

B.J. Corbin (b. 1958) considers himself to be the "regular guy" of Ark research. His attempt in initiating this book and starting the web site (www.noahsarksearch.com) was to bring Noah's Ark research and researchers closer together in a spirit of unity and harmony. We can accomplish much more when we share information and resources. I was happy to provide a forum and clearinghouse environment on my web site for all Ark researchers.

Chapter 26

1986-2003 B. J. Corbin

I hope the preceding chapters have given you an appreciation for the explorers of Ararat. Searching for the remains of Noah's Ark is a very difficult task.

I will attempt to summarize some of the key points expressed by the explorers and offer some thoughts of my own. Of the explorers that still believe the remains of Noah's Ark exist on Ararat, most of them favor the northeast summit and Abich II glacier areas. There is still interest in the Western Plateau, Parrot Glacier and Ahora Gorge areas.

B.J. CORBIN

Many people have asked me over the years how I got involved in the search for Noah's Ark. In the mid-1970's, my mother gave me the book Noah's Ark: I Touched It by Fernand Navarra. I was intrigued by Navarra's claims of finding Noah's Ark and actually showing wood fragments, but I had serious questions as to why there were not more follow-up expeditions (other than the 1969 SEARCH expedition) to uncover more of the artifact and conclusively validate the discovery. Little did I know then, that I would be researching many other claims of discovering Noah's Ark. I openly admit my Christian bias and beliefs, but try to be fair and honest in my appraisals of the various claims of discovering Noah's Ark. I truly hope that we will one day see the remains of Noah's Ark conclusively verified so people can know and trust that the Bible is true.

Some years later, I graduated from college and was working for a large national foodservice company. Though successful in my new career, I still wanted to become involved in projects of a higher calling, and more inline with my interests. (Not that I have anything against food!) My Bachelor of Arts degree is in Sociology, and I took several related courses in Anthropology and Archaeology. I have strong interests in advanced ancient civilizations, origins, and biblical archaeology. From what I have read and seen on television, I think the pre-Flood civilization was very advanced in many ways. You can see that selling food was not a perfect match for my interests! I knew that I needed to get away and sort out my thoughts, so I took a trip to Cancun, Mexico to relax and visit the Mayan ruins. Before returning from this trip, I knew that I would be leaving my job and heading in a new and different direction, even if that were to mean selling the BMW! So I quit my job as an Account Executive and moved in with supportive friends. Maybe it was the exposure to the Mayan ruins that jarred my memory of the search for Noah's Ark, I am not sure, but I recall thinking about the book on Noah's Ark and that I would like to pursue this a little further.

Where to start my search for Noah's Ark? My late father, Robert Gardner Corbin, Sr., always used to tell me to "go to the source" on any issue, so I called John Bradley, who at the time was the president of the SEARCH Foundation that worked very closely with Fernand Navarra, especially the 1969 expedition to Mount Ararat. I contacted Mr. Bradley by phone and found him to be very friendly and cordial. He explained that SEARCH was not planning any future expeditions to Mount Ararat, and that I should contact Bill Crouse, the editor of a popular ark research newsletter called the Ararat Report. So I called Bill Crouse who was also very helpful by suggesting that I contact Dr. Charles Willis of Fresno, California who was planning an expedition.

1988 Dr. Charles Willis - Snow Tiger Team

I called Dr. Willis in 1986 and we communicated by phone and mail for several months until he invited me to participate in an upcoming expedition. We did not go in 1987 as planned, but went the following year in 1988. Since Dr. Willis has his own chapter in this book, I will try not to duplicate information, but rather attempt to add my perspective of that 1988 expedition.

One of the things that I liked about Dr. Willis' premise was that he thought Ararat had been adequately searched on the surface of the mountain, and that a subsurface search was reasonable. He surmised that the ark should be near the summit and buried underneath a frozen ice field, not a moving glacier. Based on earlier studies by Nicholas Van Arkel, Ph.D., Willis concluded that the eastern summit plateau of Ararat was the only part of the mountain that fit all of his criteria. He recruited team members with a variety of skills and backgrounds. One of the more important aspects of the expedition was the use of subsurface ground penetrating radar or GPR, operated by Mr. Robert Roningén.

As of this writing, the 1988 Willis Team stands as one of the best expeditions to Mount Ararat. Subsurface radar and polar ice drilling were used to eliminate the large eastern plateau summit area as a likely landing area for the ark. This research approach should be used as a model for future research expeditions searching for the remains of Noah's Ark.

While writing of successful expeditions, I should mention the 1989 expedition headed by Scott Van Dyke, where many high-resolution aerial mapping photos of Mount Ararat were taken. I have only seen one of the images, but understand from other ark researchers that have visited Scott in Houston, Texas, that the image quality is the best available to date, or I should say, the best that we know about or have access to. What the results of this expedition confirmed is, that if the remains of Noah's Ark are indeed on Mount Ararat, they are hidden and not in plain view.

1989 Chuck Aaron / Bob Garbe - Immanuel Expeditions Team

In 1989 I teamed up with Chuck Aaron and Bob Garbe to combine the use of a helicopter and ground penetrating radar. Since both Chuck and Bob have their own separate chapters that deal with this particular expedition, I will attempt to only add my perspective.

