

*Don Shockey (b. 1937), O.D., has been an Ark researcher since 1984. He was instrumental in the first and only "ark-a-thon" in June 1986, and authored the book, *The Painful Mountain*, featuring the alleged eyewitness Ed Davis. He also discovered the Satellite Remote Sensing expert George Stephen III. Dr. Don Shockey, an optomologist who received his doctorate from Pacific University, also received a degree in Anthropology at the University of New Mexico. He participated in a number of archaeological excavations including the 1955 Lucy Site excavation of Sandia Man, "pit-house" dwellings in northern New Mexico, the Stone Age Mexican Tarahumara Indians, a Roman amphitheater in Albania, Qumran in Israel, the temple mount in Jerusalem and a mastodon site. Shockey was also the founder of the Governor Bent Museum in Taos, New Mexico.*

Chapter 23

1984-1990 Don Shockey, O.D.

One news article caught my eye as I was reading the Albuquerque Journal in the fall of 1983. An explorer would be speaking at a local church the next Sunday evening concerning his four previous attempts to locate Noah's Ark in Turkey. Being a degreed anthropologist from the University of New Mexico, my latent interest in biblical archaeology immediately surfaced. The time of the lecture would conflict with my position as music director of a local church.

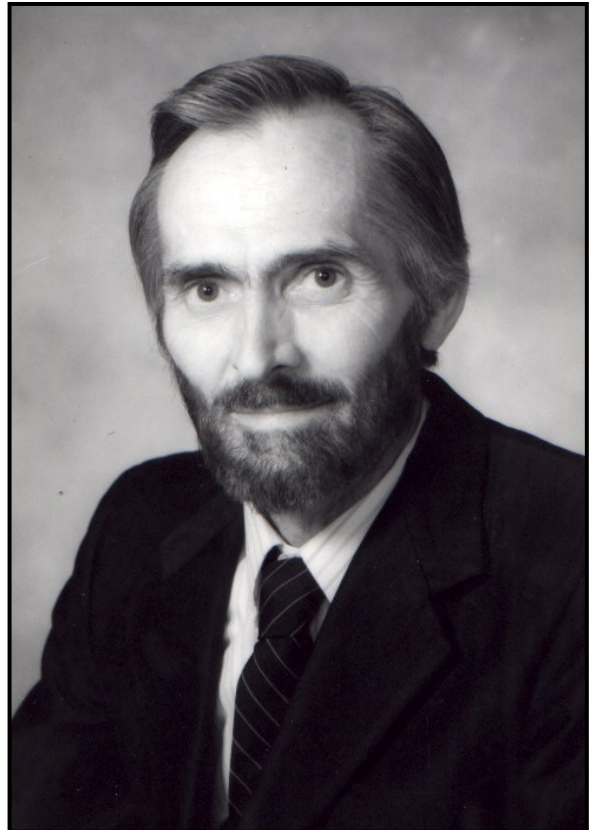
I followed previous attempts to verify the existence of the Ark on Mt. Ararat. I had an interest in the SEARCH expeditions of Dr. Ralph Crawford, Eryl Cummings, and more recently, astronaut James Irwin. My wife and I went to a lecture by Dr. Howard Davis of Artesia, New Mexico.

Following the lecture, the Davis's and the Shockeys drove to a local restaurant for a cup of coffee. Howard told me that one of his team members would be unable to participate in the next expedition scheduled for the summer of 1984. He suggested, assuming the approval of the other team members, that I consider becoming a part of the expedition. I glanced at my wife, she smiled, and without hesitation my reply was "Yes, yes, yes!" The rest is history. I began the most awesome adventure of my life.

