

## Lesson 3 – Where is Noah’s Ark?

### Background

#### Genesis 8:3b–4 (ESV)

At the end of 150 days the waters had abated, and in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, the ark came to rest on the mountains of Ararat.

### Why is this unsolved?

1. **Where are the “mountains of Ararat?”** - This likely referred to a mountain range, not necessarily a particular mountain called Ararat. Ararat was likely the country or region of Urartu. Urartu as a country would have extended into modern Turkey, Armenia, Iran, and Iraq—covering an area of over 100,000 square miles. This region is referred to elsewhere in the Old Testament (see 2 Kgs 19:37; Isa 37:38 – “land of Ararat”).

Modern Mount Ararat is a snow-capped and dormant compound volcano in eastern Turkey. It actually consists of two stratovolcanoes, Greater Ararat and Lesser Ararat. The summit of Greater Ararat is 16,854 feet above sea level, while Lesser Ararat, just 8 miles to the east of it, is only 12,782 feet high. Together they cover a massive area of 420 square miles.

2. **The Ark was Made of Wood** (Gen 6:14) – how likely is it that a large wooden boat would have survived the elements in any capacity for over 4,000 years.
3. **Volcanic Activity** – Most modern expeditions looking for Noah’s ark have focused on Modern Mount Ararat as opposed to the greater Urartu region. If Modern Mount Ararat truly were the landing place, how could the Ark have survived this volcano’s numerous eruptions, which continued until 1840?

### Has Noah’s Ark been found?

In the past century, dozens of individuals have claimed to have located the Ark. Most of these modern searches have focused on Modern Mount Ararat in Eastern Turkey.

#### Site One: The Durupinar Site

Heavy rains exposed a large “Ark-shaped” formation in 1948, approximately 15 miles from the summit of Mt. Ararat. A 1960 expedition found only dirt and rocks, but explorer Ron Wyatt went back in the 1970s and 1980s, claiming he found an outline of metal fittings using a “frequency generator.”

Despite its “Ark-like” appearance and popularity, Christian geologists and archaeologists who would love to find the Ark and who have visited the location have soundly rejected the Durupinar site as nothing more than a geologic formation.

### Site Two: The Ahora Gorge

One mile below the peak of Ararat is Ahora Gorge. This site gained popularity when George Hagopian, an Armenian, claimed his uncle took him on top of the Ark as a young boy around 1908. Throughout his lifetime, he proclaimed what he discovered as truth, but he was unable to pinpoint the exact location of his discovery.

The Ahora Gorge was largely constructed by an 1840 earthquake and the resultant catastrophic erosion. Yet even though these Ark searchers say the Ark could have slid down after the gorge formed, it still begs the question as to how a wooden structure would have survived being buried by the molten lavas which erupted since the Flood ended.

### Site Three: The Ararat Anomaly

A US Air Force reconnaissance plane took black-and-white images of the northwest side of Mt. Ararat in 1949, revealing a large object that resembles a portion of a ship. The images were made public in 1995 and sparked further interest. Most likely that this “anomaly” is simply a rock outcropping with just the right amount of ice and snow melted away to give the illusion of a boat-shaped object.

### Site Four: Ararat—NAMI Expedition

A Kurdish man, Parasut, supposedly found compartments from the Ark’s interior on the south side of Mt. Ararat. He took photographs in 2008 and reported them to NAMI, a Hong Kong-based ministry. This discovery is likely a hoax as there is a real possibility that NAMI were victims of a fraud enacted by Paraşut.

### Site Five: Mount Suleiman

A veteran named Ed Davis claimed he saw the remains of Noah’s Ark while he was stationed in Iran during World War II. Later expeditions claimed to find beam-like rocks on Mount Suleiman. Among the biggest problems with this site is that Mount Suleiman lies 250 miles east of the farthest-known reaches of the ancient Urartu region.

