

The Natural Reading of Noah's Flood as a Local Flood

Table of Contents

1.	Does the Bible Teach a Global or a Local Flood?	1
2.	Translation Bias	2
2.1.	“On the Earth” or “In the Land”	2
2.2.	“Mountains” or “Hills”	3
2.3.	“The Heavens” or “The Sky”	3
2.4.	<i>Navigating Genesis</i>	4
3.	Interpretation Bias	4
4.	Modified ESV Text of Genesis 6-9	5
5.	Different Biases in English and Spanish	10

1. Does the Bible Teach a Global or a Local Flood?

Traditionally Noah's flood has been viewed as a global flood, with water covering the entire earth. However, some simple physical calculations show that this would be impossible, as shown in [this article](#), [this article](#), and [this article](#), among many articles on the [Reasons to Believe](#) website and many other websites. One of the most thorough presentations is Hugh Ross's excellent book [Navigating Genesis](#), especially chapter 17.

But when we read the account of the flood in Genesis 6-9 it certainly appears that it must have been a global flood, which appears to make the Bible conflict with the findings of objective science.

However, in reality **the Bible text supports a local flood** just as readily as a global flood, provided it is translated and interpreted using the *most common meanings* of these words instead of those with a bias towards a global flood. ([See 4. Modified ESV Text of Genesis 6-9.](#))

The problem is that in these chapters we face two different kinds of *bias*, which we can call *translation bias* and *interpretation bias*.

The first refers to a translation done on the basis of certain presuppositions that the text itself does not require. Examples are given in the [relevant section](#) below.

The second refers to reading the text of the Bible on the basis of certain presuppositions that the text itself does not require. Even in the case of words that are not the result of *translation bias*, we can easily misinterpret some words if our presupposition is that the flood was global. Examples are given in the [relevant section](#) below.

2. Translation Bias

It turns out that our English translations suffer from a bad case of *translation bias*. In fact, much of the misunderstanding of these chapters is based on the translations of just a couple of words, which I discuss in the following paragraphs.

2.1. “On the Earth” or “In the Land”

The Hebrew word אֶרֶץ /ʔeretʃ/ is extremely common in the Old Testament, occurring 2503 times, and is translated “land, country, ground, earth”, though the majority of its cases are translated “land” or “country”. Its definite form הָאָרֶץ /hāʔāretʃ/ “the land”, occurs many times in Genesis 6-9, and the ESV always translates it as “the earth” in these chapters, though elsewhere it is far more often translated “the land”, as in Genesis 34:30. To our modern minds “the earth” sounds like it is referring to the entire planet,¹ but this is actually a fairly uncommon meaning for this Hebrew word, and in fact it can very naturally be translated “land” every time it occurs in these chapters, the idea being that, just as in the time of the Tower of Babel, it is probable that the people had not spread out over the earth as God had commanded them in Genesis 1:28, but had remained in just one area. This drastically changes our perspective on the meaning of Genesis 6-9, and makes a local flood a perfectly natural interpretation, whose effects were nevertheless global as far as the destruction of humankind is concerned. In the text in the [big chart](#) below each case of this is marked in **red**, and the word **land** is in bold to show that I changed it from **earth**.

Often הָאָרֶץ /hāʔāretʃ/ “the land” is preceded by the preposition בְּ /bə/ “in, on, at”, producing the word בְּאֶרֶץ /bəʔāretʃ/,² which is most commonly translated as “in the land” in the ESV, as in Genesis 34:21, but in Genesis 6-9 it is always translated “on the earth”, except once, in Genesis 6:5, where it is translated “in the earth”. I have changed all of these to “in the land”, except that Genesis 6:5 has “in the land” since I didn’t change the word **in**.

הָאָרֶץ /hāʔāretʃ/ “the land” can also be preceded by a different preposition עַל /ʕal/ “on, on top of, upon, over”, producing the uncontracted phrase עַל-הָאָרֶץ /ʕal-hāʔāretʃ/, which is most commonly translated as “over the land” or “on the land” in the ESV, as in 1 Kings 23:33 or Genesis 19:23, but in Genesis 6-9 it is always translated “on the earth” or “upon the earth” or “over the earth”. I have changed all of these to “on the land” or “upon the land” or “over the land”, and have marked “on” or “upon” or “over” in **dark green** and עַל in **dark green** to show that they need never be changed in these chapters.

A different Hebrew word אֲדָמָה /ʔādāmə/ also occurs in Genesis 6-9, and the ESV usually translates it as “ground”, though occasionally “land” or “soil”. These need no adjustment, since their meaning is naturally understood as local. All of the cases in these chapters are the definite form הָאֲדָמָה /hāʔādāmə/, “the ground”. All of these cases are shown in **blue**.

In one case the preposition עַל /ʕal/ “on” occurs before הָאֲדָמָה, in Genesis 7:8, and I marked this in **dark green**. The preposition בְּ /bə/ “in, on, at” does not occur with this word in Genesis 6-9.

Another extremely rare Hebrew word תְּרָבָה /tərabā/ “dry land, dry ground” also occurs in Genesis 7:22, with the prefix בְּ /bə/ “in, on, at”, and the ESV translates it as “on the **dry land**”, although technically it should be “on **dry land**”, since it is indefinite (the NIV translates it correctly as “on **dry land**”). Even so, I didn’t change this in the ESV, since it probably won’t significantly affect any *interpretation bias*. This is shown in **light green**.

¹ Even in English “earth” does not always refer to the whole planet, as we can see from verses like Genesis 24:52, 26:15, and 28:15, among many others, and its meaning also depends on its context.

² /bəhā/ “in the” gets contracted to /bə/.

2.2. “Mountains” or “Hills”

The word **הָרִים** /hā'rîm/ can mean “mountains, hills, hill country” (the singular is **הָר** /'hār/ “mountain, hill, hill country”, but in Genesis 6-9 it only occurs in the plural). Most of the mountains in Israel are not very tall, and these are the ones generally referred to in the Old Testament, so they didn't really need words to distinguish hills from mountains. And if the flood occurred in central Mesopotamia or even a dry Persian Gulf, because that is where all of the people were living, no mountains would be visible, only local hills, and it is quite possible that these are the ones referred to in Genesis 7:19-20. As for the “mountains of Ararat”, in the Bible the name Ararat referred to a country, not a mountain, and corresponded to the ancient region and kingdom of [Urartu](#) (see 2 Kings 19:37, Isaiah 37:38, and Jeremiah 51:27). The mountain we know today as Mount Ararat [historically did not even have this name](#). Thus the original readers of Genesis 8:4 would have thought not of this mountain but of the region and kingdom, whose borders came down almost to the edge of the Mesopotamian plain, in fact almost to Nineveh, as can be seen by [this map](#) and [this map](#).

