



Think & Believe

A Publication of Alpha Omega Institute

Mar./Apr. 1986: Vol. 3 No. 2

The Ark of Safety

by Dave and Mary Jo Nutting

Though the Bible documents a world-wide flood, and geology seems to bear it out, many are not willing to accept the reality of such an event. Some have suggested that it was not really a universal Flood, but perhaps just a local one. There are, however, some major problems with this view.

First, the Bible clearly indicates that it was world-wide. The Genesis account tells us that "all the high mountains everywhere under the heavens were covered," and the "water prevailed fifteen cubits higher." That's pretty inclusive! If you cover the highest mountain by 15 cubits (about 22 feet) you have covered the whole world. Water does not normally "pile up" without spreading out! Also, notice the universality indicated by the terms used: "*everywhere* under the heavens," "*all flesh* that moved on the earth perished," "He blotted out *every living thing* that was upon the face of the land" (emphasis added). The choice of words certainly indicates a world-wide catastrophe. In addition, the Genesis account indicates that the waters prevailed on the earth for 5 months and 7 more months were required for them to drain off. This would be entirely inconsistent with a local Flood.

Second, if the Flood were just a local one, there would have been no need for an ark. Noah and the animals could easily have migrated to higher ground to be saved from the Flood waters. The dimensions of the ark are also entirely unrealistic in view of a local flood, but remarkably well-suited for a world-wide cataclysm (see Spotlight on Science).

Finally, remember that the Flood came as a result of man's sin. God would have blotted out all human life from the earth, but "Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord." By grace, the Lord instructed Noah to build the ark to save himself and his family. In faith Noah obeyed and was saved from judgment. Peter (II Peter 3) compares the judgment by water in Noah's time with the coming world judgment by fire. But again, God has graciously provided an "ark" of safety. Jesus said, "Truly, truly I say to you, he who hears my word and believes Him who sent me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life" (John 5:24). "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life" (John 3:16). As Noah entered the ark by faith in obedience to God's command, so we have the opportunity today to exercise faith and come to Christ Jesus for salvation. Are you safe from the coming judgment? Have you entered the "ark?" The door is still open, but one day it will close. Don't wait too long.

A Popular Misconception of Noah's Ark!
See Spotlight on Science



NOTES & QUOTES

■ Someone has said that if the ark is discovered it will be the greatest archeological find of all time. Over the years there have been many reported sightings of a structure on Ararat that many believe to be the ark. Listen to what some early writers have said as quoted by Tim LaHaye and John Morris in *The Ark on Ararat*:

- But of this ship that grounded in Armenia some part still remains in the mountains of the Gordyæans in Armenia, and some get pitch from the ship by scraping it off and use it for amulets. (Berosus, about 257 B.C. as quoted by Polyhistor, last century B.C.)
- The Armenians call that spot the Landing-Place, for it was there that the Ark came safe to land, and they show the relics of it to this day. (Josephus, Jewish historian, 1st century A.D.)
- Do not the mountains of Armenia testify to it, where the Ark rested? And are not the remains of the Ark preserved there to this very day for our admonition? (Chrysostom, early church father, 4th century A.D.)

■ There have been numerous reports of sightings of the ark throughout history. Some of these have been clearly fictitious, but others seem quite reliable.

- Not far from Arghuri there are the ruins of St. James monastery buried by an earthquake in 1840. Many ancient relics of the epoch of Noah, many ancient manuscripts and books were lost here . . . This area should be searched. (Colonel Alexander Koor, White Russian Army, early 1900s)
- We have received from our correspondent in Trebizond news of the return of the Commissioners appointed by the Turkish Government to inquire into the reported destruction of Mosul, Ashak and Bayazid by avalanches, and to render relief to the distressed villages in the glens of the Ararat ranges . . . At last they were rewarded by the sight of a huge dark mass, protruding twenty or thirty feet from the glacier . . . It was in a good state of preservation, being painted on the outside with a dark brown pigment, and constructed of great strength . . . The projected portion seemed about forty or fifty feet in height . . . Effecting an entrance through one of the broken corners, the explorers found it filled for the greater part with ice, the interior being partitioned off into compartments about twelve or fifteen feet high . . . The Commissioners, one of whom was an Englishman, Captain Gascoyne, formerly

attached to the British Embassy in this city, and well known as a scientific investigator, are fully confident that it is the Ark of Noah, and they support the position by maintaining that, having been enveloped in snow and frozen, it has been kept in a state of perfect preservation. (News release from the *Levant Herald* as quoted in the *British Prophetic Messenger* summer 1883)

