

Gilgamesh and the biblical Flood—part 2

Murray Adamthwaite

In this sequel to the previous article on the *Gilgamesh Epic* other Mesopotamian Flood literature is now examined: Atrahasis, Ziusudra, the one enshrined in Berossus, plus one small but important fragment from Nippur which has gone largely unnoticed for a century. For all the inclusion of the Flood motif in epic myth and legend, the Mesopotamians certainly believed that a great deluge really happened, as various historical-type texts attest. Meanwhile, versions of this flood tradition originally circulated independently, being incorporated into larger, composite epics in the early to mid second millennium BC. These various Mesopotamian accounts of the great deluge should be seen in conjunction with accounts of such in tribal folklore around the world. The common allegation that the latter result from the work of Christian missionaries will not stand examination.

Other flood traditions in the ancient Near East

Following the earlier discussion of the *Gilgamesh Epic*, we proceed to other Flood stories in Mesopotamian lore, which also have similarities to Genesis.

First is the *Ziusudra Epic* where the ‘Noah’ figure is Ziusudra, a pious king who stations himself beside a wall where he hears the god Enki (?) informing him of the decisions taken by the assembly of the gods to send a flood “to destroy the seed of mankind”. The part where Ziusudra presumably builds a boat to save himself, his family and others, is missing, but at the end the sun god Utu sends light and heat to warm up the earth, and Ziusudra offers sacrifices of oxen and sheep, after which he is deified and transported to Dilmun, the paradise-land.¹ It is important to note that this story seems to have circulated independently, whereas a modified version at some time has been incorporated into the *Gilgamesh Epic*.

While the preceding outline is derived from an extant, but fragmentary, cuneiform tablet, the version of it told by the third-century-BC Babylonian Marduk-priest *Berossus*² deserves mention. His ‘Noah’ figure is Xisouthros—clearly a Hellenized rendering of Ziusudra, who reigned before the Flood for 64,800 years, after which a great deluge came. Kronos appeared to Xisouthros in a dream and told him of a coming deluge to destroy mankind. He instructed him to build a boat for himself, his relatives, and close friends, and take on board all animals and birds, plus enough supplies for his journey. After the deluge had ceased, Xisouthros sent out birds, which returned to the ship after first flying around. Then he sent out more birds, which also returned, stained with mud. On the third occasion they did not return, whereupon Xisouthros disembarked with his wife, his daughter, and the boat’s pilot. He offered sacrifices, and then disappeared to be with the gods; but when the others on board realized that Xisouthros had gone, they too disembarked. Then they heard a voice from heaven which told them to

return to Babylon; they did so and rebuilt both that city and others, with their corresponding temples. It would appear, therefore, that in the 3rd century BC this seems to have been the popular version of the flood epic—i.e. minus the *Gilgamesh* immortality quest.

Berossus’ version of the flood seems, in the light of the texts now recovered, to be a conflation of various Mesopotamian stories, but with the Ziusudra story predominating. Whatever the actual make-up, Berossus’ tale had been known long before the *Gilgamesh Epic* or any of the other Mesopotamian flood literature turned up, so the latter should have come as no surprise when archaeologists unearthed this literature in the 19th and early 20th centuries. In this light the whole excitement about *Gilgamesh* and the *Ut-napishtim* story in the late nineteenth century has the earmarks of a scholarly fad,³ which should have awaited more sober judgment with the passage of time. However, the excitement was such as fitted the mood of the period, viz. to jettison Genesis as having any historical value.

Egypt also had a flood tradition. This story, first noted by Naville more than a century ago, comes from the *Book of the Dead*, and relates how the god Atum decides to destroy what is on the surface of the ground by covering it with water, thus making it again into Nu, the great ocean from which everything originated in the beginning. The water would come from the inundation from the Nile.⁴ Apart from the Egyptian polytheism there are clear overtones of Genesis in this brief reference.