Though Dr. Willis' assessment that the eastern plateau was the most probable location that one could expect to find substantial remains of Noah's Ark, others wanted to be sure that the ark was not hidden somewhere else under the permanent ice cap.

Chuck is a seasoned helicopter pilot, Bob had built a portable ground penetrating radar (GPR) unit, and I had just been on the Ararat ice cap the year before on a similar expedition. We were assisted and supported by Debbie Redmer, Gerry Garbe, Linda and Chuck Aaron, John Wanvig, David and Kathy Montgomery, Paul Schemer, and our many Turkish friends.

Though our homespun radar was less capable than the Geophysical Survey Systems model SIR-3 unit we used the previous year, a few things of note were accomplished on this expedition. The first accomplishment was the helicopter landing by Chuck Aaron on the Western Plateau at 15,000 feet in a Huey 500C! I am told that this is well above the ceiling for this aircraft. Though I followed behind Chuck and Bob and landed on the Western Plateau on the second flight with our Turkish pilot, I should mention this was my first trip riding in a helicopter!

Although the radar we used did not have continuously profiling capabilities, we were able to measure the ice depth on the Ararat Western Plateau. To our surprise, we obtained an ice depth measurement in one area of over 250 feet on the Western Plateau. To Chuck, Bob and the rest of us, this seemed to imply that the Western Plateau is possibly a caldera or sunken volcano cone. This could explain the accounts that mention the ark resting in a large lake high on Mount Ararat.

The other accomplishment of this expedition was quite by accident. As David Montgomery was in the helicopter approaching the Western Plateau, he took a picture of our camp. His picture combined with our GPR survey of 500 feet in 50' foot increments of the plateau gives us one the best estimates of the Ark's scale on the Ararat ice cap.

[Insert Photo of Ark Scale]

This expedition had several incidents that I will only summarize since both Chuck and Bob have chapters in the book. Let me say that this expedition was so exciting that it, along with the Dr. John Morris and Jim Irwin expeditions, were the basis for a book called *The Mystery of the Ark* by Paul Thomsen.

- We had problems with our flight out of JFK airport in New York.
- One team member forgot their passport, so we had to meet them in Europe.
- While on the Western Plateau at 15,000 feet we were approached by two men with machine guns. No fun!
- One person accidentally drank generator fuel (that was in a water bottle) thinking it was water, and had to be taken off the mountain via helicopter and then on to a hospital.
- The helicopter was not permitted to take Chuck, Bob and myself off the mountain. We had to hike off with the help of a guide, and were forced to camp in the rocks with no tent at 14,000 feet. One of the coldest nights in my life!
 - One of the guides that retrieved the rest of our stranded gear from the Western Plateau kept the climbing gear that I let him borrow. Fortunately on another trip, Chuck was able to get most of it back.
 - On our hike down the mountain, I drank what turned out to be spoiled goat's milk offered by a little shepherd boy and I got very sick on the trip home.

The 1989 expedition was very exciting and quite a learning experience for me. Having climbed Ararat slowly in 1988 to properly acclimate to the higher elevations, and also taking the quick jump on a helicopter in 1989, I definitely encourage others to climb and allow time to acclimate. I promise you will feel a lot better and can accomplish more on the mountain!

I really respect and admire the effort and intellect it must have taken my friend Bob Garbe to build the ground penetrating radar, but would suggest to other groups to take more advanced equipment. There are few opportunities to

conduct this type of research on Ararat or other mountains in the region, so if your budget does not allow for the equipment needed to get the job done, then keep praying and fund-raising.

1990 Dr. Don Shockey / Dr. Carl Baugh – Ararat 8 Team

In 1990, I went to Turkey with Don Shockey O.D., Carl Baugh, Walt Brown Ph.D., Ron Charles Ph.D. and others to locate a barn-shaped object that was photographed in 1989 by Ahmet Arslan. The ground-based expedition including Arslan was based on secret information obtained the year before by Don Shockey and Robin Simmons of there being two unnatural objects high in the northeast Abich II glacier on Mount Ararat.

We were able to take many helicopter flights around Mount Ararat at close range while flying in a Russian MI-8 helicopter. The southwestern Ice Cave, of interest to Chuck Aaron and Bob Garbe, and the eastern summit area of special interest for Ray Anderson, were both checked out. We also visited the Durupinar/Telçeker formation. The late Ron Wyatt and late David Fasold were two of the main proponents of this site. I have visited this site on three separate trips and do not have any hopes that it is the remains of Noah's Ark. I have seen other similar mound sites near Ararat.

The 1990 Shockey expedition obtained lots of video and pictures of Mount Ararat at close range from a helicopter. Robin Simmons and George Adams produced an excellent video called Visions of Ararat and later another video called Riddle of Ararat.

Both Dr. Don Shockey and Robin Simmons have chapters in this book providing more details of this expedition.

1998 Jim Hall – Ark Research Project Team

Robert Michelson and Dr. Salih Bayraktutan - SEPDAC

I worked with Jim Hall and the Ark Research Project (ARP) in 1998 and part of 1999. In an attempt to "open" the doors to research in this part of the world, Professor Robert Michelson at Georgia Tech in the United States and others have been working very closely with Professor Salih Bayraktutan of Ataturk University in Erzurum, Turkey. Professor Bayraktutan was the initial contact person in Turkey for permission to search the eastern region, which includes Mount Ararat and the Durupinar boat-shaped formation. Many ark researchers do not fully understand the complicated and bureaucratic permit process. Even if Professor Bayraktutan submitted a research application for approval or further processing at that time, it moves through various government agencies, governors, mayors, and the military before full permission can be granted. Even if all permissions are in-hand, there is still no guarantee of access to the desired research sites.

