




UNTOLDSECRETS
of Planet Earth

Flood Fossils
VANCE NELSON



UNTOLD SECRETS of Planet Earth

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Dedication

This book is dedicated to my Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.
Without Him, I'd still be wallowing in my sins with no purpose
in this life, let alone any hope for the life to come.

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Preface

As a young boy, educated in the secular schools, there wasn’t much that pointed me to God or His Word. I grew up believing the secular history of the cosmos as an absolute, undeniable, irrefutable fact. Time, matter, chance; to me, that was reality. A Creator God was not even part of the equation.

At nineteen, things changed—radically changed. I accepted Jesus Christ as my Lord and Saviour—almost unbelievable to anyone who really knew me. I didn’t become miraculously perfect; in fact, I’m still not perfect by any stretch of the imagination. But how could a completely secular guy become a Christian overnight? Good question. To make a long story short, I found out that the Creator was intimately interested in me, and not only me, but everyone else too.

Having now gone through post-secondary Christian colleges, I’ve observed an alarming and very dangerous trend. Many “believers” seem more ready to question the Bible than defend it. Having been raised outside the church, I find this extremely baffling and unfortunate.

So, why write a book on *Flood Fossils*? More people than ever question the reality of Noah’s Flood. Every word of the Bible is important. Jesus Christ accepted Noah’s Flood as real history, and Christ is the center of Christianity. If Jesus was wrong about history, then I can agree that trusting Him with my eternity would be foolish. The Flood is more than just a children’s story for Sunday School; it is real history, real judgement for sin, and real deliverance in Christ, the living Word. Either there was a worldwide flood, or there was not. If not, then all of Scripture, in my estimation, would be tentative, making self-serving sinners (including scientists) judges over God’s Word.

My training in both theology and science is helpful in a book detailing evidence for Noah’s Flood. It is important to properly understand Scripture before one can see if the evidence is consistent with it. Hermeneutics, the methodology by which Scripture is properly interpreted is vital. When I say “interpreted” I am not suggesting there are various equally valid interpretations, but rather that Scripture in

its linguistic, grammatical, and historical context, will result in *one* fundamentally *correct understanding*. The most basic, fundamental, and important interpretive method is to allow Scripture to interpret Scripture. When this is done, it is clear that Jesus Christ himself understood Noah’s Flood to be a real historical event. Jesus parallels the surprise of the people when the Flood began with the surprise people will experience at His return. In Matthew 24:38-39, Jesus says, “For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.” Jesus took the early history in Genesis as literal history—real people, real events. Christians submitting to Him ought to do the same.

The Ark, the Flood, and the fossils will be discussed in light of intriguing, and sometimes profound evidence. So much evidence and information was collected and researched, that a book to fit it all would require ten times the number of pages. Therefore, this book is not meant to be comprehensive. Rather, it is a summary of various kinds of evidence that bear light on the subject of fossils. I hope you enjoy *Flood Fossils*; and, if you do not know Jesus Christ as your personal Saviour, I pray this book might be instrumental in leading you to Him. If you already know the Lord Jesus as your Saviour, I pray you will be encouraged in your walk with Him and learn to trust in His Word completely.

Never forget that just as Noah and his family were saved by going through the door of the Ark, Jesus said, “I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture. The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have *it* more abundantly” (John 10:9-10). Jesus wants to save you from your sins and grant you eternal life. Will you follow Him?

Noah's Ark

a link to the flood

Noah's Ark: a link to the flood

section one

Introduction

The year was 1916. The Russians were experimenting with a new high altitude engine in one of their aircraft. They were flying over a mountain known as Agri Dagh, or Ararat in English. To their amazement, they spotted an enclosed sea-going vessel high atop the mountain. At first, they were puzzled—why would anyone be building such a vessel on a mountain?

News about the vessel atop Ararat got back to Czar Nicholas II. In the summer of 1917, a total of 150 soldiers from the Russian White Army were ordered by the Czar to scale the mountain in a mission to find the vessel, measure it, and document it via photography.

