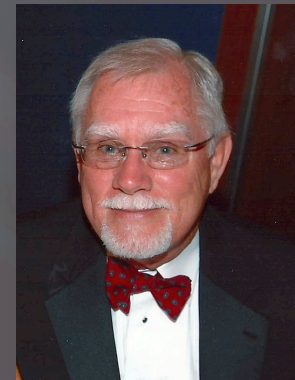


NOAH'S ARK ON EARLY MAPS

Presented by Jim Siebold
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Origin Stories of the “Great Flood”



“The Great Flood”

- ❑ Was the story of the flood and the Ark original to the Christian *Bible* in *Genesis*, chapters 6–9 at all?
- ❑ The flood myth is actually common to many cultures around the world, and the Christian biblical version appears to have its primary source in the Mesopotamian myth of Utnapishtim in the *Epic of Gilgamesh*. The earliest known written flood myth is a Sumerian flood myth found in the *Deluge Tablet* in which the hero is named Ziusudra. The story in *Genesis* is repeated, with variations, in the *Quran*, where the ark appears as *Safina Nūḥ* (Arabic: سفينة نوح “Noah's boat”).

The Ark

- ▣ Noah's instructions for the ark are described in *Genesis* 6:14–16.:
 - 300 *cubits* long,
 - 50 *cubits* wide, and
 - 30 *cubits* high
- ▣ Three internal divisions (which are not actually called “decks”, although presumably this is what is intended), a door in the side, and a *tsohar*, which may be either a roof or a skylight.
- ▣ It was made of *gofer* wood and divided into *qinnim*, a word which always refers to birds' nests elsewhere in the Bible, leading some scholars to emend this to *qanim*, reeds. The finished vessel is to be smeared with *koper*
- ▣ Modern estimates of the dimensions of the ark render it as 510 feet long, 85 feet wide and 51 feet high.

The Ark Reconstructed



Historical Evidence

- ▣ 1872 George Smith
 - An Assyriologist working among the thousands of ancient clay tablets brought back to London from Iraq, made a sensational discovery: a version of the *Flood Story* written in *cuneiform*.
 - Over the years, cuneiform flood tablets have continued to turn up. Three distinct Mesopotamian incarnations of the Flood myth have now been identified, one recorded in Sumerian and two in Akkadian.
 - It has become clear that the tale of a universal flood was widespread in Mesopotamia for an entire millennium and a half before the Judeans

Ancient Written Evidence

- ▣ Dr. Irving Finkel, the British Museum's expert of cuneiform studies, provides a further clinching piece of evidence: a tablet that actually describes animals entering an ark "two by two". Not only that, but it offers startlingly precise specifications on how best to construct one. An ark, so the tablet instructs us, should properly be circular in shape, have an area of 3,600 meters, and be fashioned out of plant fibre.

The Ark's Location

- Different traditions also grew up about the identity of the mountain resting place for Noah's Ark, for the ancient Babylonian story always retained its importance within Judaism, Christianity and Islam.
- To push things further we really need a contemporary Babylonian map. According to Dr. Irving Finkel we have one - the *Babylonian Map of the World* (#103).
- This map is a one of the whole world. It is one of the most remarkable cuneiform tablets ever discovered, so smart that it has its own Latin nickname - in the world of Assyriology at least - the *mappamundi*, notwithstanding other claimants for the title. It is, in addition, the earliest known map of the world.

The Ark's Location

- ▣ It is a widespread belief that Noah's Ark came to rest on Mount Ararat, the defense of the proposition being that it '*says so in the Bible*'. In a way it does, but with one important rider:
 - *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. 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 8:3-5*
- ▣ The Hebrew text speaks of '*mountains*' in the plural, so the key passage means '*in the mountains of Ararat*', much as we would say, '*in the Alps*'. We cannot therefore really translate this as if it meant one particular mountain called '*Mount Ararat*'
- ▣ Mt. Ararat is, incidentally, only the modern name. The venerable Armenian name is *Massis*; the equivalent Turkish name is *Agri Dagh*.)

The 'Ark Mountains'



Biblical Ararat corresponds to the ancient name *Urartu*, which was the ancient political and geographical entity due north of the Mesopotamian heartland included in the *Babylonian map of the world*.

NOAH'S ARK?

Some believe the original Noah's Ark is buried under an 'Ark-Shaped' formation in eastern Turkey



Since 2019, a joint scientific team has applied GPR, ERT, LiDAR, and chemical analysis to determine whether the Durupınar formation is a natural geological fold – or a buried decayed wooden ship preserved in the mountains of Ararat (Urartu).



