

Sumerian King List

Creation: “After the kingship descended from heaven...”

Generations: “The kingship was in **Eridu**.” Eight kings are listed in five cities: Eridu, **Bad-Tibira**, **Larak**, **Sippar**, and **Shuruppak**. (**Atrahasis** is listed as the king of Shuruppak, prior to the flood.)

Flood: “Then the flood swept over.”

Generations: “After the flood had swept over, and the kingship had descended from heaven...”

Atrahasis Epic

Creation: After 3,600 years of hard work, the gods create mankind to do the work for them. They sacrifice a lesser god, mix his flesh and blood with clay, and bake the the mixture in an oven.

Generations: After 1200 years man’s noise angers **Enlil**, and he has a lesser god produce a plague. **Enki** gives **Atrahasis** advice; the plague stops. 1200 years pass; man’s noise angers Enlil, and he has a lesser god produce a disease. Enki helps Atrahasis again. 1200 years pass, man’s noise anger’s Enlil again, and he makes Enki produce a flood. Enki advises Atrahasis to build a boat, and fill it with his family and every type of animal.

Flood/Ark: “Like a wild ass screaming the winds howled, the darkness was total, there was no sun...” **Inanna** weeps. The dead bodies “clog the drains like dragonflies.” After seven days...

Generations: ...the flood subsides, and Atrahasis offers a sacrifice. **Ninhursag** swears she will never forget the flood. Enki persuades Enlil to punish man by making one-third of all births unsuccessful.

Eridu Genesis

Creation: The heavens and earth are created out of the chaos and the sea. God uses pillars to raise the fruitful place (earth) up between the liquid waters and the waters in the atmosphere. The gods create man to farm their land, herd their animals, and worship them.

Generations: Cities and kingships are created: **Eridu**, **Bad-Tibera**, **Larak**, **Sippar**, and **Shuruppak**. [*Lost account of the Antediluvian rulers; Enlil’s anger at man’s noise, and his decision to destroy man through flood*] **Nintur** and **Inanna** grieve. A god warns **Ziusudra** about the flood. [*Lost account of Enki’s advice to build a boat and fill it with pairs of living things; Ziusudra’s compliance*].

Flood/Ark: “All the evil winds, all stormy winds gathered into one and with them, then, the flood was sweeping over the cities... for seven days and seven nights.”

Generations: The sun comes out. Ziusudra sacrifices before the sun, then before **An** and **Enlil**. They make him ruler over small animals and the seed of mankind and grant him life, like a god’s.

Sumerian King List	Atrahasis Epic	Eridu Genesis	Genesis 1-11
Creation • Kingship comes down from heaven	Creation • Humans created to work for gods	Creation • Cities instituted	Creation (1-2)
Genealogies • Series of eight kings in five cities	Alienation • Noisy humans alienate deities	Alienation • Alienation implied • Cities and kingships created	Alienation (2-3) Genealogies (4-5)
Flood	Flood / Ark	Flood / Ark	Flood / Ark (6-8)
New start Genealogies	New start	New start	New start (8-9) Genealogies (10-11)
Modern times*	Modern times • Implied	Modern times • Implied	Modern times (11)

* "Modern times" refers to the beginning of the second millennium BCE.

Chart based on K. A. Kitchen, *On the Reliability of the Old Testament* (tbl. 34, p. 424).

Online sources for ancient texts:

- *Sumerian King List*: www-etcs1.orient.ox.ac.uk/section2/tr211.htm
- *Atrahasis Epic*: faculty.gvsu.edu/websterm/Atrahasi.htm
- *Eridu Genesis*: www.piney.com/EriduGen.html