

**The 1,335 days (years) of Daniel 12:12: The issue of the reward of those who wait patiently**

533	Decree of Justinian	1868	End of temporal power of papacy
632	Abubeker and the Saracens dominate the Middle East, including the land	1967	Jerusalem, Golan, West Bank and Sinai under control of Israel following Six-Day War
688	Dome of the Rock built	2023	Temple of Ezekiel's prophecy to be built?

Finally, a consideration of the abomination of desolation and the time periods of Daniel will prevent any trend towards minimising the place

of Israel in the purpose of the Almighty, as Christendom does. "Let him that readeth understand" the hope of Israel.

## Where did Noah's Ark land?\*

Tony Benson

**I**N NORTHEAST Turkey, close to the border with Iran and Armenia, is the 16,853 foot (5,137 metre) volcanic peak of Mount Ararat. Here, it is popularly supposed, is the place where Noah's Ark came to rest as the flood waters began to ebb. But is this so?

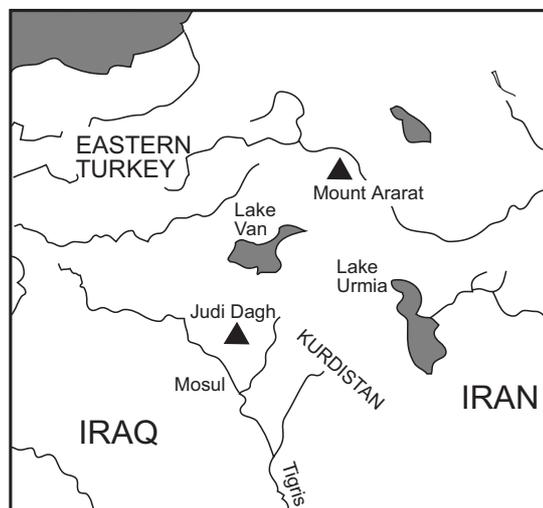
According to Genesis, "the ark rested in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, upon the mountains of Ararat" (8:4). Ararat is the name of a country; in secular history it is usually referred to as Urartu. It is referred to again as Ararat in Jeremiah 51:27, and in 2 Kings 19:37 and Isaiah 37:38 as Armenia. It occupied the mountainous area to the north of the Tigris valley where Assyria was situated. Although linked with Armenia it was in fact centred on the area considerably to the south of the present-day nation of Armenia, formerly part of the Soviet Union and now independent.

Urartu largely corresponds today to Kurdistan, the home of the Kurdish people, now part of Iraq and Turkey, and to a lesser degree Syria and Iran. Their struggles for independence have made the news in recent years, bringing them into conflict with Saddam Hussein's murderous regime in Iraq and also with Turkey's less dictatorial but still oppressive rule.

The first person to identify the mountain now known as Ararat as the place where the Ark came to rest was a traveller called Vincent de Beauvais in the thirteenth century. Other travellers, such as Marco Polo, took it for granted that this was correct, and it has become an accepted fact. However, before this the Ark was believed

to have come to rest on a much lower peak, situated well to the south. This mountain is a peak about 6,000 feet (2,000 metres) high called Judi (or Chudi) Dagh, situated north of the Iraqi city of Mosul in the Iraq/Turkey border area.<sup>1</sup> It is part of the Zagreb mountain range, which rears into the sky to the northeast of the Tigris valley.

Both Josephus and the Koran say that the Ark came to rest on Mount Judi. On this mountain a Kurdish tribe called the Yezidis were found



\* This article is based on material in David Rohl's book *Legend: Genesis of a Civilisation*, reviewed in March 1999 (p. 75).

1. I cannot ascertain whether it is actually located in Iraq or Turkey.

by travellers in the early part of last century to be offering sacrifices commemorating the ones offered by Noah when he left the Ark (Gen. 8:20). The Nestorian church<sup>2</sup> built monasteries on the slopes of Judi Dagh, and one on its summit, because of its association with Noah. An ancient Jewish legend says that the Assyrian emperor Sennacherib revered a plank of wood which came from the Ark, and there are Assyrian carvings of Sennacherib cut into the rocks of Judi Dagh. The third-century-B.C. Babylonian historian Berossus said that the Ark came to rest in the land of the Kurds, which in those times was the area where Judi Dagh is, not the area further north where Mount Ararat is located.