According to witnesses, the Russians indeed discovered the vessel and, as they approached it, the soldiers and scientists fell completely silent. No orders were issued verbally, and a sense of complete awe fell upon them as they contemplated the vessel before them. None doubted they were standing in front of Noah's Ark; it was surreal. It was what some people call a "religious experience."

The box-like vessel was on the edge of a small lake. There was a long series of windows, or ventilation openings, running lengthways along the top of the vessel, at knee height from the roof. The door was missing, and found nearby, partially burned. The wood had a wax-like coating both inside and outside the vessel. There were cages, some with metalwork. There were three levels. Based on measurements taken, the vessel was 500 ft long, 83 ft wide, and 50 ft tall (c. 152 m x 25 m x 15 m). Photographs were taken, and eventually they and the report were sent back to the Czar.^{1,2,3,4,5}



Was it Really Noah's Ark?

If some man-made wooden structure has been seen on Mount Ararat (facing page), how would one know if it really is the historic Ark of Noah? To start with, the Scriptural description of the Ark's shape is unique and specific. The shape of the Ark has been overlooked or ignored for the last few hundred years, even by most theologians. During that same period of time, boat-like depictions have come to be accepted as "Noah's Ark."

However, Scripture, in its original languages, indicates the Ark's shape was in fact a rectangular lidded box, distinctly different from that of a typical boat or ship. Therefore, if the details described by the most reliable eyewitnesses are in harmony with the Scriptural description, then the case for the Ark's recent existence high atop Ararat becomes increasingly compelling. This precise convergence with Scripture would seriously elevate the significance and authority of the eyewitness accounts.

Some skeptics may suggest any wooden remains on Ararat are simply ancient shrines, but those familiar with Ararat know it is inconceivable that enough wood could be hauled up the mountain to build a vessel of such huge proportions, as the Russian expedition claimed to see, walk on, and document. Consequently, such a vessel could only have landed on the mountain by some other means. The most logical means is obvious. If the Ark really resides above the 14,000 foot level (c. 4,300 m) on Ararat, then there must have been a worldwide flood. This fact would necessitate that much of modern geology and palaeontology needs reinterpretation—fossils themselves could be the recent result of this global catastrophe.

The Bible, the Flood, and the Landing of the Ark

Let's take a look at the Genesis text. What does it actually say about

the Flood and the Ark? The Bible says that the earth was filled with violence after Adam's sin, and people became so wicked that God sent a global flood. Genesis 6:5 says, "And GOD saw that the wickedness of man *was* great in the earth, and *that* every imagination of the thoughts of his heart *was* only evil continually." Verse 7 continues, "And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them."

According to the Biblical text, a man named Noah was chosen to build a vessel that housed eight people and at least two of every kind (not to be confused with modern usage of the word *species*) of land animal. The text says in Genesis 6:14-16:

Make thee an ark of gopher wood; rooms shalt thou make in the ark, and shalt pitch it within and without with pitch. And this *is the fashion* which thou shalt make it of: The length of the ark *shall be* three hundred cubits, the breadth of it fifty cubits, and the height of it thirty cubits. A window shalt thou make to the ark, and in a cubit shalt thou finish it above; and the door of the ark shalt thou set in the side thereof; *with* lower, second, and third *stories* shalt thou make it.⁶

Once all the people and animals were on board, and the door closed, a watery judgement was unleashed upon the planet. Based on Biblical chronologies in combination with secular chronologies, this would have occurred about 4,500 years ago.

Eventually, after about a year on board the vessel, Noah and his family left the Ark. According to the Biblical text in Genesis 8:4, the landing place of the Ark was "upon the mountains of Ararat." This is a reference to mountains within an ancient kingdom known as Urartu. Scholars agree that modern-day Ararat, where the Russians claimed to discover the Ark, is indeed within the boundaries of this ancient kingdom.

