

The Surprising Flight of Noah's Raven

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Did you ever wonder why Noah sent a raven out of the Ark after the flood? The whole event is narrated in a single sentence in the first book of the Bible.

- Gen 8:6-7 After forty days Noah opened the window he had made in the ark and sent out a raven, and it kept flying back and forth until the water had dried up from the earth. NIV

Of all the birds Noah could have sent, and there were probably more than one hundred inside the Ark, why did he choose one among the few unclean¹? Didn't Noah understand that God had just purified the earth with the water of the flood? Wouldn't it have been more appropriate to send the clean (dove) bird first and then, if it really mattered, use the unclean one (raven) after? What did Noah learn from the raven that he couldn't have figured out later from the behaviour of the dove? Did the raven really accomplish something? These are interesting questions but in the absence of any obvious answer from the Bible many see **the raven's mission as a failure unworthy of further investigation**. After all, hadn't Noah himself turned us against the raven by his apparent lack of concern toward the bird whereas he later gave his full attention to the dove?

- Gen 8:9 so it [the dove] returned to Noah in the ark. He reached out his hand and took the dove and brought it back to himself in the ark. NIV

Did Noah really treat the raven with contempt? Based on each of the following points, I say no.

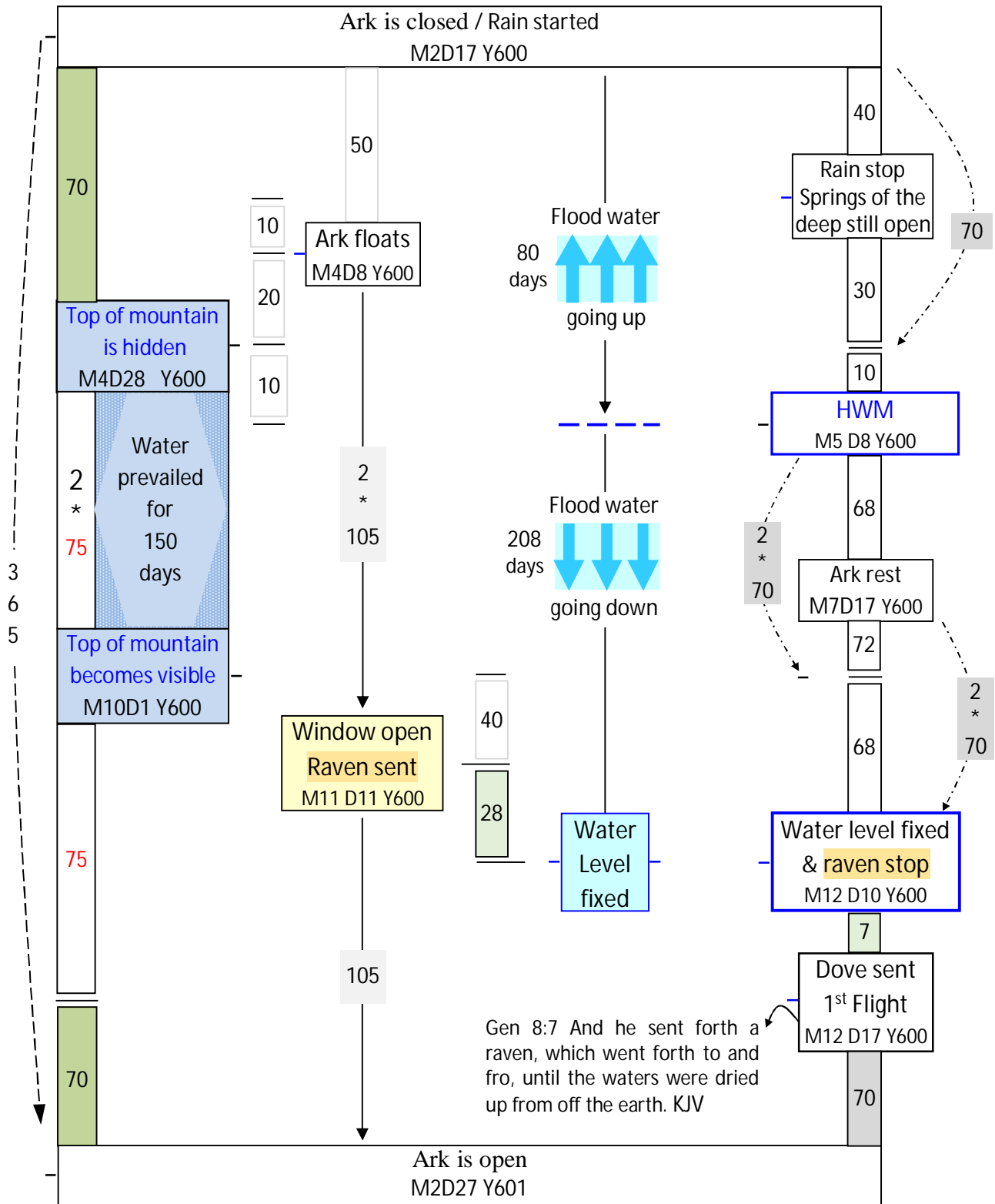
- Noah thought the raven was worthy of leaving the Ark first.
- Noah's responsibility toward the care of every animal was given directly by God. Shouldn't we assume that he loved them all and took all the steps necessary for their wellbeing?
- After the raven's mission was over Noah waited 7 days² and sent the dove. This waiting of 7 days would be repeated two more time before the final flight of the dove³, which tends to prove that everything was going according to an orderly schedule. No matter the difficulties to understand the physical mission of the raven there is no reason to believe that the raven's mission didn't bring full satisfaction to Noah.

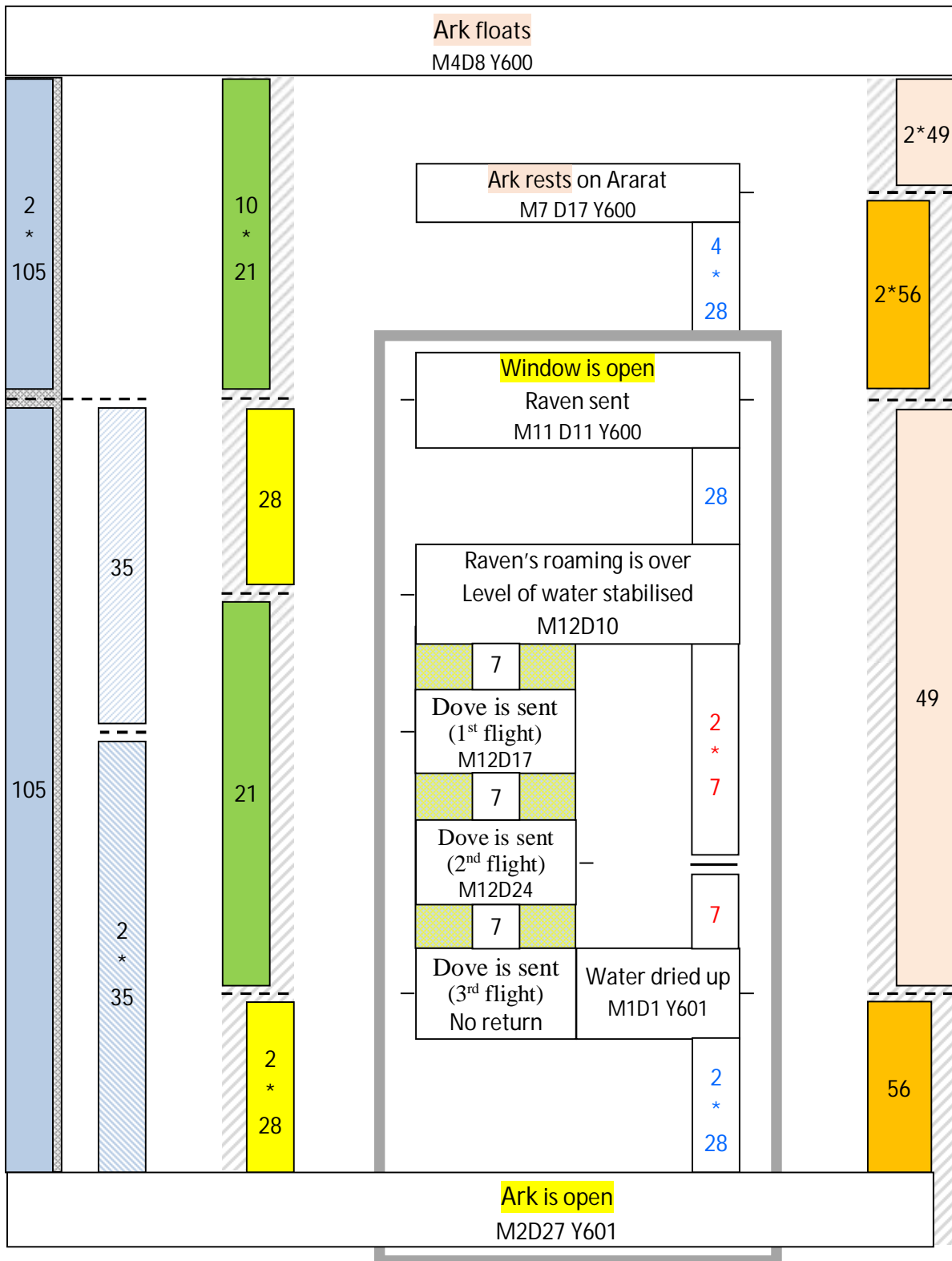
¹ Lev 11:13-15 "These are the birds you are to detest and not eat because they are detestable: the eagle, the vulture, the black vulture, the red kite, any kind of black kite, any kind of raven, NIV

² See my chronology of the Flood

³ 7 days before the first flight, 7 more days before the second flight, and another 7 days before the final flight

is a reminder of the chronology developed in my paper, "The prevailing water of Noah's flood".