Actually the Bible does not say that the ark ended up on the very top of a high mountain, and it more likely settled on some hill at a much lower altitude, probably not far above the Mesopotamian plain, which reaches 400 meters (1300 feet) above sea level where it meets the foothills.³

I have changed all of these cases to **hills**, bold and in pink. (The definite form is **הַהָרִים** /hehā'rîm/ “the hills”. The construct form is **הָרֵי** /hā'rê/ “hills of”).

2.3. “The Heavens” or “The Sky”

The word **שָׁמַיִם** /šā'mayim/ is translated as “heavens, heaven, sky” in both the ESV and the NIV. However it always seems to be either “the heavens” or just “heaven”, never just “heavens” or “the heaven”.

This word has several problems. One is that it is one of a group of Hebrew words that are always plural, never singular. In other words, in Hebrew you can never say “heaven” or “sky”, only “heavens” or “skies”, at least in the case of this word. (There are several other Hebrew words that are sometimes translated “heaven” or “sky”, but they are very rare, and do not occur in Genesis 6-9. This is the normal word for “heaven” or “sky”).

(The Hebrew word for water **מַיִם** /'mayim/ has the same oddity: you can only say “waters”, never “water”. And a number of other words follow the same apparently arbitrary rule. Conversely there are a number of other words like **עוֹף** /'ōwṗ/ “bird” that can only be singular, even when their referent is obviously plural!)

Another problem with this word is that it can either mean the sky that we can see or heaven where God lives. The actual meaning can only be known from its context in each case. (See the Brown-Driver-Briggs section of this page.) And its meaning cannot be based on how a particular translation decides to translate it: in Genesis 6-9 the ESV always translates it “the heavens” or “heaven”, never sky; the NIV has “sky” twice in these chapters, and “the heavens” the rest of the time. However, I contend that in every case in Genesis 6-9 the meaning is “the sky we can see”.

This word can occur either without the article: **שָׁמַיִם** /šā'mayim/ “sky, heaven” or with it: **הַשָּׁמַיִם** /haššā'mayim/ “the sky, the heavens, (the) heaven”, but this difference does not help us to determine its meaning: it occurs with both meanings both ways, frequently in each case, though the form with the article

³ Ancient Jewish, Christian, and Islamic tradition said that Noah's ark came to rest not on what is today called Mount Ararat, but on a mountain called [Mount Judi or Mount Qardū](#), which is in the first range of mountains north of the Mesopotamian plain, at 2,089 meters (6,854 feet), in present-day Turkey, close to where Turkey, Syria, and Iraq meet. It is also close to where the River Tigris [comes out of the northern mountains](#) into the [plain](#). (The coordinates given in the link above, and the place marked on Google Maps as [Cudi Dağı](#) is located incorrectly, as is obvious by the fact that it is supposed to be 2,089 meters tall, but the altitude at the place marked is only 600 meters. I have located the correct location at: [37°22'43.4"N 42°27'09.5"E](#), which seems to be the highest point in its range, at least until you go much farther east. This tradition is probably much closer to the actual location than Mount Ararat is, but it is impossible to know for certain how close it really is.

is more common. In Genesis 6-9 it only occurs with the article, 9 times. Surprisingly, the ESV translates it as “the heavens” 8 times, but as “heaven” once, in Genesis 6:17, even though the form is identical. The NIV has “the heavens” in this case.

I have changed all of these cases to the **sky**, in olive with **sky** in bold, except in Genesis 6:17, where I have **the sky** with both words in bold, since the ESV had “heaven” with no “the”. (The form “in pause”, that is, at the end of a sentence or before a major break in the sentence, is **הַשָּׁמַיִם** /haššā' māyim/; 6 of the 9 cases in these chapters are these.)

Changing the translation to **sky** vastly changes our perspective in some of these cases. For example, in Genesis 6:17 it sounds quite impressive when God says, “I will bring a flood of waters upon the **land** to destroy all flesh in which is the breath of life under heaven.” This sounds like it is referring to the heaven where God lives, and naturally gives a planetwide perspective. However, this Hebrew word is identical to all the other cases in these chapters, and should naturally be translated, like them, “under **the sky**,” referring to the sky over the land where the people lived, clearly in a poetic fashion, but with no planetwide implications. (See also the comments on Genesis 7:19 below.)

2.4. Navigating Genesis

[Navigating Genesis](#) deals with all of these words in greater or lesser detail in chapter 16 (though its handling of the hills is slightly different from my view here), and inspired me to write this page, since I thought it would make these ideas more real if I actually adjusted the text to its most natural reading. However, I strongly recommend that you read the book, since what I am presenting here is very limited.

This book also points out that in several instances it is important to understand that the **perspective** of these chapters is generally that of Noah, and should be viewed from his point of view. For example, in 7:19 it says, “And the waters prevailed so mightily **on the land** that all the high **hills** under the whole **heaven (sky)*** were covered.” However, this should be understood as “under the whole **sky** (that Noah could see)”, so it would mean all the hills within his view. (See the discussion of **הַשָּׁמַיִם** /šā'mayim/ above.) A similar case occurs in Genesis 8:5 in relation to the **hills** becoming visible and in 8:9 in relation to the waters still covering the whole **land**. I mark these three cases with asterisks and explanatory links.

3. Interpretation Bias

Even when no *translation bias* is involved, certain words can still be affected by the *interpretation bias* of the reader. For example, the word **תְּרָבָה** /hārā' bā/ “dry land, dry ground” in Genesis 7:22 which was discussed above will naturally be interpreted according to the reader’s understanding of Genesis 6-9 as a whole, as to whether it applies to all the dry land on the planet or only the dry land in a local area. As I have made clear, I believe the latter should apply.⁴

And of course, even the English word “land” must be interpreted according to this same criterion, whichever Hebrew word it is translating, though it is much less prone to be interpreted as planetwide than “earth”. Again my point is simply that there is absolutely nothing in Genesis 6-9 that requires a planetwide understanding of the Flood.