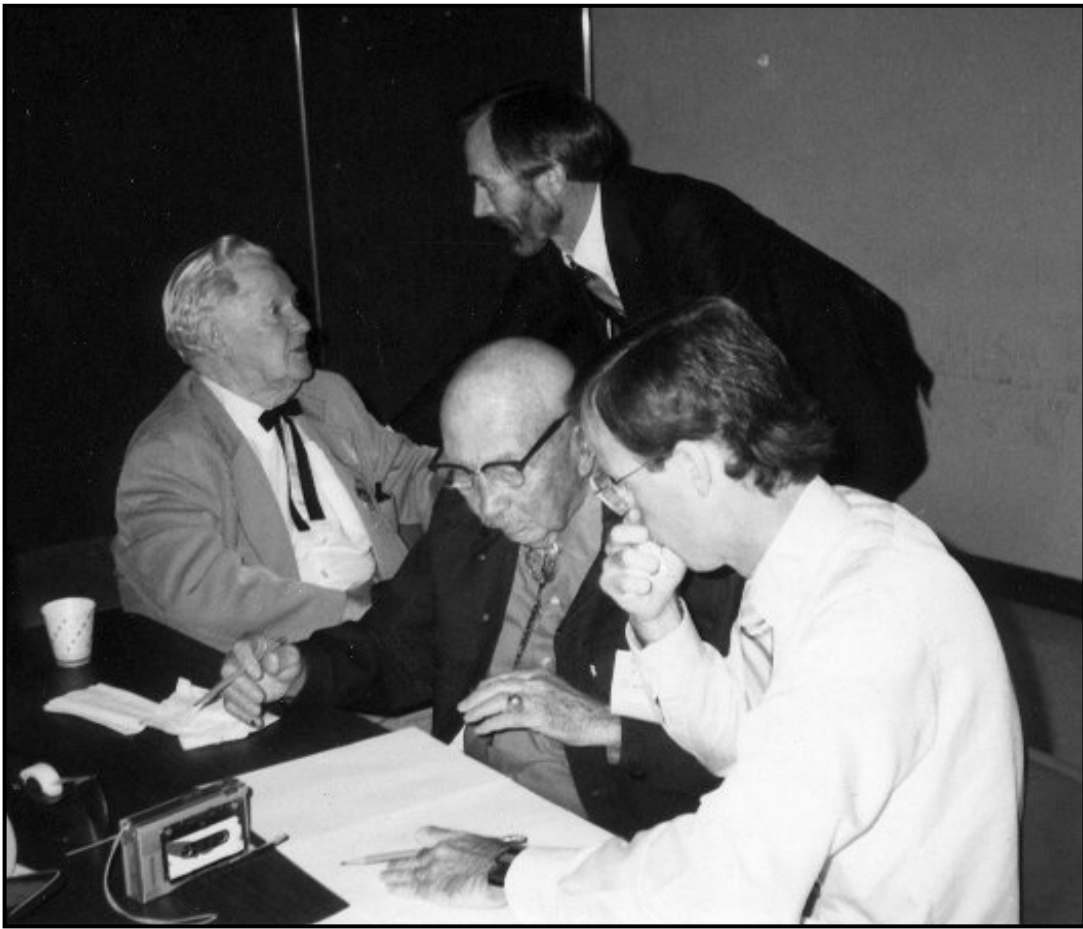
During the years following 1984 I've logged nine trips to Turkey and made three climbs on Mt. Ararat. All have been memorable and all different. Preparation was the key. One should expect the worst and if the worst didn't happen, consider yourself very lucky.

Voracious reading and research were only part of the equation for success. I learned that temperatures could drop to -40 F, high winds, rain and snowstorms and lightning were to be expected as a common occurrence and threat. Then there were the ever-present rebels who could kidnap or kill without greater provocation than the fact you were on their mountain. Camera film could be confiscated and equipment destroyed. Should one become ill or injured, medical care would be in the hands of the explorer, as the nearest hospital is many miles away. The high, upbeat excitement of the expedition would be somewhat tempered by the reality of unexpected delays and dangers encountered each day. Asking God for guidance, protection and discernment was number one priority in all our prayers.

The 1984 expedition did not sight any object on the mountain that we could identify as the Ark or as broken pieces of the ark. There is absolutely no doubt in my mind that God, according to His divine timetable, orchestrated a number of things related to my ark-search efforts. Uppermost in these events was meeting Ed Davis and sharing his unique story in my book *The Painful Mountain* so that fellow Ark hunters might benefit from the new information gained from Ed. It was my great pleasure to introduce Ed at the first and only "ark-a-thon" in Farmington, New Mexico in the summer of 1986 where Ark



Dr. Don Shockey
Courtesy of Don Shockey



Ark-a-thon with Eryl Cummings, Don Shockey, Ed Davis, and Elfred Lee 1986
 Courtesy of John McIntosh via Don Shockey

researchers and explorers from throughout the United States gathered together for the purpose of sharing vital information.