Two birds, two missions

Some commentators explain that Noah's original plan was to send the raven to survey the surrounding outside the ark and bring back some information (how exactly it would have worked they never explained). But the plan totally back fire when the raven found plenty of food from the corpses floating around.

Shouldn't these commentators give some credit to the 600 years old patriarch and recognize that Noah had enough wisdom to properly select the first animal that he was going to send out of the Ark?

Others commentators contend that the raven didn't bring back anything to Noah because there was nothing to bring back. According to them the raven was sent too early whereas the vegetation didn't had time to grow yet. Interestingly these people fail to emphasize that the Dove didn't bring back anything either at the end of its first sortie, nevertheless Noah didn't replace it with another bird. I would like these commentators to tell us why the raven was not allow more time given that in the end that could have make a difference. Even better, why didn't Noah use the Dove from start to end? He could have sent it every week for months until it brought back something.

Failure to properly understand the role of the raven has lead to many deficient explanations.

We know so far that the raven was a much stronger⁴ bird than the Dove. Did it matter given that in the end the weaker Dove brought the information that Noah expected? The raven 'kept going to and fro until the waters had dried up from the earth'. Was that relevant to his mission? How? The raven was sent first but it is the Dove that brought the information. Does it make the raven useless?

Is there any way to reconcile everything?

A new world leads to a new beginning

Before anything else it is important to understand in which environment the two birds operated. The flood was not a random cataclysm that happened unexpectedly. The flood was really God's instrument to destroy and re-create the world.

Gen 6:13 So God said to Noah, "I am going to put an end to all people, for the earth is filled with violence because of them. I am surely going to destroy both them and the earth.



⁴ There are some arguments that a stronger bird was needed to confront the harsh weather. Really? By the time the raven was sent the water of the flood was going down, the rain had stoped more than 6 months before. Why would have bad weather day been more numerous than sunny and beautiful days?

There are also some arguments that a stronger bird was more apt to find some resting place. This is forgetting that the Dove didn't find any resting place during its first sortie (see Gen 8:9) which didn't prevent it to be successful later.

Here is a fascinating parallel showing that the language used to describe the creation of the 'original' world in Gen 1. had some strong echoes in the narration of the flood in Gen 8.

	Creation of the Original world	Creation of the New world	
Gen 1:2	and the Spirit [RUWACH] of God was hovering over the waters	God sent a wind [RUWACH] over the earth [water].	Gen 8:1
Gen 1:6	to separate water from water	Springs of the deep and water of heavens are separated.	Gen 8:2
Gen 1:9	Water and land are separated	On the first day of the tenth month tops of the mountains became visible.	Gen 8:4
Gen 1:11	Land produces vegetation	Dove came back with a leaf (vegetation is appearing).	Gen 8:11
Gen 1:14	Day and night, season	Summer, winter, day and night	Gen 8:22
Gen 1:20	Creatures of the sea and winged bird	Noah sent the raven and the dove. (Creatures of the sea never disappeared.)	Gen 8:7
Gen 1:24	Land animals are created	Animals disembark from the Ark.	Gen 8:17
Gen 1:28	God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it."	so they can multiply on the earth and be fruitful and increase in number upon it."	Gen 8:17

After the flood Noah⁵ opened the door of the Ark to discover a quite different world. Here are some clues that show the huge transformation the world went through.

Some believe that before the flood all the vegetation was watered by a permanent mist.

- Gen 2:5-6 before any plant of the field was in the earth and before any herb of the field had grown. For the LORD God had not caused it to rain on the earth, and there was no man to till the ground; **but a mist went up from the earth and watered the whole face of the ground.** NKJV

If this were the case, rain as we know it was a new meteorological phenomenon introduced at the flood.

- Heb 11:7 By faith Noah, when warned about things not yet seen, in holy fear built an ark to save his family. NIV

⁵ In Gen 7 :17 God shut the door of the Ark but in Gen 8:18 Noah could have opened the door himself. This distinction could symbolise a new era where men would have a more active role.

Note: According Gen 9:13-14 God created the rainbow after the flood.

The earth had been reshaped during the flood:

- Gen 6:13 I am surely going to destroy both them and the earth.
- Ps 104:6-9 the waters stood above the mountains. At thy rebuke they fled; at the sound of thy thunder they took to flight. **The mountains rose, the valleys sank down** to the place which thou didst appoint for them. Thou didst set a bound which they should not pass, so that they might not again cover the earth. RSV

After the flood man's diet included animals:

The pre-flood food was vegetal:

- Gen 1:29-30 Then God said, "I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food. 30 And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds of the air and all the creatures that move on the ground--everything that has the breath of life in it--I give every green plant for food." And it was so. NIV

But it was extended after the flood:

- Gen 9:3 **Everything that lives and moves will be food for you.** Just as I gave you the green plants, I now give you everything. NIV

After the flood man would judge man and this would prevent God from totally annihilating life on earth:

- Gen 9:6 Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God has God made man. NIV
- Gen 9:9-11 I now establish my covenant with you and with your descendants after you and with every living creature that was with you--the birds, the livestock and all the wild animals, all those that came out of the ark with you--every living creature on earth. 11 I establish my covenant with you: Never again will all life be cut off by the waters of a flood; never again will there be a flood to destroy the earth." NIV

The antediluvian world was so corrupted that God destroyed it. The new world was created with subtle change that gave man a more active role to play. The flood marked the physical transition between the old and the new world. As the first two breathing being to access the new world, the two birds became active players in that transition. It is important to properly understand their respective role.

Two propositions and their corollary

- The Raven mission was as successful as the Dove's one
 - The raven didn't bring back any physical evidence and it was not his role to do so.
- No matter that the raven was impure it was given the privilege to be the first animal to leave the Ark and explore the new world.
 - From the raven Noah obtained a fundamental information that make possible the Dove's mission.

There is an undeniable fact about the flood. While the Ark preserved the life of Noah, his family, and a selected group of animals, every other people and animals were drowned by the water. Does it mean that there was numerous corpses in decay floating around when Noah opened the window of the Ark?

I would say it was unlikely.

The rain had stopped 260 days before. Therefore there had been plenty of time for the marine life, relatively unaffected by the flood, to have eliminated all the waste. But was that a source of worry for Noah? Of course it was. God had just destroyed the world because it was full of corruption. Was Noah going to take a chance and release a Dove, the purest animal, the one often used in sacrifice, and send it outside the Ark if traces of decay had appeared on the land? Noah did the only thing that could adequately inform him of the outside situation. He sent the 'impure' Raven to scout around.

Keep in mind that the Raven is a bird of prey that can eat almost anything including seeds, grain, living animals and dead carcasses.

Does it mean that Noah sent the raven out to eat each carrion it would find? No, in fact Noah's strategy was exactly the opposite. Noah needed the assurance that there was no decaying flesh anywhere in the land and he trusted in the Raven behavior to obtain that certitude.

So the raven went out and kept returning to the Ark.

- Gen 8:7 And he sent forth a raven, which went forth to and fro, KJV

Have you ever wondered why the raven, after having been kept captive inside the Ark for 260 days, bothered to come back once it was set free? **It didn't do it only once, it kept doing it⁶.** When the raven left the Ark the top of the mountain had already been exposed for 40 days and had surely presented a more natural environment to a raven looking for a resting place. Still it kept returning to the Ark.

- Gen 8:5-7 ... and on the first day of the tenth month the tops of the mountains became visible. After forty days Noah opened the window he had made in the ark and sent out a raven NIV

⁶ Thus the expression : which went forth to and fro

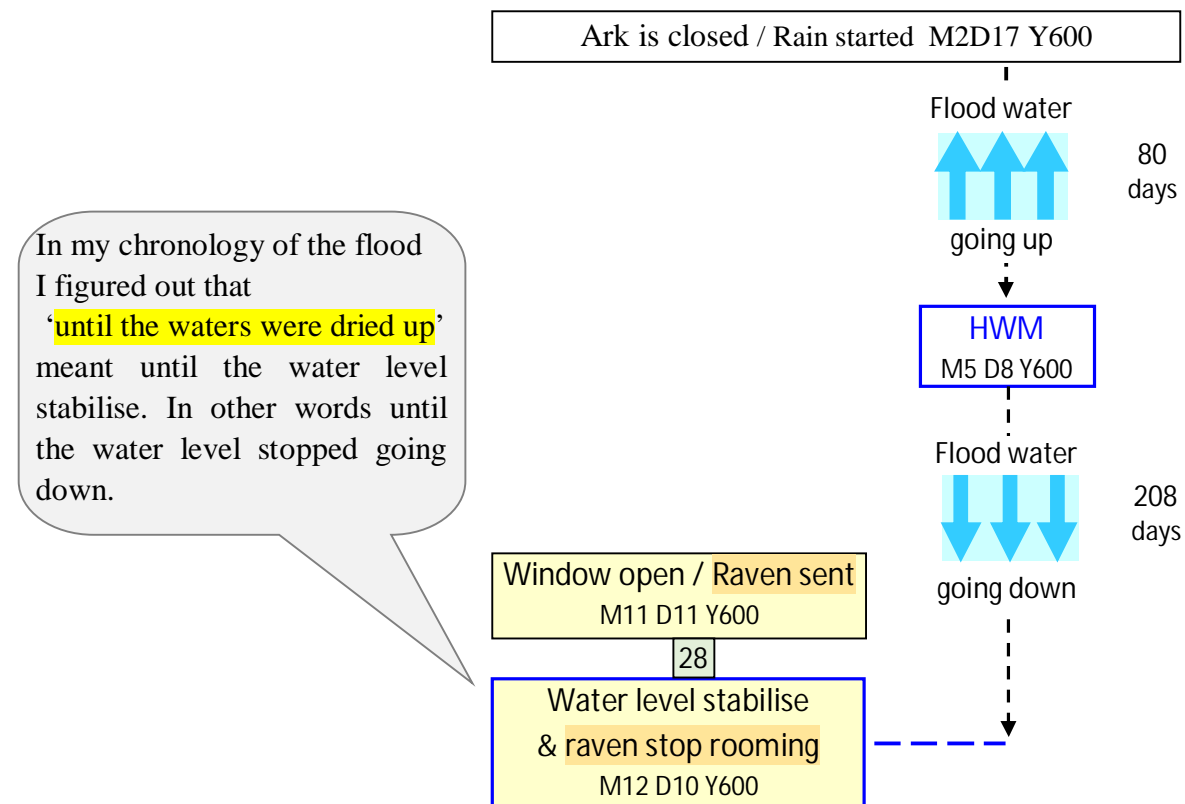
Some would suggest that the raven needed a mate. True, the only other raven alive was still in the Ark, given that Noah had saved only one pair of that species. But this raven didn't have that kind of knowledge and therefore we cannot assume that this was the incentive that pulled him back to the Ark. Why then did the raven kept returning to the Ark? The only and fully satisfactory answer is: **to be fed**.