Fig. 1 Girona, Spain: box-shaped Ark, 970 - 975 A.D.

What did Noah's Ark Look Like?



It is interesting to note that the early church understood the Ark to be either a box or a chest. Fig. 2 is a fresco of Noah's Ark, from the 3rd to 5th century A.D., discovered in the Catacomb of the Giordani under the city of Rome. Noah is standing in a literal box, maybe four feet in diameter. In Fig. 3, we can see another early depiction of Noah and the Ark from the 3rd to 5th century A.D. Notice, this time Noah is depicted in a literal chest, with the lid

and keyhole visible. The question arises, "Why would anyone depict Noah's Ark as a literal box or chest?"

If an individual at any point in history was going to depict a vessel that floated upon the waters of the Flood (saving Noah, his family, and various animals), it seems almost certain that a typical boat would naturally come to mind. This is indeed the case for a

number of depictions of Noah's vessel throughout church history: basic boats with a pointed bow and stern for directional travel. This makes sense, based on human experience, since this has been the basic design of vessels used for sailing over the last few thousand years.

Why the early church depicted literal boxes and chests, rather than boats or ships, is simple: because of the words of Scripture. The New Testament for example, refers to Noah's vessel as a *kibotos* (κιβωτός) in the original Greek, and there is no doubt that the Greek word *kibotos* refers to either a chest or box made out of

wood.⁷ It appears the early church saints regarded the event of Noah's Ark as miraculous, as evidenced by the size they depicted it.

A beautiful painting of Noah's Ark from 10th century Spain can be seen in Fig. 1 (facing page). In Figs. 4 to 8 (on the next few pages), we see various arks depicted in the history of the church up to the 15th century. The box-shaped depictions of Noah's Ark continue to be seen in many drawings. As time progresses, the Ark begins to grow in size. By the time we hit the 16th century, scholars and artists seem to have finally realistically and accurately combined the box-shape with the Biblical dimensions.



Fig. 2 Rome, Italy: Noah in a literal box, 3rd - 5th Century A.D.



Fig. 3 Rome, Italy: Noah in a literal chest, 3rd - 5th Century A.D.



Fig. 4 Italy: eight people in box-shaped Ark, c. 300 - 310 A.D.



Fig. 5 Venice, Italy: Noah in chest-shaped Ark (mosaic), 13th Century A.D.



Fig. 6 Italy: box-shaped Ark (Illuminated manuscript), 13th Century A.D.



Fig. 7 France: rectangular chest-shaped Ark, early 15th Century A.D.



Fig. 8 Paris, France: rectangular chest-shaped Ark (*Bedford Hours*), 15th Century A.D.

Hebrew Scholarship Affirms a Chest-shaped or Box-shaped Ark

On the previous pages, intriguing evidence from ancient artwork has been presented, demonstrating that the early Christian church believed Noah's Ark to be either chest-shaped or box-shaped. There is no doubt this originates from Scripture. The New Testament, for example, uses the shape-specific word *kibotos*, meaning chest or box constructed out of wood.

Some may wish to assume the later chest-shaped and box-shaped Noah's Ark depictions merely resulted from reading the Latin Vulgate translation of the Bible. Even if this could be established, the word *arca* in the Latin Vulgate is exactly synonymous with the original New Testament word *kibotos* meaning a chest or a box.

The Greek version of the Old Testament, known as the Septuagint, independently uses the same God-inspired word for Noah's vessel as the New Testament, the word *kibotos*. Therefore, even if some assume the chest-shaped or box-shaped depictions of Noah's Ark originate from the Septuagint, this would simply reinforce the clear meaning of the New Testament word. That is to say, regardless of whether the word was gleaned from the New Testament or the Septuagint, the word's meaning is the same: a chest or a box.