2019

In the mountains of eastern Turkey, near Mount Ararat, lies a mysterious boat-shaped formation known as the *Durupınar* site. First identified in 1959 by Captain İlhan Durupınar, this 157-meter-long (515 feet) structure perfectly matches the biblical description of Noah's Ark found in *Genesis 6*. It's location matching what the biblical account states in *Genesis 8:4*

The *Qur'an* (11:44) echoes the same account:

"And the ship came to rest upon Al-Jūdī."

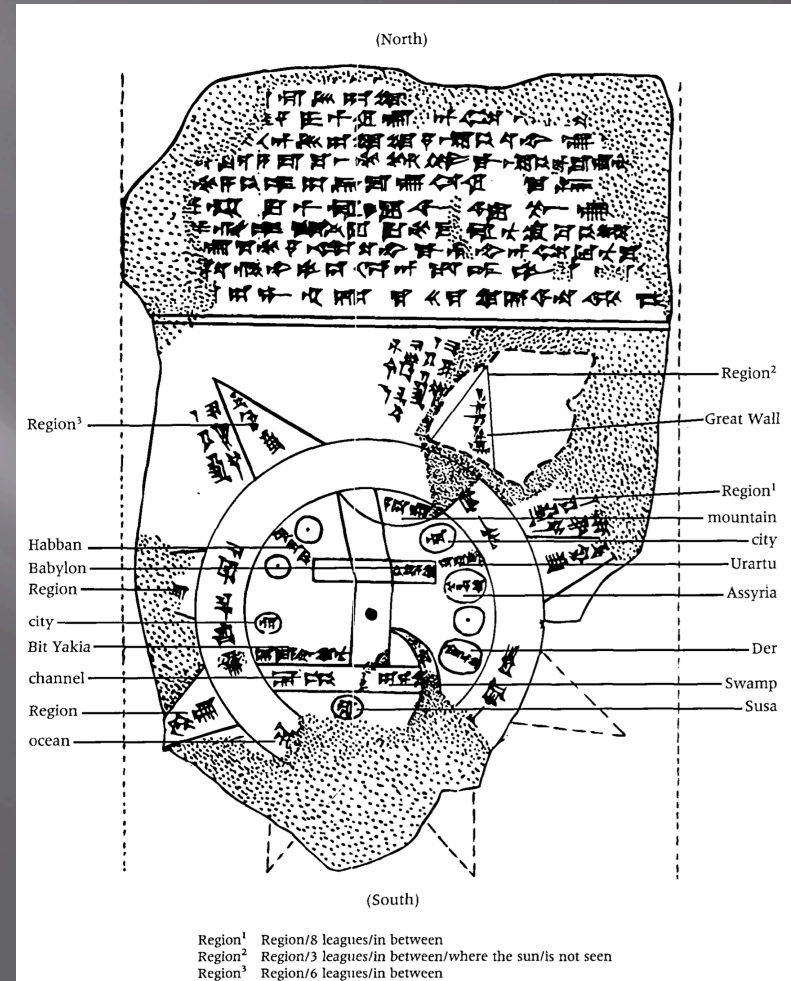
Locals still call the mountain *Al-Judi*, preserving an ancient memory of a vessel that survived a great flood.