⁴ It is interesting that this is not the word used in Genesis 1:9-10 to refer to the dry land which was separated from the sea, which certainly in that context applies to the whole planet. That word is **יַבְשָׁה** /yabbā' šā/, also translated “dry land, dry ground”, and is almost as rare as **תְּרָבָה**. But again, that word also must be interpreted carefully according to its context, since in Joshua 3:17 and 4:18 it applies only to the dry ground the Israelites needed to cross the Jordan.

4. Modified ESV Text of Genesis 6-9

In choosing the English Standard Version (ESV) for this exercise I am not being particularly critical of the ESV: on the contrary, it's the translation I personally prefer for my Bible reading and study. But all the Bible translations that I know of have this same bias to a greater or lesser degree.

Modified ESV text of Genesis 6-9 , with key words in color, and all modified words in bold	Hebrew text
Increasing Corruption on Earth	
6	
<p>¹ When man began to multiply on the face of the land and daughters were born to them, ² the sons of God saw that the daughters of man were attractive. And they took as their wives any they chose. ³ Then the LORD said, "My Spirit shall not abide in⁵ man forever, for he is flesh: his days shall be 120 years." ⁴ The Nephilim⁶ were in the land in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God came in to the daughters of man and they bore children to them. These were the mighty men who were of old, the men of renown.</p>	<p>¹ וַיְהִי כִּי־הִחַל הָאָדָם לָרֹב עַל־פְּנֵי הָאֲדָמָה וּבָנוּת יִלְדוּ לָהֶם: ² וַיִּרְאוּ בְנֵי־הָאֱלֹהִים אֶת־בָּנוֹת הָאָדָם כִּי טֹבֹת הֵנָּה וַיִּקְחוּ לָהֶם נָשִׁים מְכֹל אֲשֶׁר בָּחָרוּ: ³ וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה לֹא־יָדוֹן רוּחִי בָאָדָם לְעֹלָם בְּשָׂגֵם הוּא בָשָׂר וְהָיוּ יָמָיו מֵאָה וְעֶשְׂרִים שָׁנָה: ⁴ הַנְּפִלִים הָיוּ בְּאֶרֶץ בְּיָמֵי הָהֵם וְגַם אֲחֵרֵי־כֵן אֲשֶׁר יָבֹאוּ בְנֵי הָאֱלֹהִים אֶל־בָּנוֹת הָאָדָם וַיִּלְדוּ לָהֶם הַגִּבּוֹרִים אֲשֶׁר מְעוֹלָם אָנָּשִׁי הַשָּׁמַיִם: פ</p>
<p>⁵ The LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the land, and that every intention of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. ⁶ And the LORD regretted that he had made man in the land, and it grieved him to his heart. ⁷ So the LORD said, "I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the land, man and animals and creeping things and birds of the sky, for I am sorry that I have made them." ⁸ But Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD.</p>	<p>⁵ וַיִּרְא יְהוָה כִּי רַבָּה רָעַת הָאָדָם בְּאֶרֶץ וְכָל־יִצְרָר מִחַשְׁבֹּת לִבּוֹ רָק רָע כָּל־הַיּוֹם: ⁶ וַיִּנְחַם יְהוָה כִּי־עָשָׂה אֶת־הָאָדָם בְּאֶרֶץ וַיִּתְעַצֵּב אֵל־לִבּוֹ: ⁷ וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֲמַחֶה אֶת־הָאָדָם אֲשֶׁר־בְּרָאתִי מֵעַל־פְּנֵי הָאֲדָמָה מֵאָדָם עַד־בְּהֵמָה עַד־רֶמֶשׂ וְעַד־עוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם כִּי נִחַמְתִּי כִּי עָשִׂיתֶם: ⁸ וְנֹחַ מָצָא חֵן בְּעֵינֵי יְהוָה: פ</p>
Noah and the Flood	
<p>⁹ These are the generations of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his generation. Noah walked with God. ¹⁰ And Noah had three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth.</p>	<p>⁹ אֵלֶּה תּוֹלְדֹת נֹחַ נֹחַ אִישׁ צַדִּיק תָּמִים הָיָה בְּדֹרֹתָיו אֶת־הָאֱלֹהִים הִתְהַלְקֶ־נֹחַ: ¹⁰ וַיִּוֹלַד נֹחַ שְׁלֹשָׁה בָנִים אֶת־שֵׁם אֶת־חָם וְאֶת־יָפֶת:</p>
<p>¹¹ Now the land was corrupt in God's sight, and the land was filled with violence. ¹² And God saw the land, and behold, it was corrupt, for all flesh had corrupted their way on the land. ¹³ And God said to Noah, "I have determined to make an end of all flesh,⁷ for the land is filled with violence</p>	<p>¹¹ וַתִּשְׁחַת הָאֶרֶץ לִפְנֵי הָאֱלֹהִים וַתִּמְלֵא הָאֶרֶץ חָמָס: ¹² וַיִּרְא אֱלֹהִים אֶת־הָאֶרֶץ וְהִנֵּה נִשְׁחָתָה כִּי־הִשְׁחִית כָּל־בָּשָׂר אֶת־דַּרְכּוֹ עַל־הָאֶרֶץ: ¹³ וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים לְנֹחַ קַח כָּל־בָּשָׂר בָּא לִפְנֵי כִּי־מָלְאָה הָאֶרֶץ חָמָס מִפְּנֵיהֶם וְהִנְנִי</p>

⁵ **Genesis 6:3** Or *My Spirit shall not contend with*

⁶ **Genesis 6:4** Or *giants*

⁷ **Genesis 6:13** Hebrew *The end of all flesh has come before me*

through them. Behold, I will destroy them with **the land**.¹⁴ Make yourself an ark of gopher wood.⁸ Make rooms in the ark, and cover it inside and out with pitch.¹⁵ This is how you are to make it: the length of the ark 300 cubits,⁹ its breadth 50 cubits, and its height 30 cubits.¹⁶ Make a roof¹⁰ for the ark, and finish it to a cubit above, and set the door of the ark in its side. Make it with lower, second, and third decks.¹⁷ For behold, I will bring a flood of waters **upon the land** to destroy all flesh in which is the breath of life under **the sky**. Everything that is **in the land** shall die.¹⁸ But I will establish my covenant with you, and you shall come into the ark, you, your sons, your wife, and your sons' wives with you.¹⁹ And of every living thing of all flesh, you shall bring two of every sort into the ark to keep them alive with you. They shall be male and female.²⁰ Of the birds according to their kinds, and of the animals according to their kinds, of every creeping thing of **the ground**, according to its kind, two of every sort shall come in to you to keep them alive.²¹ Also take with you every sort of food that is eaten, and store it up. It shall serve as food for you and for them.”²² Noah did this; he did all that God commanded him.

