

1: Ancient Israelites and the Great Flood | Resources | American Bible Society

The flood myth motif is found among many cultures as seen in the Mesopotamian flood stories, Deucalion and Pyrrha in Greek mythology, the Genesis flood narrative, Manu in Hinduism, the Gun-Yu in Chinese mythology, Bergelmir in Norse mythology, in the lore of the K'iche' and Maya peoples in Mesoamerica, the Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwa tribe of Native Americans in North America, the Muisca, and Cañari Confederation, in South America, and the Aboriginal tribes in southern Australia.

Survivor Stories Some of the incredible stories of those who survived. The flood killed one in ten people in Johnstown – but what about those who survived? Some survivors managed to make it to high ground in time, or to the upper floor of a building that withstood the flood. Others were washed away but somehow managed to survive the floodwaters, floating debris, and the horrific fire that broke out at the stone bridge. Everyone who survived had a story – and many of these stories were recorded, in memoirs, letters and media reports. Below is a sampling of a few of the most famous. He was washed away moments before the flood struck the Fenn home, where Anna and the seven children were. Fenn held the baby while the other six children clung to her, but one after the other they drowned. She described the scene as follows: It was dark and the house was tossing every way. The air was stifling, and I could not tell just the moment the rest of the children had to give up and drown. Fenn gave birth to a baby girl a few weeks later, but the child did not survive. Eventually she remarried and moved to Richmond, Virginia, and apparently had no more children. He glanced toward the house and saw his father at a second-story window, frantically gesturing for him to climb to the roof. He scrambled up, and saw what his father had seen – a two-story, rumbling mass of debris, crashing down the valley toward them. As he watched in horror, the Heiser home was crushed like an eggshell, and his parents disappeared. The barn was engulfed as well, and Heiser rode the violent flood wave downstream, avoiding freight cars, animals and other debris, until he passed a two-story brick house. He left Johnstown, went to college and eventually became a physician. As a public health officer and physician, Dr. Victor Heiser is credited with saving as many as two million lives, and developed the first effective treatment against leprosy. He wrote a best-selling memoir, and before his death in was interviewed by historian David McCullough. Their three young daughters were at home, and their 7-year-old son was visiting a neighbor. Waters heard someone down the street shout a warning, and hurried his wife and daughters up a ladder into the unfinished attic, which had no floor. The family was forced to stand on joists – the lath and plaster ceiling between each joist could not support their weight. The water rose upstairs, and the family struggled to keep their balance as the house shook. Belle, holding baby Eva, fell through the ceiling but was able to keep her head above water by standing on tiptoe, balancing on a raised corner of the room. She lifted Eva above her shoulders. Mary and Margaret soon fell into the murky water too, and struggled amid the swirling debris. Desperate, George reached into the water and grabbed two feet and thought he only had one of the girls, and called in despair to his wife. But as he pulled the feet out of the murky water, he saw that he had both girls – one foot belonged to each. After Mary and Margaret were safe, he then found the ladder, went down into the submerged room and rescued Belle and Eva. After the flood subsided, the Waters family was overjoyed to discover that their son, Merle, had also survived. The family later rebuilt their house on the same site. As a memento of the terrible flood, Belle saved the dress 5-year-old Mary had worn that fateful day. Chapman Pastor of the Franklin Street Methodist Church, Chapman and his family lived in a parsonage in the middle of town. On the day of the flood, he opened his front door to see a boxcar rolling down the street with a man on top of it. The man grabbed for a tree limb and managed to make his way to the second floor of the Chapman home. The reverend quickly realized that the dam must have failed, and turned and yelled for his family to head for the attic. As the family scrambled for the stairs, Chapman rushed to the study to turn off the gas fire. The front door burst open and floodwater rushed in, chasing Chapman as he ran for the kitchen stairs. The family made it to safety in the attic, along with the man from the boxcar and a few others who had rescued themselves in a similar fashion. The force of the water tore the porches off the house and toppled bookcases and other furniture downstairs, making noises that terrified the group. In fact, the church had borne the brunt

of the flood wave, helping protect several buildings behind it – including the parsonage and Alma Hall. Before the terrible night of May 31 was over, Alma Hall would shelter desperate flood survivors on its upper floors. The survivors huddled together in the dark without dry clothes, food or medical supplies, wondering if the building would collapse. Among them was the Rev. David Beale of the Presbyterian Church on Main Street, who had been in his parsonage at the time the flood wave hit. He and his family had managed to make it to the third floor of the house. They were able to save several people floating by, but as the night went on the house seemed less stable. The group left the house, walking on flood wreckage, and made it to Alma Hall, which was about a block away. Beale later led the assembly in prayer. Other notable Alma Hall stories include that of James Walters, a lawyer, who was washed out of his home on Walnut Street, onto a floating roof, and was thrown by the force of the water through a window into his own office in Alma Hall. Despite having suffered two broken ribs himself, Dr. William Matthews tended to the wounded by the dim light of distant fires, and delivered two babies.