What evidence exists that Hebrew-speaking Jews affirmed the early Christian church's view on the shape of Noah's Ark? The Jewish people knew that the Hebrew word for Noah's vessel (Genesis 6:14) and Moses' vessel (Exodus 2:3) were the same. There is also no doubt that they understood this word to mean a specific shape, as evidenced by their depictions of both vessels in their own books.

Specific types of Jewish books, known as Haggadot, were commonly illustrated with beautiful paintings during the Middle Ages. These books were read at the Passover Seder, a ritual feast that marked the beginning of the Passover festival. These books, often written in Hebrew, demonstrate that the Jews understood

the meaning of the Hebrew word for Noah's Ark and Moses' vessel to be a shape-specific design, that of a three-dimensional rectangular chest or box (not a pointed ship-shaped vessel).

Let us look at one example from the *Prato Haggadah*, written around 1300 A.D. Fig. 9 shows a page from this particular book. Observe, the text is written in Hebrew. Later in the *Prato Haggadah*, we see a depiction of Noah's Ark (Fig. 10). Notice the dove approaching with an olive branch. Notice the shape of the vessel floating on the water. What does Noah's Ark look like? It is a giant chest with compartments for the animals and people. Notice the latch hanging from the lid. Notice the keyhole. There is no doubt whatsoever that the Ark is depicted here as a giant chest.

Why would Jews, who understood Hebrew, depict Noah's vessel as a giant chest? The answer is clear and definite. This is what the Hebrew word literally means.⁸ The chest-shape or box-shape of Noah's Ark is affirmed repeatedly by the Hebrew-speaking people themselves in their own books. Speaking of Noah's Ark, as defined in Hebrew, Dr. David Kraemer from The Jewish Theological Seminary, said this:

Traditional Jewish illustrations and commentaries all understand it to be box-shaped....The medieval commentator [Rabbi Abraham] ibn Ezra understands the choice of the word *tevah* to be a conscious rejection of the common shape of a ship.⁹

Sadly, though the true shape of Noah's Ark was once common knowledge among Christians and Hebrew-speaking Jews, the knowledge of what the Ark of Noah looked like has been recently lost. For the past two hundred years, most Christian scholars have overlooked or ignored what the Bible teaches regarding the Ark's specific shape and design. Next, we are going to delve into further details about the specific Hebrew word, *tebah*, which is translated as *ark* in Genesis 6:14 (Noah's Ark).

Fig. 9 Spain: Hebrew text from *Prato Haggadah* (MS 9478), c. 1300 A.D.



Fig. 10 Spain: Noah's Ark from *Prato Haggadah* (MS 9478), c. 1300 A.D.



Tebah (תִּבְרָה) is the Hebrew word used in the Old Testament for both Noah's Ark and Moses' vessel (in which he was placed as a baby). Johannes Buteo, speaking of the two words for ark in the Old Testament, *tebah* (Noah's Ark/Moses' vessel) and *arow* (אֲרוֹן) (ark of the covenant), said that "[t]eachers of Hebrew always claim that these two words are synonymous."¹⁰ Now, if true, this would be vitally important in deciphering the shape of Noah's Ark, since no one disagrees that the ark of the covenant was a chest (or lidded box). The Jewish translators of the Greek version of the Old Testament, known as the Septuagint, also agreed. Directly from Hebrew, they translated both the Ark of Noah and the ark of the covenant with the same Greek word, *kibotos*, which means a chest (or box) constructed out of wood. Furthermore, the Latin Vulgate, also translated directly from Hebrew, also replaced these two different Old Testament words for ark with one word, *arca*,¹¹ which means a chest or box.¹² Finally, in the New Testament, inspired by God Himself, we see that both the Ark of Noah and the ark of the covenant are described with one Greek word, *kibotos*, meaning a chest (or box) made from wood. Clearly *tebah* (Noah's Ark) and *arow* (ark of covenant) are synonyms. It is also clear that the ark of the covenant was chest (or a lidded box). Therefore, *tebah* must also be a chest or a box (which is affirmed by many modern Hebrew lexicons and theological resources^{13,14,15,16}).