Prior to going out of the Ark the raven had been fed every day for 260 days. To a bird regarded as very intelligent, it wouldn't have taken long to cut short its explorations outside the Ark if it was hungry and unable to find any food. What else could better explain the behavior of the raven as it kept coming back to the Ark (going to and fro) if it was not to be fed? And it was hungry because it didn't find any food outside the Ark. And no food for the raven outside the Ark meant to Noah that there was no trace of corruption either.

Need another proof that I am right?

We are told that the raven kept exploring for a while (28 days according my chronology), isn't it surprising? Once it knew that there was no food (decaying flesh) why didn't it give up the search and spend its days perching on the top of the Ark waiting to be fed? Because its immediate environment kept changing every day. Have you notice what brought an end to the Raven mission?

- Gen 8:7 And he sent forth a raven, which went forth to and fro, **until the waters were dried up** from off the earth. KJV



All the time the water decreases something immersed could have suddenly appears on the surface of the land. Every time the raven went out there was a possibility that it could find some rotten flesh laying on the new exposed shore. Noah knew it didn't happened because the raven kept returning to the Ark to be feed.



When the water level had finally stabilized (after the raven had been sent out for 28 days) Noah didn't need to send the raven anymore. There was no possibility for any decaying flesh to appear on the land anymore. The flood had totally flushed the previous corrupted world.

Noah had ingeniously used the 'unclean' Raven to assess the condition of the land. It is only when he got full assurance that the land was clean (and would remain clean) that he released the 'pure' Dove.

But there is another consideration that could have convinced Noah to favour these two birds among all the others animal available to him: it has to do with the symbolical value they would gain on as soon as they left the Ark.

Two contrasting animals



Ravens are surrounded by superstition and myth. This is a cunning bird, well-adapted for survival.



Doves are easily associated with weakness, docility, purity and beauty.

I have always been intrigued by the contrasting nature of the two birds chosen by Noah to go out of the Ark before any other animals. Why did it have to be especially a raven and a dove? The strong opposite color between the totally black Raven and the totally white Dove compelled me to look for more differences.

The Raven is a bird of prey that can eat almost anything including seeds, grain, living animals and dead carcasses. This bird is clever and can follow other animals to discover their nest and attack their young. The raven's sound is a gurgling croak disagreeable to the ear. The Bible described it as detestable and unclean:

- Lev 11:13-15 These are the birds you are to detest and not eat because they are detestable: ... any kind of raven, NIV
- Deut 14:11-14 You may eat any clean bird. But these you may not eat: ... any kind of raven, NIV

The Dove however is a quiet and frail bird that feeds exclusively on plants or seeds. According to the Bible it is not a very intelligent or brave bird, and its characteristics are often used in analogies:

- Ps 74:19 Do not hand over the life of your dove to wild beasts; do not forget the lives of your afflicted people forever. NIV
- Hos 7:11 "Ephraim is like a dove, easily deceived and senseless- NIV
- Hos 11:11 They will come trembling like birds from Egypt, like doves from Assyria. NIV

Its voice is sweet:

- Song 2:14 My dove ... let me hear your voice; for your voice is sweet, NIV

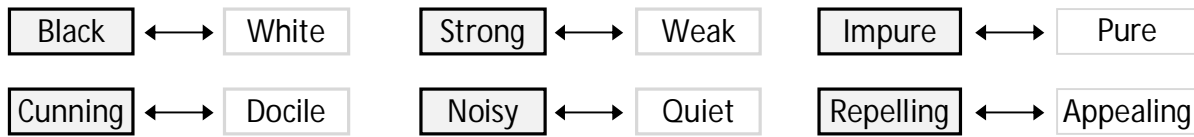
In the Bible the dove personifies the weak:

- Nah 2:7 Its slave girls moan like doves NIV
- Isa 59:11 we moan mournfully like doves. NIV

Differences between two animals should be expected, but why do we find so many sharp contrasting traits between the two birds Noah chose? It is not only a matter of their physical attributes; we have also observed the same opposition between their respective characters. Should we rule out these contrasts as pure coincidence or on the contrary, should we rather see them as an indication that Noah deliberately chose these birds to communicate to the future Bible's readers some fundamental information?

The symbolical use of the Raven and the Dove

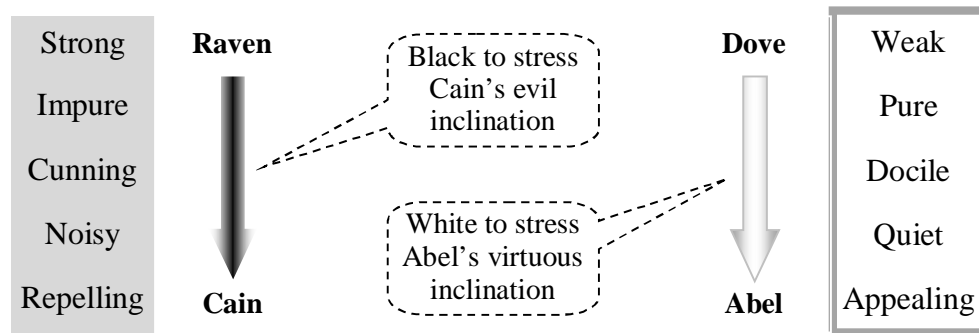
Let's see what we have:



Here are two verses combined to create the mental image of a raven killing a dove:

- Prov 30:17 "The eye that mocks a father, that scorns obedience to a mother, will be pecked out by the ravens of the valley, NIV
- Song 1:15 Oh, how beautiful! Your eyes are doves. NIV

Don't we have enough already to recognize that Noah was symbolically portraying two individuals? In other words, can we use the characteristics of the raven and the dove to identify two persons who would have exhibited similarly contrasting differences between them? Isn't it obvious that Noah used a black raven and a white dove to portray **CAIN and Abel** respectively, the first⁷ two humans born in the flesh?



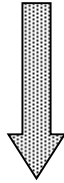
The following quotation emphasises the difference between Abel and Cain:

As a shepherd, Abel was likely a tranquil and peaceful man, passive and embracing the environment as it was, with no special incentive to impose his will and skill on the earth, but accepting it as a given. He left the condition of the soil largely untouched, drawing from it only what it yielded on its own. His flock, however, he attended to solicitously, and cared for with tenderness. Relieved of physical toil, he had the time and will to meditate upon the greatness of God, to whom he brought his choicest sheep for an offering. In harmony with God and nature. ... In striking contrast was Cain's character. As a farmer, he was of necessity active and intrusive and non-accepting of the natural given state of the earth. He deliberately imposed his will and strength upon a reluctant soil, cultivating and nurturing it to give more. He challenged the land to yield its potential, so that he could eat his bread in comfort, variety and abundance. ... Of greatest impact on his psychological makeup is the image he had of himself. Bringing forth new and varied crops and forms, he saw himself as creator and producer, vying with God Himself.

From an article of the Jewish Bible Quarterly written by **JOEL LITKE**

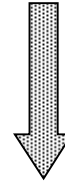
⁷ Adam and Eve had no human parentage.

Cain's sacrifice was
not accepted.



The Raven didn't bring back
anything from its expeditions.

Abel's offering was
well accepted.



The Dove came back with
an offering (leaf).

Contrary to the popular explanation, Cain's sacrifice was not deficient, it was Cain himself who was.

In an essay where he argues that Cain's and Abel's sacrifice were voluntary offerings (and not a sin offering), Bruce K. Waltke says that it was absolutely relevant that each brother brought an offering appropriate to his own vocation and therefore the absence of blood didn't disqualify Cain.

The most significant clue to explain God's rejection of Cain's offering is supplied by Heb 11:4 where it says, 'By faith Abel offered God a better sacrifice'.

In many instances Cain showed the deficiency of his character and consequently proved that he had been unworthy of worship.

Ref CAIN AND HIS OFFERING
by **Bruce K. Waltke**

Cain

Black **Raven** = Evil **Cain**

- 1 John 3:12 Do not be like Cain, who belonged to the evil one and murdered his brother. NIV

Cain and the raven pictured in perpetual motion:

Cain

- Gen 4:14 I will be a restless wanderer on the earth, NIV

Raven

- Gen 8:7 and sent out a raven, and it kept flying back and forth NIV

Cain and the raven not producing any food:

Cain

- Gen 4:12 When you work the ground, it will no longer yield its crops for you. NIV

Raven

- Ps 147:9 He provides food for the cattle and for the young ravens when they call. NIV
- Luke 12:24 Consider the ravens: They do not sow or reap, they have no storeroom or barn; yet God feeds them. NIV

Abel

White **Dove** (innocence, weakness) = **Abel**

Afflicted people are like a Dove

- Ps 74:19 Do not hand over the life of your dove to wild beasts; do not forget the lives of your afflicted people forever. NIV

Abel and the dove are connected with 'sacrifices':

- Gen 4:4 But Abel brought fat portions from some of the firstborn of his flock. The LORD looked with favor on Abel and his offering, NIV
- Lev 1:14 If the offering to the LORD is a burnt offering of birds, he is to offer a dove or a young pigeon. NIV

Are there any doubts left?

