

The Great Flood and the Exodus

The Great Flood

The story of the Great Flood takes the form of divine punishment for human sin. In the Sumerian myth, the flood narrative describes how the number of humans, who once enjoyed infinite lifespans, rapidly increased, causing excessive noise. The gods, after consultation, decided to reduce the number of humans through a flood, and subsequently limited human lifespans to solve the pressing issue. In the Sumerian myth, the role analogous to Noah is played by Atrahasis. It can be inferred that the flood story in the Old Testament was adapted by the Jews into their own narrative after hearing the Sumerian myths during their Babylonian exile. The story of Noah's Ark was also recorded after the Jews returned from Babylonian exile, likely after the 5th century BCE.

According to Genesis 7:2–3 regarding the number of animals loaded onto the Ark, Noah is commanded to take seven pairs of every clean animal, one pair of every unclean animal, and seven pairs of birds as well. However, immediately afterward, Genesis 7:8–9 states, "Of clean animals and of animals that are not clean, and of birds and everything that creeps on the ground, two and two, male and female, went into the ark with Noah, as God had commanded." Even within the same chapter of a book that supposedly records the words of an all-knowing God, the contents are contradictory.

without knowing its actual height. Had they known, they would not have claimed that the mountain was submerged under just 7 meters of water. Mount Everest, the highest point on Earth, is 8,848 meters tall. Therefore, to maintain the authority of being a divine record, the Old Testament should have stated that the water rose above even that.

"To submerge Mount Everest in water would require 4.4 billion cubic kilometers of water.

However, the Earth's atmosphere cannot hold that amount in the form of vapor. If it did:

Atmospheric pressure would rise 840 times higher than today;

99.9% of the atmosphere would be water vapor, making breathing impossible for humans or animals;

At temperatures where humans can survive, this mixture cannot remain gaseous;

The ratio of nitrogen and oxygen would fall below 0.1%, and the thick clouds would prevent almost all sunlight from reaching the surface.

In conclusion, Earth simply cannot support a flood of this magnitude."¹

The Exodus

"Around 1250 BCE [the time of Ramesses II, the third Pharaoh of Egypt's 19th Dynasty, born 1303 BCE and reigned 1279–1213 BCE — editor's note], the Israelites were enslaved in Egypt. When the burden of Pharaoh's oppression and forced labor became unbearable, they cried out to Yahweh. In response, the Lord Yahweh delivered them through Moses. Through this 'Exodus from Egypt,' the Israelites had a vivid experience of the living, saving God."²

Based on this narrative and the record that the Israelites wandered the desert for 40 years before entering the Promised Land, most films depict the Exodus occurring at this time.



However, 1 Kings 6:1 states, "In the 480th year after the Israelites came out of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, he began to build the temple." This suggests the Exodus occurred around 1446 BCE. This differs by 200 years from the Catholic Church's interpretation. If the Catholic view is correct, Solomon would have had to be reigning in Jerusalem around 770 BCE — which is historically implausible.

Moses' Exodus from Egypt lacks historical evidence and presents unrealistic numbers and durations while insisting it be accepted as historical fact. Exodus 12:40 mentions that the Israelites stayed in Egypt for 430 years. This number aligns with Ezekiel 4, which refers to 390 years plus 40 years. However, Exodus 6:16–20 shows that Aaron and Moses were the great-grandchildren of Levi, who had migrated to Egypt. According to this record, they returned in only four generations.

Genesis 15:13 says that Abram's descendants will live as strangers and slaves in a foreign land for 400 years. But Genesis 15:16 also states, "In the fourth generation, your descendants will come back here." These conflicting figures highlight textual inconsistency.

Scholars estimate the Exodus may have occurred between the 14th and 12th centuries BCE.

However, during that period, Canaan was part of Egyptian territory. Thus, the idea that the Israelites escaped from Egyptian rule is inaccurate. A more accurate description would be that they moved around within different areas of Egyptian-controlled territory. Also, the Book of Joshua, which describes the conquest of the Promised Land, makes no mention of Egyptians residing in Canaan — a puzzling omission.³

According to Numbers 1:45–47, the number of Israelite men eligible for battle, excluding Levites, was 603,550. Including women, children, and the elderly, the total population would easily exceed 2 million. These people supposedly wandered in the desert for 40 years, sustained by manna provided by Yahweh.

Genesis 46:26–27 states, “All those who went to Egypt with Jacob—those who were his direct descendants, not counting his sons’ wives—numbered sixty-six persons. With the two sons who had been born to Joseph in Egypt, the members of Jacob’s family who went to Egypt were seventy in all.” Similarly, Exodus 1:5 says, “The descendants of Jacob numbered seventy in all.”

Exodus 1:1–4 lists eleven sons of Jacob who entered Egypt, including Levi. Even generously assuming large families, their total number would not have exceeded 1,000 people. If their stay in Egypt lasted four generations—at most about 150 years, or 430 years at the extreme—it’s inconceivable that their population could have increased to over 2 million during that time.

References

1. Evolution vs. Creationism: An Introduction, Eugenie C. Scott, 2004: 150 (Soroka and Nelson 1983: 135)
2. Together on the Journey, Pastoral Office of the Archdiocese of Seoul, Catholic Publishing House, 1995: 43
3. The Laughing Jesus, Timothy Freke & Peter Gandy, Three Rivers Press, 2005: 29