**Comparison Of Flood Accounts**

Various cultures have an account of some supernatural being or beings destroying humanity with a small number of surviving humans. Many of these accounts include a flood as the means of eradication. The Epic of Gilgamesh and the book of Genesis include one such account each. A first person perspective is used by the narrator of the story in the Epic of Gilgamesh whereas the Genesis tale is told in 3rd person. In the Epic of Gilgamesh the Great Gods have a change of heart and decide to destroy humanity uttering an oath not to inform the recipients. The Genesis narrative describes the Lord deciding to destroy humanity due to its wickedness but he provides a means to sustain a part of humanity by informing a human that he did not view as wicked of his intentions.

The design of Utnapishtim’s boat is a design more comparable to a skyscraper with a square base the length of a field and approximately 180 feet high with each of 7 decks individually around 25 feet tall. The description of the Genesis Ark is approximately the length, beam, and height (top deck of main body) of a modern Cruiser with 3 decks each around 15 feet tall and the interior divided into rooms. Utnapishtim gathers whatever animals are in his field along with his family, friends, and servants. Noah gathers two of each animal as well as every kind of food. The ark seems to have had a balanced male to female ratio unless Noah’s sons had multiple wives each. With the inclusion of the servants Utnapishtim’s craft seems to contain more men than women, “All the living beings that I have . . . , and the draftsmen.”

Wind is the focus of the actual storm account of The Epic of Gilgamesh. Erupting water from the earth and sky are pivotal to the storm in the Genesis story. Both accounts use birds as a means of discerning water level versus dry land. The Sumerian Gods are divided in purpose and fickle. They inflict a flood which will without help destroy humanity unless one of their number provides aide but after the flood they are easily moved to be compassionate to mankind and even bless two humans with eternal life on a whim. The deity in the Genesis story sticks to his plan and after seeing the results is moved not to cause the same level of destruction and blesses the men that were aboard the Ark.

Both tales indicate Patriarchal societies, a division of measure and early mathematics as well as the presence of tools for building the water floating vessels. The picture of the Genesis society invokes small familial groups with a knowledge of crops such as olives that had a Monotheistic faith. A Polytheistic culture that had a social hierarchy with frequent social interactions outside ones family is depicted in the Epic of Gilgamesh.