I introduced Ed to archaeological illustrator Elfred Lee. After listening to Ed's eyewitness account of being taken up Mt. Ararat to view the Ark in 1943, Lee began sketching a depiction of what Ed was describing. Ed was the first person to share information that the Ark was in two major pieces. Prior to this time, and using information from the George Hagopian *encounter*, it was assumed that the Ark was still in one major piece. Apparently at some time in the interim between the Hagopian viewing and the Ed Davis viewing, volcanic, earthquake, or other forces caused the vessel to break into at least two pieces.

As Ed was describing to me the large structure he viewed on the mountain, he told of huge timbers that extended from both parts of the ark. He said that if you could bring the two broken sections back together they would fit like an interlocking puzzle. Ed stated that it appeared to be some type of laminated construction. This information was tucked into "file 32" in my mind, and all but forgotten until I was in Dallas Texas for a seminar. On the second day a doctor approached me. He had been told that I had been searching for Noah's Ark, and had some questions to ask. After talking with him and answering his questions for some forty minutes, I asked Dr. Weinstein if he was Jewish. His reply was affirmative. As it turned out, he was born in Israel and was a student of the Hebrew Scriptures. Now it was my turn to ask some questions.

I began, "Dr. Weinstein, when God directed Noah to build the Ark of gopher wood, what is your understanding of what this wood is? The Hebrew word for gopher seems to be rather non-specific."

Without hesitation, he replied, "In the old days there was a particular tree growing in the mideast that when the bark was cut, a gummy secretion would ooze from the cut. This resin was collected and used to apply to the wood to be spliced together. These pieces of wood were coated with the resin and clamped together. After 24 hours the bond was so good and complete that you could not break the splice. It becomes harder and stronger than the wood on either side of the splice. This is 'gopher wood.'"

Ed's account and what Dr. Weinstein was telling me suddenly came together in my mind as I heard the proverbial bell ring. We have plywood, but not a "ply" tree. Could Gopher wood be a *process* rather than a species? It is apparently a "gophering" process whereby many types of trees could be used in the construction of the ark. This would have significant advantages in engineering applications for design and for structural strength.



Al Jenny Holds a Special Ark-a-thon Gift of a Gopher Wood Detector for Veteran Explorer Eryl Cummings 1986
Courtesy of Don Shockey

not just a nickname, but one which held much pride and respect. Davis related to me the entire saga of the "Trail of Tears" where his relatives were force-marched from Florida to Oklahoma and incarcerated in a reservation. Ed's grandfather was an Anglo-Irish wagon master who led pioneers from St. Louis to Oregon, and later became a U.S. Marshall in Indian territory in Oklahoma. He was very proud to be a descendant of his great-grandfather, Jefferson Davis, who was president of the Southern Confederacy during the Civil War.

Chief was born on a train somewhere between Texas and Oklahoma on July 11, 1908. He met his wife Polly in Albuquerque in 1939, and they were married in 1940. There were no children born from this marriage. Ed's involvement with the Ark of Noah began while he was serving in the armed forces during World War II. Soon after his enlistment he was sent to Hamadan, Iran where he worked with the Army Corps of Engineers. Chief's company guarded Roosevelt, Churchill and Stalin when they met in Tehran.

His next orders were to build a supply road from Iran into Russia to support in their effort to defeat Germany. Native Lurs (Ed Davis pronounced "Lurds," possibly to emphasize the rolling "r") were hired as drivers to assist the army engineers in this endeavor. It was at Hamadan that Davis met Abas-Abas, a Lur in his eighties. Abas and his family revered the Ark as a holy site.



Kurdish children with eight crosses on rock at Eli village 1983
Courtesy of Doris Bowers

Ed performed a service of great importance to Abas' village [Davis helped them get fresh water], and in an act of gratitude, Abas-Abas and seven of the patriarch's sons took Ed to Mt. Ararat to climb to the site of the holy artifact. According to Ed this experience changed his life forever. When Mr. Davis saw the Ark it had been broken into two large pieces separated by a narrow ravine. The trek up to the Ark took three days. His entire story is recounted in the book, *Agri-Dagh The Painful Mountain* by this author.

After another stretch of army duty in France, Davis was discharged. Excited to share his experience on the mountain, he soon discovered that most people, including many theologians, dismissed his account of the experience as less than truthful or perhaps total fabrication because he had no photographs to substantiate the story. Ed told me that the doubters placed the veracity of his seeing the Ark on Mt. Ararat in the same category as stories of UFOs and Sasquatch. Disappointed with this reaction, he was silent about the experience during all the following years until 1985 when this author learned about Davis and his incredible experience. Chief agreed to a three and one-half hour polygraph test administered by P.G.P. Polygraph in Albuquerque, New Mexico on May 1, 1988.