During the Summer and early Fall of 1998, I worked with Professor Michelson who was coordinating a conference with Professor Bayraktutan at the Ataturk University Earthquake Research Center in Erzurum, Turkey. The title for the conference was "The First International Workshop on the Noah Flood and The First Settlement in the Agri Mount Region." Where I was also acting as a consultant to Jim Hall and the Ark Research Project, I quickly put Jim in contact with Rob to ensure representation at the conference.

The planning session was held on October 6th, with fieldwork conducted on October 7th and 8th at the Durupinar boat-shaped formation and what is believed to be remains of an early settlement in the hills above the site. Some in the group prematurely called the site "Naxuan" or "Naxuana," which according to Josephus, refers to the place of first decent. The field group also spent an hour or two at Kazan, which is just west of Mount Ararat, to see large stones that some speculate are sea anchors or drogue stones from Noah's Ark.

During the workshop and at other informal meetings, most people expressed a desire for all potential sites related to Noah's Ark and the flood to be researched. In reality, most participants could be divided into two research paradigms, Durupinar and Mount Ararat.

The first group included Salih Bayraktutan, Robert Michelson, David Deal, and Bill Shea, who are interested in the Durupinar boat-shaped formation and the site above. To be fair, Bill Shea was more of a neutral observer who added a sense of balance between the two groups. I would also place Jerry Kitchens, the primary fund-raiser into the category of neutral observer initially, but as time progressed, he became more interested in Ararat.

The second group included Mark Jenkins, Matthew Kneisler, Michael Holt, and myself representing the Ark Research Project directed by Jim Hall. Unfortunately, Jim Hall suffered from intestinal bleeding and was forced to stay at the hospital in Erzurum during the workshop and fieldwork. To Jim's credit, he remained in good spirits and was continually encouraging the team to accomplish specific tasks. The Ark Research Project team was primarily focused on researching Mount Ararat. We met Ed Crawford along with guide Peter Aletter at the hotel and nearby restaurant in Dogubayazit, the small town south of Mount Ararat. Mr. Crawford is interested in the Abich I glacier just above the Ahora Gorge on the north side of Mount Ararat. His assumptions for potential discovery of Noah's Ark are based on rock inscriptions found in the Ahora Gorge and from a variety of photos of the glacier. Crawford admittedly stated that he preferred to work independent of other Ararat research groups (<http://www.vonbora.com>).

A third research group interested in the Mount Cudi or Cudi Dagi site, some 150 - 200 miles southwest of Mount Ararat, was not represented at the workshop or in the field group. Currently, I am only aware of Dr. Charles Willis of Fresno, California, being active in the search of this site, though Lloyd Bailey and Bill Crouse have expressed written support of the site. Dr. Willis, a veteran of several expeditions to Mount Ararat in the 1980's, has made a couple of trips in the mid-1990's to the Cudi site to prepare the way for a future expedition to search for petrified wood and other fragments that may still remain.

Excerpts From My Daily Journal of the 1998 Ark Research Trip

Thursday 10/1/1998

I left Salisbury Regional Airport on a commuter to Philadelphia, only to find out that my connecting flight to Washington Dulles had been cancelled. My only option was to fly to Washington National Airport and hope to catch a shuttle bus to Dulles. When I arrived at Washington National and asked the US Airways representative at the gate about getting to Dulles to catch my International flight, he said there was no way to make the flight. A young man overheard my dilemma and suggested the only way possible to make the connection would be to take a cab for around \$50 dollars to Dulles, and he offered to split the fare with me.

We raced to Dulles, then I dashed to the Lufthansa ticket counter out of breath and gave the short version of the story to the ticket agent. She completed a fast transaction and quickly directed me to the appropriate security checkpoint (which I cut in line to the front) and then to an airport shuttle to the correct terminal.

I ran through the airport with two fairly heavy bags and saw Jim Hall, Matthew Kneisler and Mark Jenkins (with wife and two sons to see us off) already in line to pre-board the flight. It took me several minutes to catch my breath and cool down. I made the flight from Dulles to Frankfurt/Ankara!

Friday 10/2/1998

We arrived in Frankfurt, Germany very early Saturday morning. Michael Holt and Jerry Kitchens were waiting at the gate for us. Michael Holt, an employee of United Airlines, coordinated special accommodations for the team, including a place to rest, eat, and take showers. We were soon joined by Rob Michelson and discussed tentative plans for our trip to Turkey. We all flew to Ankara, and then took a 15-20 mile taxi ride to the Tunali Hotel.

Saturday 10/3/1998

We left Ankara airport to fly further east to Erzurum, Turkey. We stayed at the Oral Hotel and got settled in. We had dinner at the hotel and Dr. Salih Bayraktutan (Our Turkish co-host from Ataturk University) stopped by to meet everyone and to pick up Rob.

Later that evening the Ark Research Team met in Jim Hall's room. Jim shared his overall goals and visions for the project, and then shared a long and detailed testimony. We had a time of fellowship and prayer, then it seemed only minutes afterwards that Jim went into the bathroom and sounded sick. Most of us figured that it was something that he had eaten. He returned with us for a brief time, and then returned back to the bathroom. The group broke up and decided to give Jim some privacy.

