

# The Global Flood: A Case Study in Mormon Truth Claims

How a single story reveals a fundamental conflict  
between modern science and foundational scripture.

## The story of Noah's Ark is a cherished childhood lesson.

We learn about Noah's righteousness, the call to build an ark, and the promise of saving the animals, two-by-two. It's often presented as a story of salvation and a new beginning.



**“ All flesh died that moved upon the earth, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of beast, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man. ”**

— Genesis 7:21

# The Genesis account is a later version of an older Babylonian myth.

Scholars widely agree that the Noah story mirrors the much older Epic of Gilgamesh (c. 1800 BCE) so closely that a connection is undeniable. Genesis, in its current form, was composed during or after the Babylonian exile (c. 6th-5th century BCE), centuries later.

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“The flood story in Genesis mirrors Gilgamesh so closely that few doubt that the account in Genesis is derived from Gilgamesh.”

— Professor Andrew George, Babylonian Scholar

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## **Epic of Gilgamesh (c. 1800 BCE)**

A god reveals a secret plan to flood the world.

A man is told to demolish his house and build a boat.

The boat is loaded with relatives, craftsmen, and animals.

A great storm lasts for 6 days and 7 nights.

The boat lands on a mountain (Mount Nemus).

A dove, then a raven are sent out to see if the waters have receded.

The hero offers a sacrifice to the gods.

## **Genesis (c. 600 BCE)**

God instructs Noah to build an ark.

Noah is commanded to build an ark of specific dimensions.

The ark is loaded with Noah's family and pairs of every animal.

A great rain lasts for 40 days and 40 nights.

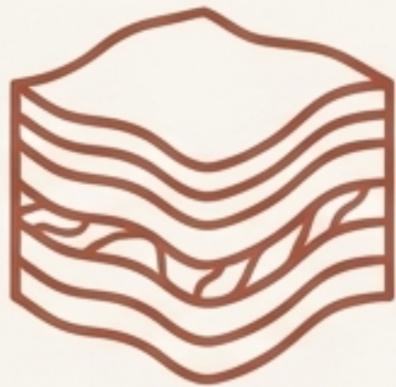
The ark rests on the mountains of Ararat.

A raven, then a dove are sent out to see if the waters have receded.

Noah builds an altar and offers a sacrifice to God.

# Modern science overwhelmingly concludes a global flood never happened.

The evidence against a worldwide flood from approximately 4,500 years ago is not from one field, but from many. The consensus is so complete that even the Church's top apologists concede the point.



## Geology

No evidence of a worldwide sedimentary layer. Mountains like the Sierra Nevadas and Appalachians show vastly different ages of erosion.



## Biology/Genetics

No evidence of a species-wide genetic bottleneck 4,500 years ago. Impossible logistics of gathering all species (kangaroos, polar bears, etc.) and repopulating the globe.



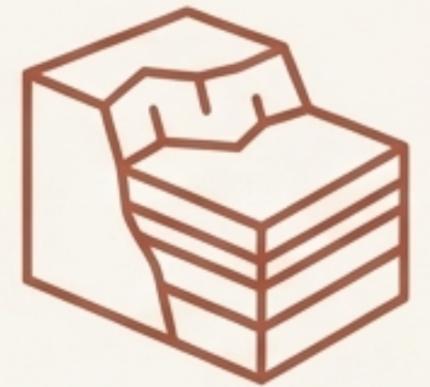
## Archaeology

Continuous, uninterrupted civilizations existed before, during, and after the supposed flood date (c. 2400 BCE), including Egyptians, Sumerians, and the Norte Chico in Peru.



## Dendrochronology

Tree ring data shows continuous records going back over 10,000 years with no disruption corresponding to a global flood.



## Glaciology

Ice cores from Greenland and Antarctica show annual layers dating back over 40,000 years with no evidence of a flood event.

Even Mormonism's primary apologetic group acknowledges the scientific problem

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“The story of a global deluge then appears to be **at complete odds with scientific data.**”

FAIR Mormon, “Noah's Flood/Global or local”

**For most of Christianity, this isn't a problem.  
For Mormonism, it's a crisis.**

Mainstream Christian and Jewish faiths can interpret the flood story as an ideological myth, a powerful allegory without needing it to be literal history.

*Why can't Mormonism do the same?*

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Because Joseph Smith and subsequent prophets didn't just reaffirm the story—they built foundational, testable doctrines directly upon it, cementing it as literal history in unique ways.