## What Really Matters

### Hebrews 11:1 (ESV)

<sup>1</sup> Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

## Background

### Genesis 6:11–22 (ESV)

<sup>11</sup> Now the earth was corrupt in God's sight, and the earth was filled with violence. <sup>12</sup> And God saw the earth, and behold, it was corrupt, for all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth. <sup>13</sup> And God said to Noah, "I have determined to make an end of all flesh, for the earth is filled with violence through them. Behold, I will destroy them with the earth. <sup>14</sup> Make yourself an ark of gopher wood. Make rooms in the ark, and cover it inside and out with pitch. <sup>15</sup> This is how you are to make it: the length of the ark 300 cubits, its breadth 50 cubits, and its height 30 cubits. <sup>16</sup> Make a roof for the ark, and finish it to a cubit above, and set the door of the ark in its side. Make it with lower, second, and third decks. <sup>17</sup> For behold, I will bring a flood of waters upon the earth to destroy all flesh in which is the breath of life under heaven. Everything that is on the earth shall die. <sup>18</sup> But I will establish my covenant with you, and you shall come into the ark, you, your sons, your wife, and your sons' wives with you. <sup>19</sup> And of every living thing of all flesh, you shall bring two of every sort into the ark to keep them alive with you. They shall be male and female. <sup>20</sup> Of the birds according to their kinds, and of the animals according to their kinds, of every creeping thing of the ground, according to its kind, two of every sort shall come in to you to keep them alive. <sup>21</sup> Also take with you every sort of food that is eaten, and store it up. It shall serve as food for you and for them." <sup>22</sup> Noah did this; he did all that God commanded him.

### Genesis 8:1–5 (ESV)

<sup>1</sup> But God remembered Noah and all the beasts and all the livestock that were with him in the ark. And God made a wind blow over the earth, and the waters subsided. <sup>2</sup> The fountains of the deep and the windows of the heavens were closed, the rain from the heavens was restrained, <sup>3</sup> and the waters receded from the earth continually. At the end of 150 days the waters had abated, <sup>4</sup> and in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, the ark came to rest on the mountains of Ararat. <sup>5</sup> And the waters continued to abate until the tenth month; in the tenth month, on the first day of the month, the tops of the mountains were seen.

### Genesis 9:8–17 (ESV)

<sup>8</sup> Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him, <sup>9</sup> "Behold, I establish my covenant with you and your offspring after you, <sup>10</sup> and with every living creature that is with you, the birds, the livestock, and every beast of the earth with you, as many as came out of the ark; it is for every beast of the earth. <sup>11</sup> I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be cut off by the waters of the flood, and never again shall there be a flood to destroy the earth." <sup>12</sup> And God said, "This is the sign of the covenant that I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for all future generations: <sup>13</sup> I have set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth. <sup>14</sup> When I bring clouds over the earth and the bow is seen in the clouds, <sup>15</sup> I will remember my covenant that is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh. And the waters shall never again become a flood to destroy all flesh. <sup>16</sup> When the bow is in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is on the earth." <sup>17</sup> God said to

Noah, "This is the sign of the covenant that I have established between me and all flesh that is on the earth."

## **Urartu**

### **2 Kings 19:37 (ESV)**

<sup>37</sup> And as he was worshiping in the house of Nisroch his god, Adrammelech and Sharezer, his sons, struck him down with the sword and escaped into the land of Ararat. And Esarhaddon his son reigned in his place.

### **Isaiah 37:38 (ESV)**

<sup>38</sup> And as he was worshiping in the house of Nisroch his god, Adrammelech and Sharezer, his sons, struck him down with the sword. And after they escaped into the land of Ararat, Esarhaddon his son reigned in his place.

[https://answersingenesis.org/noahs-ark/noahs-ark-found/has-ark-been-found/#fn\\_1](https://answersingenesis.org/noahs-ark/noahs-ark-found/has-ark-been-found/#fn_1)  
(Accessed March 26, 2019)

### ***Has the Ark Been Found?***

by [Tim Chaffey](#) on August 19, 2016

The discovery of Noah's Ark would be an unparalleled archaeological find. Throughout history, thousands of individuals have searched various mountains for the remains of this wooden structure described in the Bible and in numerous legends from cultures around the world.

Ancient reports speak of the Ark as being readily accessible to certain groups of people, even describing an annual festival that supposedly took place on a mountain slope to commemorate the Ark's landing. Pieces of the Ark were allegedly taken and used as amulets.

In the past century, dozens of individuals have claimed to have located the Ark. Most of these modern searches have focused on Mount Ararat in Eastern Turkey. While some of these explorers claimed to have found the Ark or its remains, others are a little more cautious. They call attention to an assortment of evidence that seems to support their beliefs, such as pieces of wood found high on the mountain, as well as aerial and satellite images that show an "Ark-like" structure.



