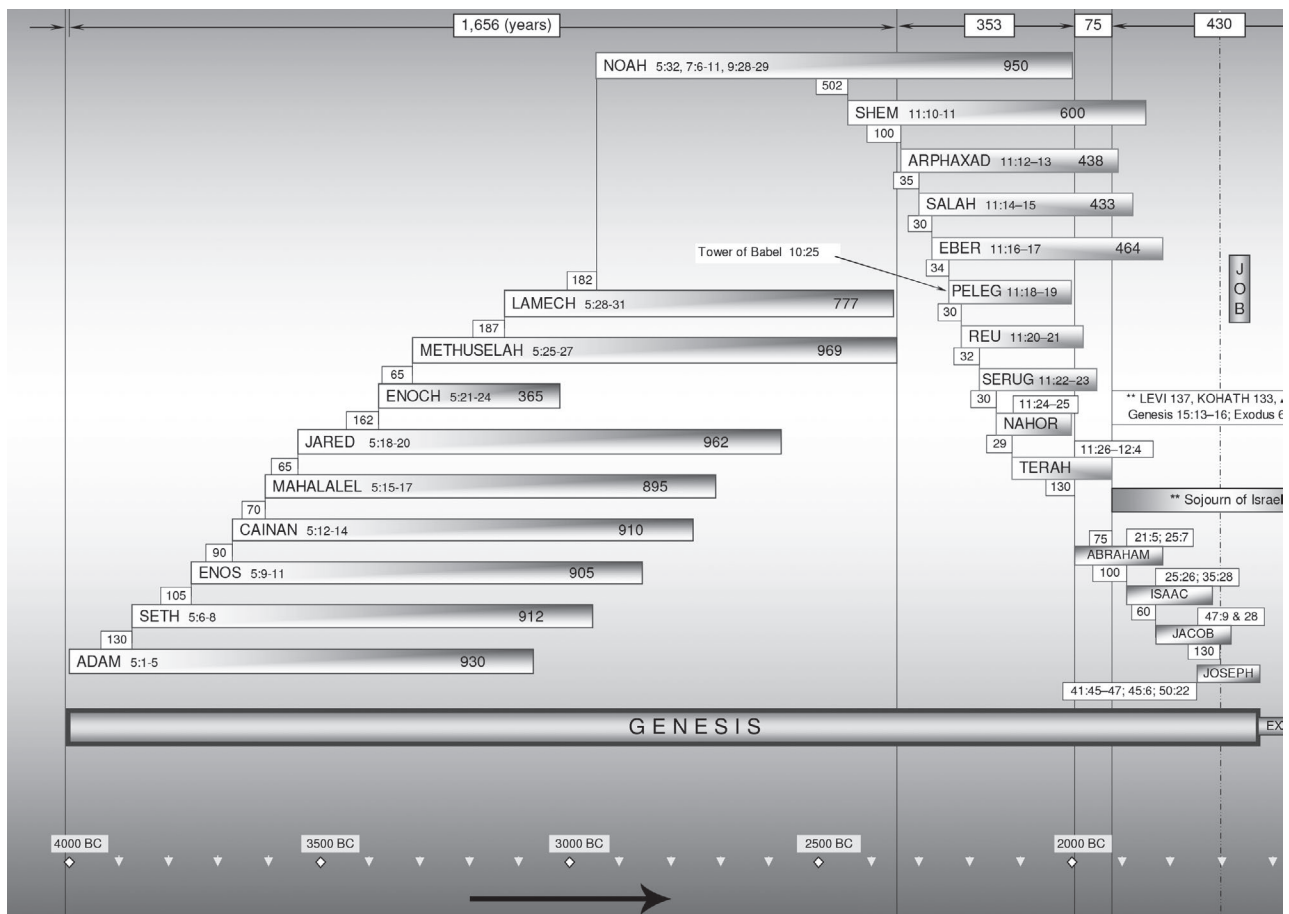


Figure 1. Genesis 5 and 11 reveals overlapping chronogenaealogies (after Paul Hansen<sup>4</sup>).