2: Before Noah's Great Flood: Here Are 3 Flood Stories That Predate The Bible | Ancient Code

While flood myths are common to practically every culture on the planet, they differ significantly in detail. This article describes hundreds of flood myths originating from cultures all over the globe.

The Great Flood was supposedly sent by God or the gods upon the earth in order to destroy civilization as an act of divine punishment. This story is a widespread theme among many cultural myths and is perhaps best known from the biblical story of Noah. There are several other "perhaps less famous" versions such as stories of Matsya in the Hindu Puranas, Deucalion in Greek mythology. Curiously, a great deal of similarity exists between several of the flood myths, something that has led many authors and scholars to believe that these have evolved from or influenced each other. And despite the fact, three stories of a great flood exist in nearly all ancient cultures on Earth; mainstream scholars are divided in opinion whether or not such an event took place on Earth. It also records the names of Antediluvian cities on earth and their respective rulers. The Eridu Genesis is believed to have been composed circa 2, BCE is considered as the earliest known account of the great flood and predates more popular Great Flood described in the biblical book of Genesis. Many authors and scholars believe that the Sumerian accounts of a great flood eventually gave birth to more popular Flood myths like the one described in the Bible. However, if that is true, how did the story of a great deluge make its way all the way to Mesoamerica, thousands of years ago? The Aztec Flood Stories There are several accounts of Aztec Flood stories, but authors argue that the most famous of them all is that of Nota, the Aztec version of Noah. When the Sun Age came, there had passed years. Then came years, then Then all mankind was lost and drowned and turned to fishes. The water and the sky drew near each other. In a single day, all was lost. The waters shall near the sky. Nahui-Ocelotl Jaguar Sun "Inhabitants were giants who were devoured by jaguars. The world was destroyed. This world was destroyed by hurricanes. Nahui-Quiahuitl Rain Sun "Inhabitants were destroyed by a rain of fire. Only birds survived or inhabitants survived by becoming birds. Nahui-Atl Water Sun "This world was flooded turning the inhabitants into fish. A couple escaped but were transformed into dogs. Nahui-Ollin Earthquake Sun "We are the inhabitants of this world. This world will be destroyed by earthquakes or one large earthquake. This world was flooded turning the inhabitants into fish. Only one man and one woman are said to have survived, sheltered in a huge cypress. Different versions of Mesoamerican floods, especially those by the Aztec people tell that after the great flood, there were no survivors, and creation had to start from the beginning, while other accounts describe how current humans are descended from a small number of survivors. Before the great Flood which occurred around 4, years after the creation of our world, the country of Anahuac was inhabited by giants, all of whom either perished in the inundation or were transformed into fishes, save seven who fled into caverns. The gods beheld, with wrath, an edifice the top of which was to reach the clouds. Irritated at the daring attempt of Xelhua, they hurled fire on the pyramid. Numbers of the workmen perished.

3: Flood myth - Wikipedia

What we know is that different interpretations of the flood myth exists and this is the point highlighted by Uma in her first children's book, Stories Of The Flood. If you have grown up hearing one flood story, it is one idea from one person's home culture.

The god told two people to get into a ship. He told them to take lots of seed and to take lots of animals. The water of the flood eventually covered the mountains. Finally the flood stopped. Then one of the men, wanting to know if the water had dried up let a dove loose. Later he let loose a hawk which did not return. Then the men left the boat and took the animals and the seeds with them.

Asia China The Chinese classic called the *Hihking* tells about "the family of Fuhì," that was saved from a great flood. This ancient story tells that the entire land was flooded; the mountains and everything, however one family survived in a boat. The Chinese consider this man the father of their civilization. This record indicates that Fuhì, his wife, three sons, and three daughters were the only people that escaped the great flood. It is claimed, that he and his family were the only people alive on earth, and repopulated the world.

Babylon Gilgamesh met an old man named Utnapishtim, who told him the following story. The gods came to Utnapishtim to warn him about a terrible flood that was coming. They instructed Utnapishtim to destroy his house and build a large ship. The ship was to be 10 dozen cubits high, wide and long. Utnapishtim was to cover the ship with pitch. He was supposed to take male and female animals of all kinds, his wife and family, provisions, etc. Once ship was completed the rain began falling intensely. The rain fell for six days and nights. Finally things calmed and the ship settled on the top of Mount Nisir. After the ship had rested for seven days Utnapishtim let loose a dove. Since the land had not dried the dove returned. Next he sent a swallow which also returned. Later he let loose a raven which never returned since the ground had dried. Utnapishtim then left the ship.

Chaldean There was a man by the name of Xisuthrus. The god Chronos warned Xisuthrus of a coming flood and told him to build a boat. The boat was to be 5 stadia by 2 stadia. In this boat Xisuthrus was to put his family, friends and two of each animal male and female. When the waters started to recede he let some birds loose. They came back and he noticed they had mud on their feet. He tried again with the same results. When he tried the third time the birds did not return. Assuming the water had dried up the people got out of the boat and offered sacrifices to the gods.

