

Geographical and historical concerns in Genesis 8:4—part 1

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The dispute over the historicity of Genesis 6–8 has led to a search for the remains of Noah’s Ark, especially since the 1970s. This search has mostly been focused on Mt Ararat/Agri Dagh in northeastern Türkiye. However, there are strong reasons to reject Mt Ararat as the landing place of Noah’s Ark: a lack of ancient testimony; the geology of the mountain; geographical reasons; unreliable witnesses; and the lack of any discovery, despite efforts.

The account of a global Flood in Genesis 6–8 is one of the best-known stories in Scripture. The entire human race perished, except for Noah and seven of his family members, who survived along with mating pairs of each kind of land animal and bird in a large ship called an ‘ark’. When the floodwaters subsided, the Ark came to rest “on the mountains of Ararat” (Gen 8:4), and Noah, his family, and the animals disembarked from the Ark to begin life anew in the postdiluvian world. The historicity of the Genesis Flood account has been hotly debated in modern scholarship in recent times,¹ and it is largely for this reason—to defend its veracity—that efforts have been made to locate its remains. For many Christians who accept the historicity of Genesis 6–8, Noah’s Ark landed on Mt Ararat/Agri Dagh. The authors of this article once held this view, and one of the authors (Crouse) was so convinced that he made two trips to Mt Ararat in the 1980s and climbed to its summit. It is a spectacular mountain, the highest in the area (16,945 ft / 5,165 m), and there is a plethora of astonishing ‘eyewitness’ accounts of Ark sightings from adventurers, natives, and men in military service. However, in the process of evaluating the evidence, it became apparent that there were many contradictions in the accounts of the alleged eyewitnesses. Some say it was completely intact, some that it was split into two, others into three pieces. The sightings also pinpoint many different locations on the mountain. To the present, no verifiable remains of the Ark have ever been found on Mt Ararat. This has led to a quest to evaluate the evidence from ancient records, which resulted in the conclusion that Cudi Dagh, a mountain 320 km (200 mi) from Ararat in SE Türkiye (see part 2), is the site that is best supported by ancient and early medieval sources. The geology, geography, and archaeology do not support Mt Ararat as the site of its final berth.

Five reasons why Mt Ararat should not be identified as the landing place of Noah’s Ark

1. Inadequate testimony from antiquity

The claim that Noah’s Ark landed on Mt Ararat/Agri Dagh was unknown, or virtually unknown, in antiquity.

Two of the earliest references to Mt Ararat as the landing place of the Ark are debatable. The first is found in Jerome’s *Commentary on Isaiah 37:38*, which was written between the years 408 and 410:

“When they had fled into the land of *Ararat*, which refers to Armenia, Esarhaddon succeeded in place of his father Now *Ararat* is a flat region of incredible fertility in Armenia, through which the *Araxes* flows to the base of the *Taurus* mountain, which reaches even that far. Therefore, when the flood ceased, even the ark in which Noah was saved with his sons was not carried to the mountains of Armenia in a general sense, which is called *Ararat*, but to the tallest mountains of *Taurus*, which overlooks the plains of *Ararat*.”²

Mt Ararat is indeed a very tall mountain overlooking a broad plain and is near the *Araxes* (*Aras*) River, which flows eastward into Iran, but *it does not flow to the Taurus mountains, which are in southern Türkiye* (figure 1). They are far from Mt Ararat. In some geographies, Cudi Dagh is part of the ‘*Armenian Taurus Mountains*’,³ but Mt Ararat was never included in the *Taurus Mountains*. Thus, it is not clear what Jerome meant by “the tallest mountains of *Taurus*, which overlooks the plains of *Ararat*”. Possibly Jerome conflated his sources.⁴

The second mention of Mt Ararat as the landing place of the Ark is also from early in the 5th century by historian Philostorgius.⁵ His 12-volume history has not survived, but Photius, a patriarch of Constantinople, summarized it in the 9th century. One of the translators of his work noted that “he has inserted in his narrative many curious geographical and other details about remote and unknown

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Figure 1. Relief of the Taurus Mountains in the south of Turkey

countries.”⁶ Philostorgius referenced the location of Noah’s Ark as follows:

“As for the Euphrates River, it appears to take its rise in Armenia, where Mount Ararat is. The mountain is still called by that name among the Armenians. It is where, according to scripture, the ark came to rest, and they say that considerable remnants of its wood and nails are still preserved there.”⁷

While it is possible to interpret this quote as saying that the source of the Euphrates River is near Mt Ararat, it is more likely that Philostorgius meant that the source of the Euphrates is in Armenia, and that Armenia is where Mt Ararat is. He then goes on a digression about Mt Ararat and Noah’s Ark. Some of the headwaters of the Euphrates (the Murat River) are indeed about 50 km (30 mi) from the mountain that is today called Mt Ararat. However, ancient Armenian sources called Mt Ararat ‘Masis’.⁸ The name ‘Mt Ararat’ was used by early Armenian writers for Cudi Dagħ, so it is likely that Philostorgius was actually referring to Cudi.⁹

The earliest indisputable sources identifying Mt Ararat / Agri Dagħ as the landing place of the Ark date to the 11th and 12th centuries. Streck writes, in the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*:

“The tradition that Masik [Agri Dagħ] was the mountain on which the ark rested only begins to find a place in Armenian literature in the 11th and 12th centuries. Older exegesis identified the mountain now called Djabal Djūdī, or according to Christian authorities, the mountains of Gordyene (Syr. Ǧardū, Armen. *Kordukh*) as the ‘apobaterion’ [place of descent] of Noah.”¹⁰

The new tradition is reflected in Marco Polo’s account of his travels to China in the 13th century:

“In the heart of Greater Armenia is a very high

mountain, shaped like a cube, on which Noah’s ark is said to have rested, whence it is called the Mountain of Noah’s Ark. It is so broad and long that it takes more than two days to go around it. On the summit the snow lies so deep all the year round that no one can ever climb it; this snow never entirely melts, but new snow is forever falling on the old.”¹¹

The search for Noah’s Ark, in the 20th century, on Mt Ararat / Agri Dagħ began in 1948, when an American missionary responded to a news account of a ‘ship-like’ object high on the slopes of Ararat and decided to investigate.¹² This modern search for

Noah’s Ark on Ararat has been chronicled in several books.¹³

In summary, the first reason that Mt Ararat / Agri Dagħ should be rejected is that it has inadequate testimony from antiquity.¹⁴ The use of the name ‘Mt Ararat’ for Agri Dagħ/Masis is rather late. This area south of the Araxes River was known in antiquity as the ‘canton of Airarat/Ararat’, but, at some point during the Middle Ages, the name of this district was transferred to the spectacular mountain within it.¹⁵ Because Mt Ararat has become so well known, many contemporary readers of Genesis 8:4 incorrectly assume it refers to ‘Mt Ararat’, rather than to ‘the mountains of Ararat’. Agri Dagħ is the highest mountain in the region, and, because of its altitude, in the minds of many, it must have been the landing place of Noah’s Ark.

2. The geology of Mt Ararat

A second reason to reject Mt Ararat as the landing place of the Ark is the mountain’s geology. Ararat is a complex stratovolcano, seated on a bedrock of limestone without definitive evidence of ever having been submerged in water. Fossiliferous rocks are nowhere to be found, though they are abundant in the hills surrounding the mountain. All this would lead one to believe that the mountain was formed after the Flood.¹⁶ It is often claimed there is sedimentation found on the mountain, but it can easily be shown that this layering is the result of volcanic, and not alluvial, action. The alleged presence of pillow lava is also sometimes put forth as evidence that Mt Ararat was once submerged. However, pillow lava is not formed exclusively from extrusion underwater, but can be formed from extrusion under ice and snow. The lack of evidence that Mt Ararat was once submerged is a stubborn fact that still awaits an explanation from Ark hunters.¹⁷



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Figure 2. Greater and Lesser Ararat sitting in the middle of a plain, and not as a part of the range known in antiquity as ‘the mountains of Ararat/Urartu’.

Those advocating Mt Ararat as the site of Noah’s Ark often claim that the Ark has been preserved intact because it has been encased in ice for millennia. An object made of durable wood covered with a preservative and frozen in ice could certainly be preserved for thousands of years. However, almost all of the ice fields on Mt Ararat are in the form of moving glaciers, which would have the action of crushing and pulverizing any wooden object the size of the Ark. Pockets of alleged stationary ice have been searched with sub-surface radar with no current definitive results.