Then there is *the Atrahasis tale*.⁵ This rather repetitive tale is both a creation-of-man story and a flood story. It begins with the sky being ruled by Anu, the Earth by Enlil, and the subterranean sweet water by Enki. These gods find their workload arduous, whereupon the Igigi-gods shoulder the work for 3,600 years. When this experiment fails, Ea proposes that Belet-ili, the womb-goddess, create mortal man to “bear the yoke”. With the assistance of Enki they slaughter the god Geshtu-e and with his flesh and blood, they make

clay from which in turn they create seven males and seven females, the progenitors of the human race who now perform the arduous duties appointed for them to sustain the gods.

However, mankind subsequently grows to enormous numerical proportions such that their combined noise irritates the gods and they cannot sleep. A series of measures—disease, drought, then more diseases—at 600-year intervals fails to silence the noise. Finally, they resolve to send a flood, but then a quarrel erupts between Enki and Enlil, and so Enki reveals the plan to Atrahasis and instructs him to dismantle his house and build a boat with upper and lower decks⁶ so as to save himself, birds, and both domestic and wild animals.

Atrahasis has to line his wooden craft with bitumen, which he also uses to seal the entrance. As he does so, Adad (the storm deity) sends a furious storm with wind and rain; “it roared like a bull” as men outside perished in the catastrophe. For seven days and nights the flood prevailed, but meanwhile the gods in self-pity blame each other for the “wicked order” (*bīšu*; “shameful utterance”) to send the flood.⁷ A 58-line break in the text has obscured the place where the craft came to rest, but we do read of sacrifice being offered when Atrahasis emerged, at which the gods “gathered like flies over the offering”, just as in Gilgamesh. The divine assembly agrees that no man should have survived, and then blame Enki for revealing the secret. To atone for his misdeed, Enki pleads that of women in the human race which now replenishes the earth one third be visited with a demon so as to “snatch the baby away”, create infertility, and thus control the population.

Comments

1. Unlike Gilgamesh, there is no theme here of a quest for immortality at all, while the hero, Atrahasis, is not granted immortality for surviving the flood—at least, not according to the extant portions. There is only a round of self-recrimination among the gods for (a) sending such a monumental catastrophe, and (b) against Enki for revealing the secret when the ‘reed hut’ should have provided security. Hence there is now (c) a reluctant resolve on their part to accept the new situation, albeit with a policy of population containment.
2. The gods in this tale lurch from a ‘Plan A’ to a ‘Plan B’ to a ‘Plan C’, and so on, each one 600 years after the previous one. By contrast, the God of Genesis, in the face of human wickedness, simply declares what He will do, and executes that plan after first announcing it to the righteous Noah.
3. The reason for sending the flood is thoroughly puerile: i.e. that men are making too much noise and the gods can’t sleep. Compare this to the Sovereign Lord of Scripture: “He that keeps Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps” (Psalm 121:4). Furthermore, rather than human wickedness

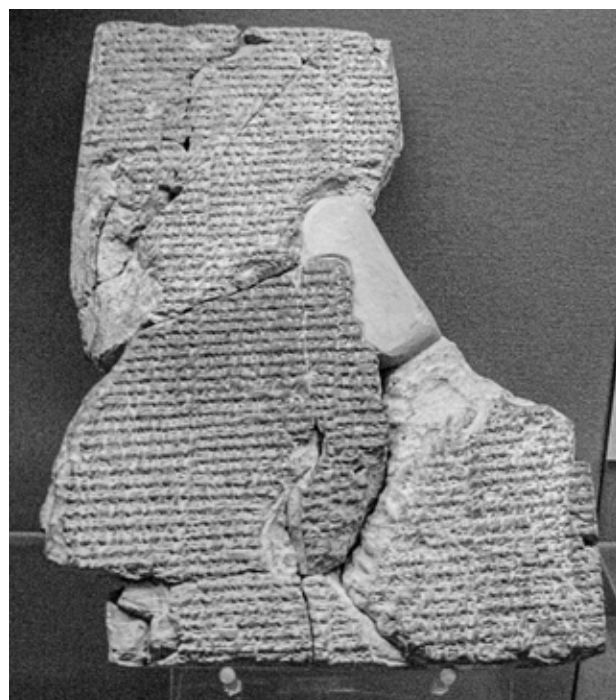


Figure 1. Tablet III of *Atrahasis* (BM 78943).

being the reason for the flood, it is the gods (particularly Enlil) who decree and carry out this “wicked order”.