India A long time ago lived a man named Manu. Manu, while washing himself, saved a small fish from the jaws of a large fish. The fish told Manu, "If you care for me until I am full grown I will save you from terrible things to come". Manu asked what kind of terrible things. The fish told Manu that a great flood would soon come and destroy everything on the earth. The fish told Manu to put him in a clay jar for protection. The fish grew and each time he outgrew the clay jar Manu gave him a larger one. Finally the fish became a ghasha, one of the largest fish in the world. The fish instructed Manu to build a large ship since the flood was going to happen very soon. As the rains started Manu tied a rope from the ship to the ghasha. The fish guided the ship as the waters rose. The whole earth was covered by water.

Australia There is a legend of a flood called the Dreamtime flood. Riding on this flood was the woramba, or the Ark Gumana. In this ark was Noah, Aborigines, and various animals. This ark eventually came to rest in the plain of Djilinbadu where it can still be found. They claim that the white mans story about the ark landing in the middle east is a lie that was started to keep the aborigines in subservience. This legend is undoubtedly the product of aboriginal legends merging with those of visiting missionaries, and there does not appear to be any native flood stories from Australia.

Europe Greece A long time ago, perhaps before the golden age was over, humans became proud. This bothered Zeus as they kept getting worse. Finally Zeus decided that he would destroy all humans. Before he did this Prometheus, the creator of humans, warned his human son Deucalion and his wife Pyrrha. Prometheus then placed this couple in a large wooden chest. The rains started and lasted nine days and nights until the whole world was flooded. The only thing that was not flooded was the peaks of Mount Parnassus and Mount Olympus. Mount Olympus is the home of the gods. The wooden chest came to rest on Mount Parnassus. Deucalion and his wife Pyrrha got out and saw that everything was flooded. They lived on provisions from the chest until the waters subsided.

North America Mexico The Toltec natives have a legend telling that the

original creation lasted for years, and was destroyed by a flood and only one family survived. Aztec- A man named Tapi lived a long time ago. Tapi was a very pious man. The creator told Tapi to build a boat that he would live in. He was told that he should take his wife, a pair of every animal that was alive into this boat. Naturally everyone thought he was crazy. Then the rain started and the flood came. The men and animals tried to climb the mountains but the mountains became flooded as well. Finally the rain ended. Tapi decided that the water had dried up when he let a dove loose that did not return. Men and women disrespected each other, families quarreled and soon villages began arguing back and forth. This saddened Gitche Manido [the Creator] greatly, but he waited. Finally, when it seemed there was no hope left, Creator decided to purify Mother Earth through the use of water. The water came, flooding the Earth, catching all of creation off guard. All but a few of each living thing survived. Ojibwe - Ancient native American creation story tells of world wide flood. Delaware Indians - In the pristine age, the world lived at peace; but an evil spirit came and caused a great flood. The earth was submerged. A few persons had taken refuge on the back of a turtle, so old that his shell had collected moss. A loon flew over their heads and was entreated to dive beneath the water and bring up land. It found only a bottomless sea. Then the bird flew far away, came back with a small portion of earth in its bill, and guided the tortoise to a place where there was a spot of dry land. South America Inca During the period of time called the Pachachama people became very evil. They got so busy coming up with and performing evil deeds they neglected the gods. Only those in the high Andes remained uncorrupted. Two brothers who lived in the highlands noticed their llamas acting strangely. They asked the llamas why and were told that the stars had told the llamas that a great flood was coming. This flood would destroy all the life on earth. The brothers took their families and flocks into a cave on the high mountains. It started to rain and continued for four months. As the water rose the mountain grew keeping its top above the water. Eventually the rain stopped and the waters receded. The mountain returned to its original height. The shepherds repopulated the earth. The llamas remembered the flood and that is why they prefer to live in the highland areas.

4: The Two Floods of Noah

The Flood found its proper place in Christianity, Judaism, and Islam, and flood stories crop up in Hindu, American Indian, and African story-telling as well. The first known flood story comes from Sumer in the tale of Atra-hasis (19th century, BCE).