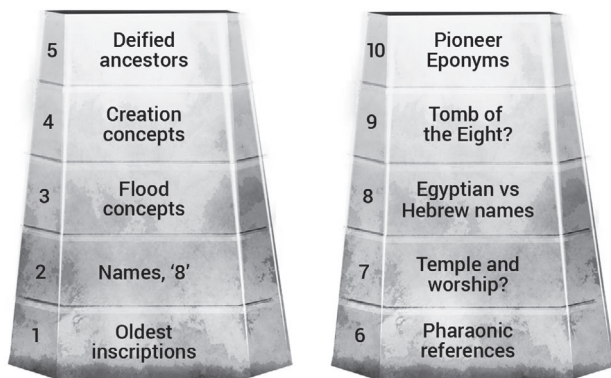


Figure 2. Ten search parameters based on the biblical text

implications of the biblical text) and set up search parameters, or predictions for Egyptian history and religion, from which to proceed (figure 2).

## Discussion

From the biblical text, Egypt should be understood as a post-Babel civilisation (Genesis 11:1–9). If Noah, his family,

and the Flood are recorded in secular history, we should expect to see evidence in Egypt's earliest writings. The 5<sup>th</sup> Dynasty Pyramids at Saqqara, dated between 2321–2306 BC,<sup>5</sup> are the earliest writings known from Egypt. However, these conventional dates cannot be accepted, as this places these pyramids' construction at the time of the Flood (2304 BC  $\pm$  11 years<sup>6</sup>), assuming the MT timescale.

As the Genesis record suggests, Noah's son Ham and grandson Mizraim settled in Egypt, taking with them (all-be it in paganized form) the memory of Noah's family and the Flood. However, it seems likely that Ham and his family line slipped into apostasy (based on the implications of Genesis 9:20–27). Nevertheless, the accounts of Creation and the Flood passed on from Ham, although corrupted by idolatry, would retain some aspects of the truth.

Noah and family: deified ancestors

Genesis 9:28–29 and 11:11 indicate Noah and Shem lived to 950 and 600 years respectively, outliving everyone around them. Having survived the Flood, carried the sum-total of human knowledge into the new world and started life afresh, it would be likely that Noah and sons became

deified ancestors in the pagan religions. That being the case, would Egypt's pharaohs make reference to them as gods within their associated writings? Therefore, based on the implications of the biblical text, a search will be made in Pharaonic inscriptions for references to the Flood and the memory of the eight.

If Noah's family became objects of pagan worship as deified ancestors, then it would be likely that they had their own worship temple and centre, predicting a 'cult of the eight' in ancient Egypt, with its own temple, lore, and textual tradition.

Also, the names of Noah, Ham, Shem, and Japheth should be preserved in ancient Egyptian onomastics,<sup>7</sup> if Ham passed on the knowledge of them to his sons and so forth. Not only the names, but their meanings—when compared to the Hebrew Bible and the Egyptian language—should show some evidence of transfer.

Being the founders of civilization would logically offer the possibility of Noah and sons' names being used as 'inventor/pioneer eponyms'. That is to say, the people behind inventions tend to lend their names to their inventions.<sup>8</sup>

Despite having such huge lifespans, Noah's family eventually died, so where were they buried? Ham and his son Mizraim would naturally be buried in Egypt, so a tomb to the eight Flood survivors would mark their memory, if not their actual bodies. So, is there such a tomb that clearly references them and the great Flood in its inscriptions?

The search criteria/predictions discussed here logically flow out of the implications of the biblical text dealing with Noah, his sons, and the Flood. Their experiences were extraordinary, and would therefore leave some kind of footprint in world history, specifically Egyptian history, and religion, which should be discernible.

Where to begin?—introducing the Ogdoad

Egyptologists are well aware of a group of eight gods known as the Ogdoad derived from the Greek meaning 'eight', which in modern hieroglyphic transliteration is written *hmnw* (Khemnw). The Ogdoad are also well known in later Ptolomaic and Roman period texts where they receive much theological speculation.<sup>9</sup> Egyptologist David Silverman

**Table 1.** Related roots for Noah, Ham, Shem, and Japheth

Name	Lexical ref.	Related root
Noah	1320–1323	"eminency, distinction, beautify, home, pasture, rest, settle down, quietness, soothing, resting place"
Ham	674, 677, 625a	"father-in-law, hot, heat"; "darkened, dark brown or black"
Shem	2405	"name"
Japheth	3315 (Strongs)	"be spacious, wide, open"