# Mormonism's foundational scriptures require a literal, global flood.

**Scripture:** Book of Mormon (Ether 6:5-7)

**Claim:** Describes America as a "choice land" preserved by God after "the waters had receded from off the face of this land."

**Implication:** Requires the Americas to be wiped clean of all inhabitants to be preserved for the Jaredites and Lehites.

**Scripture:** Joseph Smith's Revelation (D&C 116)

**Claim:** Identifies Adam-ondi-Ahman in Missouri as the place where Adam lived.

**Implication:** Means Noah's family began in America. To get to the Old World where the ark landed (Mt. Ararat), a global flood is the only mechanism.

**Scripture:** Book of Moses & Book of Abraham

**Claim:** Joseph Smith's "translations" expand on Genesis, doubling down on the flood's literality and adding new details, such as Egypt being settled while still "under water."

**Implication:** Locks in the flood as literal, revealed history.

**Needs a  
Global Flood.**

# Modern prophets have consistently taught the flood as a literal, global event.

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The flood was baptism of the earth... if the water did not cover the entire earth then it was not baptized, for the baptism of the Lord is not pouring or sprinkling.

— Joseph F. Smith

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To guarantee such sanctity [for America], the very surface of the earth was rent... The great continents separated and the ocean rushed in to surround them. The promised place was set apart without habitation.

— Jeffrey R. Holland (1976)

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The Garden of Eden was in Missouri. Noah was taken to the Old World by the flood. This teaching was given by Joseph Smith and is still accepted as true doctrine. Given this teaching, Mormons have to accept the flood as a global phenomenon.

— Bruce R. McConkie

# The Apologetic Response: Shrinking the Target

Faced with overwhelming evidence, apologetics often reframe the original claim. A massive, testable event is reinterpreted as a smaller, localized event that avoids scientific scrutiny.



A Literal Flood  
Covering the  
Entire Earth

● “A flood which  
covered *his* world.”

“What the Church teaches is that Noah was a real prophet and that he was commanded to save his family along with a number of animals in an ark from a flood which covered his world.”

— FAIR Mormon

# The “local flood” solution breaks Mormonism’s own scriptures.

While a local flood might seem like a plausible compromise, it cannot account for the Church's unique doctrinal claims.

## Doctrinal Problems

1. How does a local flood in the Old World “wipe the Americas clean” to preserve them for the Book of Mormon peoples?
2. If the Garden of Eden was in Missouri, how does a local flood in the Middle East get Noah from America to Mount Ararat?

## The Apologetic Gymnastics

To solve this, FAIR Mormon suggests Joseph Smith's revelation about Adam-ondi-Ahman was merely a “symbolic act intended to sacralize the land,” directly contradicting its status as a literal, historical prophetic teaching.

# The deflection: “Other churches believe it too.”

## **FAIR Mormon Quote:**

“Although this criticism can be directed at the LDS Church, it is really directed at anyone who believes in a literal reading of the Old and New Testament.”

## **The Flaw in this Logic:**

Mormonism’s central claim is that it is *not* like other churches. It claims to be the “one true church” with living prophets who receive direct revelation from God to correct the errors of traditional Christianity. If its prophets repeat and expand upon the same errors, what is their value?

# The Bait and Switch: “You don’t have to believe it to be a good member.”

“Some still believe in a global flood... some believe in a local flood... some believe there was no flood at all. People of different views can be members in good standing.”

## The Unanswered Question

This isn’t about membership status. It’s about whether the church’s foundational claims are true. If the flood—a story central to the Book of Mormon, Book of Moses, Book of Abraham, and teachings of modern prophets—is false, it implies the entire prophetic model that produced these claims is unreliable.



Can the house stand if the foundation is gone?

# The Weight of the Evidence

The story of the Global Flood, when examined layer by layer, is more than just a scientific problem. It is a case study in how the Mormon prophetic model created tangible, testable claims that are now demonstrably false.

## Mythological Layer



The Genesis story is derived from older Babylonian myths.

## Scientific Layer



A global flood is contradicted by geology, biology, archaeology, and more.

## Scriptural Layer



Mormonism's unique scriptures lock in the flood as literal, global history, making metaphorical interpretations doctrinally impossible.

## Apologetic Layer



The attempts to resolve the conflict create even deeper contradictions with foundational doctrine.

This is not about tearing down faith, but about providing the evidence necessary for informed consent. The facts are on the table.