3. The geography of Mt Ararat

A third reason to reject Mt Ararat as the landing place of the Ark is the mountain’s geography. Ararat, with its satellite cone called Little/Lesser Ararat (figure 2), is a volcano that is isolated and off by itself in a plain. It is not part of the great mountain range that was known in antiquity as ‘the mountains of Ararat/Urartu’. Genesis 8:4 does not use the term ‘kingdom of Ararat’ or ‘land of Ararat’, but ‘mountains of Ararat’, which shows that this is intended as a geographical term. Further, it is a term used to designate a mountain range, not an individual mountain. The use of this term makes it highly unlikely that modern Mt Ararat is referenced, since Ararat is an isolated volcanic mountain, not part of a larger mountain range.

There is broad agreement among scholars that Ararat, more commonly called by its Assyrian equivalent ‘Urartu’, includes the mountainous region where Cudi Dagh is found. What is less certain is how early the term ‘Urartu’ came to be used for this region. The earliest known extrabiblical use of the term ‘Urartu’ comes from an inscription of Shalmaneser I (1263–1234 BC), who uses the term to refer to a geographical (rather than political) region.¹⁸

According to Bailey, the term ‘Urartu’ may have originally meant ‘mountainous country’, and “the land of Urartu” in Shalmaneser I’s inscription refers to the mountainous area to the southeast of Lake Van.¹⁹ Urartu later became a united kingdom and a regional power, and, in the late 9th or early 8th century BC, expanded to include the area around modern Mt Ararat, though it also included the mountainous region around Cudi Dagh.²⁰ There are thus two meanings of the term ‘Urartu’ in ancient literature. Zimansky explains:

“Even for the Assyrians, who coined the term, ‘Urartu’ had more than one meaning. It was originally a geographical designation of a land that contained several independent political entities. Later it became the name of a unified state which covered a much larger expanse.”²¹

The date of the use of the term ‘the mountains of Ararat’ in Genesis 8:4 is disputed. It may be as early as the late 15th century BC, according to the conservative date of the composition of Genesis. Such an early date for the use of this term is possible, given the 13th-century Assyrian inscription which uses ‘Urartu’ with reference to a mountainous region to the north of Assyria.²² However, there are some instances of the updating of place names in Genesis by an inspired post-Mosaic updater (‘Dan’ in Genesis 14:14 and possibly ‘Chaldeans’ in Genesis 11:28, 31; 15:7). Thus, it is possible the original text read something like “the mountains of Mitanni” or “the mountains of Hurri” and that the inspired updater changed this to “the mountains of Ararat” after the expansion of the Urartian kingdom (see 2 Kings 19:37; Isa 37:38). An analogous change was made later, when the Aramaic Targums updated ‘Ararat’ to ‘Qardu’ (see further on the Targums in part II).

In any case, it is highly unlikely that Genesis 8:4 is referring to the area of present-day Mt Ararat, which (as

Box 254
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Ararat Rept.

I was interested in your literature but terribly disappointed with the usual results. Never in all these trips do they FIND the ark. Just come back with more legends, hearsays and guessworks.

This is to me a source of great embarrassment to be constantly denounced for starting the world's greatest hoax about Noah's ark.

You state that you have a man in Albuquerque who has been to the ark. Fine deal. Then let's get him to hop into a helicopter and take us to it and get some pictures to prove it. If the air is quiet enough to make a landing cut off some wood for age testing.

Just a suggestion of mine but if enough of us get together it would not hurt anyone very bad. I'd be willing to toss in a \$1000.

Think it over anyhow and do what you think best. You folks do know the situation better than I do.

We are fighting the scientific establishment I know which "knows" there has never been a flood or that the world has rolled over one third of the way.

Here in Hawaii the geologists recently bored through Mount Monolua and found arctic permafrost thousands of years old which proved Hawaii was in the arctic at the same time Alaska was in the tropics as proven by elephants and palm trees there frozen in the present permafrost. Science says no. Hawaii got its permafrost from the ice age they think. I wonder where they got those palm trees and elephants in Alaska.