Only minutes later did Michael Holt knock on our door (Matthew Kneisler and myself) and said we needed to get Jim a doctor. There was a large amount of blood in Jim's bathroom floor that had been coming out "both ends." I ran downstairs to the front desk and attempted to explain the situation. We soon had an ambulance to take Jim to a hospital in Erzurum. Michael rode in the ambulance with Jim as Salih Bayraktutan and Rob Michelson returned to the hotel from a pre-conference meeting. Salih Bayraktutan and family, along with the management and staff of the Oral Hotel, and the staff at the hospital all need to be commended for the excellent care and concern expressed to Jim in his time of need. They even donated their own blood to help him.

The team was obviously very concerned for Jim's well being, and had felt like we had witnessed a spiritual attack on Jim and the team, though logical explanations were offered.

Sunday 10/4/1998

This was one of the longer days of the trip. We were all concerned about Jim and visited him at the hospital. We were supposed to have had a pre-meeting with Salih around 5 P.M. that evening, but later received a call from Rob stating that the meeting would be moved to 7 P.M. Around 9 P.M. the rest of the team was getting both anxious and frustrated. I recall Rob returning to the Oral Hotel around 10 P.M. to a semi-hostile crowd.

Monday 10/5/1998

The workshop began around 10 A.M. with opening statements from Dr. Salih Bayraktutan. He expressed an interest in having an international team of researchers investigate all sites and areas of interest relating to the flood of Noah.

Professor Robert Michelson gave a detailed presentation for the Durupinar boat-shaped formation, though careful not to make any claims of discovery. He also echoed the call for collaborative scientific efforts for sites related to the flood of Noah.

David Deal followed Rob with his interpretation of aerial photos and historical references regarding the Durupinar site and to a new claim of discovering "Naxuan" or "Naxuana" in the hills above Durupinar. He boldly proclaimed that Durupinar was indeed the remnants of Noah's Ark, and the upper site was probably Naxuan. I personally found these statements to be total conjecture since Mr. Deal, at that time, had never even been to either of these sites, and presented little in the way of conclusive evidence.

After lunch, Matthew Kneisler presented the Ark Research team proposal, in proxy, for Jim Hall who was in the hospital for intestinal bleeding.

I presented a brief history of research on Mount Ararat and concluded with the most likely areas left to search on Mount Ararat, including the ruins at Eli, Korhan, and the St. Jacob's monastery.

Tuesday 10/6/1998

We left in three rented cars for Dogubayazit, which is just south of Mount Ararat. We stop in Agri for lunch and photo opportunities. We encountered some typical communication problems at the entrance of the governor's office building because of the video camera. The situation was soon resolved and we were escorted out of town by police and registered with Turkish security.

After passing through several military checkpoints, we arrived in Dogubayazit late in the afternoon. Salih met with local police, security, mayor, and military to say that we were in town and give the nature of our visit.

We checked into the Hotel Grand Derya, which was quite nice by eastern Turkey standards, and noticed that we had two Turkish security assigned to us in the lobby. There was also security posted outside of the hotel on our behalf.

Wednesday 10/7/1998

We stopped at the military headquarters to see about our escort for the day. Two Turkish soldiers were assigned to protect us as we ventured on the Durupinar site, where a short, but solemn memorial service was held in honor of David Fasold, as David Deal sprinkled some of the ashes of David Fasold on the site.

The group also went up near the Iranian border to search for ruins of an ancient settlement. We did hear some gunshots, and were hoping these were only from target practice, or maybe warning shots from Turkish military, as we were very near the Iranian border. No ruins or artifacts were easily discernable to most of the group once we reached the upper site of interest.

We concluded the day with a drive to Kazan, a small village west of Mount Ararat, where some claim large stones are actually sea anchors or drogue stones from Noah's Ark. We arrived in Kazan near dark, and it was decided we should wait until morning of the next day to visit the stones.

Thursday 10/8/1998

We went to Kazan to see the large stones. After about an hour or so, we returned to the Durupinar site, where the Ark Research team conducted an interview at the visitor's center, and the others went back up to the upper site. We heard more gunshots, and could only hope for the best.

There was a brief period of tension during the afternoon, where most of the Ark Research team was left at the visitor's center with no car or person that spoke Turkish. At one point, we got a little nervous watching a crouched person in the bushes for over a half an hour. Too long for a mere bathroom break! Not to mention the occasional gun shots in the background.

Salih, Rob and Dave announced the discovery of what they believed to be the top of a tomb at the upper site. I recall them saying that they found corners of a 3' by 5' stone slab. Due to some confusion, I did not go up to see the sites, but Rob later showed me some photos of the sites, which seem to warrant further investigation. Some members of the group claimed to have found pieces of pottery and bone.

We eventually left for Erzurum around 4 P.M., stopping again in Agri for dinner, this time without incident.

Friday 10/9/1998

Matthew and I went to Erzurum airport to catch an earlier flight out. We arrived at Ankara and spent several hours changing tickets. We also alerted Lufthansa of Jim Hall's condition and had phone numbers of doctors and wheelchairs waiting. We were able to make a standby flight to Frankfurt and were very pleased. We celebrated by staying at the Sheridan Hotel at the airport, mostly at our own expense.

