

Walton vs. Van Seters: Comparative Studies and Literary Dependency
by Jintae Kim, Nyack College on May 12, 1998 (OTQ 16)

		<i>Walton</i>	<i>Van Seters</i>
Similarities	Method	Comparative	
	Sources	Same (Sumerian King List, Memphite Theology, Atrahasis)	
	Open to Idea	Bible draws from an ancient literary milieu of which it is a part. It displays common motifs/genres , because they have common roots .	
Differences	Sources	Limited to ANE (Mesopotamia, Egypt, Syro-Palestine, and Anatolia)	Both ANE and Ancient West (Greek and Rome): Athenian King List, Hesiod's Theogony, Ovid & Apollodorus' flood, and The anonymous genealogical lists.
	Purpose of Comparisons	Apologetical: To answer the question of alleged borrowing	Critical: To investigate the nature of ancient histories and to redefine over conception of the genre of history .
	Uniqueness of Bible	Very , esp. regard to history	Not very , esp. with regard to history
	Literary dependence	No direct dependence. Possibility of common tradition in the past	Direct dependence
	Sumerian king list	Gen 5 predates it, could not depend on it.	Overlapping of simultaneous kings to show one kingship → a national tradition
	Memphite Theology	Creation not through creation of gods.	Historicized myth is etiological, just like creation and flood story.
	Atrahasis	Purpose for flood not caprice of gods, but human sin	Creation and flood etilogized.
	Authorship & dating of Genesis	Mosaic	An exilic historian , Yahwist, writing history of Israel. Direct dependence of its material and historiography upon ANE and Ancient West.
	Israelite thinking	Generally it is historical in that they displayed genuine antiquarian interest. ANE thinking is mythological.	No sharp line between history and myth in ancient times.
	Israelite portrayal of history	It is unique . It is eschatological and points to divine plan.	Israelite portrayal of history is similar to ANE and Ancient West: the historicizing of myth to create a national tradition.
		It is monotheistic . God achieves his plan unopposed (sovereignty).	
No evidence of propaganda (Patriarchs & David) vs propagandistic nature of ANE historiography.			