The raven and the dove do symbolize Cain and Abel. But this creates a bigger mystery?

What could have incited Noah, more than 1,500 years after Abel's death, to portray the two brothers in this surprising way?

When God created the ‘original’ world His last act was to create the first two humans (Adam and Eve). From those came the first ‘true’ sons of man, Cain and Abel (both of their parents were human as opposed to Adam and Eve). And as we all know Cain killed Abel and was thus responsible for the very first act of shedding of blood.

When Noah prepared to take possession of the new ‘re-created’ world he was well aware of the reasons that lead to the destruction of the old world. That is why he took two measures to give humanity a better chance to succeed in the new world. First he make sure that there was no more trace of any corruption on the land (we saw how it was done in the previous pages). Second, by sending the Raven and the Dove, he initiated a path that would one day lead back humanity to the tree of life.

The Raven and the Dove establish a path

So Noah’s raven keep going **‘to and fro’ between the land and the Ark to be fed**. Doesn’t the behavior of the Raven strongly connect with another biblical story also involving a raven going to and fro to feed someone near water?

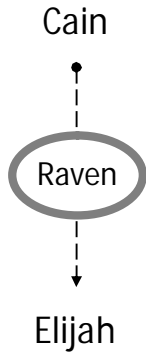
At the time of Elijah there was a drought that lasted several years and at the beginning God ordered the raven to feed Elijah.

- 1 Kings 17:2-4 Then the word of the LORD came to Elijah: "Leave here, turn eastward and hide in the Kerith Ravine, east of the Jordan. You will drink from the brook, and I have ordered the ravens to feed you there." NIV

	Raven of the Flood period	Raven during the drought at the time of Ahab
1	Raven sent after the heavens had been shut	Raven sent after the heavens had been shut
2	Raven sent by Noah (Raven forced out of the Ark)	Raven sent by God (Raven forced to obey)
3	Raven to go to and fro from the Ark	Raven to go to and fro from Elijah
4	Noah sent raven to seek flesh	God sent raven to bring meat to Elijah
5	Raven keeps returning to a fixed point (the Ark). The Ark not moving anymore	Raven keeps returning to a fixed point (Elijah’s hiding place). Elijah is not travelling anymore.
6	Raven search for food near the water	Raven brings food to Elijah who is closed to a water source.
7	Raven will stop going to and fro as soon as the water stop going down.	Raven will stop returning when water has dried in the brook
8	Raven feed by Noah	Elijah feed by Raven
9	Raven to be replaced by the dove	Raven to be replaced by a widow at Zarephath
10	Raven’s other activities not mentioned	Raven’s other activities not mentioned

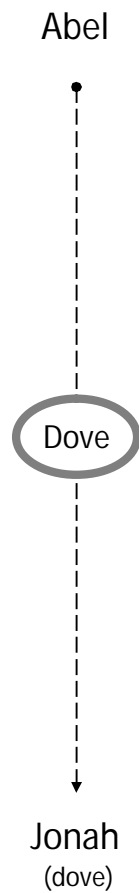
First we established that the raven symbolised Cain. Then we used the raven's flight to make a connection with Elijah. Somehow we can say that in a symbolical way, the flight of Noah's raven reveals a **hidden path between Cain and Elijah**. Here are several correlations between the two individuals.

	CAIN	Elijah
1	God talk to Cain Gen 4:9 Then the LORD said to Cain, NIV	God talk to Elijah 1 Kings 17:2 Then the word of the LORD came to Elijah
2	Cain would be hidden from God (Gen 4:14)	Elijah hidden from the king Ahab (Ex 18:10)
3	Gen 4:16 So Cain went out from the LORD's presence and lived in the land of Nod, east of Eden.	1 Kings 17:3 Leave here, turn eastward
4	Gen 4:12 You will be a restless wanderer on the earth."	1 Kings 17:5 he went to the Kerith Ravine, east of the Jordan, and stayed there. [Elijah become a sojourner]
5	Gen 4:12 When you work the ground, it will no longer yield its crops for you.	1 Kings 17:1 there will be neither dew nor rain in the next few years except at my word."
6	Gen 4:8 Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed him .	1 Kings 17:21 Then he stretched himself out on the boy three times and cried to the LORD, "O LORD my God, let this boy's life return to him! "
7	Gen 4:9 "Where is your brother Abel?" "I don't know," he replied. " Am I my brother's keeper? "	1 Kings 17:19 "Give me your son," Elijah replied. He took him from her arms, carried him to the upper room where he was staying, and laid him on his bed.
8	Gen 4:10 "What have you done? Listen! Your brother's blood cries out to me from the ground.	1 Kings 17:18 "What do you have against me, man of God? Did you come to remind me of my sin and kill my son? "
9	Cain never lamented the death of Abel but complained about the punishment he received. Gen 4:13 "My punishment is more than I can bear.	Elijah lamented a death for which he had no responsibility and ignored the mother's complaint. 1 Kings 17:20 "O LORD my God, have you brought tragedy also upon this widow I am staying with, by causing her son to die?"
10	Cain feared for his life Gen 4:14 and whoever finds me will kill me."	Elijah feared for his life 1 Kings 19:3 Elijah was afraid and ran for his life.



According to the pattern that seems to emerge from the sequence **Cain -- (Raven) -- Elijah** we should be able to establish a similar sequence going out from Abel.

Does the dove's flight lead us to someone else? Yes, and we could hardly miss it. The dove connects to another dove in the person of Jonah the prophet. In Hebrew the word for 'dove' is **יונה**, the same as the name of the prophet Jonah. (Ref 'The Sign of Jonah the Prophet' by Author Noel Rude)



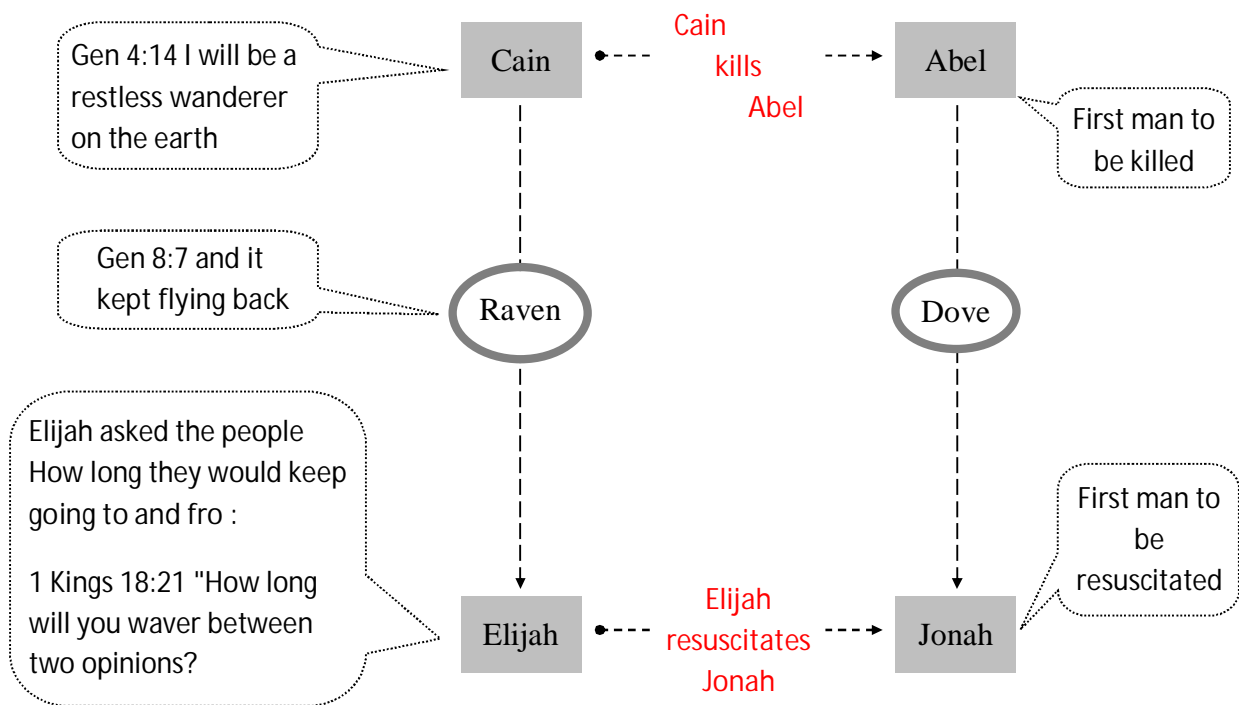
<p>Note : Contrary to ravens which are excellent fliers and can soar to great heights, (ravens nest on higher elevations) the dove will want to fly low. We need to remember that the dove was sent from an Ark resting on a mountain and it came back the first time because the land was still wet. Where was the land? Surely not on top of the mountain but rather down at the bottom of its slope where the Dove must have been instinctively flying to. The dove left the boat to go down and found wet land.</p>	<p>D O V E</p>
<p>In the following extract from the paper JONAH THE REBELLIOUS PROPHET by Raphael Shuchat</p> <p>the author highlights how, in the book of Jonah, the prophet begins his journey by going through several steps that bring him down each time. In the end Jonah left a boat to go down into the sea.</p> <p>Here is the extract:</p> <p>The text begins with God saying to Jonah: 'Arise' (1:2), but Jonah instead went down to the port of Jaffa and went down into the ship (1:3), and then went down into the recess of the ship (1:5). Then, he was cast into the sea (1:15) and swallowed up by a fish (2:1). We have here four descents: The journey down (southward) to Jaffa, then down into the boat, then down into the hold of the boat, and then down into the depths of the sea.</p>	<p>J O N A H</p>

There is a strong connection between Cain and Abel. They are brothers and we all know that Cain killed Abel. At first glance an equivalent connection is missing between Elijah and Jonah because we are under the impression that they lived at different times. But according to the Jewish sage this conclusion is wrong and there is a real connection between Elijah and Jonah.