4. While both the Genesis Flood and that of Atrahasis conclude with sacrifice being offered, the Genesis Flood concludes with a sacrifice of both thanksgiving and propitiation of Divine wrath; the phrase *reah nihoah* (“the sweet savour”) anticipates the Mosaic sacrificial system (as in Lev.1:9), and the final atonement by Christ, as in Eph. 5:2. By contrast, both the Babylonian stories are crude and grotesque: they have the ravenous gods gathering around, hungry for man’s offerings from which they have been deprived.

Dating of the Atrahasis story is somewhat easier; a colophon is attached which identifies the scribe as Nur-Aya, who dates his copy to the reign of Ammi-Šaduqa (conventionally 1646–1626 BC), although the story itself is likely much older.

The Nippur Fragment

Finally for Mesopotamia there is a very fragmentary tablet known as the Nippur Tablet (C.B.M. 13532), the surviving text of which relates a great flood. The inscribed portion—on the reverse side only—was discussed by Hilprecht a hundred years ago⁸, but has received little attention since.⁹ Hilprecht’s discussion, however, involved some adventurous restorations of missing text, which Heidel (wisely) refrained from reproducing.

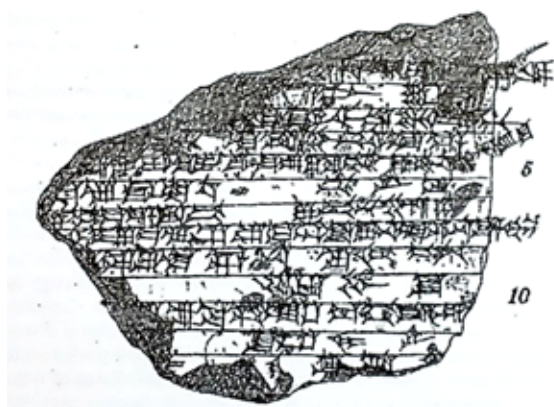


Figure 2. The Nippur Tablet (C.B.M. 13532).

That said, however, the tablet is worthy of consideration, the extant text reading as follows:

1.thee
2.I will loosen
3.all men together it shall seize
4.life before the deluge comes forth
5. ...living beings], as many as exist, I will bring
overthrow, disaster, silence
6. ...build a great ship and
7. ...the total height let it be its structure
8. ...it shall be a houseboat carrying what of life is
saved
9.with a strong deck cover it
10.the ship] which you shall make
11.into it brjng the animals of the field and
the birds of the sky
12.instead of a number
13.and the family
14.and.....

Without engaging in a full discussion of this text, a number of comments are in order:

1. Although Hilprecht's restorations are dubious, his readings of the preserved signs are accurate. For example, the *Chicago Assyrian Dictionary* reads line 5' differently¹⁰, but its reading lacks plausibility in comparison with Hilprecht's plate.
2. The text indeed records a great deluge. The word *abubu* in line 4' is clear. The same word appears in *Gilgamesh* and *Atrahasis*, which in turn renders the Sumerian A.MA.RU in Ziusudra and other Sumerian references, and denotes the deluge as a "cosmic event".¹¹
3. There is no mention of a god or gods in the extant lines, but the singular "I" of lines 2 and 5 points in the direction of monotheism.¹² The agent of the flood is this unidentified personage, who sends it in his own right and by his own power. It does not read as if a god—like Enki—warns of what the rest of divine assembly is planning to do, as in *Atrahasis* or *Gilgamesh*. Moreover, a certain man is being

addressed and told to build a great ship to save himself, his family (line 13), and a whole array of animals.