Summary Analysis This chapter consists of the story that Utnapishtim tells Gilgamesh. It begins in Shurruk, a city built along the Euphrates river. The city was growing quickly. The gods agree to wipe out all the mortals. This story has many similarities to the Biblical tale of Noah and the Flood, suggesting that the Biblical writer may have drawn on the myth of Gilgamesh, or that both stories are based on a real flood that occurred in ancient Mesopotamia. To Enlil, it seems that mankind has overstepped its place in the universe by building such loud cities. This offends his pride—his sense that those below him have not accepted their place—and also sets up another connection between civilization and a kind of corruption or fall from grace. He asks how he will explain himself to others, and Ea tells him to say that Enlil was angry with him, so that he may no longer live on land or in the city. With his children and hired men, Utnapishtim builds the enormous boat with seven decks, packing it with supplies. Nergal, Ninurta, and the Annunaki. The storm god, Adad, turns day into night, and a tempest comes that is so terrible even the gods fear it. Water is most important as a symbol in this story of the flood, a force representing both destruction and rebirth. Previously Gilgamesh has bathed after all his major actions a sign of physical and spiritual rejuvenation, and the flood takes this idea to a much larger scale. Once again the most frightening images in the Epic are of wild, uncontrollable nature, usually embodied as storms or natural disasters. At dawn of the seventh day, the storm ends and the sea becomes calm. Utnapishtim opens the hatch of his boat and sees an endless sea around him. But he also sees a mountain rising out of the water fourteen leagues away. For six days and six nights the boat sails toward the mountain, and on the seventh dawn Utnapishtim releases a dove into the air. The dove returns, having not found a place to land. Then Utnapishtim releases a swallow, and it too returns. But then Utnapishtim releases a raven that eats and keeps flying, and does not come back. Utnapishtim then opens all the hatches and makes an offering of cane, cedar, and myrtle on a mountaintop in a heated cauldron. The details again resemble those of the story of Noah. Like Noah with the dove, Utnapishtim sends out birds to figure out whether there is land nearby. Ishtar was a destructive, petty goddess in dealing with Gilgamesh, but here she appears as a friend to mankind. Ishtar swears that she will remember the flood and all that happened. She tells all the gods but Enlil, who was responsible for the flood, to gather around the offering. Ea then criticizes Enlil for trying to destroy mankind. Now Enlil has overstepped his bounds. Though as a god he is more powerful than mere mortals, the other gods judged that he did not respect his place in the universe, which is to be involved in human affairs but not presume to destroy all of mankind. He then wishes that a lion, or wolf, or famine had destroyed mankind, rather than the flood. **Active Themes** Ea says that he was not the one who told Utnapishtim how to avoid his fate; Utnapishtim learned it from a dream. Then Enlil enters the boat and takes Utnapishtim and his wife below-deck, and he makes them kneel down. Importantly, as Utnapishtim and his wife are granted immortality, they kneel before the gods and pay respect. *The Story of the Flood. Retrieved November 14,*

5: Survivor Stories - Johnstown Area Heritage Association

So many flood stories with such similarities surely come from the Flood of Noah's day. A Historical Event The worldwide catastrophic Flood, recorded in the book of Genesis, was a real event that affected real people.

In the Sumerian flood story, the gods unleash the Deluge, a terrible storm that floods the world. Over a thousand years prior to this depiction, scholars from the ancient Sumerian civilization authored a remarkably similar account of the flood. In the Sumerian flood story, a hero builds an ark to preserve the species of the Earth from the Deluge flood. This myth appears in the epic tales of Atrahasis and Gilgamesh around 2, B. C., bringing the veracity of the later Biblical account into question. The Sumerian civilization emerged from what is now called Iraq in 3, B. The Sumerians worshipped a diverse pantheon of gods, of which a supreme triad ruled over myriad lesser deities. Anu was the supreme sky god, Enlil presided over Earth, and Ea or Enki dwelt in the ocean below. These gods sent a great flood to wipe out mankind, which is referred to as the Deluge in ancient Sumerian literature. The hero warned by the gods to build an ark and preserve the beasts of the wild was called Ziusudra, Atrahasis, or Uta-Napishti depending on the era. It is likely that any historical flood was confined to this region. Uta-Napishti, Babylon, 1, B. Noah, Israel, 1, B. Generally, the changes in name reflect the evolving language of the region rather than changes in the story. The story was only changed significantly in the Old Testament version 1, B. Atrahasis also appears in the Babylonian version. Uta-Napishti is the name he adopts after being granted immortality by the gods. The name means "he found life". The Deluge, from the Tate Gallery. Source The Sumerian Creation Story The epic tale of Atrahasis begins with the creation of mankind and the series of events that led to their destruction by the supreme triad of gods. It is preserved in its most complete form in the Epic of Atrahasis. The epic depicts the gods as living on Earth before the time of man. The supreme triad had ordered the less powerful gods to work the land, maintaining the temples and growing food. Eventually the lesser deities rebelled, refusing to continue with their laborious assignment. The supreme triad was sympathetic, and decided to appease their subordinates by ordering the Mother Goddess, Mami, to create humans to do the work for them. The humans were fashioned out of clay, and to give them reason and an immortal soul, the intelligent young god, Geshtu-E, was sacrificed, and his blood mixed with the clay. However, Geshtu-E was leader of the rebels, meaning the first humans shared his deceitful and pugnacious character. As the human population grew, the gods began to regret their decision. The noises made by the throngs of people disturbed their sleep. Enlil attempted to cull the population by sending plague, famine and drought. When his efforts failed, he sent the Deluge flood to destroy mankind. Atrahasis was told to build a boat and to take on board all living things. When the flood came, Atrahasis. After seven days the boat came to rest on Mount Nimush, and Atrahasis released a dove, a swallow, and a raven to search for land. The gods recognized the imprudence of their actions. They were starving without humans to produce their food, and when Atrahasis made them an offering, they swarmed to the scent. Atrahasis was blessed with immortality and settled far away from the next generation of humans on a remote island. A new batch of humans were created with a number of deliberate flaws. To control overpopulation, the humans were made to suffer from stillbirth and infant mortality. Some women were made to be priestesses nuns who refrain from sexual activity. Most importantly, the Angel of Death was unleashed, drastically reducing the human life-span. This explanation for the evils of the world is an important and clever part of the Sumerian flood story as it solves the problem of evil inherent to more recent religions. The epic of Atrahasis was written on clay tablets in the cuneiform writing style of Sumer. Source The earliest surviving stories of Noah were written on parchment animal skin. Source Flood Stories Comparison The following are direct quotes from the stories of Atrahasis and Noah that illustrate their profound similarity. The boat you will build. Three myriads of pitch I poured in a furnace. Make thee an ark of gopher wood; rooms shalt thou make in the ark, and shalt pitch it within and without with pitch. The length of the ark shall be three hundred cubits, the breadth of it fifty cubits, and the height of it thirty cubits. To keep seed alive upon the face of all the earth. I sent on board all my kith and kin, the beasts of the field, the creatures of the wild, and members of every skill and craft. And of every living thing of all flesh, two of every sort shalt thou bring into the ark. For six days and seven nights