*Little Ararat (left) and Mount Ararat (right). Image by Vahram Mekhitarian, via [Wikimedia Commons](#).*

Despite so many supposed sightings and evidences from Mount Ararat, it seems unlikely that Noah's Ark has been found in recent times. And even though we would be ecstatic if the Ark were discovered, we have reason to doubt that it will be found in the future. Nor would it convince the skeptics who would simply claim it is a replica monument to a mythical boat. Certainly, it is hard to imagine a large wooden structure surviving the elements for more than 4000 years. Also, if Mount Ararat truly were the landing place, how could the Ark have survived this volcano's numerous eruptions, which continued until 1840?

These factors have not stopped the search for the Ark or the reported sightings of it. This article will focus on five of the most popular locations for the Ark's final resting place. Four of the locations are on or very near Mount Ararat, while the other site lies hundreds of miles from this famous peak.

### Site One: The Durupinar Site

Popularized in the 1980s by Ron Wyatt and others, this “Ark-shaped” formation lies approximately 15 miles from the summit of Mount Ararat. Wyatt claimed to have found numerous artifacts in the vicinity to corroborate his claims. In the past few years, the Durupinar site has again risen to prominence after being promoted on several websites as the real Noah’s Ark.

Despite its “Ark-like” appearance and popularity, Christian geologists and archaeologists who would love to find the Ark and who have visited the location have soundly rejected the Durupinar site as nothing more than a geologic formation.[1](#)



*Often heralded as the remains of Noah’s Ark, the Durupinar site is actually just one of many similar-looking geologic formations in this region of Turkey.*

In fact, several similar-looking formations can be found in the region as a simple “Google Maps” search demonstrates ([see the Durupinar site](#), and then simply zoom out a little and navigate the map to find other “Ark-like” formations). These formations are caused by mud flowing around eroded outcrops of basalt lava flows.[2](#)