7

¹ Then the LORD said to Noah, “Go into the ark, you and all your household, for I have seen that you are righteous before me in this generation.² Take with you seven pairs of all clean animals,¹¹ the male and his mate, and a pair of the animals that are not clean, the male and his mate,³ and seven pairs¹² of the birds of **the sky** also, male and female, to keep their offspring alive on the face of all **the land**.⁴ For in seven days I will send rain **on the land** forty days and forty nights, and every living thing¹³ that I have made I will blot out from the face of **the ground**.”⁵ And Noah did all that the LORD had commanded him.

⁶ Noah was six hundred years old when the flood of waters came **upon the land**.⁷ And Noah and his sons and his wife and his sons' wives with him went into the ark to escape the waters of the flood.⁸ Of clean animals, and of animals that are not clean, and of birds, and of everything that creeps **on the**

מִשְׁחִיתֶם אֶת־הָאָרֶץ: ¹⁴ עֲשֵׂה לָךְ תֵּבַת עֲצֵי־גֹפֶר קַנִּים תַּעֲשֶׂה אֶת־הַתֵּבָה וְכִפַּרְתָּ אֹתָהּ מִבֵּית וּמִחוּץ בַּכֹּפֶר: ¹⁵ וְזֹה אֲשֶׁר תַּעֲשֶׂה אֹתָהּ שְׁלֹשׁ מְאוֹת אַמָּה אָרְךָ הַתֵּבָה חֲמִשִּׁים אַמָּה רְחֹבָהּ וּשְׁלֹשִׁים אַמָּה קוֹמָתָהּ: ¹⁶ צִהַרְוּ תַעֲשֶׂה לַתֵּבָה וְאֶל־אַמָּה תְּכַלְכְּנָהּ מִלְּמַעַלָּה וּפְתַח הַתֵּבָה בְּצִדָּהּ תִּשְׂשֶׂה תַחְתֵּימָם שָׁנַיִם וּשְׁלֹשִׁים תַּעֲשֶׂה: ¹⁷ וְאֲנִי הִנְנִי מֵבִיא אֶת־הַמַּבּוּל מֵיִם עַל־הָאָרֶץ לְשַׁחַת כָּל־בְּשָׂר אֲשֶׁר־בּוֹ רֵיחַ חַיִּים מִתַּחַת הַשָּׁמַיִם כֹּל אֲשֶׁר־בָּאָרֶץ יָגוּעַ: ¹⁸ וְהִקְמַתִּי אֶת־בְּרִיתִי אִתְּךָ וּבֵאתָ אֵלַי הַתֵּבָה אֹתָהּ וּבְנֵיךָ וְאִשְׁתְּךָ וּנְשֵׁי־בְנֵיךָ אִתְּךָ: ¹⁹ וּמִכָּל־הַחַיִּים מִכָּל־בְּשָׂר שְׁנַיִם מִכֹּל תָּבִיא אֵלַי הַתֵּבָה לְהַחֲיִת אִתְּךָ זָכָר וּנְקֵבָה יְהִיּוּ: ²⁰ מִהָעוֹף לְמִינֵהוּ וּמִן־הַבְּהֵמָה לְמִינָהּ מִכָּל רֶמֶשׂ הָאֲדָמָה לְמִינָהּ שְׁנַיִם מִכָּל יָבֹאוּ אֵלֶיךָ לְהַחֲיִיתָ: ²¹ וְאֹתָהּ קָח־לָךְ מִכָּל־מֵאֲכָל אֲשֶׁר יֹאכֵל וְאֶסְפַּת אֵלֶיךָ וְהָיָה לָּךְ וּלְהֵם לְאֹכְלָהּ: ²² וַיַּעַשׂ גַּח כֹּכֵל אֲשֶׁר צִוָּה אֹתוֹ אֱלֹהִים כִּן עָשָׂה: ס

7

¹ וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה לְנוֹחַ בֹּא־אִתְּךָ וְכָל־בֵּיתְךָ אֶל־הַתֵּבָה כִּי־אֹתְךָ רָאִיתִי צַדִּיק לְפָנַי בְּדוֹר הַזֶּה: ² מִכָּל הַבְּהֵמָה הַטְּהוֹרָה תִּקַּח־לָּךְ שְׁבָעָה שְׁבָעָה אִישׁ וְאִשְׁתּוֹ וּמִן־הַבְּהֵמָה אֲשֶׁר לֹא טְהוֹרָה הִוא שְׁנַיִם אִישׁ וְאִשְׁתּוֹ: ³ גַּם מִעוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם שְׁבָעָה שְׁבָעָה זָכָר וּנְקֵבָה לְחַיִּוֹת זָרַע עַל־פְּנֵי כָל־הָאָרֶץ: ⁴ כִּי לַיָּמִים עוֹד שְׁבָעָה אָנֹכִי מִמְטִיר עַל־הָאָרֶץ אַרְבָּעִים יוֹם וְאַרְבָּעִים לַיְלָה וּמַחֲיִתִּי אֶת־כָּל־הַיְקוּבִם אֲשֶׁר עָשִׂיתִי מֵעַל פְּנֵי הָאֲדָמָה: ⁵ וַיַּעַשׂ גַּח כֹּכֵל אֲשֶׁר־צִוָּהוּ יְהוָה:

⁶ וַנֹּחַ בְּוָשֶׁשׁ מְאוֹת שָׁנָה וְהַמַּבּוּל הָיָה מֵיִם עַל־הָאָרֶץ: ⁷ וַיָּבֹא נֹחַ וּבְנָיו וְאִשְׁתּוֹ וּנְשֵׁי־בְנָיו אִתּוֹ אֶל־הַתֵּבָה מִפְּנֵי מִי הַמַּבּוּל: ⁸ מִן־הַבְּהֵמָה הַטְּהוֹרָה וּמִן־הַבְּהֵמָה אֲשֶׁר אֵינְנָה טְהוֹרָה וּמִן־הָעוֹף וְכָל אֲשֶׁר־רֶמֶשׂ עַל־הָאֲדָמָה:

⁸ **Genesis 6:14** An unknown kind of tree; transliterated from Hebrew
⁹ **Genesis 6:15** A cubit was about 18 inches or 45 centimeters
¹⁰ **Genesis 6:16** Or skylight
¹¹ **Genesis 7:2** Or seven of each kind of clean animal
¹² **Genesis 7:3** Or seven of each kind
¹³ **Genesis 7:4** Hebrew all existence; also verse 23