Babylonian World Map, 600-500 BCE

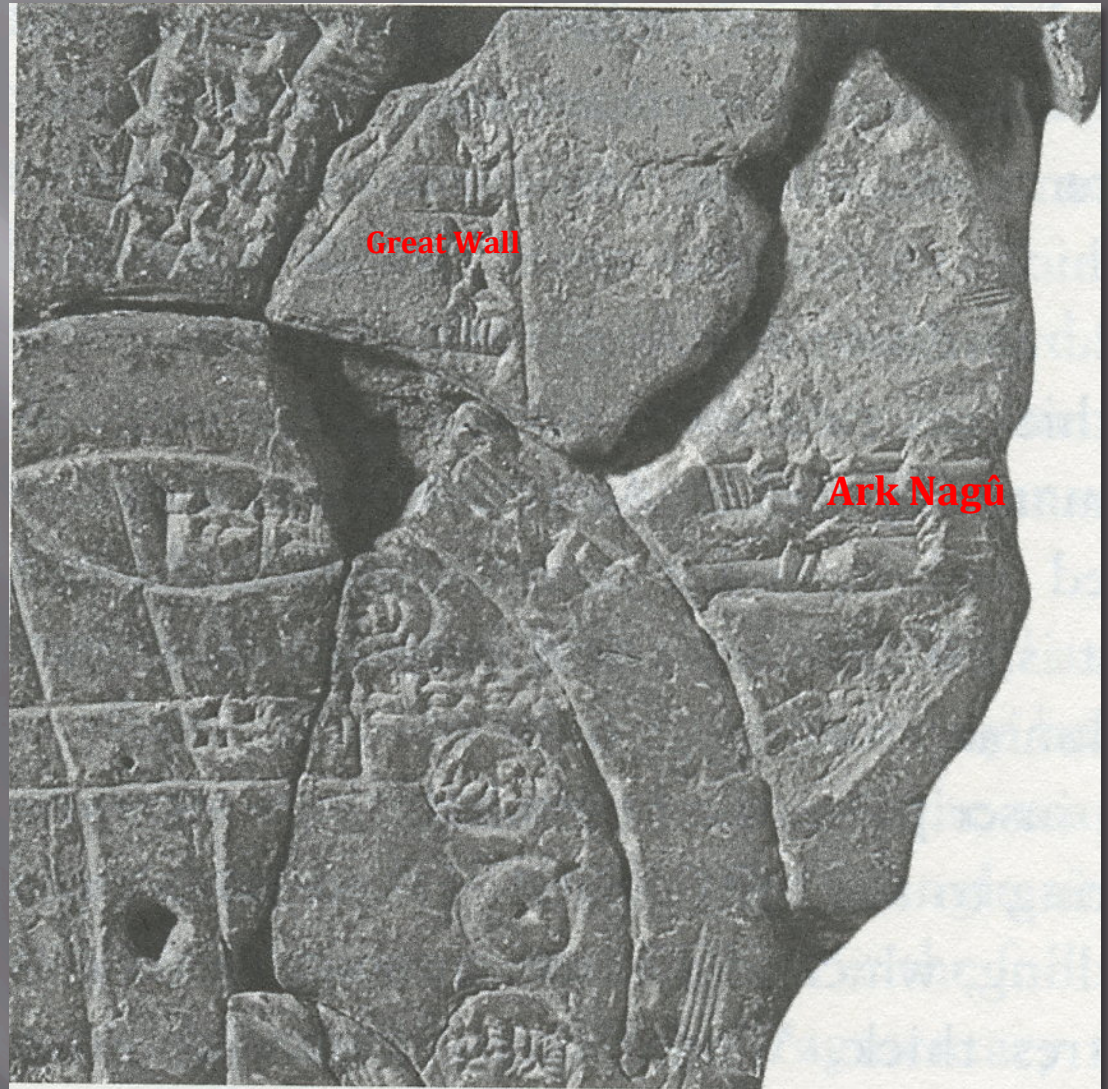
This world map depicts the known world from far above as a disc surrounded by a ring of water called *marratu* in Akkadian. Two concentric circles were drawn in with some cuneiform precursor of a pair of compasses whose point was actually inserted south of Babylon, perhaps at the city of Nippur, the '*Bond of Heaven and Earth*'. Within the circle the heartland of Mesopotamia is depicted in schematic form. The broad Euphrates River runs from top to bottom, originating in the northern mountainous areas and losing itself in canals and marshes in the south. While this is not only the earliest map to address the *Flood Story*, as mentioned, it is also the oldest known world map





Babylonian World Map, 600-500 BCE

- Close-up of Babylonian Map of the World, front view, showing Urartu, the Ocean the Great Wall of China and *Nagû IV*, the original home of Noah's Ark
- The written and illustrated tradition of the *Babylonian Map of the World* is the oldest information we have; it encapsulates old Babylonian ideas of the early second millennium BCE which are a thousand years older than the tablet on which it is preserved. According to this the Ark came to rest on a very remote, gigantic mountain, located far beyond *Urartu* on the other side of the world-encircling Ocean, far indeed beyond the ken of man.



The Cottoniana or Anglo-Saxon Map, ca. 995



The Cottoniana or Anglo-Saxon Map, ca. 995



Noah's Ark on the top of the twin peaks of Mount Ararat

Asia



Europe

Africa

15th century Noachic T-O world map from Jean Mansel's *La fleur des histories*
Noah's Ark on top of Mt Ararat and Noah's sons Japheth, Shem and Ham
Bibliothèque Royale Albert Ier, Brussels, MS. 9231, fol. 281v

Asia

Europe

Africa



*Isidore mappamundi, ca. 1130
Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich, Clm 10058, f. 154v*



- Noah's Ark appears in Asia (upper left) of this Isidore mappamundi from 1130, just below the river *Araxis*
- The house-like structure shown here bears the inscription *Archa Noe* or *Noah's Ark* - sitting on the twin peaks of Mount Ararat

Psalter mappamundi, 1225-1265 (oriented with East at the top)



The Ebstorf mappamundi, 1234, was engraved on 30 pieces of goatskin, oriented with East at the top.



