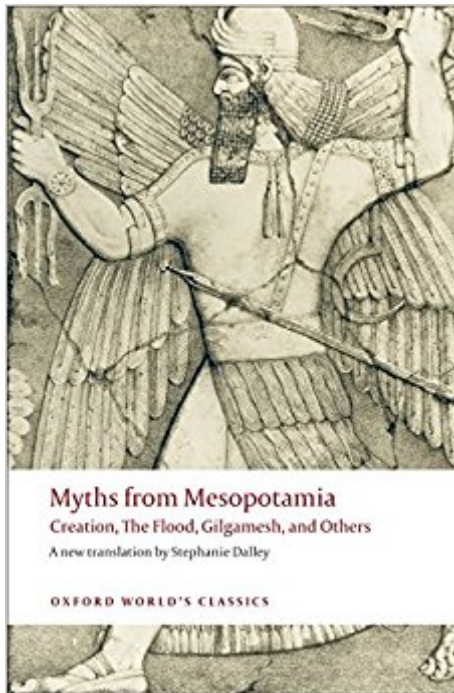




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# Myths From Mesopotamia: Creation, The Flood, Gilgamesh, And Others (Oxford World's Classics)



## Synopsis

The ancient civilization of Mesopotamia thrived between the rivers Tigris and Euphrates over 4,000 years ago. The myths collected here, originally written in cuneiform on clay tablets, include parallels with the biblical stories of the Creation and the Flood, and the famous Epic of Gilgamesh, the tale of a man of great strength, whose heroic quest for immortality is dashed through one moment of weakness. Recent developments in Akkadian grammar and lexicography mean that this new translation--complete with notes, a glossary of deities, place-names, and key terms, and illustrations of the mythical monsters featured in the text--will replace all other versions. About the Series: For over 100 years Oxford World's Classics has made available the broadest spectrum of literature from around the globe. Each affordable volume reflects Oxford's commitment to scholarship, providing the most accurate text plus a wealth of other valuable features, including expert introductions by leading authorities, voluminous notes to clarify the text, up-to-date bibliographies for further study, and much more.

## Book Information

Series: Oxford World's Classics

Paperback: 368 pages

Publisher: Oxford University Press; Revised ed. edition (February 15, 2009)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0199538360

ISBN-13: 978-0199538362

Product Dimensions: 7.7 x 0.9 x 5.1 inches

Shipping Weight: 8.8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.2 out of 5 stars 44 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #4,404 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #3 in [Ancient Mesopotamia](#) > [Books](#) > [Textbooks](#) >

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## Customer Reviews

"Fresh, authoritative English translations from the sources."--Classical World "A careful, scholarly edition of a variety of important texts from ancient Mesopotamia. Dalley's scrupulous care in showing lacunae makes this a harder narrative for classroom use but her annotations are thorough and her insights illuminating."--Nick Humez, Montclair State University "[Dalley] obviously controls

the material as a scholar."--Comparative Civilizations Review

Stephanie Dalley is Shillito Fellow in Assyriology at the Oriental Institute, Oxford and a Senior Research Fellow, Somerville College, Oxford.

Continuing my exploration of ancient mythology I got this book, which contains most (if not all) of the major myths from Mesopotamian mythology. I am rather new to this sort of literature (save the mandatory reading of Greek myths as a high school freshman) and not a language scholar, so I can't really comment on quality of translation. However, as pure reading material, I found the Canaanite myths a little more interesting. The source material for these is also a great deal more fragmented, so there are frequent issues of comprehensibility (but not in macrocosm). The big story that probably everyone will recognize (but not necessarily have read) is 'The Epic of Gilgamesh.' It certainly was a great read, but there were other stories in here that I found more engaging. For one, the story of Atrahasis, was a good one, relating a story of creation as well as one similar to the story of Noah in Genesis. I also found the Epic of Creation to be fascinating, definitely more so than the ones found in the Bible. It was also the most intact/complete out of everything in here. The book also has different variations on Ishtar's descent into the Underworld, Nergal and Ereshkigal. However, my absolute favorite was Anzu, the bird-god who stole the Tablet of Destinies. The last story in the book, Erra and Ishum, was also interesting in that it reminded me a lot of prophecies of Israel's destruction in the second half of the Old Testament. Overall, as a collection of Mesopotamian myths, there's probably not a better book than this one. There are plenty of notes on the translations as well as chapter introductions which give an overview of what you're about to read and the nature of the sources. There is also a glossary of terms and select bibliography. I can highly recommend this to anyone interested in ancient mythology.

Stephanie Dalley should be commended on this work. Her comments and notes are as valuable as the myths themselves and I prefer reading the Epic of Gilgamesh in her work over Andrew Georges' the Epic of Gilgamesh which seems to have been influenced more by the Joseph Campbell hero archetype. I would agree that this is the most up to date translation and in Stephanie Dalley's own words, "such huge strides have been made in our understanding of the cuneiform script and the Akkadian language during the past three decades that new translations need no justification."

This is a fascinating look at all of the myths from Sumer and Babylon that have been found and

translated. If you are curious about ancient myths this is a great book. The stories are easily read and understood and each has an introduction explaining when and where it was found. Here you'll find Gilgamesh, Marduk, Atrahasis, and Utnapishtim, among others. At the back of the book is a complete glossary of all the gods and heroes of Mesopotamia. I highly recommend this book.

For a course on Mesopotamian Religion I read most of the myths in this book. Each myth has a short introduction and frequent interesting and helpful footnotes. Although I am not an expert in this area, I thought the translations were easy to read. I also appreciated the way the stories were laid out. I also appreciated a glossary of god names, places, and key terms at the back and referred to it frequently. The myths included in the book cover many of the most essential myths of that era. As an aside, I would not attempt to read these myths without the guidance of a class and teacher. They frequently take study and rereading many times to get the story. They're between 3000 and 4000 years old and really need some solid background information in order to fully understand them, as well. Also, keep in mind that many of these stories were meant to be chanted or otherwise performed at public functions, so that simple reading them on the page probably doesn't do them full justice. Good luck!!

The translation of these Babylonian epics which parallel with Genesis 1-11 is easy to read with a wonderful concise introduction to the literature. Dalley makes accessible the Epic of Gilgamesh, Atra-hasis, Descent of Ishtar, Nergal and Ereshkigal, Adapa, Etana, Anzu, The Creation Epic, Theogony of Dunnu, and Erra and Ishum. You'll be amazed at the literary similarities with Genesis, clearly a borrowing of cultural myths. You may just finish this in a few days, it is a very enjoyable and easy reading of primary sources. A must have for seminary students and those conducting serious Bible study.

This book might not include everything, or be the newest and best, but if you are looking to purchase just one book on the Sumerians/Akkadians/Ancient Babylon, it has to be this one. All of the popular and must read classics are here and I think these are the kinds of things we should have read in grade school, instead of some of the other useless rubbish crammed down our throats!

A scholarly translation of the Creation myth, and other Mesopotamian stories. Solid material, a must have.

I have been looking for a book like this for a few years, and now I happened upon this one. This has a lot of the myths and stories that I was wanting to read. Highly recommend to those who are interested in the subject.

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