Natives here say the flood reached up two miles on the Hawaii mountain which makes sense to me as the ocean here is just that, two miles deep. Only the little Mēnūhūne escaped that flood and few of those left to tell the tale. I spend time in Samoa where the legend is that all islands were covered and few survived.

Anyway I just thought I'd put in my two cents worth and you can think it over about us sending that man back there to Ararat.

Sincerest Aloha
Floyd M. Gurley

P.S. I live in Hawaii but get all my mail through my daughter who sends it to me weekly.

Figure 3. Letter from Floyd Gurley

mentioned earlier) is an isolated volcanic mountain that is well to the north of the mountain range ancient writers identified with the mountains of Ararat.

4. The unreliability of eyewitness claims

A fourth reason to reject Mt Ararat as the landing place of the Ark is problems with the claims of so-called eyewitnesses. Since the start of the Ark search in the mid-20th century, several dozen claims have been made, mostly by Americans, about seeing the Ark mostly intact on Mt Ararat.²³ In almost every case, where the claims could be investigated, they have been shown to be troublesome, contradictory, and stretching credulity. With good research and detective work, most have been proven to be untrue. Several confirmed hoaxes have misled many.²⁴ Perhaps the greatest hoax of all was an alleged discovery by the Russian

military during the First World War. According to the story, a Russian plane spotted a large black submarine-like object embedded in a frozen lake high on Mt Ararat. Later, a large contingent of the Russian soldiers managed, with much difficulty, to get to the site in the middle of winter and found that it was indeed Noah's Ark. Pieces of wood and a detailed report were supposedly sent to the Czar, but, alas, the government offices were besieged by the Bolsheviks, and both the wood and the report turned out to be missing. Much detective work was done, and the story was traced to a man in California who wrote the story in a very small newsletter/magazine.²⁵ The story, however, was reprinted in tract form and literally went around the world several times, and still surfaces occasionally today. This story is known to be false because Crouse corresponded with the author, Mr Floyd M. Gurley, who confessed in a phone conversation and in a letter dated 21 June 1989, which is in Crouse's possession, that the story had no historical reality (see figure 3).

During World War II, several more stories surfaced about pilots seeing large black, rectangular objects on the mountain during flyovers. Some of the pilots may have been telling the truth when they described large barge-like objects on the mountain.

Ararat is a volcanic mountain; given the right shadows and lighting, large blocks of basalt can easily be mistaken for a ship-like object. There are several genuine photos of these 'phantom arks', some of which are quite striking in appearance (figure 4).²⁶

There are other stories of proven prevarication, false impressions, or over-active imagination. Two such stories to further illustrate are the Ed Behling and the Donald Liedmann stories. In Ed's case he claimed he was taken to see the Ark while stationed at a U.S. military base in Türkiye. While there he was taken to see it by a native. I (Crouse) tracked him down and contacted several from his church, who counselled me about certain personal factors, leading me to not believe his story. The Liedmann story was a spectacular lie that is chronicled by Violet Cummings.²⁷ According to Liedmann, he was shot down as a fighter pilot during WW II, and, while in a prison camp, he was

shown photos that were purported to be of Noah's Ark on Mt Ararat by Russian pilots who were presumably in prison with him. Later, he claimed to have two doctorates, one an MD. The parishioners were beguiled by his many stories of his past, but some were suspicious. One fellow church member, a pilot and owner of a small plane, invited him to fly with him. The pilot, being suspicious of his exploits as a fighter pilot invited him to take the controls. What he learned was his entire story was in fact a lie. Liedmann was then confronted by the elders of his church, and he humbly agreed to seek help. A few weeks later he and his wife suddenly disappeared.

When another friend heard about my (Crouse) research he introduced me to his brother, who, while in the military, was involved in top secret analysis of photography taken from high altitude planes. One day he noticed a strange object in a high-resolution photo of Mt Ararat. When he asked his supervisor about the identity of the object he was told, "Why it's Noah's Ark." Several years later, when this man was in grave health, he confessed to me that he had made up the story. This story, nonetheless, became known among Ark searchers and was retold countless times.