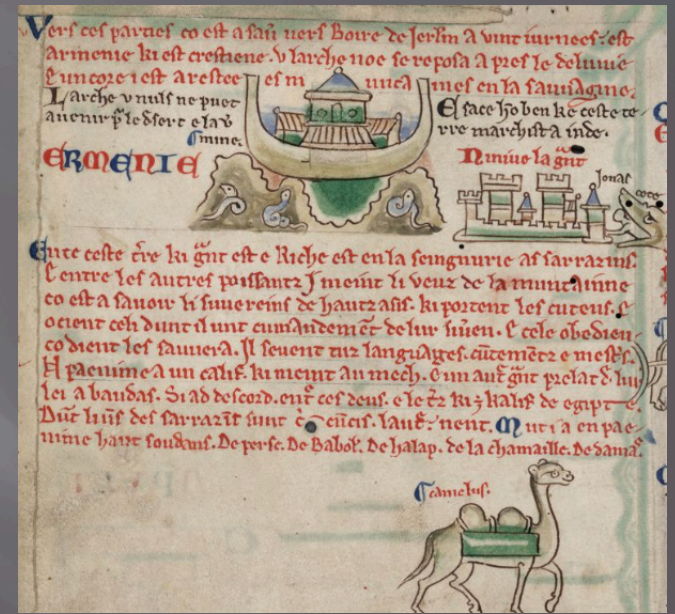
Noah's Ark on Mount Ararat on the Ebstorf mappamundi, near Alexander's Wall

