

## Noah's Ark

The Subsiding of the Waters by Thomas Cole (Quotations from the English Standard Version)

God observes that the earth is corrupted with violence and decides to destroy all life. But Noah "was a righteous man, blameless in his generation, [and] Noah walked with God," and God gives him instructions for the construction of an ark, into which he is told to bring "two of every sort [of animal] ... male and female," and their food.

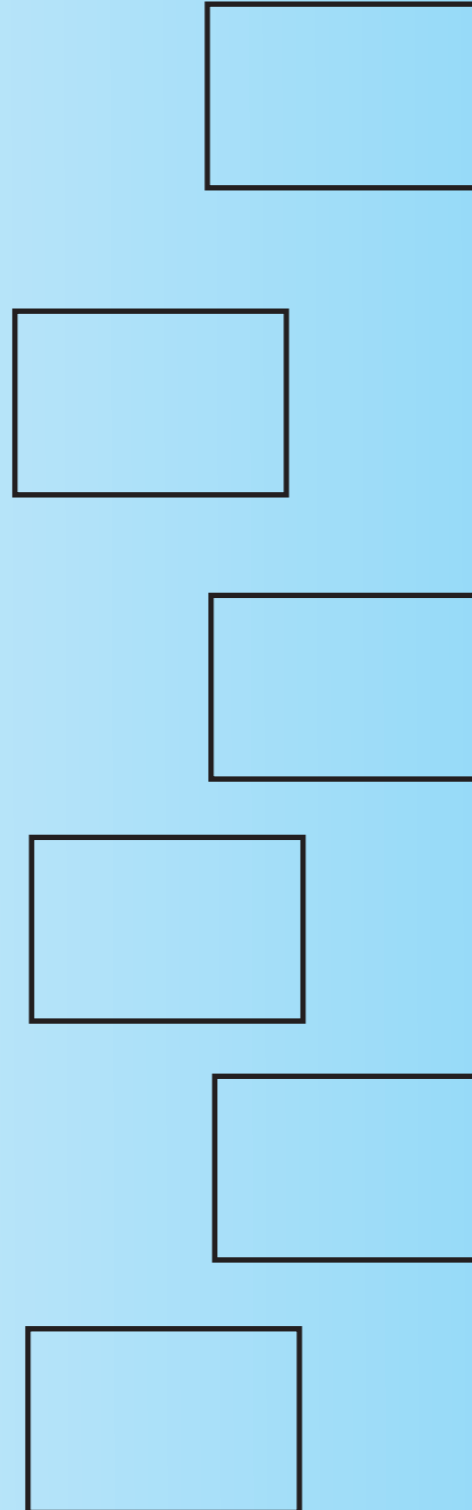
God instructs Noah to board the Ark with his family, seven pairs of the birds and the clean animals, and two pairs of the unclean animals. "On the same day all the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened, and the rain was upon the earth," and God closes up the door of the Ark. The flood begins, and the waters prevail until all the high mountains are covered fifteen cubits deep, and all the people and animals and creeping things and birds of the heavens are blotted out from the earth, and only Noah and those with him in the Ark remain.

Then "God remembered Noah," and causes his wind to blow, and the fountains of the deep and the windows of the heavens are closed, and the rain is restrained, and the waters abate. In the seventh month the Ark rests on the mountains of Ararat, and in the tenth month the tops of the mountains are seen. Noah sends out a raven and a dove to see if the waters have subsided; the raven flies "to and fro" and the dove returns with a fresh olive leaf in her beak. Noah waits seven days more and sends out the dove again, and this time it does not return.

"In the six hundred and first year, in the first month, the first day of the month, the waters were dried from the earth, and Noah removed the covering of the ark and looked, and behold, the face of the ground was dry." God tells Noah to leave the ark, Noah offers a sacrifice to God, and God resolves never again to destroy the earth, "for the intention of man's heart is evil from his youth." [8] God grants to Noah and his sons the right to kill animals and eat their meat, but forbids meat which has not been drained of its blood. Blood is proclaimed sacred: "For your lifeblood I will require a reckoning: from every beast I will require it and from man...Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed, for God made man in his own image." Then God establishes his covenant with Noah and his sons and with all living things, and places the rainbow in the clouds, "the sign of the covenant that I have established between me and all flesh that is on the earth."

### Work it out:

Cut along the dotted lines. Put the stamp into the correct place in the text "Noah's ark"



Subject: Noah's Ark

READING + STAMPS

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The Bible, Genesis 6 through 8, provides these specifications for Noah's ark: 450 feet long, 75 feet wide, and 45 feet high (in Hebrew 300, 50, and 30 cubits); to be built of cypress wood caulked with pitch inside and out; with lower, middle and upper decks; a window on top for ventilation, and a loading door in the side of the hull. 'Ark' is derived from the Latin word 'arca', meaning 'box', giving us another clue as to its shape.