<p>ground, ⁹ two and two, male and female, went into the ark with Noah, as God had commanded Noah. ¹⁰ And after seven days the waters of the flood came upon the land.</p>	<p>⁹ שְׁנַיִם וְשְׁנַיִם בָּאוּ אֶל־נֹחַ אֶל־הַתֵּבָה זָכָר וּנְקֵבָה כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה אֱלֹהִים אֶת־נֹחַ: ¹⁰ וַיְהִי לְשִׁבְעַת הַיָּמִים וַיְמִי הַמַּבּוּל הָיָה עַל־הָאָרֶץ:</p>
<p>¹¹ In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second month, on the seventeenth day of the month, on that day all the fountains of the great deep burst forth, and the windows of the sky were opened. ¹² And rain fell upon the land forty days and forty nights. ¹³ On the very same day Noah and his sons, Shem and Ham and Japheth, and Noah's wife and the three wives of his sons with them entered the ark, ¹⁴ they and every beast, according to its kind, and all the livestock according to their kinds, and every creeping thing that creeps on the land, according to its kind, and every bird, according to its kind, every winged creature. ¹⁵ They went into the ark with Noah, two and two of all flesh in which there was the breath of life. ¹⁶ And those that entered, male and female of all flesh, went in as God had commanded him. And the LORD shut him in.</p>	<p>¹¹ בַּשָּׁנָה שִׁש־מֵאוֹת שָׁנָה לְחַיֵּי־נֹחַ בַּחֹדֶשׁ הַשֵּׁנִי בְשִׁבְעָה־עָשָׂר יוֹם לַחֹדֶשׁ בַּיּוֹם הַזֶּה נִבְקְעוּ כָּל־מַעְיֵנֹת תְּהוֹם רַבָּה וְאַרְבַּת הַשָּׁמַיִם נִפְתְּחוּ: ¹² וַיְהִי הַגֶּשֶׁם עַל־הָאָרֶץ אַרְבָּעִים יוֹם וְאַרְבָּעִים לַיְלָה: ¹³ בְּעֶצְם הַיּוֹם הַזֶּה בָּא נֹחַ וְשֵׁם־וְחָם וְיִפְתָּח בְּנֵי־נֹחַ וְאִשְׁתּוֹ נֹחַ וּשְׁלֹשַׁת נְשֵׂי־בָנָיו אִתָּם אֶל־הַתֵּבָה: ¹⁴ הָמָּה וְכָל־הַחַיָּה לְמִינָהּ וְכָל־הַבְּהֵמָה לְמִינָהּ וְכָל־הַרְמֹשׁ עַל־הָאָרֶץ לְמִינֵהוּ וְכָל־הָעוֹף לְמִינֵהוּ כֹל צִפּוֹר כָּל־פְּנֹף: ¹⁵ וַיָּבֹאוּ אֵלֶיךָ אֶל־הַתֵּבָה שְׁנַיִם שְׁנַיִם מִכָּל־הַבְּשָׂר אֲשֶׁר־בּוֹ רוּחַ חַיִּים: ¹⁶ וְהַבָּאִים זָכָר וּנְקֵבָה מִכָּל־בְּשָׂר בָּאוּ כַּאֲשֶׁר צִוָּה אֱלֹהִים וַיִּסְגֹר יְהוָה בְּעַדוֹ:</p>
<p>¹⁷ The flood continued forty days on the land. The waters increased and bore up the ark, and it rose high above the land. ¹⁸ The waters prevailed and increased greatly on the land, and the ark floated on the face of the waters. ¹⁹ And the waters prevailed so mightily on the land that all the high hills under the whole sky* were covered. ²⁰ The waters prevailed above the hills, covering them fifteen cubits¹⁴ deep. ²¹ And all flesh died that moved on the land, birds, livestock, beasts, all swarming creatures that swarm on the land, and all mankind. ²² Everything on the dry land in whose nostrils was the breath of life died. ²³ He blotted out every living thing that was on the face of the ground, man and animals and creeping things and birds of the sky. They were blotted out from the land. Only Noah was left, and those who were with him in the ark. ²⁴ And the waters prevailed on the land 150 days.</p>	<p>¹⁷ וַיְהִי הַמַּבּוּל אַרְבָּעִים יוֹם עַל־הָאָרֶץ וַיִּרְבּוּ הַמַּיִם וַיִּשְׂאוּ אֶת־הַתֵּבָה וַתָּרֶם מֵעַל הָאָרֶץ: ¹⁸ וַיִּגְבְּרוּ הַמַּיִם וַיִּרְבּוּ מְאֹד עַל־הָאָרֶץ וַתִּלָּךְ הַתֵּבָה עַל־פְּנֵי הַמַּיִם: ¹⁹ וְהַמַּיִם גָּבְרוּ מְאֹד מְאֹד עַל־הָאָרֶץ וַיִּכְסּוּ כָּל־הַרְיָם הַגְּבוּהִים אֲשֶׁר־תַּחַת כָּל־הַשָּׁמַיִם: ²⁰ חָמֵשׁ עָשָׂרָה אַמָּה מִלְּמַעְלָה גָּבְרוּ הַמַּיִם וַיִּכְסּוּ הַרְיָם: ²¹ וַיִּגְאוּ כָּל־בְּשָׂרוֹ הַרְמֹשׁ עַל־הָאָרֶץ בְּעוֹף וּבְבִהֵמָה וּבְחַיָּה וּבְכָל־הַשָּׂרֵץ הַשָּׂרֵץ וְכָל־הָאָדָם: ²² כֹּל אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁמַת־רוּחַ חַיִּים בְּאַפְיוֹ מִכָּל אֲשֶׁר בַּחַרְבָּה מֵתוּ: ²³ וַיִּמַּח אֶת־כָּל־הַיְקוּם אֲשֶׁרוֹ עַל־פְּנֵי הָאֲדָמָה מֵאָדָם עַד־בְּהֵמָה עַד־רְמֹשׁ וְעַד־עוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם וַיִּמָּחוּ מִן־הָאָרֶץ וַיִּשְׂאֶר אֶד־נֹחַ וְאִשְׁרֵי אִתּוֹ בַּתֵּבָה: ²⁴ וַיִּגְבְּרוּ הַמַּיִם עַל־הָאָרֶץ חֲמֵשִׁים וּמֵאֹת יוֹם:</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">The Flood Subsides</p>	
<p>8</p>	
<p>¹ But God remembered Noah and all the beasts and all the livestock that were with him in the ark. And God made a wind blow over the land, and the waters subsided. ² The fountains of the deep and the windows of the sky were closed, the rain from the sky was restrained, ³ and the waters receded from the land continually. At the end of 150 days the waters had abated, ⁴ and in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, the ark came</p>	<p>¹ וַיִּזְכֹּר אֱלֹהִים אֶת־נֹחַ וְאֵת כָּל־הַחַיָּה וְאֵת כָּל־הַבְּהֵמָה אֲשֶׁר אִתּוֹ בַּתֵּבָה וַיַּעֲבֵר אֱלֹהִים רוּחַ עַל־הָאָרֶץ וַיִּשְׁכּוּ הַמַּיִם: ² וַיִּסְכְּרוּ מַעְיֵנֹת תְּהוֹם וְאַרְבַּת הַשָּׁמַיִם וַיִּכְלָא הַגֶּשֶׁם מִן־הַשָּׁמַיִם: ³ וַיִּשְׁכּוּ הַמַּיִם מֵעַל הָאָרֶץ הַלֹּוֹךְ וְשׁוֹב וַיִּחְסְרוּ הַמַּיִם מִקְצָה חֲמֵשִׁים וּמֵאֹת יוֹם: ⁴ וַתָּנַח הַתֵּבָה בַּחֹדֶשׁ הַשְּׁבִיעִי</p>