Saturday 10/10/1998

I caught a train to Augsburg, Germany, stayed with good friends for a few days before returning to the United States. I left Matthew at the airport to catch a flight back to Dulles and then on to Tulsa.

Only after receiving an email from Matthew, did I learn that the remainder of the ARM team had been traveling behind us and actually met Matthew at the airport gate in Frankfurt. They said Jim was bleeding a little, but was in good spirits and made it home safely. Jim Hall and the ARM team started making plans for a possible expedition in 1999.

Regarding the larger group that met in Turkey, there are other plans to raise about \$2.5M for a 30-day scientific expedition that will consider the Ararat sites, Durupinar, "Naxuan," and any other sites of interest. They plan to use advanced remote sensing technologies under a coordinated research effort called the Search for Early Post Deluvial Anatolian Culture (SEPDAC), between Ataturk University and the Georgia Institute of Technology.

2000 & 2001 – Archeological Imaging Research Consortium (Arclmaging) Team

The Arclmaging team is currently comprised of Rex Geissler, Tom Pickett, Bob Stuplich, Jim Hays, Ed Holroyd Ph.D., Jonathan Brisbin, David & Teresa Banks, Gary Pryor and myself.

Our primary focus is to use the latest remote sensing technology in the search for Noah's Ark. This includes the latest satellite imagery, aerial and ground sensing using SAR, thermal IR, hyper and multi spectral, GIS mapping, GPR and other techniques.

As a group, we have concluded that if the remains of Noah's Ark are on Mount Ararat, then they must be buried, and that remote sensing is needed to finally answer the question of whether the Ark is on Ararat. We are also interested in other mountains that are within the biblical mountains of Ararat (ancient Urartu).

Detail Meetings with Ataturk University ...

We have a good team with a workable plan, and what is currently needed is prayer, research permission from the Turkish authorities, and financial resources. For those interested in learning more about Arclmaging, please visit our web site at <http://www.arcimaging.org>.

Where do I think the remains of Noah's Ark are located?

As of this writing, though I still remain hopeful, I have not seen any conclusive evidence for the remains of Noah's Ark. There are many intriguing accounts listed within the pages of this book, but still no evidence beyond a reasonable doubt.

The four primary areas that people are still searching for the remains of Noah's Ark today are Mount Ararat, Durupinar (mound-shaped site near Ararat), Mount Cudi, and a few sites in Iran. Though I encourage continued research in all of these locations, I still believe that Mount Ararat (having the most accounts by far) has the best potential to conceal an ark under the frozen permanent ice cap. With the eastern summit plateau having already been subsurface-surveyed and eliminated by the 1988 Willis team, this leaves only a few logical places large enough to contain substantive remains of an ark.

- 1) From the northeast saddle between the two main summit peaks down the Abich II Glacier to the top of the Ahora Gorge.
- 2) The western summit plateau at approximately 15,000 feet. A subsurface radar survey conducted in 1989 measured ice depths over 250 feet, considering the plateau to be a caldera or sunken volcano cone.
- 3) The upper Parrot and Abich I Glacier area around 14,000 feet.

In my opinion, these are the three remaining areas (in order of priority) of Mount Ararat left to search via subsurface radar and other remote sensing techniques.

[Insert photomap of prime target sites on Ararat]

Recommendations for Future Expeditions

I must admit there is a strong spiritual presence on Mt. Ararat that I cannot fully explain. I can remember having one of my most powerful prayers while camping under the stars of Mt. Ararat (my whole body felt electrified). I have also been fearful of what could happen while on Mt. Ararat.

It sounds like a cliché and oversimplified, but if you are interested in the search for Noah's Ark, you really need to pray constantly for God's will concerning any involvement. As you have read, it is a very dangerous expedition.

If you are planning an expedition to Mt. Ararat, I recommend the following:

1. Try to establish contact with established veteran ark researchers to avoid common pitfalls and mistakes—have them join your team, or join their team, if possible.
2. Start early establishing government agency contacts to secure permits—even though a permit will not guarantee you will get on the mountain.
3. Follow standard mountain climbing protocol—many ark researchers seem interested in a quick helicopter landing on the ice cap to avoid unfriendly confrontations below. I was part of the 1989 expedition that actually landed on the ice cap by helicopter. We struggled with mountain sickness and were still confronted with machine guns at 15,000 feet! I would only recommend a helicopter landing if the climbers were fully acclimated (say on a nearby mountain) prior to takeoff.
4. Guard against the lack of water on the mountain—most camp fuel stoves do not melt water efficiently at high altitudes
5. Start ascents to the ice cap early (pre-dawn) before the ice melts and rocks begin to loosen and fall from above
6. Have a good Turkish/English-speaking guide or translator with you at all times—things can get confusing real fast
7. Learn the culture of Turkey and show respect for the people and authorities
8. Have strong leadership that will provide team correspondence every month or as needed, starting at least a year before the actual trip—have the entire team meet prior to expedition (preferably a practice climb or two)
9. Be cautious of what you eat—many a climber has suffered from stomach and intestinal problems on Ararat. I found success in this area by eating the local yogurt. (I received this advice from Robin Simmons father, a doctor, just before leaving on our 1990 trip)
10. Maintain proper diet and exercise prior to an expedition—if you drink coffee and/or smoke cigarettes—plan on some extra problems at high altitudes
11. Given all the failed attempts to find the Ark on the surface of Ararat, one should explore the latest subsurface radar and satellite technology—I believe if the Ark is on Mt. Ararat, it is under the ice cap or possibly buried at a slightly lower elevation. Don't just believe your eyes, believe the GPR or SAR.
12. Avoid the common tendency to "harmonize" claimed sightings of the ark that are unrelated – in other words, try not to force all the historical accounts to match your current site of interest