According to the above specs, the ark had usable space of approximately 100,000 square feet and a 'cargo' volume of 1.5 million cubic feet. Many historians have tried to determine the time that Noah's flood occurred, settling on a range of 2,900 to 5,500 years B.C. Consequently, all these exact sounding figures should be taken 'with a grain of salt'.

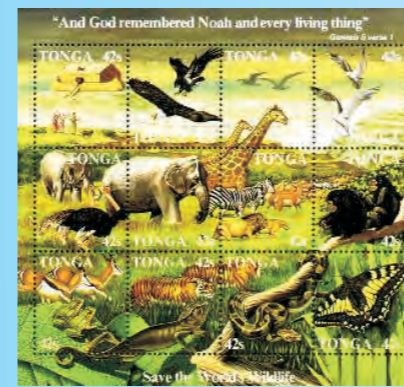
Reports of a catastrophic flood and construction of an ark are not unique to the Hebrew version of the Bible. The story is based on much older legends from the area around the Euphrates and Tigris Rivers. Assyrians, Babylonians and Hittites all had their own tales of deluges and giant floods. The most famous one is recounted in the Sumerian 'Gilgamesh Epic'. Its flood's hero is named Utnapishtim. Like Noah, he

receives orders to construct a boat and 'to take aboard the seeds of all living creatures'. Yet another version is found in the Koran. Similarly, three Native American myths from the Mississippi region, California and Alaska report a great deluge which covered all the land. And two Hawaiian legends tell the story of two humans who survived atop Mount Mouna-Kea while the islands were under water.

In 1968 Israel issued a set of five stamps representing this great catastrophe symbolically. The first stamp (0.12 value) shows Noah felling trees and the ark under construction. On the second one (0.15 value) we see the Noah family and pairs of animals approaching the ark. Then, 'rain fell on the earth forty days and forty nights', represented by the third stamp (0.35 value) with giant waves and flashes of lightning. After forty days Noah sent out a raven, then a dove on three occasions, seven days apart, as indicated by the fourth stamp (0.40 value). The first time, the dove returned to the ark with an empty beak, so, the earth was still under water. The second time, it returned with a freshly plucked olive leaf, so Noah knew the waters were receding. The third time, the dove did not return, and Noah opened his 'box'. The last stamp shows a rainbow, God's sign of his covenant with man after the flood.



Noah was 600 years old when the flood began. With him aboard the ark were his wife, his three sons and his sons' wives. Time spent on the ark was somewhat more than a year, the last five months or so while resting on the mountains of Ararat, according to the Bible.



Many expeditions have tried to find the ark there, searching, digging and conducting seismic tests over vast mountainous terrain. There are would-be explorers who alleged having found it some 32 kilometers distant from Mt. Ararat, on the slopes of Mt. Judi — exactly the place the Koran describes as being the 'landing site'. Impressions of a ship-like object approximating the dimensions of the ark were said to have been discovered there, yet others dispute this find. According to the 'Gilgamesh Epic' hero Utnapishtim placed his ship atop Mt. Nisir, northeast of Bagdad.

It's hard to believe, but there exist serious scholarly studies 'proving' that all land animals from Noah's time could have been accommodated on the ark. This way theologians are countering the argument that lack of space alone disproves the historic veracity of the Bible's story. As Noah didn't have to transport any sea animals, the number of vertebrates amounted to approx. 21,100 species, calculated as requiring some 300,00 cubic feet of space. With some 1.5 million cubic feet available overall, there'd be plenty of room for all the animals plus provisions. Furthermore, some animal species are hibernating in summer and others in winter. A different study to be perused mentions just 'less than 280 animals' taken along by Noah.



What could have caused a catastrophic flood such as this one? The Bible reports 40 days of steady rain. One study tried to calculate the total amount of water vapour extant in the atmosphere. Assuming all of it would fall down to earth in one big deluge, the result would be a rise of just one inch. Consequently, according to some scholars, either a comet or an asteroid must have crashed on earth and caused a gigantic flood wave all around the globe. A newer theory assumes that the Mediterranean, the Sea of Marmara, and the Black Sea were all landlocked bodies at one time. Following the Ice Age some 18,000 years ago, melting glacier ice made the Mediterranean rise tremendously, then flooded first the Sea of Marmara and later, with a gigantic burst at the Bosphorus, rushed all over the Black Sea. Such is supposed to have occurred some 7,500 years ago and might well have been the time of 'The Flood'.



Many myths and legends are based on some core truth. Noah must have been a great shipbuilder of the antique world and, for thousands of years, his ark was probably the largest vessel under the sun. .... On the

other hand, maybe not.

Quelle: [www.seemotive.de](http://www.seemotive.de)

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