There is also another matter which could explain some of the many stories: on the southwest side of the mountain, as viewed from the village of Doğubayazıt, one can see a large black spot near the peak of the mountain in the area of the permanent snow. The visibility of this object on the south side of the mountain had many staring in wonder. That is, until an acquaintance of Crouse, a climber, John McIntosh, climbed to this spot and testified that it was not any kind of wooden structure, just a rock outcrop! When the locals were queried about the object, we were informed they call it 'the eye of the bird'. It certainly could have contributed to the rumors and stories that the Ark of Noah rested at the summit.

The story from World War II that has received the most attention came not from a pilot but from a soldier, Ed Davis, who claimed he was taken to see the Ark by locals who

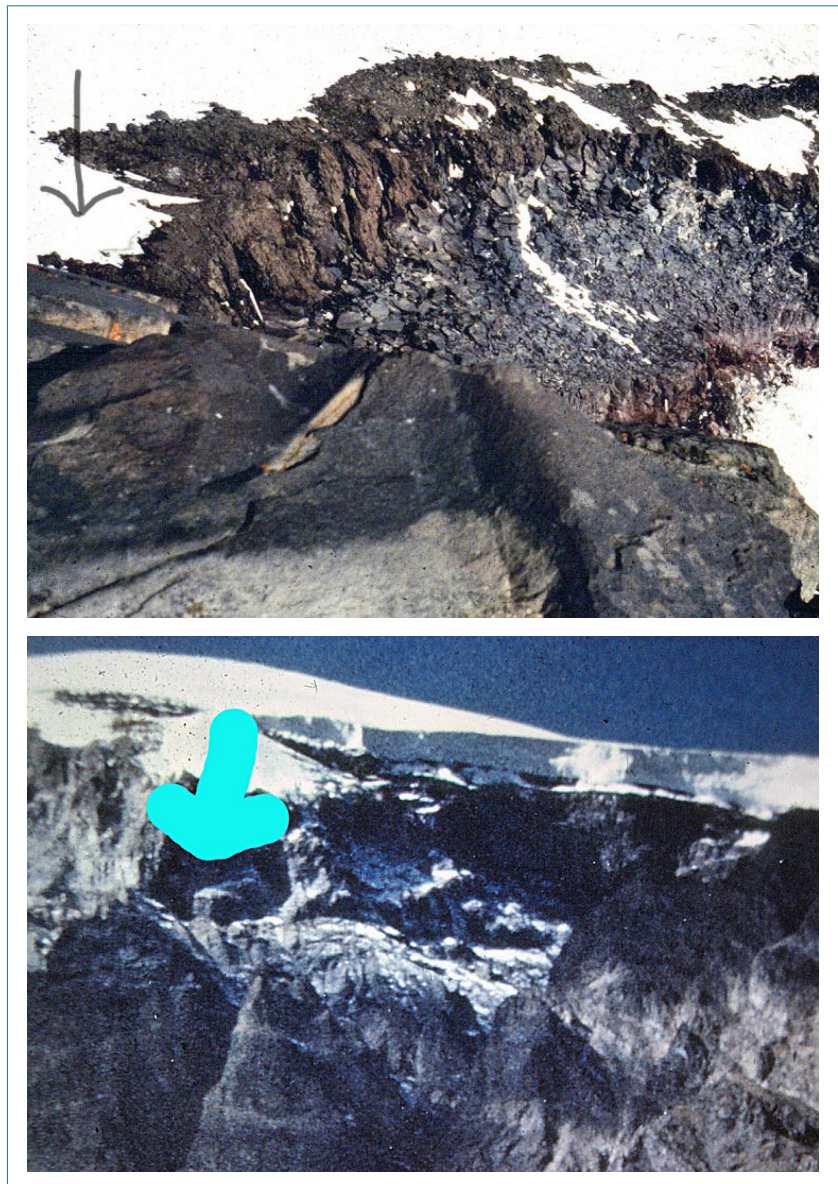


Figure 4. Arrows pointing to a large, rectangular basalt block on Mt Ararat, giving the appearance of a 'phantom Ark' (from Gurely, ref. 25).