Jonah⁸ is believed to be the son of the widow at Zarephath. This would mean that Jonah (the dove) was the boy resuscitated by Elijah.

- 1 Kings 17:19-21 "Give me your son," Elijah replied ... Then he stretched himself out on the boy three times and cried to the LORD, "O LORD my God, let this boy's life return to him!" NIV

If this interpretation is valid we have a perfect symmetry between CAIN-ABEL and Elijah-Jonah.

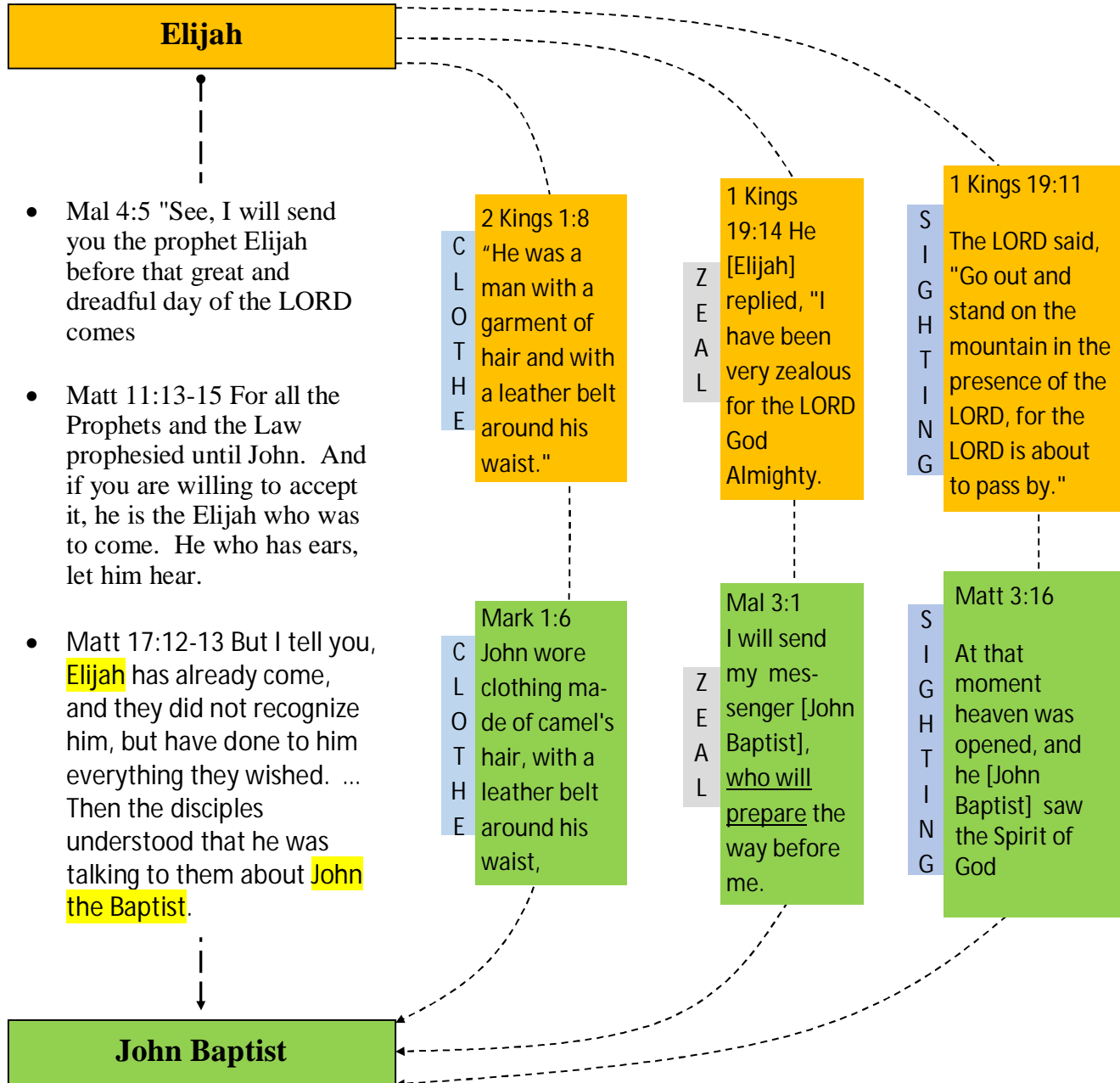


⁸ In Jonah 1:1 Jonah is called the son of Amittai. (Amittai = true and therefore it could be said that Jonah was the **Son of the true**).

Now, after her son was resurrected the widow of Zarephath exclaimed to Elijah, "Now I know that you are a man of God and that the word of the LORD from your mouth is the truth." (ref 1King 17:24) thus associating Elijah with the true. This prompted the Jewish sage to believe that Jonah ben amittai (Jonah son of the true) was the spiritual son of Elijah (man of true).

New figures magnify Elijah and Jonah

The two paths initiated with Cain and Abel don't stop with Elijah and Jonah. The Bible gives us enough clues to extend each sequence with one more individual. We will see why John the Baptist and Yeshua should retain our attention. This time the raven's and the dove's flights are not involved; it is more in the spirit of emulation that the new characters are added.



Jonah
(Dove)

Controversy over **innocence**

Men on boat don't want to kill an innocent man

- Jonah 1:14 Do not hold us accountable for killing an innocent man, for you, O LORD, have done as you pleased."

- Matt 12:39-41 But none will be given it except the sign of the prophet Jonah.

For as Jonah was **three days and three nights in the belly** of a huge fish,

so the Son of Man will be **three days and three nights in the heart** of the earth.

The men of Nineveh will stand up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it; for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and **now one greater than Jonah is here.**

Jonah ready to die thinking that if he didn't deliver his message to Nineveh they would be destroyed and would never attack Israel again.

- Jonah 1:10-12 ... (They knew he was running away from the LORD, because he had already told them so.) ... "Pick me up and throw me into the sea," he replied, "and it will become calm. I know that it is my fault that this great storm has come upon you."

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Yeshua accepted to die for the saving of others.

- Matt 20:28 just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

Judah and Pilate knew that Yeshua was innocent.

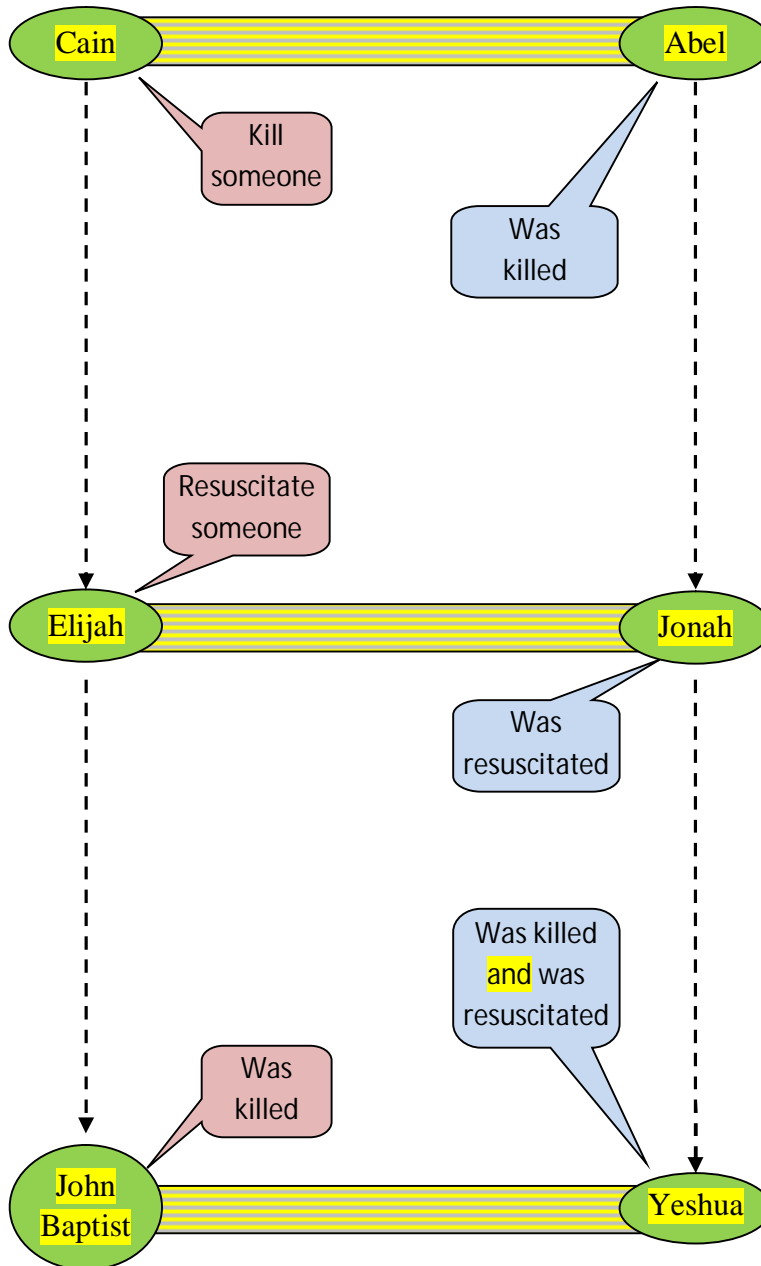
- Matt 27:4 "I have sinned," he said, "for I have betrayed innocent blood."
- Matt 27:19 While Pilate was sitting on the judge's seat, his wife sent him this message: "Don't have anything to do with that innocent man,

