

## The Epic of Gilgamesh

Read the portion of the Gilgamesh story in which Utanapishtim tells the flood story. (Go to <http://www.ancienttexts.org/library/mesopotamian/gilgamesh/> and click on Tablet XI.) Then, answer the following questions:

1. Summarize what happened in this story.
2. What does this story tell us about Sumerian religion – about their gods and beliefs?
3. Does this sound like another story you may have heard before?

Next, read Genesis chapters 6-9, the story of Noah and the flood, and answer these questions:

1. Summarize what happened in this story.
2. Can you describe some of the parallels between the story of Noah and the flood and the story that Utanapishtim tells in the Epic of Gilgamesh?
3. What are some of the differences between the two stories? Are the differing belief structures – one polytheistic, one monotheistic – the cause of some of the differences?
4. Why do you think two different cultures, one polytheistic, one monotheistic, would have had and preserved such similar stories?