The Hereford mappamundi, 1290

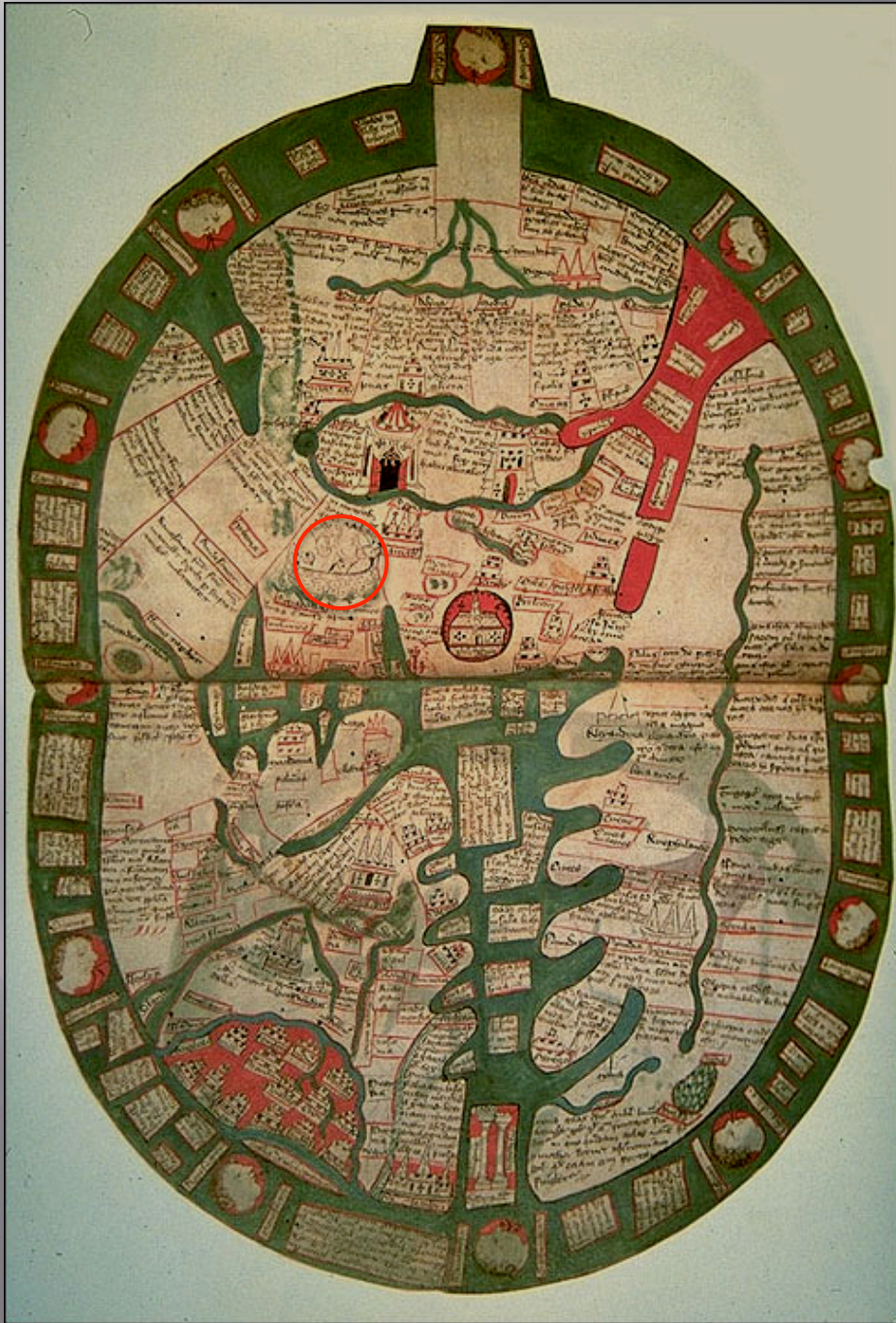


Noah's ark is shown where it came to rest in the mountains of Armenia. Below, beyond the mountains and the city of Malatya (Metima), is the tigolopes, a semi-human creature with webbed feet, holding what may be a thyrsus, a staff tipped with a pine-cone ornament and associated with Bacchus.

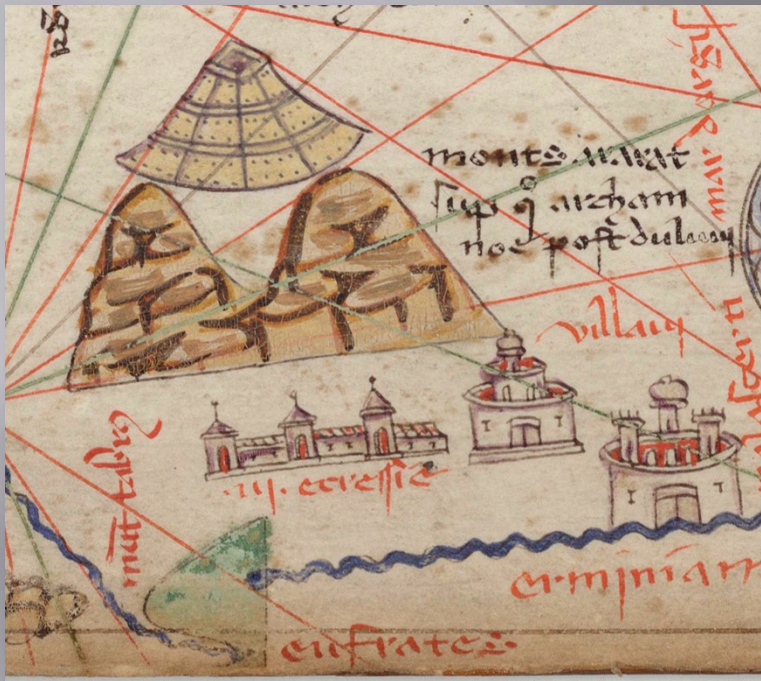
Map of the Holy Land, Cambridge, Corpus Christi College Library, MS 26



*World Map by Ranulf Higden,
a.k.a The Ramsey Abbey map,
1342*



Noah in the ark with a ram, lion,
and a stag, from Ranulf Higden's
Polychronicon, England, c. 1350,
Royal MS 14 C IX, f. 1v



Detail from the *Catalan Atlas* of 1375



The so-called *Genoese world map*, 1457, showing the green-colored Mount Ararat and Noah's Ark between the Black and Caspian Seas, with the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers flowing south

Fra Mauro 1459 *mappamundi* oriented with South at the top



Noah's Ark is shown in Turkey on Fra Mauro's *mappamundi*. The drawing of the Ark appears at the top of Mount Ararat.

The Behaim Globe, 1492



Oldest existing globe

Martin Waldseemüller's 1516 Marta Marina (sheet 3)



Sebastian Münster has set Noah's Ark adrift in the Caspian Sea like some amphibious German mountain inn, and notes that it came to rest in the Armenian mountains. Münster designed this woodcut map for his 1540 edition of Ptolemy's *Geographia*





Detail of Noah's Ark in Anatolia displayed as a three-masted sailing vessel on a 17th century portolan chart, hand-drawn on vellum by Messina