Given all the past land and aerial expeditions to Mount Ararat, it would seem unwise to continue planning conventional expeditions to hike or fly around the mountain in the hope of spotting Noah's Ark. This has all been done several times over with no conclusive evidence of an ark on Ararat. Satellite technology has advanced to a level that can easily monitor the mountain without the risk and money required for traditional expeditions. If any group plans an expedition to Ararat or other mountains in the region, it only makes sense to be equipped with the latest remote sensing technology.

Hopefully, these recommendations and suggestions will benefit future expeditions. I am glad to share my thoughts and experiences with any individual or group who are searching for Noah's Ark with a heart for God's will.

What is Really Important?

Searching for what could be one of the greatest archeological discoveries in all of human history is very exciting. But what is really important? Even if the discovery of Noah's Ark could be validated and proven beyond a reasonable doubt, what would it mean?

If you have read this book because of an interest in the search for Noah's Ark and you are not a Christian, please consider the following:

When you look at a watch, you can reason that there must be a watchmaker. Though you may not know the watchmaker personally, you know he exists by his creation. Take a good look at this world and universe we live in, at the uniqueness of mankind, especially in comparison to the other creatures in nature. There is just too much design for creation to be mere chance. I have studied evolution at the college level and would contend that it takes more faith to believe in evolution than in creation. If a person is interested in these subjects, there are a couple books referenced to study the issues.

The Bible says that God considered Noah a righteous man living in a wicked world. In the Old Testament, God provided a plan of salvation for Noah and his family through the building of the ark. God convicts our hearts when we sin and have done something wrong. In the New Testament, God now writes his laws (The Ten Commandments) in our hearts. God in his mercy and love provided a permanent "ark of salvation" through the sacrifice of his son, Jesus Christ. If you would like to learn more, the New Testament of a Bible is the place to start. For if we search for the remains of Noah's Ark for any reason other than to build trust in God and the Bible, we are missing the boat!

Though the focus of this book is on the exploration of Mt. Ararat, I should mention there was attention given to a boat-shaped object researched by Ron Wyatt, David Fasold and others, approximately 18 miles south of Mt. Ararat. Most of the explorers of Ararat, including myself, have been to this site and find it interesting, but believe it is most likely a natural formation. I have actually seen similar-shaped objects between Big and Little Ararat from a helicopter. I visited the Durupinar or boat-shaped object in 1998 with Dr. Salih Bayraktutan, Professor Robert Michelson, Dr. Bill Shea, David Deal, and fellow Ark Research Team (ART) members. Primarily, Bayraktutan, Michelson and Deal are interested in conducting a more in-depth analysis of the boat-shape and surrounding area before dismissing it as a natural formation. Ron Charles Ph.D. theorizes that Durupinar may be an old Mongol fort possibly used and fortified by Tamerlane's army in the conquest of Armenia.

Albert Groebli has an interesting alternative premise about the Ark landing in Iran. The details are listed on the author's website.¹ It should also be noted that Pierre Daniel Huet created a conception map in A.D. 1722 entitled "Terrestrial Paradise" which placed the Ark on top of another traditional "Mount Ararat" in Iran, "Kuh e Alvand." The map was placed in Calmet's *Dictionnaire historique del la Bible*. Of course, it should be noted that "Kuh e Alvand" is outside the biblical "mountains of Ararat."

This book also includes two explorers who surmise the Ark may have landed on Mt. Cudi. I have included a summary



Ark Research Field Team 1998

Driver 1, Jerry Kitchens, Driver 2, Mark Jenkins, Matthew Kneisler, Michael Holt, Robert Michelson
Salih Bayraktutan and B.J. Corbin
Courtesy of B.J. Corbin

¹ B.J. Corbin's website is <http://www.noahsarksearch.com>, which has been maintained by Rex Geissler since 2002.



B.J. Corbin next to Tent at Mihtepe 1988
Courtesy of B.J. Corbin

table of promising locations for Noah's Ark by the various explorers.

For those of us who search for the ark, it is frustrating to know that the potential discovery and validation of the Ark seems so close, yet still eludes us. Many people believe Noah's Ark has already been discovered, or at least had that impression prior to reading this book. Given all the news stories, books and movies claiming the discovery of Noah's Ark over the years. This book was not meant to confuse or challenge your beliefs. It is intended to take a deeper look at the evidence (or lack of evidence) for the discovery of Noah's Ark. I am currently unaware of any evidence that would validate the discovery of Noah's Ark.

I have not given up on Mt. Ararat as the location for Noah's Ark, though historical text and references seem to point towards Mt. Cudi. I believe some of the eyewitnesses may have been telling the truth about Noah's Ark on Mt. Ararat. The biblical account of the flood (Genesis) states that it took over seventy days for the water to recede and for the tops of other mountains to appear. This would seem to indicate a summit or near-summit landing of the ark. Mt. Ararat, as the tallest mountain in the region, would be a likely place for the ark's landfall. Its height and the difficulty of climbing Mt. Ararat does concern me with respect to the people and animals of the Ark descending the mountain. Mt. Cudi, with an approximate elevation of 7,000 feet, would seem a more reasonable location to unload the ark's passengers and cargo.