wanted to repay a favour. This American soldier was a road builder stationed in Hamadan, Iran. His sensational story was the feature of one book and has been retold in several others.²⁸ The problems with the story are many. First, Davis has changed his story several times in the telling, after being questioned by incompetent interrogators. For example, in the original story he said his friends who took him to see the Ark were Lourds/Lurs. Later, after being debriefed by Ark researchers, he changed his story. The researchers informed him that Lourds do not live at the foot of Mt Ararat, but the Kurds do. Hence, thereafter, he referred to those who took him to the Ark as Kurds! Secondly, some key details in Davis's story contradict geographic realities. He claimed

he saw the snow-covered peak of Mt Ararat from Hamadan. This is impossible, since Ararat is 644 km (400 mi) away, as the crow flies. Davis also said that he was driven from Hamadan to Ararat in a little over half a day, which would be difficult on modern highways, and would have been impossible in 1943. It may be that in 1943, while stationed in Hamadan, Iran, some natives took Davis to a snow-capped mountain about 100 km (60 mi) west of Hamadan. This mountain is known as Kuh-e Alvand, and to many in that area of the world this mountain is the one on which the Ark landed. It is a mountain of many archaeological sites, springs, and caves, just as Davis described it. With the roads the way they were in 1943, it would have taken them about half a day to get there. While there, the locals must have pointed out some object, probably a huge block of basalt partly covered with snow and informed him that it was Noah's Ark (they, too, believed it was). The story became embellished as Davis sensed the importance of his experience to Ark researchers and because of the personal attention he received. Third, some things in his story stretch credulity. Davis claimed that the locals found edible honey, feathers in cages, fish remains, and edible beans within the Ark! He also claimed that he was shown the site of the Garden of Eden! Crouse has had personal interaction with Davis and did not find him credible. On one occasion, he informed him that he had received threatening phone calls from 'The Black Arm of Mohammad' for telling his story!

A more recent and probable hoax about a discovery on Mt Ararat is the claim by a local Turkish mountaineer, called Parasut (real name: Ahmet Ertuğrul), that the inside of a cave is actually chambers of a buried Ark. He managed to convince a Chinese group from Hong Kong (Noah's Ark Ministries International, NAMI) and several others, who continue to perpetuate this story.

5. The failure to discover the Ark on Mt Ararat

The fifth reason that Mt Ararat should be rejected as the landing place of the Ark is the fact that this large object has not been found there despite great efforts. The mountain, though large and forbidding, is not infinite. A Turkish officer, a commando, told Crouse he has taken his men all over the mountain in maneuvers and has never seen anything resembling the Ark. Crouse also knows one native from a village at the foot of the mountain who walked all the way into the Ahora Gorge, then climbed out.²⁹ He has photographic proof of his journey but did not find the Ark. Hundreds of thousands of dollars have been spent on flyovers aboard fixed-wing aircraft and helicopters. One enterprising searcher rented a plane with an ultra-high resolution mapping camera and then hired a professional volcanologist from NASA to study the resulting 900 overlapping (stereo pairs) 2.54 cm² (10 in²) transparencies magnified 300 times in three dimensions. Nothing unnatural

was identified.³⁰ Currently, satellite data is being employed with no positive results, though there are at times tantalizing objects visible which succeed in setting off 'Ark fever'. *Most of the contemporary searchers continue the search on Mt Ararat because of a refusal to give up hope that the biblical artifact will be found intact.* Enthusiasm dims with some when confronted with evidence that the Ark could no longer be intact, as they believe that only the discovery of an intact Ark (not buried remains of the Ark) will convince unbelievers of the truth of the biblical Flood story. Since there are always many who make eyewitness claims to have seen the Ark intact, or in several pieces, the quest continues. A tangible ship-like object is always described. The possibility that Noah's Ark could yet be found intact and witnessed by the world dies hard.

Conclusion

We believe strongly that the early chapters of Genesis are inspired by God, infallible, and real history. That, to us, means there really was a large boat that existed in time and space the exact size as described in Gen. 6:14–17, and it landed on a literal piece of real estate. That there would be physical evidence for the vessel's existence is therefore highly probable. However, despite all the smoke, and the plethora of alleged Ark sightings around this great volcano in northeastern Türkiye, there is, up to now, no fire! No evidence, no photographs, nothing definitive. As we've tried to show in this article: ancient history does not comply; the geology is contrary; the geography is disputed; alleged eyewitnesses contradictory; and, after large amounts spent on sophisticated expeditions, nothing has been uncovered. In part 2 of our research, we will show there is a site 320 km (200 mi) south of Mt Ararat that has considerable support as the final berth of Noah's Ark.