The following is an account of how the Ed Davis polygraph became a reality. On Sunday afternoon May 1, 1988 I drove to Ed's home and picked him up before driving to the Albuquerque airport. Eryl Cummings, father of American Ark hunters, and Max Lare had flown in from Farmington. Max was responsible

With regard to Ed Davis, it is with personal sadness that I announce the death of Ed Davis in Albuquerque, New Mexico November 17th, 1998. (To those readers who do not recognize the name, Ed was very likely the first American to be taken by an Iranian family to view the Ark of Noah. This occurred in 1943.) Ed was alert until the time of his death, and I enjoyed a visit with him in the Ladera Nursing Home just one week before his passing.

Davis' entire life had been one of unusual adventures. His mother was half Cherokee and his grandmother was a full-blooded Oklahoma Cherokee, hence the name "Chief" used by his close friends was

for the name "ark-a-thon" previously mentioned. We visited in the Continental Airline terminal while awaiting the arrival of Bob Cornuke who at the time was Jim Irwin's chief assistant and vice president of "High Flight" located in Colorado Springs. Larry Williams, explorer and commodities expert from San Diego, California had arranged for the polygraph test. Larry was responsible for financing the Irwin-Cornuke expedition into Egypt to discover the path of the Exodus of the Israelites and the location of the Red Sea crossing. At a later time it was Williams and Cornuke who located what may possibly be the real Mt. Sinai in Saudi Arabia.



Euphrates River Headwaters near the Foot of Mount Ararat 1990
Courtesy of Don Shockey

P.G. Pierangel, who is considered the authority on test procedures and analysis, administered the Ed Davis polygraph test. All law enforcement units abide by his conclusions. Everyone present including the examiner agreed that Ed Davis' account was a truthful one. One huge, major problem remained. Exactly where was the ark's location on the mountain? Even today nobody knows for sure. Many possibilities and possible locations have been suggested. One area on the northeast side of Ararat has been given the tag of "Davis Canyon", but photos of the mountain in this area have failed to show any suggestive objects. This author has never felt that Davis Canyon was the actual location of Ed's sighting.

The following is taken directly from the test results and analysis by the examiner.

Tested For: Robert G. Cornuke, High Flight Foundation
Name: Edward B. Davis
DOB: July 11, 1905
POB: On a train somewhere between Texas and Oklahoma
SSN: 525-09-6268
Dot: 5-1-88

Target: Whether or not this subject is truthful when he states that he observed Noah's Ark while in the area of Mt. Ararat located in Turkish Armenia, AKA Massis. On the above date (5/1/88) this subject was tested utilizing the standard Backster Tri-Zone Comparison Specific Examination. Upon final analysis of all of this subject's polygrams it is the opinion of the examiner that he answered truthfully to the target issue.

Subject was asked to recall in detail what his recollection of the incident was. His answer was as follows: While this subject was in the U.S. Army and assigned to engineering duties between Iran, Turkey and USSR he met a male later identified as Abas-Abas. Subject stated that Abas' son was working for the government at the time of this meeting. As the subject related the story, Mr. Davis did a great favor for Abas and his tribe.

As a result of this favor Abas was asked by Davis to tell him (Davis) about the Ark or structure that was located somewhere around Mt. Ararat. Davis was told that if the weather was right he (Abas) would take him to see this structure. Some time later Abas and seven (7) of his sons escorted Davis to the site of the structure.

In trying to solicit the information from Mr. Davis the following questions were asked:

1. Are you lying when you state that you were taken to Mt. Ararat by Abas and his seven sons?
2. Are you lying when you state that you climbed Mt. Ararat on horseback and on foot?
3. Are you lying when you state that the object you saw was broken in half?
4. Are you lying when you state that the structure was exposed between 100 and 200 feet?
5. Are you lying when you state that you saw a large wooden structure high on Mt. Ararat?
6. Are you lying when you state that no one ever told you about the Ark other than Abas and the Bible?

Mr. Davis answered all of the above questions with NO. After careful analysis of all of this subject's Polygrams it is the opinion of the examiner that he answered without showing any stress to questions 1-5. Regarding question 6, the subject did show stress and answered that he has talked to a number of people about the ark. He also stated that not one of the people that he has spoken to have ever seen or known the exact location of where the Ark is.