In 1988 the Willis expedition, using subsurface radar, eliminated as a possible landing site a large area of summit snowfields called the Eastern Plateau. If one suspects that the Ark landed near the summit of Mt. Ararat, there are only a few places remaining that could contain Noah's Ark.

Location	Elevation
Northeast Summit Area	16,500 feet
Abich II Glacier	14,000-16,500 feet
Western Plateau	15,000 feet
Upper Parrot Glacier	14,000 feet
Ahora Gorge	12,000-14,000 feet
Northwest	13,000-14,000 feet
Mt. Cudi	7,000 feet

Northeast Summit Area / Abich II Glacier

Much of the evidence for the ark's existence on Mt. Ararat seems to point to the upper northeast ice cap. One would expect major ice disruption caused by a petrified Ark moving slowly down a glacier. We find such ice disruption in the



Abich II area. This would be consistent with the scenario of the Ark landing between the two summit peaks, with all or a portion of the structure moving slowly moving down the ice. There is a large box-like shaded area on the northeast summit that appears to be the right size. Many people underestimate the size of Noah's Ark when observing objects of interest. I am fortunate to have good helicopter photographs that scale a known area 500 feet in length on the Ararat ice cap. In Dick Bright's book *The Ark, A Reality?* displays a composite drawing including many of the alleged sightings of the Ark on Mt. Ararat. Most all of the sightings appear in the northeast area of the ice cap.

Another reason the northeast ice cap may be a likely resting spot for the remains of Noah's Ark, is a lack of access to that part of the mountain. Permission to climb that region of the mountain is rarely given, partly because it faces the border of Armenia. It is one of the most dangerous areas to climb on the ice cap. The general tourist route to climb Mt. Ararat approaches the summit from the south.

There is a rock outcropping located at approximately 14,000 feet on the northwest side of the mountain called "Ark Rock." I have heard that some of the locals were afraid to approach the Ark for fear of spirits guarding it. You can view the entire northeast ice cap and upper Parrot Glacier area from Ark Rock. One could speculate that people would view the Ark or what they thought was the Ark from this vantagepoint.

There is also a claim that satellite photos exist indicating two unnatural objects at approximately 15,000 feet in the northeast Abich II Glacier. Like so many other Ararat clues, it is difficult to confirm or validate the evidence from the original source.

It is not my intent here to summarize in detail all the various Ark sightings on Mt. Ararat throughout history. There are many claims of discovering the Ark on Ararat by dozens of people. I tend to trust the testimony of the late George Hagopian. He seemed an honest Armenian Christian who lived in the vicinity of

B.J. Corbin at Mihtepe 1988
Courtesy of Ross Mehan via BJ Corbin

Mt. Ararat as a boy when the mountain was still part of Russian Armenia. I have listened to a taped interview of Hagopian by Elfred Lee many times. I perceive Hagopian as telling the truth about his two experiences with Noah's Ark. Hagopian claimed the Ark rested between the two peaks, what is also called "The Saddle." For those interested in researching alleged sightings in more detail, a recommended reading section can be found at the end of this book.

Western Plateau

Many of the local mountain people who live on or near Mt. Ararat communicated to me that the Ark lies beneath the western part of the ice cap. There is a military photograph that was recently declassified showing an ark-like structure on the edge of the Western Plateau at approximately 15,000 feet. It is interesting to note that the ice on the Western Plateau was measured with subsurface radar at a depth over 200 feet thick. As you have read, Chuck Aaron and some others believe that the Western Plateau is a caldera (collapsed volcano cone). This could explain why the ice is so deep in this area of the mountain, which would explain sightings of Noah's Ark high on Mt. Ararat partially submerged in a lake. While hiking and camping on the Western Plateau, I could see and hear water running under my feet. A picture I have by Chuck Aaron and Bob Garbe shows how the Western Plateau could melt enough to appear as a small lake near the summit of Ararat. From airborne photos one can see the Western Plateau as the largest and most stable "landing area" on the entire ice cap.



B.J. Corbin at Mihtepe 1988
Courtesy of B.J. Corbin

Parrot Glacier

This area of the mountain became a prime search target after the claimed discovery of wood by Ferdinand Navarra in the 1950's. A book and movie transpired from several expeditions and discoveries made at this site. Problems began when conflicting reports emerged regarding the age of the recovered wood. In Navarra's book *Noah's Ark: I Touched It* he reports the wood is approximately 5,000 years old. Other independent reports using Carbon-14 dating revealed the wood to be considerably younger in age. What is more puzzling, as described earlier by Elfred Lee, is that Navarra claims to have discovered wood in other parts of the mountain. Also, consider that Navarra may have observed a large dark structure under the ice while he was climbing the Abich II Glacier, not the Parrot Glacier.