References

1. For example, a popular view current among some evangelical scholars holds that Genesis 1–11 is not real history but a kind of 'mytho-history'. See: Lane Craig, W., *In Quest of the Historical Adam*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, MI, 2021.
2. *St. Jerome: Commentary on Isaiah*, Scheck, T.P. (trans.), book 11, chap. 11, Ancient Christian Writers, no. 68, Newman Press, New York, pp. 520–521, 2015.
3. This is confirmed by map 4 (at the end of the book) in Thompson, R.W., Howard-Johnston, J., and Greenwood, T. (Eds.), *The Armenian History Attributed To Sebeos, part 1*, Translated Texts for Historians, vol. 31, Liverpool University Press, Liverpool, 1999.
4. According to Bailey, the name 'Armenia' came to replace the name 'Urartu/Ararat' as a geographical term, but the name 'Ararat' was still used for a region within Armenia that included Mount Ararat. Thus, he thinks Jerome mistakenly identified the region called 'Ararat' in his own day with the region called 'Ararat' in earlier times. Bailey, L.R., Ararat (Place); in: Freedman, D.N. *et al.*, (Eds.), *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, vol. 1, Doubleday, New York, p. 352, 1992.
5. Little is known about Philostorgius (AD 368–439), who was an Arian. It is known that he was born in Cappadocia and moved to Constantinople at 20 years of age.
6. *Epitome of the Ecclesiastical History of Philostorgius, compiled by Photius, Patriarch of Constantinople*, Walford, E. (Ed. and trans.), Bohn, H.G., London, p. 428, 1855.