¹⁴ Genesis 7:20 A cubit was about 18 inches or 45 centimeters

to rest on the **hills of** Ararat. ⁵And the waters continued to abate until the tenth month; in the tenth month, on the first day of the month, the tops of the **hills** were seen.**

⁶At the end of forty days Noah opened the window of the ark that he had made ⁷and sent forth a raven. It went to and fro until the waters were dried up from **the land**. ⁸Then he sent forth a dove from him, to see if the waters had subsided from the face of **the ground**. ⁹But the dove found no place to set her foot, and she returned to him to the ark, for the waters were still on the face of the whole **land*****. So he put out his hand and took her and brought her into the ark with him. ¹⁰He waited another seven days, and again he sent forth the dove out of the ark. ¹¹And the dove came back to him in the evening, and behold, in her mouth was a freshly plucked olive leaf. So Noah knew that the waters had subsided from **the land**. ¹²Then he waited another seven days and sent forth the dove, and she did not return to him anymore.

¹³In the six hundred and first year, in the first month, the first day of the month, the waters were dried from off **the land**. And Noah removed the covering of the ark and looked, and behold, the face of **the ground** was dry. ¹⁴In the second month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, **the land** had dried out. ¹⁵Then God said to Noah, ¹⁶“Go out from the ark, you and your wife, and your sons and your sons’ wives with you. ¹⁷Bring out with you every living thing that is with you of all flesh—birds and animals and every creeping thing that creeps **on the land**—that they may swarm **in the land**, and be fruitful and multiply **on the land**.” ¹⁸So Noah went out, and his sons and his wife and his sons’ wives with him. ¹⁹Every beast, every creeping thing, and every bird, everything that moves **on the land**, went out by families from the ark.

God’s Covenant with Noah

²⁰Then Noah built an altar to the LORD and took some of every clean animal and some of every clean bird and offered burnt offerings on the altar. ²¹And when the LORD smelled the pleasing aroma, the LORD said in his heart, “I will never again curse¹⁵ **the ground** because of man, for the intention of man’s heart is evil from his youth. Neither will I ever again strike down every living creature as I have done. ²²While **the land** remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease.”

בשבעה-עשר יום לחדש על **הרי אררט**: ⁵ והמים היו הלוך וחסור עד החדש העשירי בעשירי באחד לחדש נראו ראשי **ההרים**:

⁶ ויהי מגץ ארבעים יום ויפתח נח את-חלון התבה אשר עשה: ⁷ וישלח את-הערב ויצא ושוב עד-יבשת המים מעל **הארץ**: ⁸ וישלח את-היונה מאתו לראות הקלו המים מעל פני **האדמה**: ⁹ ולא-מצאה היונה מנוח לכף-רגלה ותשב אליו אל-התבה כים-מים על-פני כל-**הארץ** וישלח ידו ויקחה ויבא אתה אליו אל-התבה: ¹⁰ ויחל עוד שבעת ימים אחרים ויסף שלח את-היונה מן-התבה: ¹¹ ותבא אליו היונה לעת ערב והנה עליה זית טרף בפיה וידע נח כים-קלו המים מעל **הארץ**: ¹² ויחל עוד שבעת ימים אחרים וישלח את-היונה ולא-יספה שוב-אליו עוד:

¹³ ויהי באחת ושש-מאות שנה בראשון באחד לחדש חרבו המים מעל **הארץ** ויסר נח את-מכסה התבה וירא והנה חרבו פני **האדמה**: ¹⁴ ובחדש השני בשבעה ועשרים יום לחדש יבשה **הארץ**: ¹⁵ וידבר אלהים אל-נח לאמר: ¹⁶ צא מן-התבה אתה ואשתך ובניך ונשי-בניך אתך: ¹⁷ כל-החיה אשר-אתך מכל-בשר בעוף ובבהמה ובכל-הרמש הרמש על-**הארץ** 'הוצא' 'היצא' אתך ושרצו **בארץ** ופרו ורבו על-**הארץ**: ¹⁸ ויצא-נח ובניו ואשתו ונשי-בניו אתו: ¹⁹ כל-החיה כל-הרמש וכל-העוף כל רומש על-**הארץ** למשפחתיהם יצאו מן-התבה:

²⁰ ויבן נח מזבח ליהוה ויקח מכלו הבהמה הטהורה ומכל העוף הטהור ויעל עלת במזבח: ²¹ ויגח יהוה את-חריח הניחח ויאמר יהוה אל-לבו לא-אסוף לקלל עוד את-**האדמה** בעבור האדם כי יצר לב האדם רע מנערו ולא-אסוף עוד להפוך את-כל-חי באשר עשיתי: ²² עד כל-ימי **הארץ** ורע וקציר וקר וחם וגזי וחרף ויום ולילה לא ישבתו:

