Assignment for Monday, April 17

Reading assignments:

(1) Genesis 6.1 to 9.28 (Noah) and 11.1-10 (Babel).
(2) Harris, Understanding the Bible, 7th ed., pp. 106-108 (and see also the interesting material in Box 5.1, pp. 90-91, showing the telescoping of P’s and J’s versions of the Flood story).

Writing assignment:

1. A case could be made that the Noah story contains a whole new start, a new creation, a new set of instructions for humans about their behavior. (a) Why, according to the text -- we always want to answer questions “according to the text” -- why does God seem to decide on this new start? (b) Compare the restrictions set upon humans in this story with those set in the Adam and Eve and Cain and Abel stories. Does God seem to be revising any of his ideas?

2. In the story of the Tower of Babel, why does the LORD feel he must confuse the language of humans? Is the image of the LORD’s attitude toward humans consistent here with the image given in previous readings?

3. With regard to the relations of God/gods to humans, what comparisons and/or contrasts can you draw between Atrahasis (as discussed in Batto) and the chapters of Genesis we have read?