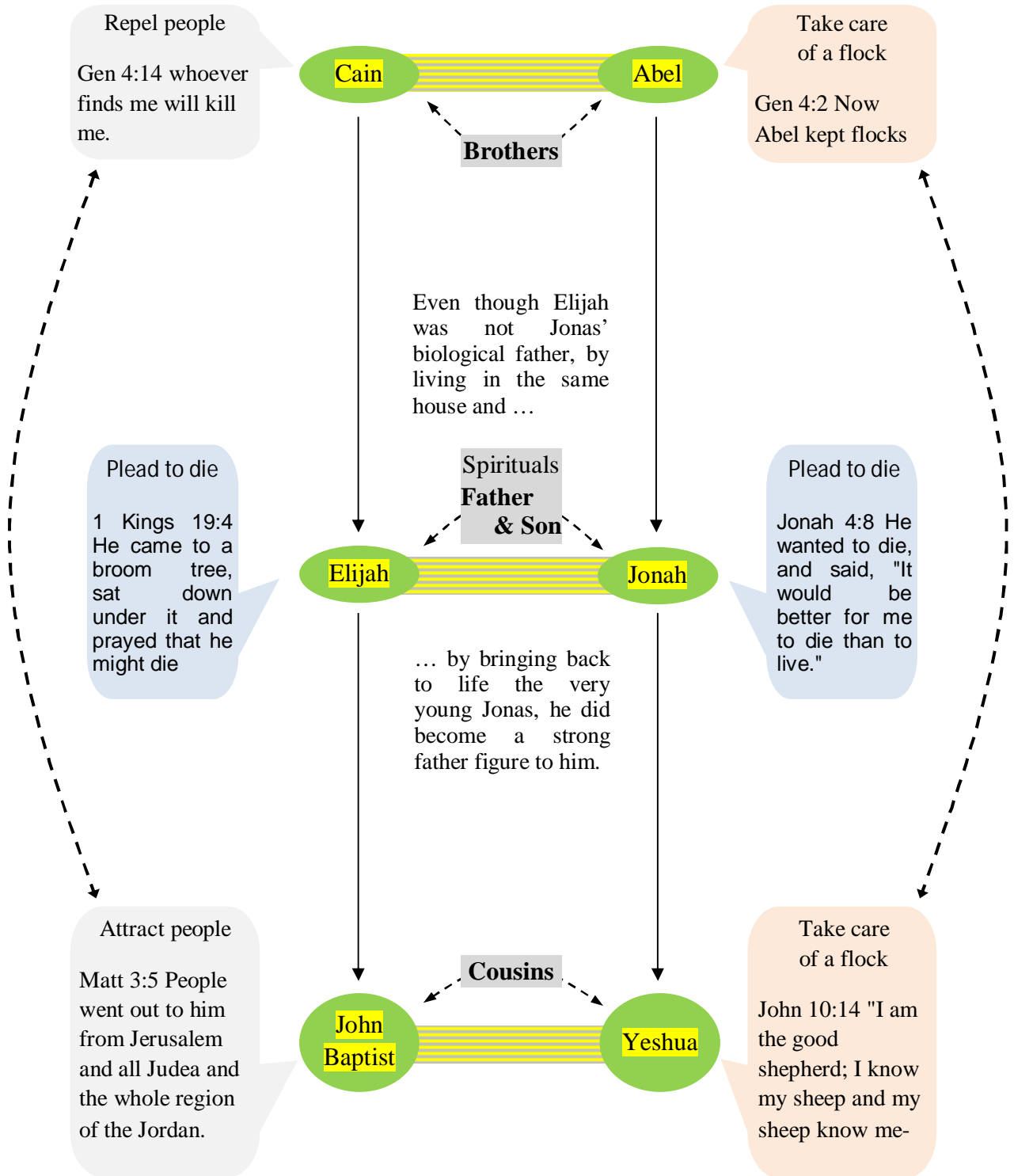
Controversy over **innocence**

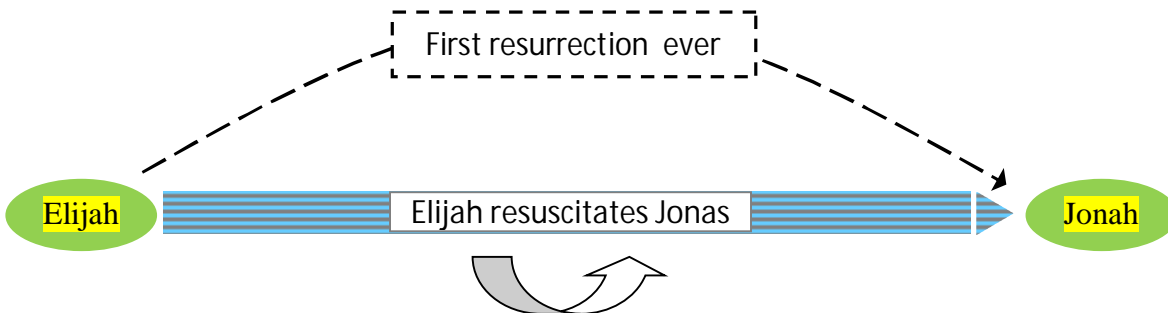
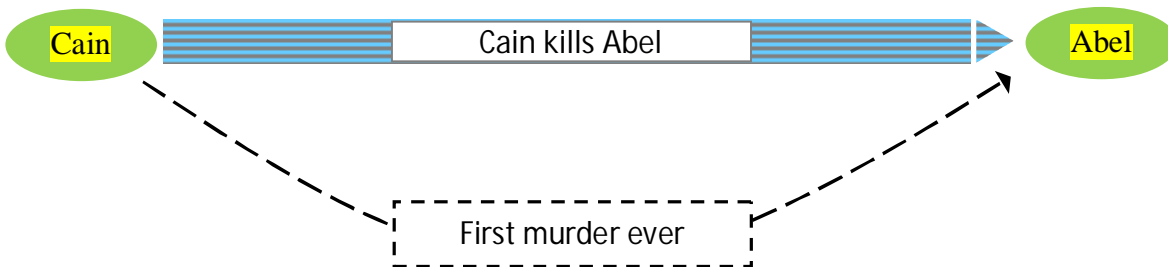
Yeshua

- Matt 3:16-17 As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove

A very strange group of people

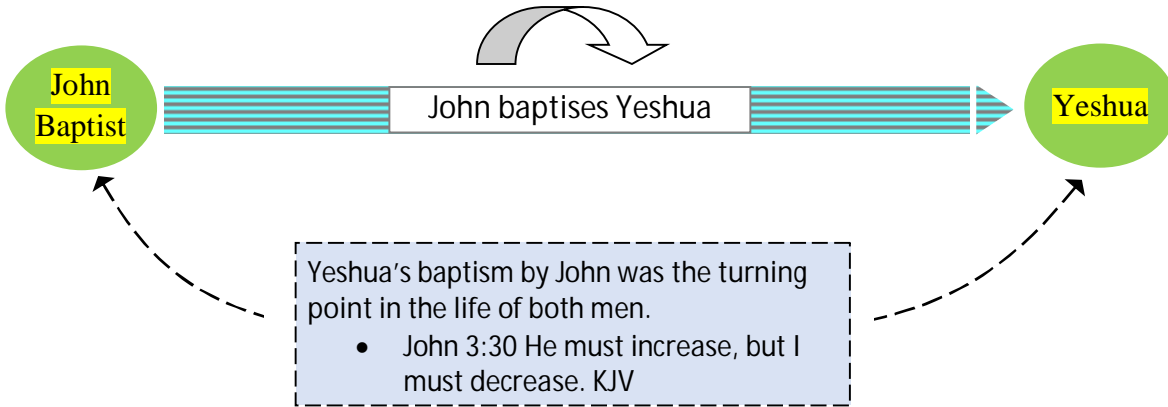






[Elijah] carried [Jonas] **up** in upper room (1 King 17:19)
 [Elijah] carried [Jonas] **down from the room** (1 King 17:23)

John Baptist brought Yeshua **down 'under' the water**
 John Baptist brought Yeshua **up 'above' the water**



the beginning of the first path is strongly linked with the end of the second path

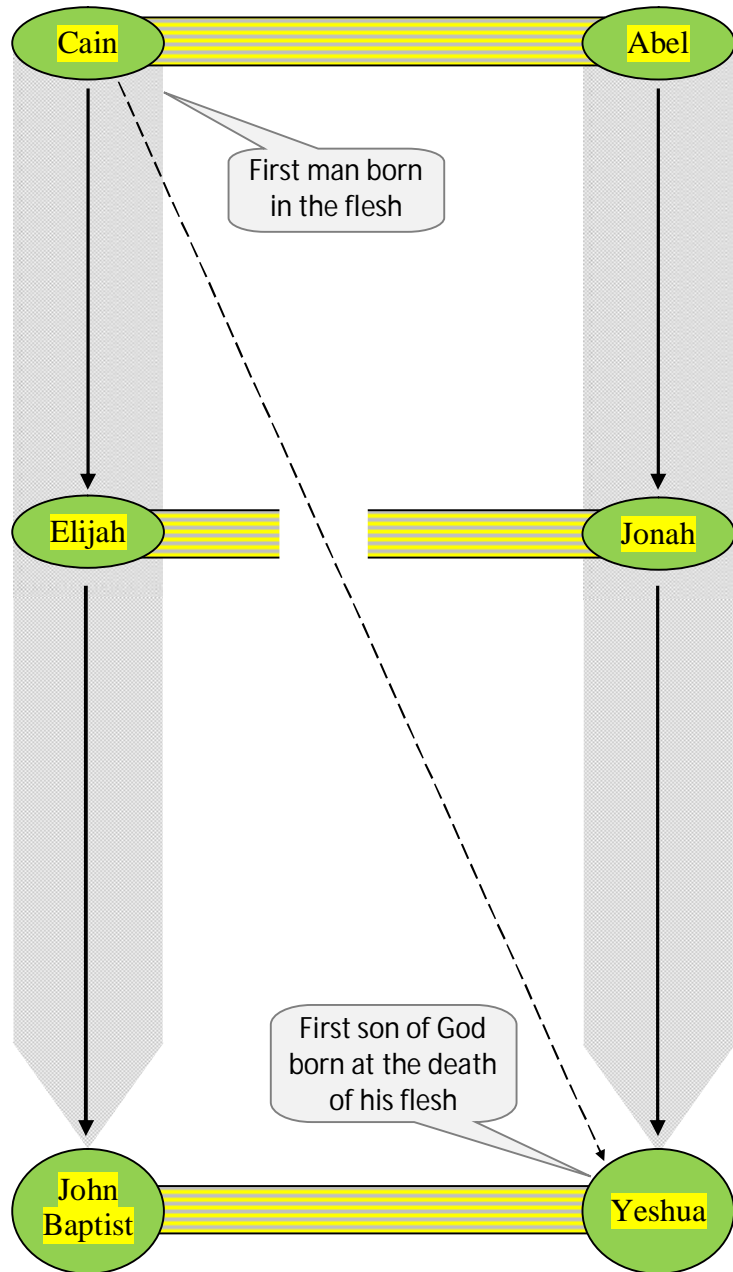
How do we know that John Baptist and Yeshua should be the last two individuals of the preceding list and nobody else should be added?