**Table 2.** Egyptian roots related to Ogdoad names

Name	Lexical ref.	Related root
Nu	II, 215.5–6; V, 375.29; III, 373.5; III, 288.12–15; 2, 221.3–19	<i>nw</i> (Ogdoad name), <i>tnw</i> "eminency, distinguish", <i>hnw</i> "home", <i>hnw</i> "resting place, abode", <i>nwy</i> "flood, water, wave"
Kek	5, 144.13; 5, 144.6; 5, 144.15	<i>kk.w</i> (Ogdoad name), <i>kk.w</i> "darkness", <i>kk.w</i> "flood water"
Amun	1, 85.3–7; 1, 83.12–18; 1, 84.8–9; 1, 84.2–3; 2, 64.13–65.2; 2, 65.6–8; 2, 69.6	<i>jmn.t</i> (Ogdoad name), <i>jmn</i> "to hide, be hidden", <i>jmn.t</i> "secret", <i>jmn-m=f</i> "Amun, hidden of name"; <i>mn</i> "so and so, someone"; <i>mn.t</i> "the like, contents"; <i>mn.t</i> "origin of the waters"
Heh	3, 152.11; 3, 152.9–10; 3, 152.14–153.24; 3, 151.3–152.4; 2, 299.2–302.9	<i>hh.w</i> (Ogdoad name), <i>hh</i> "million", <i>hh</i> "to seek"; <i>nhh</i> "eternity", <i>hh</i> "to flood"

offers an introductory summary of them explaining their role in Egyptian cosmological theology concerning the creation of the universe from the watery abys called the Nun:

"... in a series of abstract concepts: waterness (*nwy*) ... the most basic qualities, enshrined in the names of the water (Nu, Nun); infinity (*hhw*); darkness (*kkw*); (*tnmw*, literally 'lostness') or hiddenness (*jmnw*) ... they are usually depicted as four pairs of gods and goddesses, whose names are masculine and feminine counterparts of each other: Nun and Naunet, Huh and Hauhet, Kuk and Kauket, Ammun and Amuanet. Collectively, the eight deities are known as the Ogdoad ... [who] were venerated as creator-deities: 'the fathers and mothers who were before the original gods' ..."<sup>10</sup>

The earliest complete set of names and images of the Ogdoad, discovered (so far) by archaeologists, comes from the 26th Dynasty tombs of El-Bawiti (664–525 BC) in the oasis of Baharia. Excavations there carried out by Fakhry in 1942 revealed four rock-hewn tombs of wealthy individuals from the village of El-Bawiti. The tombs of two individuals





Figure 3. Ogdoad assist the air-god Shu, supporting the sky (from Fakhry<sup>11</sup>).

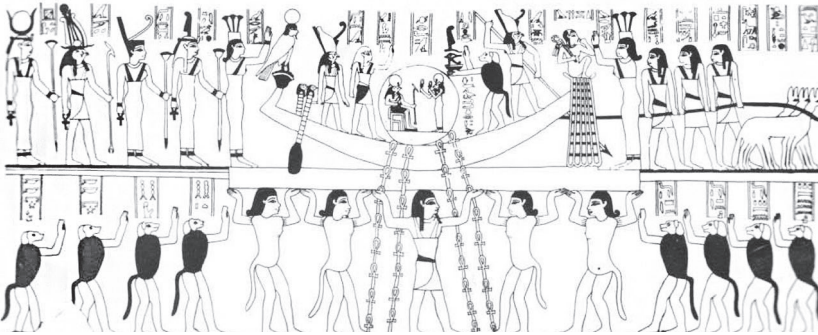


Figure 4. Ogdoad assist Shu with four deities supporting the sky (from Fakhry<sup>12</sup>).

(Ba-n-nentiu and Ped'ashtar) are of specific interest, as they preserve inscriptions displaying names and images of the Ogdoad (figure 3).

The Ogdoad pictured in figure 3 (lower register) is shown anthropomorphic and serpent-headed (creatures the Egyptians associated with water) and comprise four males and their female consorts, whose names are written in cartouches above their heads. Figure 4, (lower register) shows, with a complete set of names, the Ogdoad as apes (creatures the Egyptians associated with worship of the first sunrise at creation,<sup>13</sup> unnamed images of which occur in earlier Middle Kingdom temple inscriptions, see part 2). Both depictions show the Ogdoad assisting the air god Shu in supporting the sky, upon which the solar bark of the sun god Re sails, an image which will be discussed later in more ancient Pharaonic inscriptions. The Egyptians believed the Ogdoad's role was to maintain creation's balance, by stopping the sky from collapsing back into the Nun (the Egyptian idea of a primeval flood), which in Egyptian cosmology was believed to be a state of chaos, from which the creation emerged. This is strikingly parallel to the concepts of Creation as revealed in Genesis 1 and also mirrored within the Flood account in the role of the *tehôm*—the Great Deep. The names of these gods are written above their heads in cartouches, and are as follows. The chief god is called Nu—which is