7. *Philostorgius: Church History*, book 3, chap. 8, Amidon, P.R. (trans.), Society of Biblical Literature, Atlanta, GA, p. 44, 2007. Also note: Philostorgius did not mention an intact Ark!
8. Faustus, a 4th century Armenian historian, referred to Ararat as ‘Masis’. See Garsoian, N.G., *The Epic Histories*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, p. 96, 1989. Lazar P’arpec’i, writing in the late 5th century, also refers to Ararat as ‘Masis’. *The History of Lazar P’arpec’i*, Thompson, R.W. (trans.), Scholars Press, Atlanta, GA, p. 178, 1991. Also, Moses Khorenats’i, a 5th century Armenian historian, referred to Masis many times, but never as ‘Ararat’. *Moses Khorenats’i: History of the Armenians*, Thompson, R.W. (trans.), Harvard Armenian Texts and Studies 4, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, 1978. See especially p. 91, n.12.
9. Faustus identified Mt Ararat as a mountain in the canton of Korduk (Garsoian, *Epic Histories*, 77). In his account of Jacob of Nisibis’ quest for a piece of wood from the Ark, Faustus referred again to ‘Mt Ararat’ but was clearly not referring to what is today called ‘Mt Ararat’. Garsoian, *The Epic Histories*, pp. 252–253. See footnote 3.
10. Streck, M., ‘Djüdi’; in: *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd edn, vol. 2, Brill, Leiden, p. 574, 1991.
11. *Marco Polo, The Travels*, Latham, R., (Ed. and trans.), The Folio Society, London, p. 34, 1968. Obviously, Mt Ararat is shaped like a cone, not like a cube. Perhaps this was a mistranslation as there are many problems with the original text.
12. Cummings, V., *Has Anybody Really Seen Noah’s Ark?* Creation-Life Publishers, San Diego, CA, p. 6, 1982. See also this account: Smith, A.J., *On the Mountains of Ararat in Quest for Noah’s Ark*, West Publishing Company, Apollo, PA, 1950. Smith’s account of the mysterious local named ‘Reshit’ has all the earmarks of a tabloid story.
13. Cummings, V.M., *Noah’s Ark: Fable or fact?* Creation-Science Research Center, San Diego, CA, 1972; Montgomery, J.W., *The Quest for Noah’s Ark*, Dimension Books, 2nd edn, Minneapolis, MN, 1974; LaHaye, T. and Morris, J., *The Ark on Ararat*, Thomas Nelson, Nashville, TN, 1976; Cummings, V., *Has Anybody Really Seen Noah’s Ark?* Creation-Life Publishers, San Diego, CA, 1982; Corbin, B.J. (Ed.), *The Explorers of Ararat*, Great Commission Illustrated Books, Long Beach, CA, 1999.
14. Randall Younker, however, believes the tradition of Mt Ararat/Masis as the landing place can be traced to the 22nd century bc. He believes the plural, ‘mountains’, could refer to the twin peaks of Ararat. We believe his argument lacks definitive evidence and falls short. Hebrew has a form indicating a dual number, which could have been used if two peaks were indicated. Younker, R.W., The Case for Agri Dagh/Masis as biblical Mt Ararat, *J. Adventist Theology* 32(1–2):14ff, 2021.
15. See Bailey, L.R., *Noah: The Person and the Story in History and Tradition*, University of South Carolina Press, Columbia, SC, p. 78, 1989. Streck, M. and Taeschner, F., Aghri Dagh; in: *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, vol. 1, 2nd edn, Brill, Leiden, p. 251, 1986.
16. Andrew Snelling, a geologist, believes Mt Ararat is a volcano which arose after the Flood. [Is Noah’s ark on Mount Ararat?](#) accessed 3 Aug 2024.
17. Lanser attempts to deal with the problem, but, in the end, simply says, “we cannot quickly dismiss Mt Ararat on the basis that it lacks evidence of sedimentary rocks”. Lanser, R., The Case for Ararat, *Bible and Spade* 19(4):116, 2006.
18. Zimansky, P.E., Ecology and empire: the structure of the Urartian State; in: *Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilization*, no. 41, The Oriental Institute, Chicago, p. 4, 1985. Zimansky also writes: “The mountainous areas north of Assyria were of little consequence to the urban societies in the greater Mesopotamian sphere before the ninth century, except as a source of raw materials such as obsidian, and as the place from which various peoples migrated. Whatever polities existed there in the late second millennium were so inconsequential as to leave few archaeological traces.” Zimansky, P.E., The Kingdom of Urartu in Eastern Anatolia; in: Sasson, J.M. (Ed.), *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East*, vol. 2, Charles Scribner’s Sons, New York, p. 1136, 1995.
19. Piotrovsky also suggests that the term ‘Urartu’ may have originally meant ‘the mountainous country’. Piotrovsky, B.B., *The Ancient Civilization of Urartu*, Cowles Book Company, New York, p. 43, 1969. Younker claims, mistakenly, we believe, against Bailey and Yamauchi, that the reference to the land of Urartu by Shalmaneser I is to territory to the northeast of Lake Van. Younker, R.W., The Case for Ağrı Dağı/Masis as biblical Mt Ararat, *J. Adventist Theological Society* 31(1–2):21, 2021.
20. According to Yamauchi, “the mountain which is today called Mount Ararat lies in an area which was not incorporated into Urartu until the reign of Menua (809–786 bc).” Yamauchi, E., *Foes from the Northern Frontier: Invading hordes from the Russian Steppes*, Baker, Grand Rapids, MI, p. 34, 1982.
21. Zimansky, P.E., Ecology and Empire: the structure of the Urartian state, *Studies in Oriental Civilizations*, no. 41, The Oriental Institute, Chicago, IL, 1985.
22. This possibility is noted by Sayce, A.H., The cuneiform inscriptions of Van, deciphered and translated, *J. Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* 14:392, 1882.
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25. The original story was published by Floyd M. Gurley in the March 1939 issue of *New Eden* magazine.
26. Bill Crouse, Phantom Arks on Ararat, *Ararat Report* 14, Feb–Mar 1990, pp. 1–4.
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28. Shockey, D., *Agri-Dagh, Mount Ararat: The painful mountain*, Pioneer Publishing Company, Fresno, CA, 1986; Cornuke, R., *Ark Fever: The story of one man’s search for Noah’s Ark*, Tyndale House, Wheaton, IL, pp. 11–22, 2005.
29. Ahmet Ali Arslan, Ph.D. Formerly a foreign correspondent with *The Washington Post*.
30. This project was carried out in August 1989 by the Mount Ararat Research Foundation, headed by Scott Van Dyke, a businessman in Houston, TX. See: *Ararat Report*, no. 27, Nov–Dec. 1990.

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