

## Did humans leave (or try to leave) Africa in waves? A 1.5-million-year-old vertebrae found in Israel is challenging evolutionary canon

Scientists had debated whether ancient humans dispersed from Africa in a one-time event or in multiple waves. Now, researchers have discovered the latter scenario is more likely, based on a newly analyzed vertebra from an unknown human species. At about 1.5 million years old, the vertebra is the oldest evidence yet of ancient humans in Israel, study lead author Alon Barash, a paleoanthropologist and human anatomist at Bar-Ilan University in Israel, told Live Science.

The bone was discovered in the prehistoric site of 'Ubeidiya in the Jordan Valley, the second-oldest archaeological site outside Africa.

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Based on the bone's size, shape and other features, the researchers estimated it belonged to a 6- to 12-year-old child. However, they estimated that at death, the child would have stood about 5 feet, 1 inch (155 centimeters) and weighed about 100 to 110 pounds (45 to 50 kilograms) — as large as an 11- to 15-year-old modern human. In other words, this child would have been head and shoulders taller than its modern counterparts.

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These findings indicate that the 1.8 million-year-old fossils previously found in Dmanisi and the 1.5 million-year-old fossil in 'Ubeidiya belonged to two different kinds of hominins. As such, ancient humans likely departed Africa in more than one wave, the researchers said.

[\*\*This is an excerpt. Read the original post here.\*\*](#)