We know because there is a strong link between the first member of the first path (CAIN) and the last member of the second path (Yeshua).

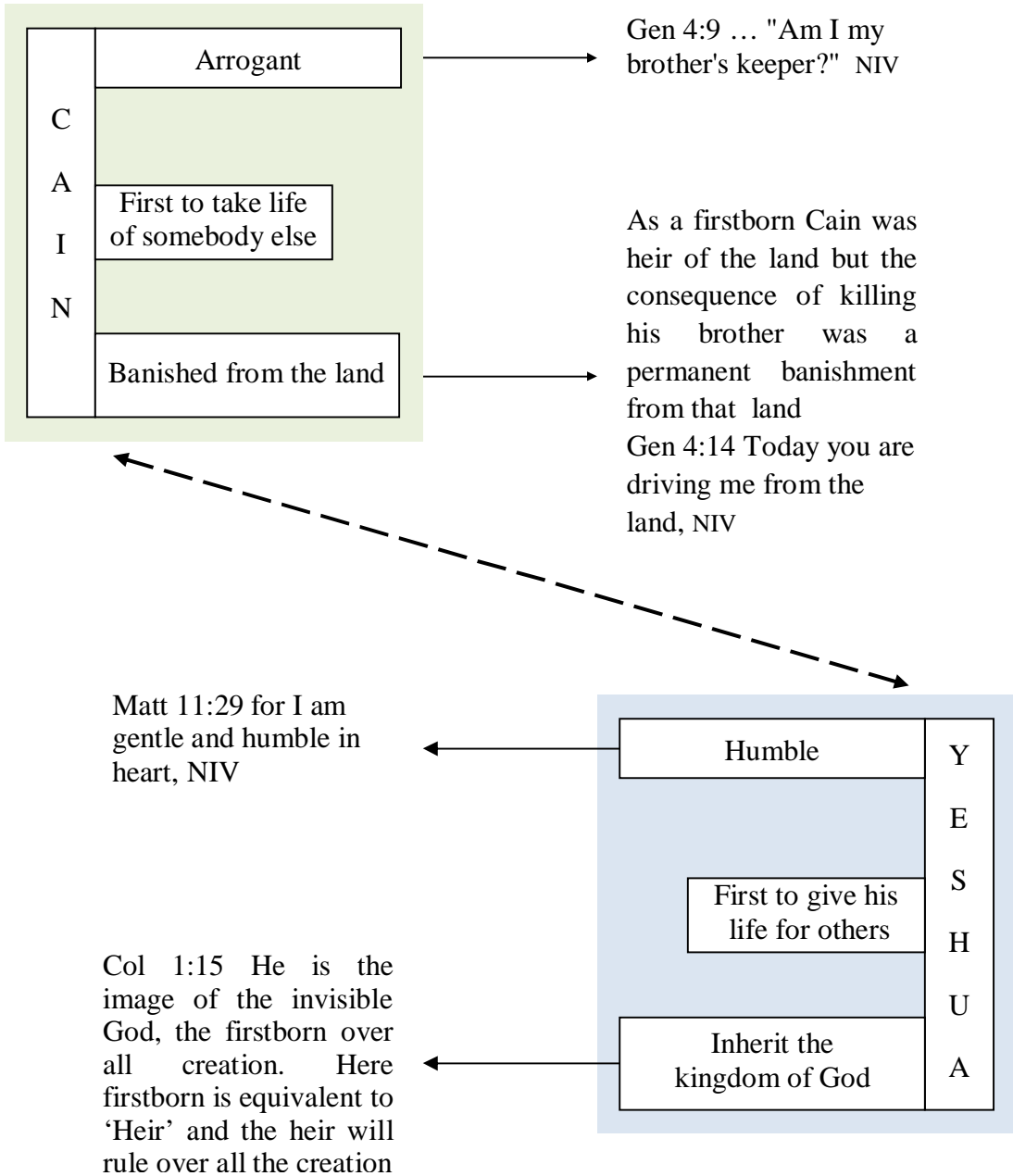
It may seem grotesque to link Cain and Yeshua together but several links can be found and anyway they are not linked because of any similarities of character but rather by the contrast they oppose to each other.

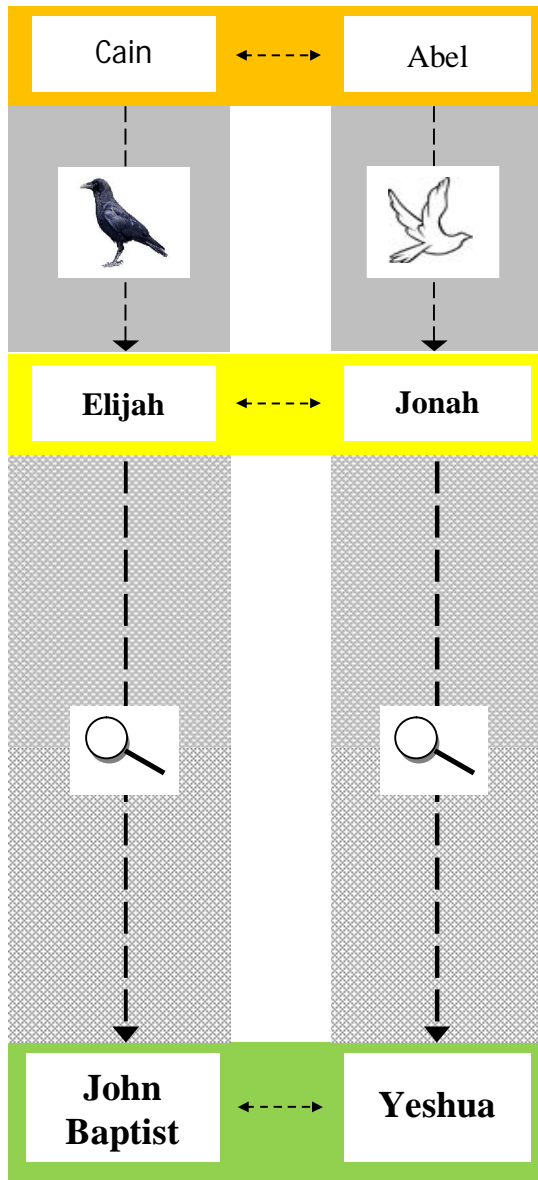
Cain, became a 'MARK' to us and represents what was worse in human nature.

Yeshua became a 'MARK' to us and represents the finest achievement that any human should aim to reach.



Cain in opposition to Yeshua





The first two elements of each column were obtained by symbolically following the raven's or the dove's path.

The bottom element of each column was retained because it denotes a magnification of what came before.

Thus John Baptist was the Elijah to come.

- Luke 1:17 And he will go on before the Lord, in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the righteous-to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."

Yeshua was the messianic figure who had been typified by Jonah.

- Luke 11:30 For as Jonah was a sign to the Ninevites, so also will the Son of Man be to this generation. NIV

At first glance there seems to be no real purpose in grouping those six individuals together. They do share many characteristics but that alone doesn't justify the elaborate work that was needed to bring them together. I started this paper by questioning the use of a raven and the investigation has led us to a deeper mystery which now includes six prominent individuals. In the next few pages a final layer of information will be exposed. It will be seen that each column of the previous matrix depicts an independent 'theme' and the six biblical figures were used to personify the 3 successive stages (**Lack, Little, Plenty**) of development associated with these themes.

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He is characterised by his unrepentant attitude.

Cain

repentance



Cain didn't care for his brother.

- Gen 4:9 "Am I my brother's keeper?" NIV

L
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His life was an unsuccessful quest to make the people repent for their sin and turn toward the one and true God of Israel.

- 1 Kings 19:4 "I have had enough, LORD," he said. "Take my life; I am no better than my ancestors.NIV
- 1 Kings 19:14 "I have been very zealous for the LORD God Almighty. The Israelites have rejected your covenant, broken down your altars, and put your prophets to death with the sword. I am the only one left, and now they are trying to kill me too."

Elijah

repentance

John Baptist was devoted to others.

- Luke 1:76 And you, my child, will be called a prophet of the Most High; for you will go on before the Lord to prepare the way for him,



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The repentance Elijah despaired of witnessing in the people was freely given by John Baptist.

- Matt 3:11 "I baptize you with water for repentance.
- Luke 3:8 Produce fruit in keeping with repentance.

John Baptist

repentance

L
a
c
k

Abel was the first human to be murdered. His blood is crying for justice and vengeance.

Abel

forgiveness



Abel's blood spilled on the ground.

- Gen 4:10 Listen! Your brother's blood cries out to me from the ground.

L
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While Jonah is characterized by his love for Israel he stubbornly resisted delivering God's message fearing that the people of Ninerve would repent and obtain forgiveness.