Nicholas Visscher, 1690 map of the Middle East





Noah's Ark lands on a mountain, by
Aurelio Luini, 1555



Noah's ark as seen by the Mughal illustrator Miskin, who painted this miniature in about 1590. A popular figure in the *Quran* as he is in the *Hebrew Bible*, Noah (in Arabic, *Nuh*) kneels on the third deck facing aft, his head wreathed in a flaming halo, while the crew-dressed only in loincloths-sail the ship. Others try to maintain order among the castaway menagerie, which includes elephants, tigers, leopards, dromedaries, monkeys, pelicans, and doves, and other passengers, one of whom has fallen over. While the animals are shown in pairs, Miskin's ark apparently carries no women



Secunda etas mudi principiū a Noe habuit post diluuiū: qđ fuit vniuersale p totū Anno scree
 tesimo vite Noe a pncipio aut mundi fm be. adillelmoferingentesimoquinquagesimoferro.
 Sed fm. lxx. interpretes quos Beda et yfido. approbat. His mille ducenti 7. xij. 7 durat vsq
 ad abrahā fm be. 292. annis. Sed fm. lxx. 342. annis. Ante diluuiū vō p. 100. annos
 Dominus apparuit. Noe id ē quingentesimo anno vite Noe.

Noe diuini honoris et iusticie amator: si-
 mus Lamech. ingenio mitis 7 integer in
 uenit. Nam coram dño. Cū cogitatio ho-
 minū pna erat ad malū. Quū tpe omnes in viam
 rectā deducere satagebat. Cūq; instaret finis vni-
 uerse carnis precepit ei dñs vt faceret arcam de li-
 gnis leuicatis bituminatā intus et extra. que sit
 trecentorū cubitorū geometrorū longitudinis. Duo
 stus 7 post eū Augusti. 7 Hugo. Cubitū geome-
 tricū sex cubitos vsuales facere dicit: quā pncipaz
 noiant. Sit itaq; trecentorū pncipaz lōgitudis: qu-
 āginta latitudinis 7 triginta altitudinis. i. a fun-
 do vsq; ad tabulatū sē signis. Et i cubito cōsum
 mab illā. In q; mālūsculis cenacula fenestrā 7 osti-
 um i latere dextrorū facies. Noe igit post cetū 7
 xx. ānos ad arā fabricatā. q; p solatio vite erant
 necna cōportant. Cūctoziq; aialū ad suādū ge-
 nus eoz masculos sūt 7 feminas pter introduxit.
 Ipe veniq; 7 filij eoz 7 vxores filioz primo
 die mēb apud ingressus ē. Facto diluuiū eis dñs
 oēm carnē delent. Noe cū suis saluat ē. Venit
 q; arca sup altissimos mōtes armenie. Qui loc⁹
 egressoz vocat. Egressi deo grās egerūt. Et alta-
 re facio: deo sacrificabant.

De signū fcedis qđ dō inter me et vos 7 ad
 Donnē animā. Gen. ix.