4. Line 5' is interesting in a number of ways. The Akkadian reads, "overthrow" and derives from the verb *abāku*, with a secondary meaning "to overturn, overthrow", but equivalent to the West Semitic and Hebrew verb *הפך* (same meaning, but there the primary meaning).¹³ The next word, *luputtu*, which could be read as *lu puttu* (D stat. "it is surely opened") but would make little sense,¹⁴ could also be taken as the D infinitive (albeit aberrant) from *lapātu*: to touch, and in the intensive D stem it can denote smiting or affecting (a land) with disaster. Finally, *hurūšu* presents a difficulty: the verb *harāšu* can mean either "to be in labour" or "to bind", neither of which fits the context. The best solution is to appeal to the Hebrew and West Semitic verb *חרש* : "to be silent" (also attested in Akkadian at Mari), hence silence or stillness—i.e. after a conflagration and annihilation. In all, the text attests a flood which wreaks an overthrow of the existing order, and an uncanny silence at the end after everything is destroyed. Hence these words are not really three synonymns, but more of a sequence.
5. The craft for preservation from the deluge is called *eleppu* (^{gis}MÁ) *ra-be-tu* ("great ship")¹⁵ in line 6', and ^{gis}MÁ.GUR.GUR ("ark") in line 8'. In both *Atrahasis* and *Gilgamesh* the craft is simply a "boat" (^{gis}MÁ: *eleppu*)¹⁶, but the word here is unique in the Mesopotamian deluge literature and seems to denote a houseboat with both a closing door and a roof.¹⁷

As to date, Hilprecht, on the basis of its archaeological provenance, assigns it to the First Dynasty of Isin, or about the time of Rīm-Sîn of Larsa, dated by conventional modern chronology c.1800 BC.¹⁸ Looking at the Mesopotamian flood tradition over all, the Ziusudra tale seems to be the earliest, which is incorporated—with modifications—into the *Atrahasis* epic, which in turn provides the basis for the Flood version in *Gilgamesh*. In regard to the Nippur fragment, while its extant text is tantalizing, and no firm conclusion can be drawn as to where it belongs in that tradition, owing to its poor state of preservation, it is certainly early, especially if what it relates is monotheistic.

Did the Mesopotamians regard the Flood as historically real? This can be answered affirmatively. First, the Sumerian King List (SKL) attests this, when at the end of a list of eight antediluvian kings reigning for a total of 241,200 years (!) there comes a note: "The Flood then swept over the land. After the Flood had swept over (the land) and kingship had descended from heaven (a second time) Kish became (the seat) of kingship."¹⁹ This occurs in what for the Sumerians and Akkadians was a sober list of historical kings. Indeed, many of the post-Diluvian kings are now known to be figures of history and not mere legend, including Gilgamesh of Uruk himself.²⁰

Then there is the Dynastic Chronicle, another Sumerian text, which, although fragmentary, is similar to the SKL, but which included an excursus describing the Flood. This excursus of at least eleven lines is unfortunately not preserved, but the first word or two began this description.²¹

Another reference is in the epic poem called *The Cuthean Legend of Naram-Sîn*, grandson of Sargon of Agade, as follows: “I made the land of Akkad (look) like it was after the deluge of water which took place at an early time of mankind.”²²

D.J. Wiseman sums up the outlook of the ancient Mesopotamians:

“Epics ... ‘king lists’ and epic poems combine to convey the oldest Babylonian account of creation of man, the fall (?) and the Flood. As with Genesis 1–11 this early history, *for such they considered these events*, was combined in a single document including poetic narrative of events linked by genealogies and without any specific indication of the time covered by the events described.”²³

Explanation of the Mesopotamian flood tradition

How then should we explain the existence and dissemination of these stories of a Great deluge early in human history? For those who reject the Genesis account as historical there have been two main theories:

Ancient inference

According to this theory, ancient man, seeing marine fossils in rocks at high elevations, concocted a story (or stories) of a massive flood to explain their origin. Dalley proposes such a theory as follows:

“However, ... the idea of a universal flood may well have arisen to explain observations in different places of marine fossils in rocks high above sea level. At a time when there was no conception of how geological change took place, nor of how vast was the time-scale of evolution, moreover when the creation of man was generally supposed to have accompanied the creation of the earth in its present form, an enormous flood which man by chance survived would be the only way to account for the presence of such marine fossils, and may have been thought up by more than one inquiring mind.”²⁴

Needless to say, this is sheer speculation, with no evidence at all to support it, and appears to contradict other modern writers who hasten to assure us that ancient man was not of a scientific bent, especially not in regard to geology.²⁵ Apart from her solid commitment to standard evolutionary theory it is noteworthy that Dalley seems here to have the Genesis story in mind, and while it is true that in more recent centuries people in fact did explain fossils by appeal to a

massive flood, it was in the light of Genesis, which most people at that time believed (i.e. before Hutton and Lyell).

Diffusion

Here the proposal is that a flood story from an original literary source is diffused among various people groups over very early centuries, and becomes embellished along the way.²⁶ This view, which has become the general wisdom in scholarly circles, generally sees a historical core to what is basically a legend, in turn disseminated to surrounding cultures.

First, as to a possible historical core. Georges Roux, in his 1964 discussion of the ‘flood legend’, outlines two theories of its origin: the first of an exceptionally severe river inundation, stretched “by oriental imagination” to a universal deluge; the other to some sort of tsunami or hurricane hitting Mesopotamia. But then he mentions two difficulties:

“But these theories do not account for two important facts: (a) the Sumero-Babylonian as well as the biblical stories put the stress on heavy rains rather than on river

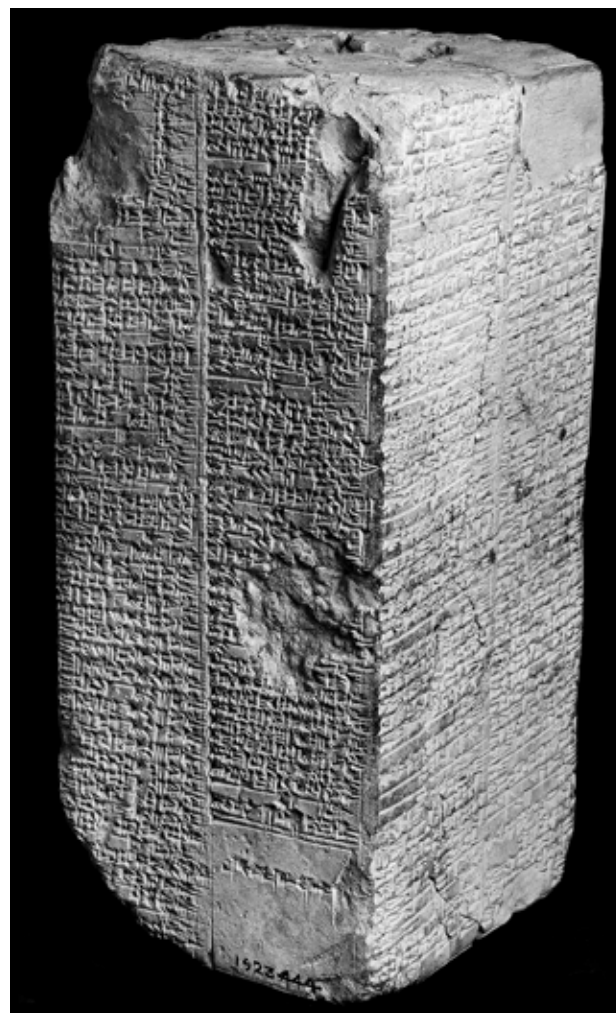


Figure 3. Sumerian King List (Ashmolean Museum, Oxford).

inundation, and (b) the legend of the flood does not belong only to the Near East, but also to a vast number of countries in all parts of the world.”²⁷

His conclusion: the flood is either pure myth or it really existed “but in very early prehistoric ages”. He cannot decide.