Jonah

- Jonah 4:1-2 But Jonah was greatly displeased and became angry. He prayed to the LORD, "O LORD, is this not what I said when I was still at home? That is why I was so quick to flee to Tarshish. I knew that you are a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abounding in love, a God who relents from sending calamity.

forgiveness



Yeshua's blood was received in heaven

- Heb 9:12 but he entered the Most Holy Place once for all by his own blood,

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One of the main teachings of his ministry was about forgiveness. He even gave his life so that every sinner would be forgiven.

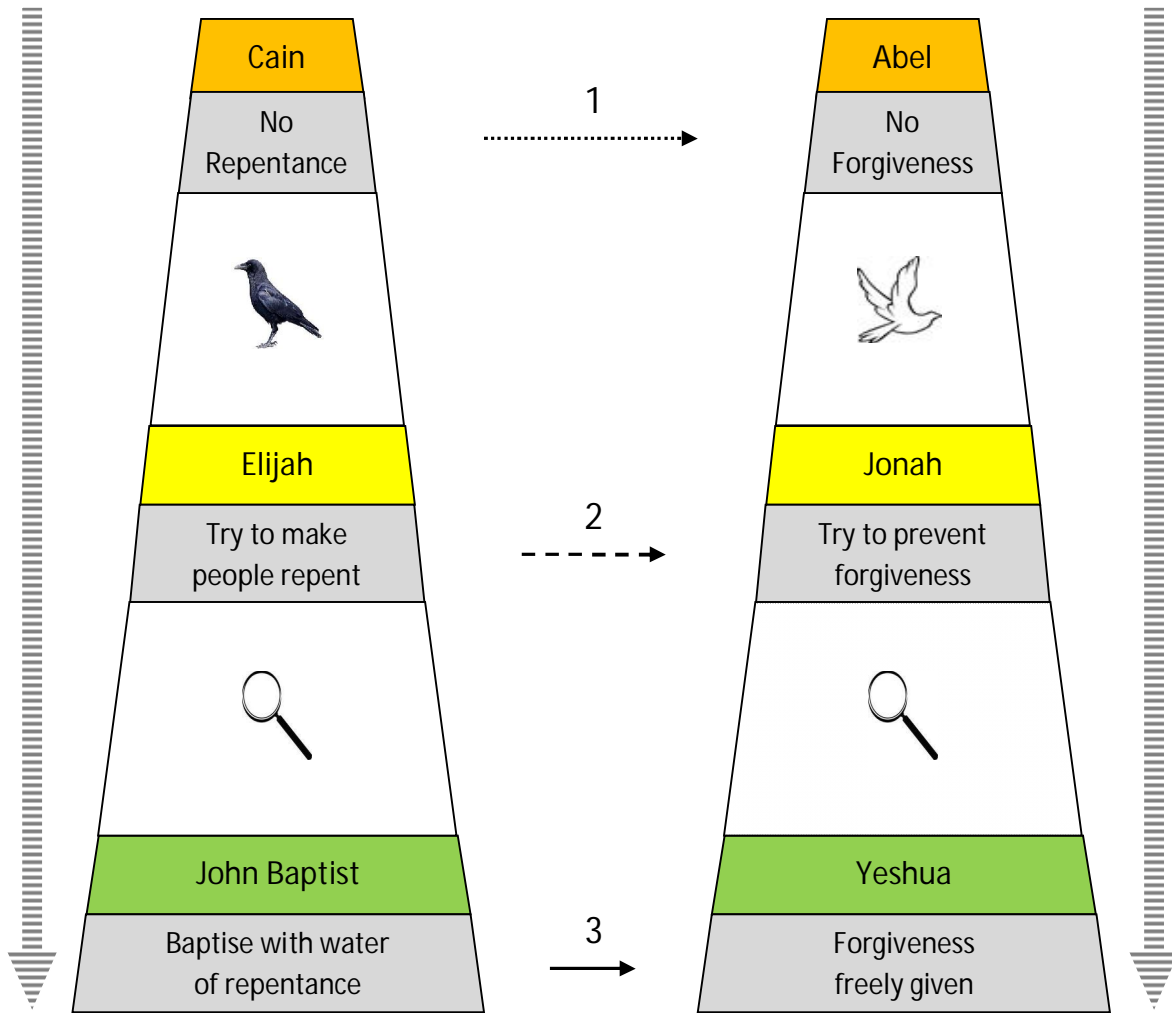
Yeshua

- Matt 9:6 But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins
- Matt 26:28 this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.
- Acts 10:43 All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name."

forgiveness

We are now going to transform the previous matrix of two columns into the more representative figure of two paths. Each path is characterised by a special motif completely negated at the origin but totally dominant when the end is reached.

Two paths, 3 stages



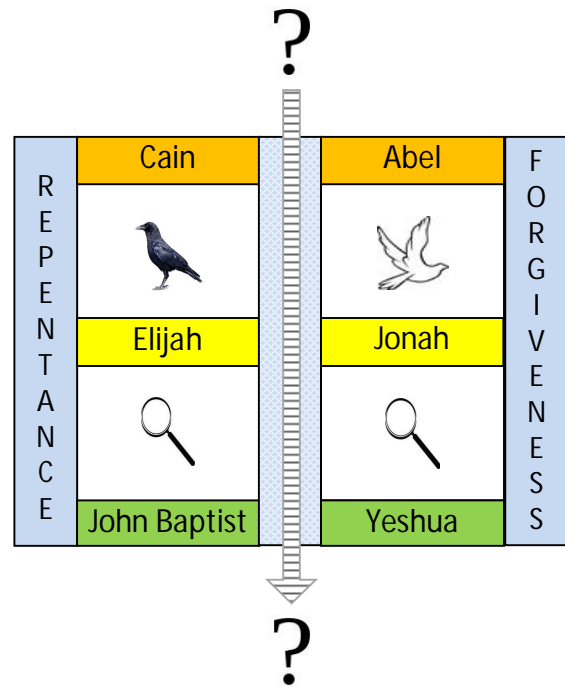
Notice how each stage on the left path leads to a consequence expressed by the equivalent stage on the right path.

- STAGE 1 No repentance leads to no forgiveness.
- STAGE 2 Difficulty in finding repentance leads to difficulty in finding forgiveness.
- STAGE 3 Plenty of repentance leads to full forgiveness.

Then what? So far we have found the 6 individuals (markers) who highlight two very special paths.

- Luke 24:47 and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

It is only when we merge the 2 paths in one that our perspective shifts and make us understand this: Cain, Elijah, John Baptist and Abel, Jonah, Yeshua reveal the path but we are missing the real purpose of the path. What stand at the origin of the path? What is the ultimate goal of the path?



In the beginning Adam and Eve were put in the garden of Eden where they had a special relationship with God. In this perfect setting God had placed two special trees. One gave knowledge of good and evil while the other provided eternal life.

- Gen 2:9 And the LORD God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground--trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food. In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. NIV

Of the two trees God had specifically forbidden the first couple to eat from the one who provided knowledge of good and evil.

- Gen 2:17 but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die." NIV

There was nothing preventing Adam and Eve from eating from the tree of life and it is perfectly reasonable to assume that they had done it on a regular basis. In fact they were enjoying an eternal life without having any knowledge of good and evil. It all ended when they committed the very first sin by eating from the forbidden tree. God immediately expelled the first couple from the garden to keep them away from the tree of life. Without this special food, eternal life couldn't be sustained.

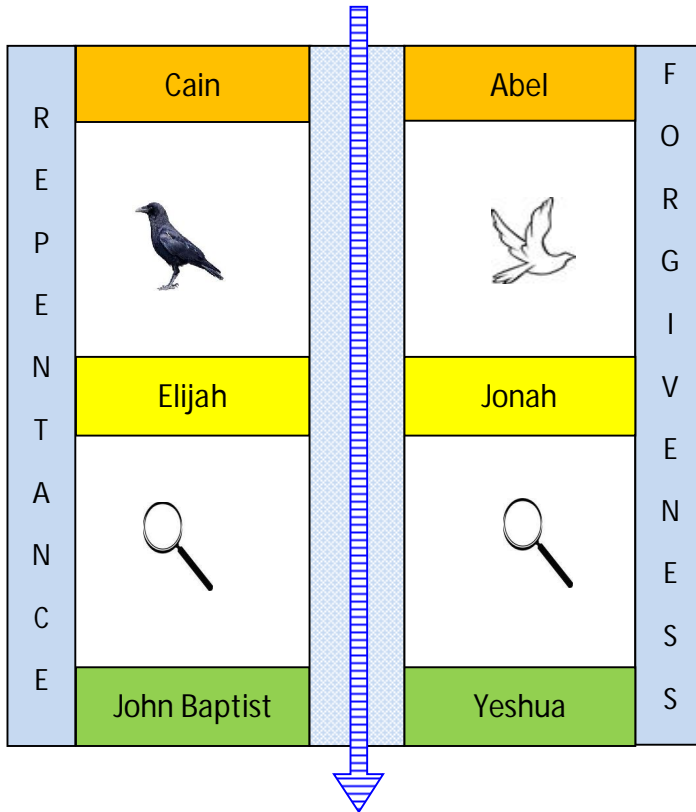
- Gen 3:22 He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever." NIV

Almost 4000 years later Yeshua (the second Adam) gave his life to erase the original sin committed by Adam and Eve. With his death Yeshua made it possible to humankind to acquire eternal life again. This time we don't need to eat any physical food from a special tree

- **John 6:51-59** - I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: instead we can feed from spiritual food freely obtained by following Yeshua teaching.
- John 6:35 Then Jesus declared, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty.

The path show how the humankind could obtain eternal life in the **Kingdom of God**.

Banished from Eden
 People prevented from eating at the
Tree of Life
 who provided eternal life



Kingdom of God inheriteded
 (but not from flesh and blood)
 people will feed from
Yeshua
 the new **Tree of Life**
 who provide eternal life

Acts 2:38 Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the **Holy Spirit**."

Dedicated to the

Jewish martyrs of Bolechow

Who like a flock of doves

Were led to their death

By the ravens of this world

The First Action - October 28-29, 1941