there blew the wind, the downpour, the gale, the Deluge, it flattened the land. And it came to pass after seven days, that the waters of the flood were upon the earth. And the rain was upon the earth forty days and forty nights. It is I who give birth, these people are mine! And now like fish, they fill the ocean! And, behold, I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven; and every thing that is in the earth shall die. On the mountain of Nimush the boat ran aground. I brought out a dove, I let it loose: I brought out a swallow same result. I brought out a raven, it saw the waters receding, finding food, bowing and bobbing, it did not come back to me. He sent forth a raven, which went forth to and fro, until the waters were dried up from off the earth. Also he sent forth a dove from him, to see if the waters were abated from off the face of the ground. But the dove found no rest for the sole of her foot I brought out an offering, to the four winds made sacrifice. And Noah built an altar unto the Lord; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar. The gods did smell the savor sweet, the gods gathered round like flies around the man making sacrifice. He touched our foreheads, standing between us to bless us. God blessed Noah and his sons. You, birth goddess, creator of destinies, establish death for all peoples! My Spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: Atrahasis sent out a swallow pictured , dove, and raven in the Sumerian flood story. Source Differences in the Flood Stories Despite the striking similarity between the Sumerian flood story and the Biblical account of Noah, there are a number of small differences. However, the major events are all the same, and in some places the Noah story appears to have lifted entire phrases from the Sumerian story. There are some more pronounced differences that were necessary to adapt the story to the Hebrew religion. Due to the different notions of heaven, Atrahasis is blessed and granted immortality like the gods, whereas Noah is blessed and allowed to live longer than his descendants. The Sumerian religion was a polytheistic one, so the god that warned Atrahasis was a different god to the one that brought the Deluge. While the Hebrew god destroyed mankind for being wicked, the Sumerian gods may have had other reasons. The humans were rebellious and loud, but the Sumerian gods appear to have been annoyed with the noise rather than any specific immorality. Genetic analyses and historical evidence shows the Hebrew peoples lived in Sumer.

6: What similarities are there between the Gilgamesh flood account and the biblical flood account?

This story has many similarities to the Biblical tale of Noah and the Flood, suggesting that the Biblical writer may have drawn on the myth of Gilgamesh, or that both stories are based on a real flood that occurred in ancient Mesopotamia.

In fact, there are a number of flood stories that predate the flood described in the Bible. Flood myths can be traced back into the Bronze Age and Neolithic prehistory. Flood stories are often referred to as new starting points in human history. It also records the names of Antediluvian cities on earth and their respective rulers. In ancient Mesopotamian mythology, we find flood stories concerning the epics of Ziusudra, Gilgamesh, and Atrahasis. In fact, the Sumerian King List divides its history into pre-flood antediluvian and post-flood periods. Before the flood had swept across the land, Earth was ruled by kings who had monstrous lifespans. In post-flood myths, these lifespans were drastically reduced. It narrates the epic of Ziusudra, who, after finding out that the Gods plan to destroy humanity with a great flood, constructs a massive vessel which eventually saves him from the rising waters. In the Sumerian King List, we read about the history of mankind, its Gods and rulers before the flood. The Sumerian King list suggests how Eridu was the first city on Earth. In fact, according to Sumerian mythology, Eridu was one of the five ancient cities that were built on Earth before the Great Deluge. The Sumerian King List reads: Dumuzid, the shepherd, ruled for 36, years. The Aztec Story of the great flood According to the ancient Aztecs, a massive flood swept across the lands. No matter where we look, we find descriptions of a massive deluge that swept across the Earth in the distant past. With a few differences, we can say that nearly all flood stories are similar in one way or another. According to ancient mythology: This great flood is said to have lasted for 60 days and 60 nights. Before creating humans, Viracocha created a race of giants that inhabited Earth, but he destroyed them in a flood as they proved to be unruly. The giants were eventually turned into stone.

7: Flood myth | mythology | www.enganchecubano.com

The Sumerian flood story is the original version of Noah's Ark, and without the former, the latter may never have existed. Questions & Answers Questions must be on-topic, written with proper grammar usage, and understandable to a wide audience.