However, in his revised edition of 1992 Roux reaches a different conclusion:

“But if there never was in Mesopotamia (and elsewhere) a cataclysmic Flood of biblical dimensions, what then was at the root of the Mesopotamian legend? Several theories have been put forward However, none of these theories is satisfactory or even relevant, for it appears clearly from the cuneiform texts that the Flood was not a natural accident but a deliberate attempt by the gods at getting rid of mankind.”²⁸

As to the Flood as a specific event in historical time:

“... it might have been introduced into the (Sumerian King) List by the scribes of Shuruppak who had witnessed two or three simultaneous disasters in that city around 2,900 BC If this were the case, then the Flood-event would merge with the Flood-myth, but of these two tales it is the myth that has survived and will never cease to fascinate us and arouse our curiosity.”²⁹

So the Flood event and the flood myth were for Roux (in 1992) two different things, and clearly for him the Genesis account belongs in the latter category, since that, along with Gilgamesh, has survived so as “to fascinate us”. No mention this time of heavy rain, nor a tsunami, nor of flood legends in tribal folklore around the world, since these would suggest a separate “Flood-event”, which he has come to reject. What then has brought about this change of mind? Not the cuneiform texts he cites, since they were already known in 1964. It can only be due to a change of mood in the intervening thirty years, as the evolutionary, uniformitarian, and anti-biblical mindset, which both Dalley and Roux mention and to which they subscribe, has across the academic world hardened into rigid dogma.³⁰

In refutation of this view:

1. It should be immediately obvious at the outset that Roux’s explanation in 1992 is, like Dalley’s above, pure speculation. To be sure, there were various river floods in the early history of Sumer (at Shuruppak, Kish, and elsewhere), and the archaeological records attest to this in the various early flood deposits in Lower Mesopotamia, but what have these to do with the Great Deluge tradition? Here Roux and most others surreptitiously adduce speculation as evidence, which needs no refutation.
2. While dissemination of the Gilgamesh story is evident from the fact that it has turned up in widely dispersed locations,³¹ despite the various versions and recensions, wherever it is attested it remains—quite recognizably—the *Gilgamesh Epic*!³² Hence to make the diffusion explanation stick, the advocates of this view need to establish firmly this ‘borrowing’ theme, whereby the

deluge motif is adapted and ‘morphed’ into different literary guises in different cultures, or else the explanation collapses. In regard to the biblical account this cannot be done (see previous article); and in regard to other flood traditions, while there is indeed a common and distinct set of motifs, there are still so many variants between them that diffusion from a literary source is highly implausible, to say the least.

Universal flood traditions

This latter point leads us to examine the widespread flood traditions: stories of a great deluge which occur across the world in tribal folklore. These are commonly explained as due to the prior influence of Christian missionaries, a view which Dalley asserts—without evidence—as follows:

“Where Flood stories are found in other parts of the world, missionaries and early Christian travellers may have disseminated them; there is no reason to suppose that they are indigenous.”³³

While this is really a separate issue deserving of a full-scale treatment in its own right, some summary points can be made:

1. The agnostic Sir James G. Frazer in his *The Great Flood: A Handbook of World Flood Myths*³⁴ seems to have been the first to propose this explanation (along with others), following the familiar “look-alike, therefore-dependent” line of argument, i.e. a tribal story looks like the Genesis story, therefore it is dependent on Genesis, the vehicle being Christian missionaries. The previous discussion has shown how misleading this type of argument can be. However, these stories come for the most part from tribes hitherto unreached by Christian missionaries, as various mission agencies will attest. Furthermore, missionaries both past and present concentrate on the specifically Christian themes of Christ as the Saviour from sin, His incarnation, His death and Resurrection, and the world to come. While the Genesis creation and Flood do figure, they do so in conjunction with these other themes, not in isolation.
2. Only stories relating to Gen. 1–11 are found in tribal traditions; nothing in tribal lore relates versions of stories from later in the Bible. Carl Wieland makes this point succinctly:

“But these indigenous stories are almost without exception telling of biblical events that *preceded* the time in biblical history when people groups lost contact with each other. The stories are either about creation, sometimes mentioning things like the temptation and the Fall, or about the dispersion of languages, or (mostly) about the great Flood But if the stories of pre-Babel biblical matters came from missionaries, one would expect at least as many stories of later events and characters.”³⁵

The best and simplest explanation of both the Near Eastern flood traditions and those in tribal folklore on a wider scale is therefore that of tradition, preserving memory of an actual event, garbled and corrupted in tribal folklore, but preserved in original integrity in Scripture. Currid states this point well in regard to the Near Eastern:

“If the Biblical stories are true, one would be surprised not to find some references to these truths in extra-biblical literature. And indeed in ancient Near Eastern myth we do see some kernels of historical truth. However, pagan authors vulgarized or bastardized those truths . . . Fact became myth. From this angle the common references would appear to support rather than deny the historicity of the Biblical story.”³⁶

Conclusion

In general conclusion, a clear deluge tradition existed in Ancient Mesopotamia from very early times, as evidenced by the Ziusudra Epic and the Nippur Tablet, but with time this was corrupted and garbled by polytheistic and mythological superstition, as seen in the *Atrahasis Epic*. Later still this tradition was incorporated—rather unconvincingly—into a larger, conflated epic occupied with the afterlife and the netherworld, which we know as the *Gilgamesh Epic*.

Meanwhile, the Genesis story is *sui generis* and primary, occupied with relating early history in the overarching plan of redemption of the true and living God. Although there are points of contact with the Mesopotamian tradition, since they both emanate from the same event, the similarities are superficial while the differences are profound.