- The Ark was very long and rectangular. Parts of the bottom were exposed and he could see that it was flat. The roof was nearly flat, except for a row of windows, 50 or more, estimated size 18 inches x 30 inches, running from front to back covered by an overhanging roof. (Summarized from a testimony given by Georgie Hagopan, an Armenian who visited the Ark in 1908 at the age of 10)

■ There have been numerous expeditions to Mt. Ararat in the past 40 years. At this point, the ark has not been rediscovered. Extreme weather conditions and unstable political conditions have added to the frustrations of researchers, and yet the search goes on. If the ark is discovered, what will it mean to the world? Will people recognize the significance of such a find? Will they see the implications for both science and religion? Or will they shrug it off and try to find some "naturalistic" way to explain it away? One evolutionist declared that even if creationists did find a boat on Ararat it wouldn't prove anything. It might just be the remains of a pleasure craft tossed up on the mountain by a storm in the Persian Gulf. That would be one large pleasure craft! To what lengths some people will go to deny the truth of the Bible! But it has always been the same.

In one of Jesus' parables, the rich man begged Abraham to allow Lazarus to return to earth and warn his brothers of the terrible judgment awaiting them. Abraham told him, "They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them." The rich man answered, "No, Father Abraham, but if someone goes to them from the dead, they will repent." Abraham replied, "If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, neither will they be persuaded if someone rises from the dead."

It is still the same today. No amount of evidence will convince people if their basic problem is hardness of heart and an unwilling spirit. Romans 1 makes it clear that God has put an awareness of Himself into the hearts of all men, but many "suppress the truth in unrighteousness." God has spoken in His Word and the natural world bears testimony of its truth. If we reject this testimony, Paul says we are "without excuse." Let us come before God in humility and openness of heart and learn from Him.

SPOTLIGHT ON SCIENCE

Noah's Ark

What comes to mind when you visualize Noah's ark? Do you picture a boat with an elephant squeezing to fit in, a giraffe's neck towering over the top, and a motley assortment of other animals filling every nook and cranny? That's the image portrayed by many children's books, but if you do some quick calculations based on the dimensions given in Genesis you get a very different picture.

According to Genesis 6, God instructed Noah to make an ark 300 cubits long, 50 cubits wide, and 30 cubits high. The cubit was a measure commonly used in ancient times, and was anywhere from 17.5" to 24". Based on a conservative 18" cubit, the ark would have been a huge vessel, 450' long, 75' wide and 45' high, as big as many large ocean liners today. Each deck would have been as long as one and a half football fields! Twenty standard basketball courts could fit on each of the 3 levels. This certainly is not the size of your average pleasure craft! The 6:1 ratio of length to width made the ark remarkably stable and the center of gravity was such that it could be tilted nearly 90 degrees without tipping. It was very well designed for its intended function of floating.

The ark was plenty large to carry all the necessary animals plus supplies for more than a year. Based on figures compiled by zoologists for known living and extinct species, creationists have estimated that a maximum of 50,000 individual animals would have required passage on the ark. Many varieties could have survived in the water and would not have needed to be on the ark. Of all the known animals, only a few are very large. The vast majority would be smaller than a sheep. The volume of the ark has been calculated to be roughly the same as 522 standard railroad box-cars, each of which could hold approximately 240 sheep-sized animals. All 50,000 animals would have fit in slightly over 200 cars. Thus, even using the *minimum* size of the ark and the *maximum* number of animals, much less than half of the ark would have been needed to house the animals. As we can see, there certainly was no need to have the giraffe's neck sticking through the top of the ark!

Geologic evidence indicates the reality of the Flood; the Bible provides information on the vessel of safety. Noah's ark was evidently designed according to sound engineering principles. It cannot be dismissed simply because it doesn't fit the currently accepted bias. Someday "ark-eologists" may stun the world with positive evidence of the greatest archeological relic of all time — Noah's ark.