It brought an ancient biblical story about a cataclysmic flood to life for audiences today. Was it the least biblical Bible movie ever made? These questions flare up in what is frankly a flat and over-rehearsed debate about the Bible in American life. Honestly, does it matter whether a movie is biblical? Do the spiritual-but-not-religious care? Do those evangelicals who grow tired of the stereotype made of them in the media care? Do secular liberals who have no use for the Bible really care about these questions? In looking at The Flood today, we participate in thousands of years of meaning-making. We connect ourselves to world literature, to ancient civilizations, and to a perennial story about a cataclysm that changed the world. Long before the Bible was written, The Flood was a blockbuster of the ancient Mesopotamian and Mediterranean worlds. It originated in Sumer over years ago. New versions were deposited in the greatest imperial libraries of the Mesopotamian empires Babylonia and Assyria. The Biblical authors fashioned their own versions of the tale, and post-biblical authors continued to ruminate on its potential for meaning-making. The Flood found its proper place in Christianity, Judaism, and Islam, and flood stories crop up in Hindu, American Indian, and African story-telling as well. This story sets the basic elements of the ancient genre: A tragicomedy about polytheism starring petty gods who complain like tired parents annoyed by their noisy children. With each divine attempt at total genocide, Enki gives the flood hero secret knowledge about which god to appease with a sacrifice. This worked against the first two rounds of disease and drought. However, Enki had to get creative for the third and final attempt. For the deluge, Enki instructs the flood hero to build a boat for family and fauna. In this Sumerian version, the gods, like bickering politicians, provide plenty of comic relief. But two characters communicate the tragedy of the flood event: I am locked in a house of lamentation. Dated somewhere between BCE, the Mesopotamian epic says little about the divine drama. The moral suppleness of the flood hero crescendos with his first reaction to the post-flood world. Stepping into a sun beam, looking out the window of his ark, he sees that all humanity returned to clay, and with tears streaming down the lines of his face, he slumps down weeping. The biblical account owes much to the Gilgamesh version in numerous nit-picky details, but not in ethos or theme. Noah never feels anything in the biblical account. Noah did not give up the status of wealth or pay any mind to the genocide outside his boat. He is an emissary, a prophet who penetrates reality with a perfect understanding of the Sacred. With no comedy to speak of, God sees human behavior, regrets that he made humans, overwhelms them with a flood, changes his mind about how to manage human behavior, and needs the rainbow as a reminder not to fly off the divine handle at them in the future. Along with the character of God and this newly minted monotheism, the biblical authors take up the problem The Flood attempts to solve. After the flood, God issues the first religious law. The biblical Flood emphasizes the unique role humans played in corrupting the earth. In contrast, the post-biblical tradition of Enochic Judaism lays blame on a human civilization that was corrupted by supernatural forces. Society is shot through with war, industry, and vainglory, all of which were taught by fallen angels. Called Watchers, these divine dissidents not only gave nascent humans the wrong advice about building their world, they ravished human women to produce destructive giants who cannibalize each other and wreak nothing but military havoc over the land. The Enochic Flood has a major job to do. The Flood itself is hardly reported, but Enochic readers can rest assured in its justification. The ancient Hindu scriptures emphasize a novel feature of The Flood: In the Mahabharata and later in the Puranas, the flood hero rides out the deluge in a boat with animals just like Noah. But Manu, the Hindu protagonist of the Flood, does not bring his family; rather he is joined by seven sages. The fish that pulls the boat reveals himself at the end as the deity, Brahma, who teaches them austerities so they might acquire power over illusions. The Hindu flood hero emerges with new insight and wisdom. With such an ancient and cross-cultural pedigree, among the earliest stories written down by civilized humans, The Flood is less like a fixed tale etched on a tablet and more like an arrow, shooting through time.

Indeed, it shoots straight to the heart of what it means to be human. The Flood forces us to grapple with the deeply impersonal forces of the universe that are set against human civilization. It is a story about the end of an age, a massive transition. And in the flood hero, we have a basic personality type, someone who cannot reconcile himself to the world as it currently stands, who does not feel at home. And though epically and in some cases tragically destructive, The Flood is also about healing. Noah is The Flood. This is our world and this is our story.

8: The Sumerian Flood Story | Owlcation

Native global flood stories are documented as history or legend in almost every region on earth. Old world missionaries reported their amazement at finding remote tribes already possessing legends with tremendous similarities to the Bible's accounts of the worldwide flood.