phonetically similar to Noah, Nu's wife is the feminine form—Naunet. The other gods are Heh and Hauhet, Kek and Kauket, and Amun and Amaunet.<sup>14</sup> (The modern transliterations for these names are as follows: *nw*, *nw.t*, *hh*, *hh.t*, *kk*, *kk.t*, *jmn*, *jmn.t*. Their meanings will be discussed briefly below, but more fully in a separate article.) It is my conviction that these male names, Nu, Kek, Amun, and Heh, are the equivalent Egyptian religious names of Noah, Ham, Shem, and Japheth (the consort names are merely the feminine forms of the same names). I will compare the meanings of these names briefly (see table 2), which can act as a working hypothesis, but will be established in depth in a separate article.

Meanings: Noah and sons vs Ogdoad names

Meanings of names are established in the Hebrew Bible from their related phonetic roots (typically three letters that form the core sound of a word).<sup>15</sup>

This is seen especially in Genesis

where names are often played upon in terms of related sounding words in order to establish their meanings. The OT contains over 80 explicit etymologies, where “proper nouns designating persons and places are given a semantic interpretation based on phonetic correspondences”.<sup>16</sup> The meaning of Noah's name can be derived from Lamech's prophetic naming of Noah in Genesis 5:29, where the related word “comfort” seems to be played upon. Shem and Japheth's names are understood from Noah's blessing and curse after his drunkenness (Genesis 9:25–28). Shem shares his identity/“name” with YHWH, and Japheth's blessing is said to be “enlarged”. Both blessings play upon the phonetic correspondents of the son's names. From the standard Hebrew lexicons<sup>17</sup> the following related roots define the meanings of the names of Noah and his sons (table 1).

Meanings of the names of the Ogdoad are derived from contextual evidence from the texts from which they occur. Egyptologist Geraldine Pinch summarizes these names as follows:

“Nun and his female counterpart Naunet, the deities of the primeval waters ... Amun and Amaunet, deities of invisible power, or the breath of life ... Primeval darkness was represented by Kek and Keket ... Heh and Hehet ... may originally have embodied the strong currents in the Primeval Waters”.<sup>18</sup>

“A single Heh god was the hieroglyphic sign for ‘millions of years’ or infinity.”<sup>19</sup>

The standard Egyptian lexicons<sup>20</sup> were selected for the following vocabulary which share their phonetic roots with the names of the Ogdoad, which have been selected for in table 2.<sup>21</sup> The oldest known examples are preferred, typically from the Old Kingdom.

When comparing tables 1 and 2 it becomes apparent that the names of Noah and sons overlap with the Ogdoad male names, with either equivalent meanings, or similar concepts. The “restfulness” and “homely” aspects of Noah’s name are shared by roots common to nw. The “darkness” of Ham is shared with Kek. Shem’s identity as “name” is shared with that of Amun, who is “hidden (of name)”, “secret”, or appears as a root in words for ‘identity’. Japheth, meaning “enlarged”, has similar concepts compared to Heh, which shares its root with “millions” and “eternity”. Furthermore, each root *nw*, *kk*, *jmn*, *hh* has its own Flood term, which is a noteworthy observation. The following relationships, as a working hypothesis, are summarized below:

Noah ≈ Nu  
Ham ≈ Kek  
Shem ≈ Amun  
Japheth ≈ Heh

The connections are intriguing and deserve further investigation, so more evidence will be discussed in a separate article.

#### The Ogdoad and the Flood in the Pyramid Texts

By the end of the Old Kingdom, texts were being inscribed on the walls and corridors of Pharaonic pyramids (located on the plain of Saqqara, 20km south of modern Cairo), known by modern scholarship as the Pyramid Texts (PT). Saqqara is also known as the location of the first pyramid to be constructed in Egypt—the stepped pyramid of King Djoser (3<sup>rd</sup> Dynasty), see figure 5.<sup>22</sup> The 5<sup>th</sup> Dynasty texts, which are highly esoteric spells for the afterlife, represent the oldest corpus of religious writings preserved from ancient Egypt. The first pharaoh to incorporate these magical spells into his pyramid was Unas, (W) who was the last king of the 5<sup>th</sup> Dynasty. The texts are to be found within his burial-chamber (see figure 6, below).

