

How the Pentateuch Was Composed: Two Floods Are Better Than One

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Examined closely, the Biblical story of Noah is rife with inconsistency, repetition and discontinuity. What brought about the Flood? How did it occur? How long did it last? Why was anyone spared? Why Noah? Why did God resolve never to destroy all life again? And how does this story fit into the larger context of Israel's pre-history recounted in the Pentateuch?

The canonical text is hopelessly ambiguous and unclear, but the source-critical analysis provides simple and compelling answers, and illustrates precisely how the documents that comprise the Pentateuch were combined into a single text.



Baruch J. Schwartz is Associate Professor of Bible at The Hebrew University of Jerusalem. His research centers on Biblical religion and law, the composition of the Pentateuch, the classical prophetic literature and medieval biblical exegesis. He is the author of *The Holiness Legislation* and the commentary on Leviticus in *The Jewish Study Bible*, as well as numerous scholarly articles on biblical topics. He is spending the current year as Visiting Professor of Religion and Judaic Studies at Princeton University.

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