References

- Heidel, A., *The Gilgamesh Epic and Old Testament Parallels*, University of Chicago, pp.163–164, 1949. Dilmun was to the ancients a real place—identical with the modern Bahrain in the Persian Gulf. However, Dilmun as a definable geographical place is not part of the mythological scheme. In *Enki and Ninhursag* Dilmun is a place of ideal reality removed from our time-space world.
- And preserved by Polyhistor in the 1st century BC. See Heidel, ref. 1, pp. 116–118. Polyhistor’s work is lost, but portions are preserved in Eusebius, *Chronicles*, and *Praeparatio Evangelica*. Josephus also refers to Berossus in *Antiquities*, I.iii.6. See discussion in Lambert, W.G. and Millard, A.R., *Atra-Hasis: The Babylonian Story of the Flood*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, pp. 134–137, 1969.
- One can see this faddish mindset in the subsequent ‘Pan-Babylonian’ school, which dominated Ancient Near Eastern studies for decades thereafter.
- Currid, J.D., *Against the Gods*, Wheaton, Crossway, Kindle version, location 1000, 2013.
- A full discussion with translation and notes in Lambert and Millard, ref. 2. This work also discusses other Mesopotamian flood texts, albeit not the *Gilgamesh Epic*.
- The shape and dimensions are obscured due to a break in the tablet, but in Tablet III, § vi, “boat” translates the word *makurru*, which denotes normally a (reed) cargo vessel shaped like a gibbous moon. (Dalley, S., *Myths from Mesopotamia*, Oxford, p. 38, n. 43, 1988).
- Dalley, ref. 6, p. 32f. The Akkadian reads *en-lil id-pi-ra ú-ša-aq-bi bi-i-ša*: Tablet III.iii.39.
- H.V. Hilprecht, The Earliest Version of the Babylonian Deluge Story; in: Hilprecht, H.V. (Ed.), *The Babylonian Expedition of the University of Pennsylvania*, Series D: Researches and Treatises, University of Pennsylvania, pp. 33–65 & Pl. C.B.M.13532, 1910. Featured also in Lambert and Millard, ref. 2, pp. 126–127.
- Save in Heidel, ref. 1, pp.105–106.
- CAD, vol. H, entry *hurūšu*, p. 256, col. ii. It reads instead, [...] *ani mala ibaššū lu su(?)*-up-pu-lu lu pu-ut-tu <ú> hu-ru-šu. However, *šu* is highly doubtful, likewise *lu* at the end of the same word, while the reading as a whole makes no sense. Significantly, Lambert and Millard, op. cit., p. 127, who offer *lu kin ubbuku* ..., make no attempt at a translation of this line, apart from *mala ibaššū*.
- CAD, entry *abūbu*, p. 77.
- Akkadian *apaššar* (G present, 1st ps. sing.), and *lukīn* (G precativ, 1st ps. sing.) resp.
- Cf. the “overthrow” (הִכְתָּה) of Sodom and Gomorrah in Gen.19:29.
- Lambert and Millard, ref. 2, p. 126, do read it this way, but then, as noted above (n. 39), give no translation.
- Lambert and Millard, ref. 2, p. 126, read the sign UD as *tam*, yielding *ra-bi-tam* in keeping with a perceived accusative case. The basic meaning, however, remains.
- Atrahasis* Tablet III, obv. i; *Gilgamesh* Tablet XI.25ff.
- See Hilprecht’s discussion, ref. 8, pp. 52–55, which remains valid.
- Kuhrt, A., *The Ancient Near East c. 3000–330 BC*, vol. I, Routledge, p. 99, 1995. Lambert and Millard, ref. 2, p. 126, n.1, cite G.A. Barton and E.I. Gordon as arguing for a later, Middle Babylonian date. While possibly true of the extant fragment, this could well be a copy of a much earlier text.
- Kramer, S.N., *The Sumerians*, University of Chicago, p. 328, 1963.
- See discussion in Kramer, ref. 19, pp. 45–49.
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- Wiseman, D.J., *Archaeology and Scripture, The Westminster Theological J. XXXIII*:141–142, 1970; emphasis my own.
- Dalley, ref. 6, p. 7.
- See discussion in Oppenheim, A.L., *Ancient Mesopotamia*, University of Chicago, p. 248f, 1964. He observes how lexical texts and ancient reference material describe the appearance of stones and plants, “but they should not be adduced as evidence of scientific interest in mineralogy or botany”. Also Jacobsen, T., in Frankfort, H. *et al.*, *The Intellectual Adventure of Ancient Man*, University of Chicago, pp. 125–135, 1946, republ. 1977, argues that the Mesopotamian worldview, which never saw the world in subject-object terms, never developed science as we have known it in the Western world. Oswalt, J.N., *The Bible among the Myths*, Zondervan, Rapids, MI, p. 53, 2009 makes the same point.
- See entry “Flood”, in: Black, J. and Green, A., *Gods, Demons, and Symbols of Ancient Mesopotamia*, British Museum Press, pp. 83–84, 1992.
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- Roux, G., *Ancient Iraq*, 3rd edn, Penguin Books, p. 112, 1992.
- Roux, ref. 28, pp. 113–114.
- This change of mood is noted also by Oswalt, ref. 25, pp. 11–14.
- Including both Palestine and Ugarit. For the former, i.e. the Megiddo Fragment, see George, A.R., *The Babylonian Gilgamesh Epic*, vol. I, Oxford, pp. 339–347, 2003; for the latter see Lambert and Millard, ref. 2, pp. 131–133. However, the latter text is so fragmentary it could be seen as part of *Atrahasis*.
- Dalley relates the ‘Tale of Bulquiya’ in the *Arabian Nights*, which bears a close similarity to the *Gilgamesh* story, but minus the flood-story component. See Dalley, ref. 6, pp. 47–48.
- Dalley, ref. 6, p. 8.
- This sequel to his *The Golden Bough* (first published 1890) grew from a lecture in 1916, and was published in his *Folklore in the Old Testament*, 1918, chap. 4. Now available in comprehensive reprint, *The Great Flood*, Create Space Independent Publishing Platform, 2013.
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Murray R. Adamthwaite graduated from Melbourne University in 1997 with a Ph.D. in Near Eastern History and Languages, and serves as sessional lecturer for the Centre for Classics and Archaeology. He also is Tutor in Old Testament with Tyndale College, Hunters Hill, NSW