Other pyramids of interest are Pepi Meryre I pyramid, Queen Neith (Nt) (daughter of Pepi I), Merenre and Pepi Meryre I pyramids. These contain the names associated with the Ogdoad—specifically two pairs, Nu and Naunet, and Amun and Amaunet in Unas pyramid spell W 301§446.<sup>24</sup> PT text 585§1580b–1581, located in Queen Neith’s chamber, refers specifically to the Ogdoad as an unnamed group, or possibly the city dedicated to them<sup>25</sup> (see part 2), repeated in Merenre and Pepi Meryre I pyramids (740§2270 and

**Table 3.** PT occurrences of Ogdoad and Great Flood terms

Ogdoad name	Pyramid Text reference
<i>Hmnw</i> (Ogdoad name) + <i>Jmn</i> (Name) + <i>Nw</i> (Name)	585§1580b+1579b+1583a
<i>Nw</i> (Name) + <i>kk</i> (darkness)	362§606+605
<i>nw</i> (abyss) + <i>kk</i> (darkness)	260§318+319+322
<i>Nw</i> (Name) + <i>Nn.t</i> (Name)	301§446; 606§1691+1692
<i>nw</i> (abyss) + <i>jmn</i> (hidden) + <i>nhh</i> (million, eternity) + <i>tkk.t</i> ('Attacker?')	627§1778+1780b+1778+1781+1785a,b+1772c
<i>Jmn</i> (Name) + <i>Jmn.t</i> (Name)	301§446c
<i>Jmn</i> (Name) + <i>hh</i> (eternity)	273§399+412a,b,c+414c
<i>Tnm.w</i> (Name) + <i>Hmnw</i> (Ogdoad name)	585§1579
<i>Hh</i> (Name)	406§709; 558§1390
Flood term	Pyramid Text reference
<i>mhy.t-wr.t</i> (Great Flood)	254§289c; 493§1059c; 496§1066d-e; 510§1131a-b;
<i>ꜥgb.w-wr</i> (Great Flood)	311§497b, 608; 344§559b; 348§565a-b; 492§1058c; 513§1172c-1173a



**Figure 5.** Djoser’s stepped pyramid, Saqqara, Egypt (Gavin Cox seated second from right; photo taken 1999)

585§1580b–1581).<sup>26</sup> Two terms for the Great Flood occur. The divine title *mhy.t-wr.t* (“Great Flood”) occurs in W 317§508; and Nt 493§1059 which states: “May you cause

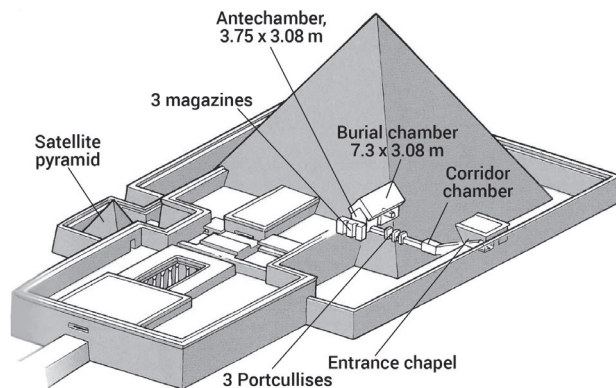


Figure 6. Unas pyramid 3D plan, in Lehner<sup>23</sup>

that Neith eat as Ne[per] who comes into being there, like Osiris who is upon the Great Flood.”<sup>27</sup> The other term for “Great Flood” is *ꜥgb.w-wr*, which occurs in Pepi 1 pyramid and Unas pyramid. From Egyptologist R.O. Faulkner’s translation, PT311§498–500 states:

“... contend with fierce roaring(?) with those who are in trouble, with those whom they would destroy. May they not make opposition when I turn to you ... this name of yours of Great Flood ... .”

These Flood titles will be discussed later. An analysis of the Pyramid Texts demonstrates that all the names associated with the Ogdoad are present, appearing either as divine names, or impersonal, cosmological concepts, along with two terms for the ‘Great Flood’. Table 3 summarizes every occurrence.