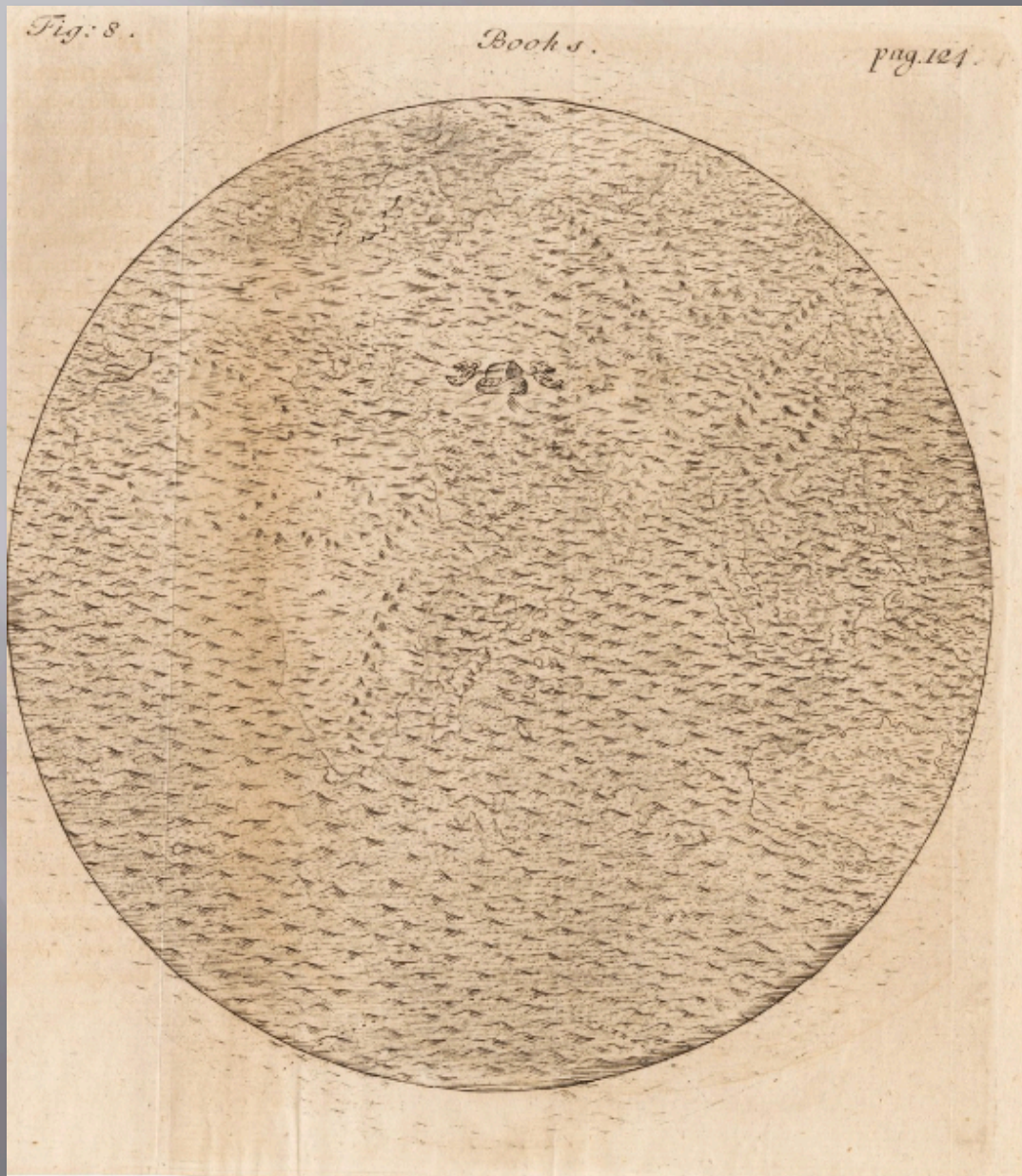


Arcus pluuialis sine Iris licet dicatur hie fer-
 vel quatuor colores. tñ duos colores pncipa-
 licet habet. q; duo iudicia repñtant. aquis diluuius
 pteritū figurat ne ampl⁹ timeat. igneus futurū in
 dicitū signat per ignem vt certitudinaliter expectet
 Illo diluuij Anno prima seculi etas terminata ē
 ab Adā vsq; ad diluuiū inclusiue. Etas scda ince-
 pit q; 7 ad abrahāe natiuitatē vsq; perdurat.

Noe vna cū filijs 7 vxore ac filioz vxoz 7 ex-
 arca egresso: pfectum altare edificatoze cūct
 pecozib⁹ volatilib⁹q; mūdus holocausto dño ob-
 tulit. Et e⁹ odorē suauitat⁹ odorat⁹ est dñs. Pro-
 pter qđ eadem dñs benedixit ac filijs suis dicens.