Additionally, linguistic evidence indicates that *tebah* may have been borrowed from the Egyptian word *d-b-t* which means chest, box, or coffin.^{17,18} This is exactly in line with the Holy Spirit inspired New Testament word for Noah's vessel, *kibotos*, a chest or box.

Exodus 2:3 indicates that Moses' vessel, the same word used for Noah's Ark, was constructed out of reeds. Some people, with a dislike for the rectangular box-like shape of Noah's Ark, have attempted to confuse the issue. They start by assuming Moses was placed in a basket, and then claim Egyptian baskets were oblong or round, thus demonstrating, in their minds, that *tebah* cannot mean a rectangular box-like shape. However, according to the Biblical text, Moses was placed in a chest or box



Fig. 11 Egyptian reed box (c. 15th - 14th Century B.C.)

made from reeds—not a basket. In Figs. 12 and 13, you can see photographs of Egyptian chests made from reeds (as described in Exodus 2:3). Ancient Egyptians often made reed boxes (Fig. 11). Furthermore, even square and rectangular baskets were common among the Egyptians (Fig. 14). The suggestion that Moses' vessel could not have been a rectangular box-like shape made from reeds, is provably false.

Scripture makes one thing abundantly clear: Noah's vessel was not a ship or a boat. There are at least three words for ship in the Old Testament, words such as *'oniyah* (אֲנִיָּה), *cephiynah* (כִּפְיָנָה), and *tsiy* (צִי). There are at least two words for ship in the New Testament, words such as *plouion* (πλοῖον) and *naus* (ναῦς). None of these words are ever used for Noah's vessel.

The book of Hebrews describes both Noah's Ark and the ark of the covenant with exactly the same word, *kibotos*. If Noah's Ark was not box-shaped, why use the word for chest or box? Why use the exact same word as the ark of the covenant, a box-shaped object? Surely, if Noah's Ark was not box-shaped, the Holy Spirit would have chosen a word other than *kibotos*, such as one of the words for ship; however, He did not.

In our English Bibles, Noah's vessel is called an ark. Ark comes from the Latin word *arca* meaning chest or box. Over 2,000 years of Biblical scholarship are indelibly stamped onto the pages of our English Bible when it comes to the shape of Noah's vessel. It was the basic shape of a chest or box, 300 cubits long, by 50 cubits wide, by 30 cubits tall (Genesis 6:15).

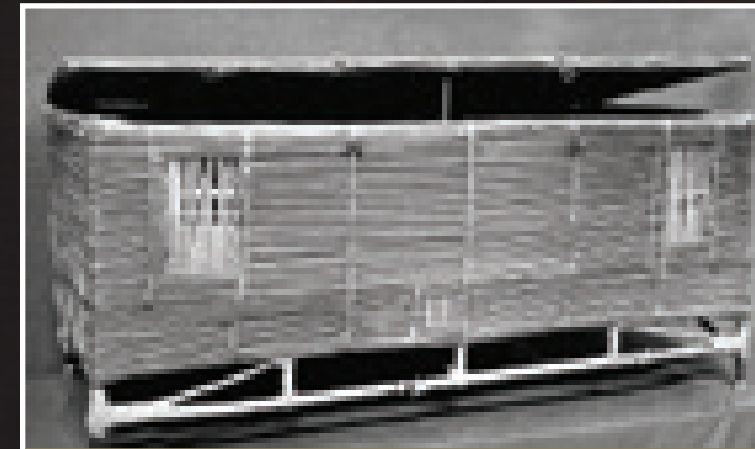


Fig. 12 Egyptian reed chest (c. 16th - 14th Century B.C.)



Fig. 13 Egyptian reed chest on stand (c. 1352 B.C.)

Fig. 14 Egyptian square & rectangular baskets (c. 22nd - 20th Century B.C.)