From the evidence presented, it is clear that the term ‘Ogdoad’, along with their titles, appear in the PT corpus, either as divine names or cosmological concepts, along with two terms for the ‘Great Flood’. Because these names appear in the oldest Egyptian texts we can be confident that they are not a later invention. (The two terms for Great Flood in PT also occur in later texts, which will be discussed, are cosmological and religious in scope, and are never used in reference to Nile floods.)

#### Ogdoad and the Flood in the Coffin Texts

Do these Ogdoad and Flood names and concepts survive into later stages of Egyptian history? To answer that question we need to investigate the next most-ancient literary corpus, that of the Egyptian Coffin Texts (CT), which represent funerary spells adorning coffins during the Middle Kingdom (ca. 1980–1760 BC) (figure 7).<sup>28</sup> CTs are so called because they were written in ink on interiors, and more rarely exteriors of coffins belonging to wealthy Middle Kingdom Egyptians.<sup>29</sup> Other, rarer texts have been found on papyri, mummy masks, canopic jars, tomb walls, and stelae.<sup>30</sup> CTs cover a diverse set of genres including hymns, prayers, and magical spells. Subject matters include identifications of gods, demons, and places of the afterlife, and are often

highly esoteric, jumbled, and confused.<sup>31</sup> Such texts formed collections which were regarded by the ancient Egyptians as guidebooks to the afterlife, similar in function to Old Kingdom PTs.<sup>32</sup> The following CT spells are of interest from a point of view of discussing the Ogdoad.

The title “eight Chaos-gods” which take their name from Ogdoad member Heh, occurs in CTs 76, 78–81<sup>33</sup>, (known as the “Book of Shu”—Shu being the name of the air-god), and the title “Chaos-gods” occurs in CTs 48, 50, 75, 107. These are listed below (extracted from Faulkner’s translation).<sup>34</sup>

#### The eight Chaos-gods (*Heh*-gods) in CT

76:1 “O you eight Chaos-gods who are in charge of the chambers of the sky ... 6 I who again begot the Chaos-gods in chaos, in the Abyss, in darkness and in gloom ... 7 O you eight Chaos-gods whom I created ... whose names Atum made when the Abyss was created ... when 8 Atum spoke in it with Nu in chaos, in darkness and in gloom ... .”

78:2 “O you eight Chaos-gods whom Shu conceived ... whom Nu begot ... .”

79:23 “O you eight Chaos-gods who went forth from Shu, whose names ... Atum created in accordance with the word of Nu in chaos, in the Abyss, in darkness and in gloom ... .”

80:1 “O you eight Chaos-gods, being veritable Chaos-gods, who encircle the sky with your arms ... I am everlasting, who fashioned the Chaos-gods ... .”

81:3 “To be recited over eight chaos-gods ... .”

107:118 “O Nu in company with the Chaos-gods ... .”

665:1 “Geb has sat beside him, the Chaos-god goes forth ... the strife-makers are execrated(?), for they cause plundering and they foretell the flood (*ꜥgb*), they see what is allotted when strife comes ... .”

1130:470 “I have made the Great Flood (*ꜥgb-wr*) ... Prepare a path for me, that I may see Nuw and Amun.”

CT occurrences of divine names or impersonal allusions connected to the Ogdoad

An exhaustive list of all the occurrences in CT in Faulkner<sup>35</sup> of the names and equivalent vocabulary related to the Ogdoad, is presented in table 4 below, either occurring as divine names or cosmological forces (cf).

CT 1130 is known from five coffins (figure 7; British Museum, EA30842) found at el-Bersha, the city cemetery of Khemnw (Eight City, see later discussion). Within CT 1130, Ogdoad names Nu and Amun can be seen, along with the term *ꜥgb-wr*, meaning Great Flood. The context seems to be describing the Flood as a “good deed” of creation. Only after this is mankind’s rebellion (*sbi*) and disobedience mentioned, along with a passage dealing with man’s creation from the god’s tears. Terms for ‘flood’ do occur in the Coffin Texts but the contexts are often confused (as in the case of CT 1130) or too brief to determine what kind of flood is



being referred to, i.e. the beneficial Nile flood, the cosmological flood of the heavens, or the global Flood being sent in judgment. Possibly an exception may be CT 665 mentioned above, which reads as a flood passage in the context of judgment brought by a Heh-god.