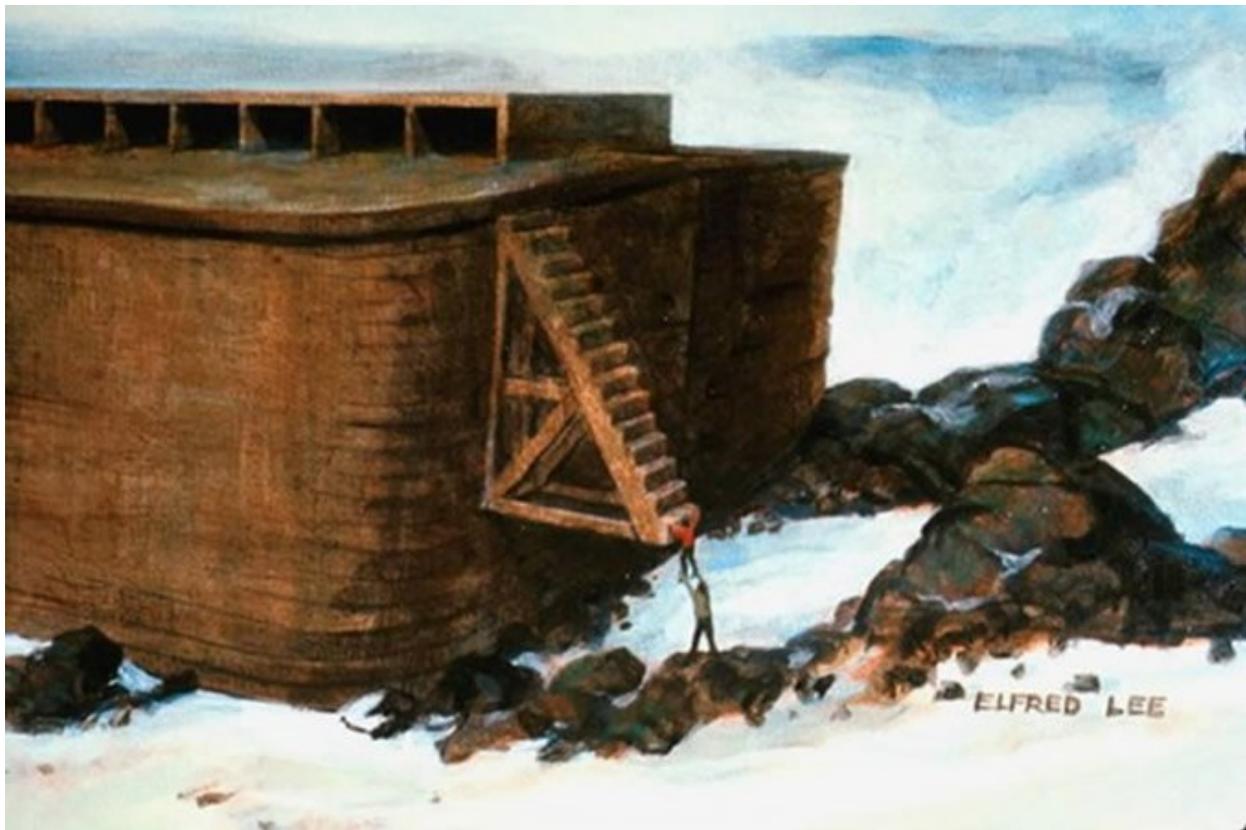
### Site Two: The Ahora Gorge

The Ahora Gorge is an enormous chasm on the northeast side of Mount Ararat. Dropping more than one mile from the peak of the mountain, the Ahora Gorge has been at the forefront of Ark-seeker expeditions for about a century.



*The Ahora Gorge is deeper than the Grand Canyon at many points. Photo by Dr. John Morris.*

Interest in this location was sparked by the claims of George Hagopian. He claimed that when he was a young boy in 1908, his uncle took him up Mount Ararat to the Ahora Gorge area. Hagopian said that they found something that looked like a large ship partially buried by snow and ice. He claimed his uncle stood on a rock pile and lifted him up so that he could walk on the roof.



*Here is one of the paintings by Alfred Lee based on interviews he had with Hagopian.*

At least a dozen expeditions have explored the Ahora Gorge since Hagopian reportedly walked on the Ark's roof. However to date, none of these adventurers has been able to find the remains of Noah's Ark at the Ahora Gorge, even though they have used satellite imagery, and explorers have searched the gorge when the glacier in it has melted back.

It is very tempting to dismiss Hagopian's incredible claims as the imaginations of a young child. Consider the following complications with his story. Hagopian offered conflicting reports of his adventure. Was he eight years old or ten years old at the time? Was it in 1905 or 1908? Also, it is hard to imagine a youngster making this very difficult and dangerous journey without proper training.

Perhaps the greatest problem with claiming this site as the resting place of the Ark is the fact that the Ahora Gorge is on Mount Ararat. Despite popular beliefs, the Bible does not specify that the Ark landed on Mount Ararat. It states that the Ark landed on the "mountains of Ararat" (Genesis 8:4). In other words, the Ark landed in the region of the land of Ararat.

As mentioned above, this dormant volcano last erupted in 1840, and many much larger eruptions occurred during the post-Flood Ice Age. In fact, the Ahora Gorge was largely constructed by an 1840 earthquake and the resultant catastrophic erosion. Yet even though these Ark searchers say the Ark could have slid down after the gorge formed, it still begs the question as to how a wooden structure would have survived being buried by the molten lavas which erupted since the Flood ended. According to geologist Dr. Andrew Snelling, Mount Ararat

likely emerged from the waters of the Flood far too late for it to have been the mountain on which the Ark ran aground on the 17th day of the 7th month of Noah's 600th year.

### Site Three: The Ararat Anomaly

We have already examined two of the popular locations of reported sightings and found them to be problematic. We will now look at another spot that has caught the eye of Ark researchers, known as the Ararat Anomaly.

In 1949, photographs of the northwest side of Mount Ararat were taken by a United States intelligence agency. A large structure can be seen jutting out of the ice and snow near the middle of the photograph below.



This object has captured the imagination of Ark hunters because it resembles a portion of a large ship. Of course, this "anomaly" may simply be a rock outcropping with just the right amount of ice and snow melted away to give the illusion of a boat-shaped object.

A satellite image taken in 2003 has breathed new life into the popularity of the Ararat Anomaly. Presumably taken of the same spot on the mountain, this overhead shot shows an elongated structure that appears to have similar dimensions to Noah's Ark (circled in red below).



*Satellite image of Ararat Anomaly, taken by DigitalGlobe's QuickBird Satellite in 2003. Image courtesy of DigitalGlobe.*

As far as I know, no expedition has explored the site of the Ararat Anomaly, but it would certainly be a stretch to conclude that these pictures are definitive proof of the Ark's remains on Mount Ararat. The object in the images may be nothing more than a natural rock formation. Perhaps that's why Ark searchers have not been inclined to explore this anomaly.