From his heavenly window, the supreme god Pranzimas saw nothing but war and injustice among mankind. He sent two giants, Wandu and Wejas water and wind , to destroy earth. After twenty days and nights, little was left. Pranzimas looked to see the progress. He happened to be eating nuts at the time, and he threw down the shells. One happened to land on the peak of the tallest mountain, where some people and animals had sought refuge. Everybody climbed in and survived the flood floating in the nutshell. The people dispersed, except for one elderly couple who stayed where they landed. To comfort them, God sent the rainbow and advised them to jump over the bones of the earth nine times. They did so, and up sprang nine other couples, from which the nine Lithuanian tribes descended. Men once lived forever and knew no troubles. The earth brought forth fine fruits, flesh grew on trees, and milk and wine flowed in many rivers. When he departed the next day, he said he would return in nine days. He gave his host a small fish in a vessel and said he would reward the host if he did not eat the fish but returned it then. The wife thought the fish must be exceptionally good to eat, but the husband said he had promised the old man to keep it and made the woman swear not to eat it. After two days of thinking about it, though, the wife yielded to temptation and threw the fish on the hot coals. Immediately, she was struck dead by lightning, and it began to rain. The rivers started overflowing the country. On the ninth day, the old man returned and told his host that all living things would be drowned, but since he had kept his oath, he would be saved. The old man told the host to take a wife, gather his kinfolk, and build a boat on which to save them, animals, and seeds of trees and herbs. The man did all this. It rained a year, and the waters covered everything. After a year, the waters sank, and the people and animals disembarked. They now had to labor to gain a living, and sickness and death came also. They multiplied slowly so that many thousands of years passed before people were again as numerous as they were before the flood. Iskender-Iulcarni Alexander the Great , in the course of his conquests, demanded tribute from Katife, Queen of Smyrna. She refused insultingly and threatened to drown the king if he persisted. Enraged at her insolence, the conqueror determined to punish the queen by drowning her in a great flood. He employed Moslem and infidel workmen to make a strait of the Bosphorus, paying the infidel workmen one-fifth as much as the Moslems got. When the canal was nearly completed, he reversed the pay arrangements, giving the Moslems only one-fifth as much as the infidels. The Moslems quit in disgust and left the infidels to finish the canal. The Black Sea swept away the last dike and drowned the workmen. The whole world would have been engulfed, but Iskender-Iulcarni was prevailed upon to open the Strait of Gibraltar, letting the Mediterranean escape into the ocean. Evidence of the flood can still be seen in the form of drowned cities on the coast of Africa and ship moorings high above the coast of the Black Sea. The gods had decided to destroy mankind. The god Enlil warned the priest-king Ziusudra "Long of Life" of the coming flood by speaking to a wall while Ziusudra listened at the side. He was instructed to build a great ship and carry beasts and birds upon it. Violent winds came, and a flood of rain covered the earth for seven days and nights. Then Ziusudra opened a window in the large boat, allowing sunlight to enter, and he prostrated himself before the sun-god Utu. After landing, he sacrificed a sheep and an ox and bowed before Anu and Enlil. For protecting the animals and the seed of mankind, he was granted eternal life and taken to the country of Dilmun, where the sun rises. People have become rebellious. Atum said he will destroy all he made and return the earth to the Primordial Water which was its original state. Atum will remain, in the form of a serpent, with Osiris. See also Budge , p. Three times every years , the gods were distressed by the disturbance from human overpopulation. The gods dealt with the problem first by plague, then by famine. Both times, the god Enki advised men to bribe the god causing the problem. The third time, Enlil advised the gods to destroy all humans with a flood, but Enki had Atrahasis build an ark and so escape. The storm god Adad raged, turning the day black. After the seven-day flood, the gods regretted their action. Atrahasis made an offering to them, at which the gods gathered like flies, and Enki

