

New Ark landing place?

The question of where Noah's Ark finally came to rest after its ordeal on the high seas with its precious cargo has long fascinated many people, with numerous expeditions mounted over the decades to try and locate the vessel. As the Bible specifically mentions the 'mountains of Ararat' (Gen 8:4) as the Ark's landing site, it is understandable that researchers have been drawn to Mt Ararat in south-eastern Turkey for many years. But what other possible locations could we also consider?

After the floodwaters receded and the Ark found itself on a high and dry mountain, Noah built an altar to the Lord, after which the Bible then describes the genealogy of Noah's children and grandchildren. By the time we get to Genesis 11 we learn that all of humanity had one language and the people 'journeyed from the east' (Gen 11:2) and settled on the plains of Shinar. There they undertook a massive construction, an immense tower, and in doing so disobeyed God's command to fill the earth.

If we accept that the Tower of Babel is in Babylon, which is about 90 kilometres south of Baghdad in modern day Iraq, we must consider the possibility that the Ark came to rest somewhere in the Zagros Mountains of western Iran, which is due east from Babylon. Upon leaving the Ark Noah and his family 'journeyed from the east' (i.e. moved westwards) to arrive at the fertile lands between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers—the plains of Shinar.

If the Ark had come to rest on the Turkish Mt Ararat, then Noah and his family would have had to journey from the north, as Mt Ararat is due north of Babylon. That would be contrary to what the Bible tells us.

The Zagros Mountains are a rugged, and in some areas little explored, region with many very high peaks—for example, Zard Kūh, which rises 4,548 metres (14,921 ft).¹ Many of the peaks

are permanently covered by snow. Another interesting point to consider is that there is a town in the Zagros Mountains called Arāk which is almost due east of Baghdad and Babylon. While the name has some similarity to the name Ararat it must be remembered that Arāk was only founded in 1808 and was originally called Sultanabad.¹ But there is the possibility that Arāk may recall the name Ararat, perhaps the region's original name, an area that once saw the arrival of an immense wooden vessel.

At this point in time no solid evidence has yet been unearthed from Mt Ararat in Turkey by the many earnest expeditions which have searched there for the Ark. Perhaps it is time researchers turned some of their attention to the Zagros Mountains of western Iran ...

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References

1. Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia 2002.
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