Early spring of 1988 brought some astounding new information concerning the physical remains of a manmade structure on the northeast section of Mt. Ararat. It began very unexpectedly as I was eating enchiladas at a restaurant in Truth or Consequences, New Mexico where I was introduced to George Stephen III and his wife Kathy.

During the course of our meal together, George asked a simple question: "What are your hobbies, Shockey?" It was an easy question and my answer was immediate. "My number one goal is to verify the existence of Noah's Ark." I continued by giving George a summary of the historic searches and the problems in obtaining any help from our government regarding U-2 and/or satellite photos. George's reply shocked me. "Don", he said, "I have access to special technology, and can within two weeks have information on any square foot of land anywhere on the globe!"

I challenged his statement, and he backed up his claim with information about his military background and the newer technology, which he had helped develop for our government in the area of infra-red analysis from satellites located 240 miles in space. He then asked me for some coordinates pertaining to my area of search. He said he would get back to me within two weeks.

George kept his word. It was two weeks to the day when he called from California. Using the technology, he had analyzed the area on Mt. Ararat and found two man-made objects in the Abich II glacier. He determined these objects to be definitely man-made.

"Are you sure, George?" was my next question, and one I should not have asked. He reminded me that this is his area of expertise, then went on to explain why he was so sure. The two pieces are rectangular, and approximately one thousand feet in separation. He said that natural formations are not so specific in shape, and he emphasized his certainty that the shapes were not background rock. He then gave me the approximate elevation and also the depth, which the objects were covered with ice and snow.

Aware that he was "sticking his neck out" to help me, I asked him if I flew out to his base location, bringing a map of Mt. Ararat could he, without compromising any secret information, mark the two locations with an "X." He agreed that this was acceptable and would not compromise any classified material.

I met with George a few days later, and the mission was accomplished. George Adams, Robin Simmons, and Chuck Aaron were invited to join me at this meeting where Stephen gave his information. The date was June 30, 1989.

Now for the first time we had hard scientific evidence of something large and foreign on the mountain. Was it the ark?

There was no way of verifying it without an expedition to reach the area and examine the two objects. If they were found to be anything other than the biblical description in Genesis, they could not be remains of the ark. The ark's dimensions would be the first criteria of identification.

The ideal time to explore the mountain is the last two weeks of July through the first two weeks of August when optimum melt down of the snow and ice normally will have occurred. Even this "window" has no guarantee of success.

Armed with Stephen's information, hasty preparations were made for a climb to the location. The necessary equipment was collected. Ahmet Arslan was contracted to be the primary guide for a considerable amount of money, and

it was arranged that he would join us in Ankara, Turkey. George Adams stayed in California and would be in charge of financing the expedition.

Despite limited funding for the expedition, Robin Simmons was able to go to Ararat at the last moment. Many problems were faced in getting necessary permission from the Turkish agencies so that we might gain access to Ararat.

While we were granted permission to climb the mountain, Robin's permit was delayed. Timetables were very critical. The climb was begun from Dogubeyazit on the south end of Ararat. Ahmet Arslan had secured the help of a second guide who was from Erzurum, and accompanied by these two men I started the ascent.

My standard trek permit did not allow me to explore the northeast side of the mountain. The only way to verify the objects at the location indicated by satellite was to have the Turkish guides check out the site and photograph any object that might be exposed there. Before we left the hotel, Robin and I gave Arslan a copy of the map showing the specific location. Ahmet said he felt that he could reach the area and take the photographs for us but wanted more money before he would go.

At the high camp, I was forced to remain as the two guides left in the darkness of early morning to attempt to carry out our instructions. It was very difficult for me to let them go on without me, but I did not feel it would be right to deliberately violate Turkish laws and regulations.



Dr. Don Shockey with Tent at Mihtepe 1989
Courtesy of Don Shockey

The wait alone on the mountain seemed to go on forever. Late in the afternoon the two guides returned. Ahmet Arslan was limping, having had a minor accident while jumping a crevice, but he was shouting *excitedly*, "It's there! The Ark is there! It's exactly in the location you showed me, and I took some photographs as instructed! My wife will be so happy because she never believed the Ark was on Ararat. Now I have proof to show her." The three of us were jubilant. Arslan was not able to get on top of the object because of the dangerous terrain and ice.