Anno mudi
 292. xxxij

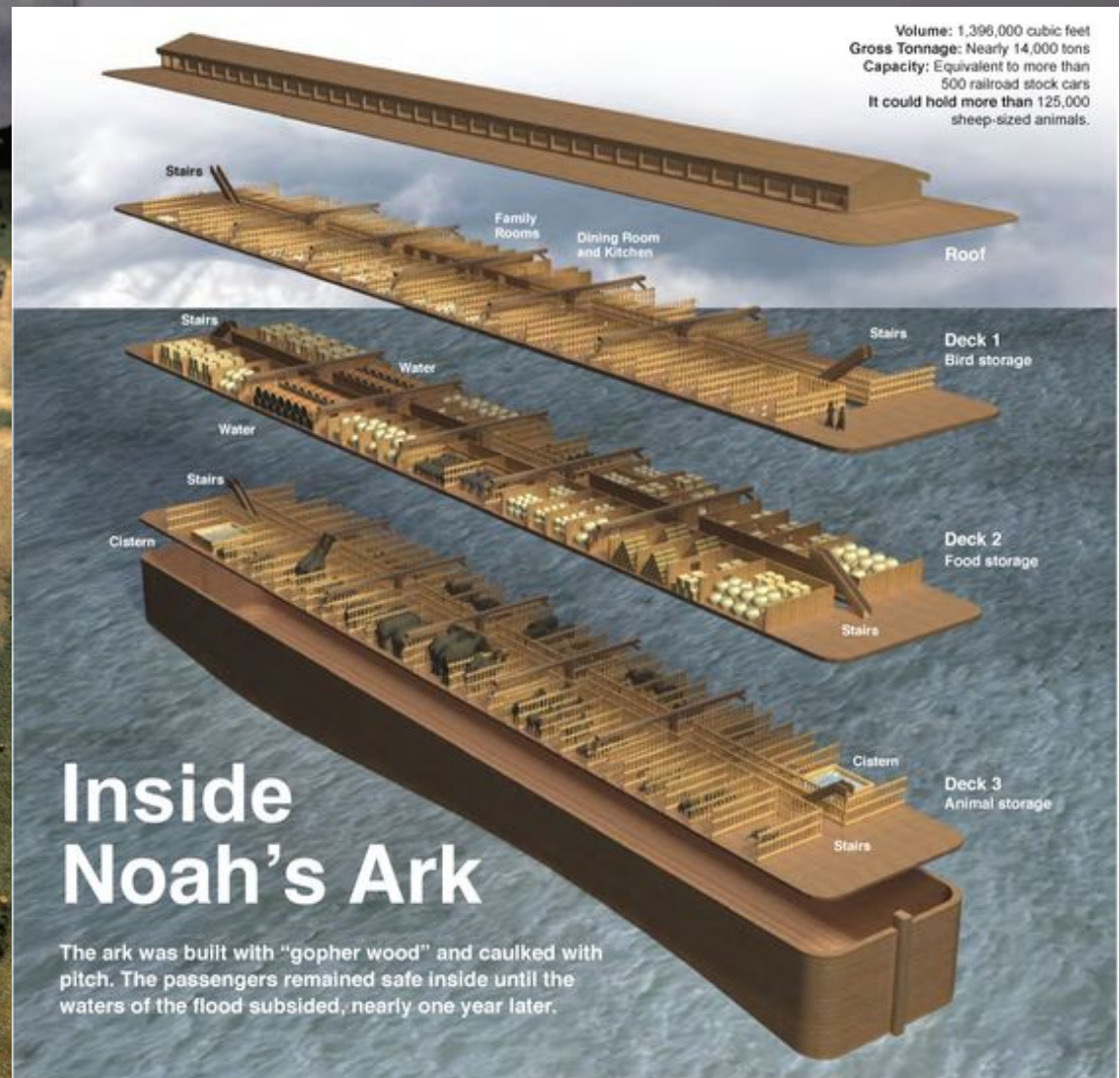
Anno aq
 292. xxxij



A faint map of the eastern hemisphere on the diluvian earth, showing Noah's Ark resting on Mount Ararat. The map appears in Thomas Burnet's 17th century book *The Sacred Theory of the Earth*, "Concerning the Deluge, and the Dissolution of the Earth." The ark is shown surrounded by angels; in Burnet's words, "we may . . . suppose the good Angels to have look'd down upon this Ship of Noah's, and that not out of Curiosity, as idle Spectators, but with a passionate Concern for its Safety and Deliverance. . . . We may entertain our selves with the Consideration of the Face of the Deluge, and of the broken and drown'd Earth, in the Scheme, with the floating Ark, and the guardian Angels." published as *Telluris Theoria Sacra*, 1681/1689



Noah's Ark escorted by angels



Volume: 1,396,000 cubic feet
 Gross Tonnage: Nearly 14,000 tons
 Capacity: Equivalent to more than 500 railroad stock cars
 It could hold more than 125,000 sheep-sized animals.

Inside Noah's Ark

The ark was built with "gopher wood" and caulked with pitch. The passengers remained safe inside until the waters of the flood subsided, nearly one year later.

*Mount Ararat and Yerevan the capital in the modern
Republic of Armenia*





Ark Encounter, a historical museum dedicated to the legendary Bible story of Noah's Ark, was built to the size specified in scripture: 510 feet long, 86 feet wide, and 94 feet high. It is the largest timber-framed structure in the world, according to its designers and developers. The Ark, which opened in Williamstown, Ky., can hold up to 10,000 people (the plan is to limit the capacity to 3,000, though), and a 1,600-seat restaurant is being set up on the top deck. The project cost \$100 million and took a little more than one year to build. The timber frame construction designed. The Ark required 3.1 million board feet of timber, and more than 1.2 million board feet of square timbers were needed for the frame itself.

Below is another Ark reconstruction in England

References

- ▣ Finkel, Irving, *The Ark Before Noah, Decoding the Story of the Flood*, 2014
- ▣ Lind, Michael, “Mystery of Noah’s Ark Solved!”, 7/25/22
- ▣ Internet: www.myoldmaps.com,
“Noah’s Ark on Early Maps” (74 pages)