established barren women and stillbirth to avoid the problem in the future. The gods, led by Enlil, agreed to cleanse the earth of an overpopulated humanity, but Utnapishtim was warned by the god Ea in a dream. He and some craftsmen built a large boat one acre in area, seven decks in a week. He then loaded it with his family, the craftsmen, and "the seed of all living creatures. Upon seeing all the people killed, the gods repented and wept. The waters covered everything but the top of the mountain Nisur, where the boat landed. Seven days later, Utnapishtim released a dove, but it returned finding nowhere else to land. He next returned a sparrow, which also returned, and then a raven, which did not return. Thus he knew the waters had receded enough for the people to emerge. Utnapishtim made a sacrifice to the gods. He and his wife were given immortality and lived at the end of the earth. In the process, "The primeval waters of Kur rose to the surface, and as a result of their violence no fresh waters could reach the fields and gardens. The god Chronos in a vision warned Xisuthrus, the tenth king of Babylon, of a flood coming on the fifteenth day of the month of Daesius. The god ordered him to write a history and bury it in Sippara, and told him to build and provision a vessel 5 stadia by 2 stadia for himself, his friends and relations, and all kinds of animals. Xisuthrus asked where he should sail, and Chronos answered, "to the gods, but first pray for all good things to men. After the flood had come and abated somewhat, he sent out some birds, which returned. Later, he tried again, and the birds returned with mud on their feet. He saw that land had appeared above the waters, so he parted some seams of his ship, saw the shore, and drove his ship aground in the Corcyraean mountains in Armenia. He disembarked with his wife, daughter, and pilot, and offered sacrifices to the gods. Those four were translated to live with the gods. Part of the ship remains to this day, and some people make charms from its bitumen. From the stars, he foresaw destruction, and he began building an ark. The waters overflowed all the mountains, and the human race was drowned except Noa and his family who survived on his ship. The ship came to rest at last on the top of the Gendyae or Mountain. Parts of it still remain, which men take bitumen from to make charms against evil. God told Noah to build an ark, x 75 x 45 feet, with three decks. Noah did so, and took aboard his family 8 people in all and pairs of all kinds of animals 7 of the clean ones. For 40 days and nights, floodwaters came from the heavens and from the deeps, until the highest mountains were covered. The waters flooded the earth for days; then God sent a wind and the waters receded, and the ark came to rest in Ararat. After 40 days, Noah sent out a raven, which kept flying until the waters had dried up. He next sent out a dove, which returned without finding a perch. A week later he set out the dove again, and it returned with an olive leaf. After a year and 10 days from the start of the flood, everyone and everything emerged from the ark. Noah sacrificed some clean animals and birds to God, and God, pleased with this, promised never again to destroy all living creatures with a flood, giving the rainbow as a sign of this covenant. Animals became wild and became suitable food, and Noah and his family were told to repopulate the earth. Noah planted a vineyard and one day got drunk. His son Ham saw him lying naked in his tent and told his brothers Shem and Japheth, who came and covered Noah with their faces turned. When Noah awoke, he cursed Ham and his descendants and blessed his other sons. This indolence led men astray, especially to the sins of wantonness and rapacity. God determined to destroy the sinners, but in mercy he instructed Noah to warn them of the threat of a flood and to preach to them to mend their ways. Noah did this for years. God gave mankind a final week of grace during which the sun reversed course, but the wicked men did not repent; they only mocked Noah for building the ark. Noah learned how to make the ark from a book, given to Adam by the angel Raziel, which contained all knowledge. This book was made of sapphires, and Noah put it in a golden casket and, during the flood, used it to tell day from night, for the sun and moon did not shine at that time. The flood was caused by male waters from the sky meeting the female waters from the ground. God made holes in the sky for the waters to issue from by removing two stars from the Pleiades. He later closed the hole by borrowing two stars from the Bear. That is why the Bear always runs after the Pleiades.

9: Five Flood Stories You Didn't Know About | Religion Dispatches

The story of Noah's ark and the flood is found in Genesis Historical Context Noah was the grandson of Methuselah, the oldest person in the Bible, who died at years old in the year of the flood.

There are several variants; the Biblical version is the most famous. It has always been known that there were similar stories from Greece and Rome like the ones by Apollodorus , Ovid , and Hyginus , but in the nineteenth century, several texts from ancient Iraq were added. It is now clear that the Biblical account stays close to a Babylonian model. Genesis and its Source This can best be recognized when we scrutinize the Biblical Flood Story and reconstruct the original text. Throughout the Biblical book of Genesis and in fact the entire Torah discrepancies and doublets can be recognized. For example, at the very beginning, there are two Creation stories Genesis 1 and Genesis 2 , and in the story of the Great Flood, we can find several contradictions: In the nineteenth and twentieth century, this idea, called the Documentary Hypothesis, was elaborated, but no two scholars have agreed upon the exact attribution of every verse, and by the end of the twentieth century, most scholars returned to more modest ambitions. However, the idea that the story of the Great Flood is based on two sources remains more or less agreed-upon. A possible, perhaps even likely, reconstruction of these two sources can be found here. What matters is the original text, the older of the two sources, which is sometimes called "Priestly". This is the text in which the animals enter the Ark two by two and in which the Flood is caused by primordial waters - the waters that were separated when God made the firmament Genesis 1. General Pattern The Priestly Text began - or may have began, according to many scholars - with the First Creation Story Genesis 1 , continued with the names of the incredibly long-lived descendants of Adam and Eve, and stories about human sin that made God decide to destroy the greater part of mankind. The Flood story itself is well-known: Noah builds an Ark, boards the ship with seven relatives, survives the Flood, lands at a mountain top in a country named Ararat, sends out birds from the Ark to check if there is dry land, sacrifices, and concludes a Covenant with God, in which God promises that mankind will never be destroyed again and live forever. The final anecdote, in which Noah gets drunk, is an addition to this story, not from the Priestly Text. The entire story is interlaced with precise chronological indications, which enable us to establish that the day on which God "remembered Noah" Genesis 8. This pattern is similar to stories from Babylonia. The main difference is, of course, that in those texts, we encounter more than one God. However, the similarities are striking: The same pattern can be found in the Greek texts. Generally speaking, the parallels between the Priestly Text and the texts from Babylonia are closer: But on two points, the Bible and the Greek texts resemble each other more: Differences The parallels are remarkable, and even when there are differences, they are not what they appear to be. For example, the Biblical Ararat Mountains - plural! The Hebrew word "Ararat" refers to the country directly north and northeast of Mesopotamia,note[Cf. Both Josephus and Berossus refer to the presence of bitumen near the place where the Ark landed. In fact, we must imagine the written texts as exceptional - the main tradition was, no doubt, oral. Still, there are too many verbal similarities to say that there was no written tradition at all. We can follow the development of the story for more than two millennia. It started in Sumer.

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