¹⁵ Genesis 8:21 Or dishonor

<p>9</p>	
<p>¹And God blessed Noah and his sons and said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the land. ²The fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the land and upon every bird of the sky, upon everything that creeps on the ground and all the fish of the sea. Into your hand they are delivered. ³Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you. And as I gave you the green plants, I give you everything. ⁴But you shall not eat flesh with its life, that is, its blood. ⁵And for your lifeblood I will require a reckoning: from every beast I will require it and from man. From his fellow man I will require a reckoning for the life of man.</p>	<p>¹ וַיְבָרֶךְ אֱלֹהִים אֶת-נֹחַ וְאֶת-בָּנָיו וַיֹּאמֶר לָהֶם פְּרוּ וּרְבוּ וּמְלֵאוּ אֶת-הָאָרֶץ: ² וּמִוְרָאֵיכֶם וּחִתְּכֶם יִהְיֶה עַל כָּל-חַיַּת הָאָרֶץ וְעַל כָּל-עוֹף הַשָּׁמַיִם כָּכֹל אֲשֶׁר תִּרְמַשׁ הָאָדָמָה וּבְכָל-דְּגַי הַיָּם בְּיַדְכֶם נִתְּנוּ: ³ כָּל-רֶמֶשׂ אֲשֶׁר הוּא-חַי לָכֶם יִהְיֶה לְאֹכְלָהּ כַּיְיָרֵק וְעֹשֶׂב נִתְּנִי לָכֶם אֶת-כָּל: ⁴ אֲדָ-בֶשֶׂר בְּנִפְשׁוֹ דָּמוֹ לֹא תֹאכְלוּ: ⁵ וְאֹד אֶת-דַּמְּכֶם לְנַפְשֵׁיכֶם אֶדְרֹשׁ מִיַּד כָּל-חַיָּה אֲדַרְשְׁנוּ וּמִיַּד הָאָדָם מִיַּד אִישׁ אָחִיו אֶדְרֹשׁ אֶת-נַפְשׁ הָאָדָם:</p>
<p>⁶“Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed, for God made man in his own image.</p>	<p>⁶ שֹׁפֵךְ דָּם הָאָדָם בְּאָדָם דָּמוֹ יִשְׁפֹּךְ כִּי בַצֶּלֶם אֱלֹהִים עָשָׂה אֶת-הָאָדָם:</p>
<p>⁷And you, ¹⁶be fruitful and multiply, increase greatly in the land and multiply in it.”</p>	<p>⁷ וְאַתֶּם פְּרוּ וּרְבוּ שְׂרָצוּ בָאָרֶץ וּרְבוּ-בָהּ: ס</p>
<p>⁸Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him, ⁹“Behold, I establish my covenant with you and your offspring after you, ¹⁰and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the livestock, and every beast of the land with you, as many as came out of the ark; it is for every beast of the land. ¹¹I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of the flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the land.” ¹²And God said, “This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: ¹³I have set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the land. ¹⁴When I bring clouds over the land and the bow is seen in the clouds, ¹⁵I will remember my covenant that is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh. And the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. ¹⁶When the bow is in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the land.” ¹⁷God said to Noah, “This is the sign of the covenant that I have established between me and all flesh that is on the land.”</p>	<p>⁸ וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים אֶל-נֹחַ וְאֶל-בָּנָיו אִתּוֹ לֵאמֹר: ⁹ וְאַנִּי הִנְנִי מִקְיָם אֶת-בְּרִיתִי אִתְּכֶם וְאֶת-זֶרְעֵכֶם אַחֲרֵיכֶם: ¹⁰ וְאֵת כָּל-נֶפֶשׁ הַחַיָּה אֲשֶׁר אִתְּכֶם בְּעוֹף בְּבִהֵמָה וּבְכָל-חַיַּת הָאָרֶץ אִתְּכֶם מִכָּל יִצְאֵי הַתְּבֹהַה לְכֹל חַיַּת הָאָרֶץ: ¹¹ וְהִקְמַתִּי אֶת-בְּרִיתִי אִתְּכֶם וְלֹא-יִכָּרֵת כָּל-בֶּשֶׂר עוֹד מִמֵּי הַמַּבּוּל וְלֹא-יִהְיֶה עוֹד מַבּוּל לְשַׁחַת הָאָרֶץ: ¹² וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים זֹאת אוֹת-הַבְּרִית אֲשֶׁר-אַנִּי נֹתֵן בֵּינִי וּבֵינֵיכֶם וּבֵין כָּל-נֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה אֲשֶׁר אִתְּכֶם לְדֹרֹת עוֹלָם: ¹³ אֶת-קַשְׁתִּי נִתְּנִי בְּעַנְנוֹ וְהָיְתָה לְאוֹת בְּרִית בֵּינִי וּבֵין הָאָרֶץ: ¹⁴ וְהָיָה בְּעַנְנֵי עַנְנוֹ-עַל-הָאָרֶץ וּנִרְאָתָה הַקַּשְׁתָּה בְּעַנְנוֹ: ¹⁵ וְזָכַרְתִּי אֶת-בְּרִיתִי אֲשֶׁר בֵּינִי וּבֵינֵיכֶם וּבֵין כָּל-נֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה בְּכָל-בֶּשֶׂר וְלֹא-יִהְיֶה עוֹד הַמַּיִם לְמַבּוּל לְשַׁחַת כָּל-בֶּשֶׂר: ¹⁶ וְהָיְתָה הַקַּשְׁתָּה בְּעַנְנוֹ וּרְאִיתֶיהָ לְזִכָּר בְּרִית עוֹלָם בֵּין אֱלֹהִים וּבֵין כָּל-נֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה בְּכָל-בֶּשֶׂר אֲשֶׁר עַל-הָאָרֶץ: ¹⁷ וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים אֶל-נֹחַ זֹאת אוֹת-הַבְּרִית אֲשֶׁר הִקְמַתִּי בֵּינִי וּבֵין כָּל-בֶּשֶׂר אֲשֶׁר עַל-הָאָרֶץ: פ</p>
<p>Noah's Descendants</p>	
<p>¹⁸The sons of Noah who went forth from the ark were Shem, Ham, and Japheth. (Ham was the father of Canaan.) ¹⁹These three were the sons of</p>	<p>¹⁸ וַיְהִיו בְּנֵי-נֹחַ הַיִּצְאָאִים מִן-הַתְּבֹהַה שֵׁם וְחָם וְיָפֶת וְחָם הוּא אָבִי כְנַעַן:</p>