The following conclusions can be drawn from this CT analysis:

1. Ogdoad names occur in the Middle Kingdom CTs both as divine names and cosmological forces.
2. Terms Khemn (Eight City of the Ogdoad) and eight Chaos-gods (*hh*) appear together in CT.
3. *nw* is a common term that occurs as a divine name and as an impersonal, cosmological force.
4. *kk* is a common cosmological, impersonal term.
5. *nw*, *tnm.w*, *hh* occur as divine names and impersonal, cosmological concepts. (It must be noted here *tnm.w* is recognized as an alternate name for Amun of the Ogdoad, deriving from PT 585§1579.)<sup>36</sup>
6. A significant quartet of impersonal, cosmological concepts/forces occurs alongside the divine title eight Chaos-gods, that of: *nw*, *kk*, *hh* and *tnm.w*. This combination is particularly striking in CT 76 where this quartet is named together 12 times, and once in CT 79, 80.
7. Khemn + Chaos-gods occur together in CT 50, indicating a link between the place of the Ogdoad and the Chaos-gods.
8. CT 1130 Ogdoad members Niw and Amun appear together with *hh* as a cosmological force, in a passage which mentions Creation, mankind's rebellion (*sbi*), and a Great Flood (*3gb-wr*).
9. Flood terms do occur in CT, but their contexts are often too brief, or too confusing as to determine what the flood is referring to.

### Conclusion

This study has identified 10 search parameters, or predictions, based upon the implications of the biblical text of Genesis 5 and 11, chronogenealogies and Flood account Genesis 6–9, as historic events. These predictions take into



Figure 7. Coffins similar to this example from el-Birsha are inscribed with Coffin Texts.

Table 4. Shared CT occurrences of Ogdoad names and/or cosmological forces (cf)

Shared occurrences	CT reference
Khemnw (Eight City) + Chaos-gods	50:232+223,225
Chaos-god(s) (Name) + Nw (Name)	75:324+334; 76:1,6+8; 78:22+19; 79:26+24; 80:27,31+33–35; 107:118+118; 132:153+153; 714:344+344
Eight Chaos-gods (Name) + Nw (Name) + <i>hh</i> (cf) + <i>kk.w</i> (cf) + <i>tnm.w</i> (cf)	76:1+5, 7+8; 79:23+24; 80:27+28
Nw (Name) + <i>hh.w</i> (cf) + <i>kk.w</i> (cf) + <i>tnm.w</i> (cf)	76:8; 79:24
<i>nw</i> (cf) + <i>hh.w</i> (cf) + <i>kk.w</i> (cf) + <i>tnm.w</i> (cf)	76:5, 6, 10, 11, 12, 12, 13, 13, 14, 15, 17; 79:24; 80:28
Niw (Name) + Imn (Name) + <i>hh.w</i> (cf)	1130:470, 466

account the influence the Flood, Noah, and his sons would have made on religion and culture. As the Bible clearly links Egypt with Ham and his son Mizraim, this study has concentrated its efforts there. The question has been asked, is there a memory of Noah and the Flood readily identifiable in the religious writings of ancient Egypt? Part 1 has begun to build a positive case to these ends. So far, a group of eight gods, known from 26<sup>th</sup> Dynasty religious texts, have been identified as a likely candidate, consisting of four males and their female consorts (known by the Greeks as the Ogdoad, and by the Egyptians as Khemn, meaning ‘eight’). They are clearly linked with Egyptian cosmological ideas involving a watery abyss called the Nun and possess a complete set of names written in cartouches above the deities’ heads. The chief, male, Ogdoad member is called Nu, which is phonetically similar to the biblical Noah. When the meaning

of the Hebrew names of Noah and sons are compared to that of the male members of the Ogdoad, some intriguing connections are revealed, either in terms of direct meaning or parallel concepts.

Prediction 1 requires these names to demonstrate the deepest of antiquity. It has been found that these names appear as divine titles or cosmological concepts as far back as Egypt's oldest known texts—the 5<sup>th</sup> Dynasty Pyramid Texts. These texts contain the names known from later history that make up the Ogdoad, along with their designation Khemnwn (either referring to the eight gods, or “Eight City”, being the city of the Ogdoad, see part 2), and two terms for the Great Flood. These names can be traced into the next literary corpus known in ancient Egypt, that of the Middle Kingdom Coffin Texts.

Part 2 will investigate later textual sources including funerary and temple inscriptions, so as to build the case that Noah, his family, and the Flood are known in ancient Egypt. A separate article will investigate further linguistic connections to Noah's family and the Ogdoad in terms of meaning and religious function.

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## References

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