Furthermore, as mentioned in the previous section, finding the Ark on Mount Ararat is highly unlikely.

#### **Site Four: Ararat—NAMI Expedition**

In April 2010, a team of evangelical Christian explorers claimed to have found evidence of Noah's Ark on Mount Ararat during their expedition there two years earlier, high up a prominent canyon on the south face of the mountain. The team represents Noah's Ark Ministries International (NAMI), which is part of the Hong Kong-based The Media Evangelism. This group claims to be a Christian organization committed to developing a Christian media presence to promote the message of Jesus Christ.



*A NAMI team member is shown examining one of the rooms reportedly found on Ararat. Image from the NAMI website.*

This group claimed to have found or were told about seven wooden compartments buried on Mount Ararat, which they believe were part of Noah's Ark. They even produced a video showing team members presumably inside one of these wooden structures.

Although we would be delighted if the Ark had actually been found, this "discovery" is likely a hoax. This is not to accuse NAMI of perpetrating the hoax, but there is a real possibility that they were victims of a fraud enacted by a Kurdish man called Paraşut.

Dr. Randall Price and Dr. Don Patton were the experts invited to be part of the expedition, but they were never permitted to see the site and were soon dropped from the team. They have documented many of the inconsistencies between what was reported and what they found in their research. For example, pictures of an alleged room in the Ark provided by Paraşut show straw, cobwebs, and a feed bowl, each in very good condition. The problem with these images is that Paraşut has claimed that the site is frequently flooded, which was his reason for not taking the expedition there in the summer months. Would a site that endured regular flooding remain in good shape for millennia?

They also interviewed a Kurdish worker who claimed to have been one of several people hired by Paraşut to construct “movie sets” on the mountain. For more details, you can [read the full 52-page exposé](#) by Dr. Price and Dr. Patton.

Finally, as mentioned above in the sections about the Ararat Anomaly and the Ahora Gorge, finding the Ark on modern-day Mount Ararat is highly unlikely. This mountain is a dormant volcano, and it likely emerged from the Flood waters far too late for it to have been the mountain on which the Ark landed.

#### **Site Five: Mount Suleiman**

The Bible states that the Ark landed on the “mountains of Ararat” (Genesis 8:4). Many people believe that Mount Ararat in Eastern Turkey is in view here, but the Bible merely places the Ark on a mountain in the region of Ararat, called Urartu in ancient times. As such, it is certainly possible that the Ark landed on a mountain other than Mount Ararat.



A military veteran named Ed Davis claimed to have seen the remains of Noah’s Ark during World War II while he was stationed in Iran. Based on his understanding of this report, Bob Cornuke of BASE Institute led expeditions to Mount Suleiman, also called the Throne of Solomon, in 2005 and 2006 to explore an alternative site for Noah’s Ark.

Cornuke provided several details about the site that he believes is a candidate for the remains of Noah’s Ark. His team found rocks that were “uncannily beam like in appearance” over 13,000 feet up the mountain, “a worship shrine,” and fossilized clams in abundance on the top of an adjoining peak. Cornuke also points to the wide variety of ecosystems in the region and the 1965 rediscovery of the Caspian horse, believed by some to be the most ancient variety of domestic horse.<sup>3</sup>

Despite these assertions, there are multiple problems with the notion that the Ark came to rest on Mount Suleiman. For example, the beam-like rocks are likely a geologic formation, the eroded edge of upended, finely bedded rock layers, according to geologists who have only been able to examine pictures. Also, it is improbable that Ed Davis's reported sighting took place on Mount Suleiman. But the biggest problem is that Mount Suleiman lies 250 miles east of the farthest-known reaches of the ancient Urartu region. As such, this mountain doesn't match the biblical description that the Ark came to rest on the mountains of Ararat (Genesis 8:4).

### **Conclusion**

Expeditions will continue to search for the Ark. While it probably has not survived the elements for thousands of years, we can be confident that it really did exist because God's Word has infallibly recorded the account of the Flood. Our [Ark Encounter](#) themed attraction shows the feasibility of this famous vessel and uses the biblical account of Noah, the Ark, and the Flood to share the [gospel of Jesus Christ](#).