¹⁶ Genesis 9:7 In Hebrew you is plural

Noah, and from these the people of the whole land were dispersed. ¹⁷	שְׁלֹשָׁה אֲלֶה בְּנֵי-נֹחַ וּמֵאַלֶּה נִפְצָה כָּל-הָאָרֶץ: 19
²⁰ Noah began to be a man of the soil , and he planted a vineyard. ¹⁸ ²¹ He drank of the wine and became drunk and lay uncovered in his tent. ²² And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father and told his two brothers outside. ²³ Then Shem and Japheth took a garment, laid it on both their shoulders, and walked backward and covered the nakedness of their father. Their faces were turned backward, and they did not see their father's nakedness. ²⁴ When Noah awoke from his wine and knew what his youngest son had done to him, ²⁵ he said,	וַיַּחַל נֹחַ אִישׁ הָאֲדָמָה וַיִּטֵּעַ כֶּרֶם: 20 וַיִּשְׁתֶּ מִן-הַיַּיִן וַיִּשְׁכָּר וַיִּתְגַּל בְּתוֹךְ אֹהֶלֶה: 21 וַיֵּרָא חָם אָבִי כְנָעַן אֶת עֶרְוַת אָבִיו וַיֵּגֵד לְשְׁנֵי-אֶחָיו בַּחוּץ: 22 וַיִּקְחָ שֵׁם וַיִּפְתּוּ אֶת-הַשָּׂמַלְיָה וַיִּשְׂימוּ עַל-שִׁכְמָם שְׁנֵיהֶם וַיִּלְכוּ אַחֲרָיִת וַיִּכְסּוּ אֶת עֶרְוַת אָבִיהֶם וּפְנֵיהֶם אַחֲרָיִת וְעֶרְוַת אָבִיהֶם לֹא רָאוּ: 23 וַיִּיָּקֶץ נֹחַ מִיַּיְנו וַיֵּדַע אֵת אֲשֶׁר-עָשָׂה-לּוֹ בְּנוֹ הַקָּטָן: 24
“Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be to his brothers.”	וַיֹּאמֶר אַרְוֹר כְּנָעַן עֶבֶד עֲבָדִים יִהְיֶה לְאֶחָיו: 25
²⁶ He also said, “Blessed be the LORD, the God of Shem; and let Canaan be his servant. ²⁷ May God enlarge Japheth, ¹⁹ and let him dwell in the tents of Shem, and let Canaan be his servant.”	וַיֹּאמֶר בְּרוּךְ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵי יָשָׁם וַיְהִי כְנָעַן עֶבֶד לָמוֹ: 26 וַיִּשְׁכַּן בְּאֶהֱלֵי-יָשָׁם וַיְהִי כְנָעַן עֶבֶד לָמוֹ: 27 יִפְתָּ אֱלֹהִים לְיִפְתָּ וַיִּשְׁכַּן בְּאֶהֱלֵי-יָשָׁם וַיְהִי כְנָעַן עֶבֶד לָמוֹ: 27
²⁸ After the flood Noah lived 350 years. ²⁹ All the days of Noah were 950 years, and he died.	וַיַּחֲיֶינָה אַחֲרַיִת הַמַּבּוּל שְׁלֹשׁ מֵאוֹת שָׁנָה וַחֲמֵשִׁים שָׁנָה: 28 וַיְהִי כָּל-יְמֵי-נֹחַ תְּשַׁע מֵאוֹת שָׁנָה וַחֲמֵשִׁים שָׁנָה וַיָּמָת: 29 פ

- * This is from Noah's perspective, the sky that he could see, and the nearby hills that he could have seen if they had not been covered with water.
- ** Again this is from Noah's perspective, the hills that became visible from where the ark was resting.
- *** Obviously the waters were *not* still on the face of the whole land, since the ark had settled to earth, and the tops of the hills were visible. But they were apparently too distant for the dove to reach, so from the dove's perspective, it *was* true. But here it is clear that “land” or “earth” refers to something far smaller than the whole planet.

5. Different Biases in English and Spanish

It is interesting that in Spanish *translation bias* 2.1 discussed on page 2 does not occur, since אָרֶץ /ʔeretʃ/ is only translated in one way in Genesis 6-9 in both the Reina Valera 1960, the most commonly used version in evangelical churches, and in the Nueva Versión Internacional, as “*tierra*”, and the preposition אֶ /bə/ “in, on, at” is only translated in one way, as “*en*”, so both “*in the land*” and “*on the earth*” come out as “*en la tierra*”, with precisely the same ambiguities as Hebrew has.

¹⁷ Genesis 9:19 Or *from these the whole earth was populated*
¹⁸ Genesis 9:20 Or *Noah, a man of the soil, was the first to plant a vineyard*
¹⁹ Genesis 9:27 *Japheth* sounds like the Hebrew for *enlarge*

Confusingly, אֲדָמָה /ʔădā'mâ/ is also always translated in Genesis 6-9 as “tierra”, making potential ambiguities slightly greater than in Hebrew. And even הָרָבָה /hārā'ḇâ/ is translated simply as “tierra” in the Reina Valera 1960, though the Nueva Versión Internacional translates it as “tierra firme”, which means “dry land”.

In addition, the preposition עַל /ʕal/ “on, on top of, upon, over”, is never translated the same as בְּ /bə/ “in, on, at” in Spanish, but always as “sobre”, so there is no potential confusion here as there is in English.

However, *translation bias 2.2* [discussed on page 3](#) still applies in Spanish, at least in certain versions like the NVI, though the RV60 uses “montes”, which is just as ambiguous as the Hebrew הַרִיִם /hā'rîm/, or even nowadays tends to just mean “hills”.

Translation bias 2.3 [discussed on page 3](#) is much less of an issue, since in Spanish the word for the sky that we can see or heaven where God lives is the same, “el cielo”, just like הַשָּׁמַיִם /haššā'mayim/. However in the various Spanish Bibles it is translated with both the singular and the plural in these chapters, even though in Spanish it would not be plural; the plural might tend to suggest heaven where God lives, introducing a slight translation bias.

Thus the *translation bias* in Spanish [in these chapters](#) ends up being far less than in English. Instead, in Spanish, Hebrew, and other languages in which these words have similar ambiguities it becomes far more a question of *interpretation bias*.²⁰

²⁰ This should not be interpreted as implying that English generally has a greater breadth of vocabulary than Spanish, or that Spanish generally matches the semantic domains of Hebrew; it just happens that in the case of these words this turns out to be the case. Spanish in general has just as great a breadth of vocabulary as English, even more in some areas, less in others.