Soon after Noah and his sons went forth from the Ark we read of Noah planting a vineyard and becoming drunk from the wine, perhaps through ignorance of its effect. Ancient tradi-

tions say that wine first appeared in Urartu, and the earliest archaeological evidence of wine comes from this area, in the form of an ancient earthenware pot in which traces of wine sediment were found.

The coming to rest of the Ark on a mountain just above the Tigris/Euphrates valley is, of course, consistent with the account in Genesis of the first cities after the Flood being founded in that valley. According to history the first urban settlements in that area were founded by a people known as the Sumerians, and the view has been put forward, though not generally accepted, that the name Sumer is derived from Noah's son Shem.

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2. The Nestorian church, named after its founder Nestorius, flourished in Asia about 500 years after Christ but is virtually extinct today.

## The Canaanite Baal

Andrew Perry

**J**ESUS WAS accused of casting out demons by the prince of demons, Beelzebub or Baal-Zebub (Mt. 12:24). Who was Beelzebub? The record in 2 Kings indicates that he was the god of Ekron: "And Ahaziah fell down through a lattice in his upper chamber that was in Samaria, and was sick: and he sent messengers, and said unto them, Go, inquire of *Baal-zebub the god of Ekron* whether I shall recover of this disease" (1:2). Baal-Zebub is described as the god of Ekron, but this does not mean that he was just the god of this Philistine city. He was in fact one of the main gods of the region.

The title 'Baal-Zebub' in Hebrew probably means 'Lord of the Fly'. The Hebrew *zebub* is similar to *zebob*, which is translated 'fly' (Isa. 7:18; Eccl. 10:1). Furthermore, some Septuagint manuscripts translate the Hebrew of 2 Kings 1 as "Baal, Fly-god", and we cannot dismiss this third-century-B.C. evidence for the meaning of 'Baal-Zebub'. However, the Hebrew title is also an insulting variation of the actual title for Baal, which was 'Zebul-Baal'. The meaning of this title is probably 'Baal, the Prince'. This is suggested by archaeological discoveries at Ras Shamra, which have uncovered uses of the title *zbl.b'l* for Baal.<sup>1</sup> The Hebrew inverts the Ugaritic word order of the title, acts as a pun on its sound, and changes its meaning.

This Ugaritic context for understanding the title is reinforced by the original Greek of the New Testament, which reinstates some aspects of the Ugaritic.<sup>2</sup> It has 'Beel-Zeboul' rather than the Hebrew 'Baal-Zebub', and therefore puts back the *zbl* word into the title. The New Testament form, however, retains the word order of the title in the Hebrew. The accusation made by Jesus's opponents (that he was in league with Baal-Zebub) also supports the sense for the title; the meaning of *zbl* is 'prince', and the opponents of Jesus make the point that Beel-Zeboul is the 'prince' of demons. Their comments show a rejection of the Old Testament perspective that Baal was a 'god of the flies'. Instead it reflects the Canaanite belief that Baal was a prince.<sup>3</sup>

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1. See A. S. Kapelrud, *The Ras Shamra Discoveries and the Old Testament*, pp. 33,37 (Basil Blackwell, 1965); U. Oldenberg, *The Conflict Between El and Baal in Canaanite Religion*, p. 82, note 1 (E. J. Brill, 1969); T. Jemielty, *Satire and the Hebrew Prophets*, p. 88 (W/JKP, 1992).
  2. For some reason, the AV translators of the New Testament have used the Hebrew Old Testament form and some old non-Greek versions of the New Testament, rather than representing the actual Greek.
  3. Another indicator that the word *zbl* means 'prince' can be seen in the use of the word in a title for Yamm, the Canaanite god of the sea—he is called