Flood Legends

Numerous cultures from around the world include flood legends in their folklore. This anthropological evidence should be considered along with other evidence supporting a world-wide Flood. Some say these legends are merely exaggerations of local floods, but the amazing similarities between the accounts preclude this idea. Although there are many variations of the story, and some obvious mythological additions to it, there is a common thread running through an overwhelming number of the tales. They seem to agree on three essential elements: there was a universal destruction of living things by water, there was a vessel of safety, and human seed was preserved.

In addition, there are traditions among peoples all over the world which trace their origins to the western part of Asia. This is interesting, since anthropological studies have long indicated that all the races seem to have originated from a common center in Asia, and of course this is consistent with the Biblical record and the genealogies describing the dispersion of peoples after the Flood (Gen. 10). (Recent claims that human life originated in Africa are based on disputed fossil evidence and are not at all conclusive at this time.)

Much research has been done in this fascinating field of flood legends. What conclusions can be drawn? Folklore is often based on actual historical events which have been colored with local traditions, cultures, and superstitions. It is therefore amazing to see the widespread agreement on the basic elements of the flood story. It would seem logical to conclude that they are the cultural remembrances of an important historical event which had great significance for the human race. When taken along with the powerful geological evidences for the great Flood they hold considerable weight in validating the reliability of the Genesis account. For a tremendous film dealing with this and many other aspects of the Flood, we suggest *The World That Perished*. Available from Films For Christ, 2628 W. Birchwood Circle, Mesa, AZ 85202.)



Events



We were thankful for the opportunity to speak to a group of about 50 students at Mesa College in Grand Junction recently. The meeting was sponsored by the Baptist Student Union and attracted many students who were not members of that group. There were many excellent questions following the presentation.

March and April look like busy months, with seminars and presentations planned in various places. As this goes to press we are preparing for a week of presentations in Corvallis, Oregon (March 9-15) where members of Zion Lutheran Church have been working diligently to arrange presentations in various churches and schools. We are thankful for the hard work they have done.

Programs have also been scheduled in the following places:

- March 29 YWAM Discipleship Training School
Cimarron, CO (Seminar)
- April 6 Loma Community Church
Loma, CO (mini-seminar)
- April 11-13 Church of the Valley
Scottsdale, AZ (seminar)
- April 26 All Saints Episcopal Church
Loveland, CO (seminar)

In addition, field trips have been scheduled with several groups in the Grand Junction area.

Further down the road, don't forget the Camp Redcloud Family Camp, August 17-22. Pack up your family and join us for a great time of fun, fellowship, and learning. (Write for more information.)

If you've been wanting a seminar in your area, *now* is the time to start planning. We are in the process of working out a summer speaking schedule and want to include as many as possible.

Alpha Omega Institute

P.O. Box 4343
Grand Junction, CO 81502
(303) 245-5906

Would you like additional information about any one of the condensed articles or on another subject that we haven't even touched upon as yet? Write to us and we will gladly send you some.

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Book Review



The Genesis Flood (1971) by John C. Whitcomb and Henry M. Morris is an in-depth study of the Biblical record of the Flood and its scientific implications. It is well documented and covers a wide variety of topics. This book is a classic in Flood geology and a must for serious students. (\$8.95)

The World That Perished (1973) by John C. Whitcomb, Jr., restates the scientific and Biblical aspects of the Great Flood on a more popular level and deals with some of the published objections to *The Genesis Flood*. It is suitable for the layman who wants a brief introduction to the subject. (\$9.95) Both books are available from Alpha Omega Institute. (Please add \$1.00 for shipping.)



THANKS



We are thankful for those of you who are regularly contributing to the work of Alpha Omega Institute. If you are not a regular supporter, we urge you to seriously consider what you can give. Your donations are tax deductible. We have many plans and projects awaiting funding.

Think and Believe is published bi-monthly by Alpha Omega Institute, P.O. Box 4343, Grand Junction, CO 81502. Editors: Dave & Mary Jo Nutting. Single copies of this publication are sent free upon request. Please write for permission to reprint material in this publication. Alpha Omega Institute is a tax-exempt organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Your donations are tax deductible.

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