Ahmet estimated that he was approximately one-fourth mile from the main object. He described it as a "coop, like a chicken coop," meaning that the structure had a slightly pointed roof as he looked into what appeared to be the broken end. Most of the object extended back into the snow and ice—only one end was visible. After arranging with Arslan to send our photos and negatives to us, Robin and I returned to the U.S. After a lengthy wait and two strong legal letters from Adam's attorney, the photos finally arrived. George Adams, Robin and I began a long series of analyses. I contacted

Dr. Jim Eberts, a nationally recognized forensic anthropologist who did a great enhancement and analysis of the photos in his lab. "I can't tell you the object in the photo is Noah's Ark," he said, "but it certainly looks like a man-made object."

A short time after returning from Turkey I received a call from Carl Baugh of Creation Evidences Museum in Glen Rose, Texas. He and famed artist Robert Summers would like to fly into Albuquerque to meet me, and would also like to meet Ed Davis for an in-depth interview. Since this first meeting with Carl and Bob, we have become close friends.

A 1990 expedition was planned which would include eight explorers. I would coordinate the logistics and Carl would be responsible for raising the funds. Carl and Bob met with Ross Perot in Dallas, Texas. Mr. Perot at that time indicated that he would finance a helicopter. Carl, Bob and I made a preliminary trip to Istanbul and Ankara to secure permission for the expedition. Having accomplished this, the entire team gathered. Joining me as principal members of the team were Carl Baugh, Dr. Walter Brown, Robert Summers, Ron Charles Ph.D., B.J. Corbin, Robin Simmons, and noted photographer George Adams.

We made arrangements to lease a Russian 24-passenger MI-8 helicopter, and signed the papers obligating us to this lease. Returning to the hotel, we found a message from Mr. Perot, informing us that he had reconsidered, and would not finance the helicopter. With a lot of prayer and phone calls, and the generosity of some wonderful people, and a lot of work by our wives, we were able to raise the funds to cover the obligation for the helicopter. Another obstacle had been overcome.



The Peaks and Saddle of Ararat Surrounded by Clouds 1990
Courtesy of Don Shockey

Having leased the helicopter for one week of service, our group flew from Istanbul to Doğubeyazit in extreme eastern Turkey. It would require another chapter to include all the delays and problems in logistics that were encountered. We flew the entire mountain twice daily for five days, carefully photographing not only our principal sites, but those of other researchers, some of whom had made claims that the Ark had been located. One particular location thought by some to be the Ark was on the north side of the mountain in an area called the Parrot's Beak. The "object" was unfortunately found to be a natural formation, which only from a distance looked promising.

From the helicopter our number one object was clearly seen with very little change in appearance from the 1989 photo. Our original plan was that following our aerial survey we would divide our team and climb from two positions to our primary area of interest. However, when our permit to fly, to land on the mountain, and to climb was translated from

Turkish into English, we learned that the words "land" and "climb" had been omitted from our permit. This revelation came as a total shock to all members of our team.

After many negotiations the Turkish authorities finally agreed to allow no more than three of the American team to climb. Deciding who should climb and who should return to the U.S. was very difficult. It was finally decided that the two who would accompany me on the climb would be Carl Baugh and George Adams. The entire team flew back to Istanbul and to the International Airport. Following the departure of our other team members, George, Carl and I returned to Dogubeyazit and began our climb.

The Kurdish rebels and the Turkish military were fighting on Mt. Ararat and the authorities were very concerned for our safety. After we had climbed to the high camp from the south side of the mountain we were ordered to get off the mountain.

Disappointment reigned now that we knew where to explore but we were thwarted from physically reaching our objects. This 1990 expedition continues to be the last American expedition on Mt. Ararat although others have since tried to gain permission to climb and have been denied.

I am aware of two non-American explorers who, solo, have been on the mountain and both met with very serious consequences. One gentleman is from New Zealand and the other from Canada. This year (1999), I am aware of at least two American and one Canadian team who plan to attempt an expedition to Ararat. This author also still awaits another return to the Mountain of Noah whenever a "green light" is given. This must be for God's glory and not to bolster an individual or a group's ego. God can and does use people to accomplish His will and purpose.

I extend my thanks to all Ark hunters who have sacrificed time, talent and money and have contributed to the major effort to identify and verify the 100% truthfulness of the biblical account of the flood, the ark, and its symbolism of Jesus Christ. Thanks should also go out to the many who have contributed in financial and prayer support to all of these various teams. The quest continues and the last chapter remains to be written.

