HISTORY REPEATS ITSELF:
THE "FALL" AND NOAH'S DRUNKENNESS

Several years ago, Jack M. Sasson made the interesting observation that the episodes of the Primeval History (Gen. i-xi) have been arranged so that they form two parallel histories: from creation to the Nephilim, and from the Flood to the Tower of Babel. The creation corresponds to the re-creation of the world after the Flood; the Cain and Abel story and the story of the curse of Canaan are both "conflict of brother" stories; the list of Cain's descendants is parallel to the Table of Nations; and the story of the Nephilim and that of the Tower of Babel are both viewed as supreme examples of hubris. While the correspondence between the nephilim inci-

13 Cf. Mittmann, ZDPV 89, S. 22-4; Donner, ZDPV 90, S. 185-6.

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dent and the Tower of Babel story seems weak, perhaps the greatest difficulty with Sasson's hypothesis is that he finds no parallel to the story of Adam and Eve. Sasson's argument that the "Fall" was a "unique occasion" and could therefore have no parallel is unconvincing, for every event in the Primeval History—the creation of the world, the first murder, the dispersion of the nations, etc.—is in some sense a unique event. If there can be a parallel to the creation of the world, why not a parallel to the Fall of humanity?

Contrary to Sasson's understanding, there appears to be just such a parallel to the Fall within the Primeval History: the story of Noah's drunkenness (i.e., the curse of Canaan, Gen. ix 20-7) seems to serve "double duty" in the Primeval History, providing parallels to both the Fall and the story of Cain and Abel. This parallelism is already evident in the opening verse of the story. The phrase, "Then Noah began to be an iš ha'ādāmâ" ("man of the ground", Gen. ix 20), is an unusual one. This is the only place in the Hebrew Bible in which this phrase is used to denote a farmer (the usual terms being ḫikkâr or ḥobēd ha'ādamâ). It seems likely that this phrase was chosen to draw an explicit comparison between Noah and Adam, since Adam is the iš ha'ādamâ par excellence. "And he began" (wayyahēl) alerts the reader to a new state of affairs. It is in this episode that we may begin to see parallels between Noah and Adam.

Immediately after Noah became an iš ha'ādamâ, he planted (wayyīṯtā) a vineyard (ix 20). There is a significant parallelism here, too, to the story of the Fall. Immediately after YHWH God created Adam, he planted (wayyīṯtā) a Garden (ii 8). Thus, Noah's vineyard may play a role in this story similar to the role of the Garden of Eden in the Fall narrative.

In both the story of the Fall and the story of Noah's drunkenness, the crisis arose when the hero partook of the fruit of the ground. Yet the crises are not identical—in fact, they are almost mirror images of each another. When Adam and Eve took from the Tree of Knowledge, their eyes were opened, and they knew that they were naked (iii 7). They immediately attempted to cover themselves. When they heard YHWH God approach, they hid themselves in the midst of the trees of the Garden (iii 8). When Noah partook of his wine, he lost his senses. He did not hide his nakedness among the trees; he uncovered his nakedness within his tent (ix 21). He was not even aware when Ham saw his nudity. In a curious reversal