I recently received some information of a claimed discovery of Noah's Ark by an Italian named Angelo Palego. The photographs appear to place the location of the Ark in the Upper Parrot Glacier region at approximately 4600 meters (14,000 feet). He identifies his discovery as a continuation of Navarra's original discovery. The photographic evidence that is available to me does little to convince me of the claim. Please understand that I have seen dozens of more interesting shapes on Mt. Ararat. The more one researches objects of interest on Mt. Ararat, the more cautious one becomes. Many claims of discovery have been made to newspapers prior to any validation of the actual discovery. We wait for evidence that will prove this claim of discovery and others beyond a reasonable doubt.



B.J. Corbin at Durupinar Site 1998
 Courtesy of B.J. Corbin

I should note that the upper Parrot Plateau continues to be an area of interest for veteran Ararat climber Ahmet Arslan. Ahmet has climbed Mt. Ararat at least fifty-four times. He is originally from Turkey and knows many of the local Ararat people, and the folklore concerning the whereabouts of Noah's Ark on the mountain.

Ahora Gorge

The Ahora Gorge area of Mt. Ararat gained popularity in recent years after Dr. Don Shockey and other veteran Ark researchers interviewed a man named Ed Davis. Mr. Davis was in the Army and stationed in Iran during World War II. In 1943 Mr. Davis earned the confidence of a man who claimed to know where Noah's Ark was located. Davis later climbed Mt. Ararat and viewed the Ark from a distance and in cloudy conditions. It is interesting to note that Mr. Davis was stationed in Hamadan, Iran. Not far from Hamadan is a mountain called "Kuh e Alvand" that also has a Noah's Ark tradition. Perhaps more interesting is the fact that it has a history of being called "Mount" Ararat. Mr. Davis, in his initial interviews, referred to the local people as Lurs or Lors from Luristan (a region in the Zagros mountains of western Iran) and not Kurds. Though most Ark researchers believe that Davis was on the Turkish Mt. Ararat, one can only speculate that he may have been taken to the Iranian "Mt. Ararat."

I have some concern regarding Ed Davis' testimony. I understand that he passed a polygraph examination, but I have two separate interviews in which he places the location of the Ark in different places. In his original interviews, veteran Ark researchers surmised that Mr. Davis viewed the Ark in the Ahora Gorge. This site in the Ahora Gorge became known as the "Davis Canyon." In a taped interview with another Ark researcher, he concurred that the Ark was located near the northeast summit (some 2000 feet higher), where he had earlier testified that he was not on the permanent ice cap.

Though Davis' story lacks consistency, his description of mountain landmarks and drawing of the Ark is similar to other accounts on Mt. Ararat. It is possible that Davis unintentionally allowed himself to be led during some of his interviews. It is a natural tendency for Ark researchers to harmonize accounts that favor where we expect to find Noah's Ark.



Jim Willis, Scott Little, Willis Newton, Jr. at Mihtepe
 Courtesy of Dr. Charles Willis 1988

The Ahora Gorge has been extensively photographed with no definitive Ark discovered. There was some excellent aerial photography of Mt. Ararat orchestrated by Scott Van Dyke. I understand that he discovered several objects of interest in the Ahora Gorge, but awaits a ground expedition to confirm whether they are artifact or rock.

Several climbing expeditions took place in the 1970's by Ark researchers in the Ahora Gorge. There were some close-up helicopter flights of the area in the late 1980's and early 1990's. The close proximity of the Ahora Gorge to the Armenian border and civil unrest make it unlikely that any permission will be granted to search this area in the near future.

Ark researchers Dick Bright, John McIntosh, Ken Long, and others have "objects of interest" located in the Ahora Gorge area. Ed Crawford is interested in an object between the Abich I Glacier and the upper Parrot Glacier.

Northwest Site

In the 1970's there was a man who supplied Ark researchers with very specific details and maps of Noah's Ark and its location. Knowledge of the mountain was apparent by the landmarks and details he described. He claimed that his father had actually been to the site some two-thirds of the way up the north-northwest side of the mountain and that he had seen the remains of Noah's Ark. To my knowledge, this site has not been fully identified. I have helicopter photographs of what may be the location described by the gentleman. In one of the ice-laden valleys near the location is a large rectangular-shaped shadow under the ice. I believe the best practice is to fully eliminate all possible sites until the remains of the Ark are found.

Mt. Cudi

Of the explorers highlighted in this book, two of them believe that Noah's Ark did not land on Mt. Ararat, but on Mt. Cudi (pronounced Judi), which is located approximately 200 miles to the southwest of Ararat. Both of these men have previously explored Ararat and originally thought Ararat to be the landing area for the ark. Based on what I have read by Lloyd Bailey and other Bible scholars, they may be correct about their assumptions about Mt. Cudi. Though Mt. Cudi has



B.J. Corbin with Immanuel Expeditions Flag
 Courtesy of B.J. Corbin 1989

little in the way of sensational eyewitnesses, ancient historical texts and documents seem to favor Mt. Cudi over Mt. Ararat as the landing site for Noah's Ark. None of the Ararat eyewitness accounts have proven the ark's existence on Ararat beyond a reasonable doubt.

The various opinions and conclusions expressed in this book demonstrate that good people can disagree. The key for researchers is to respect each other and keep the lines of information and communication open. It seems that many of us who search for Noah's Ark have pieces of the puzzle, but would gain a better understanding if information were more openly shared. Attempts have been made in the past to bring Ark researchers together. I did not attend the last ark-a-Thon, but understand it was beneficial. Other attempts to bring Ark researchers together have failed. Though the primary reason for the book was to offer some straight talk about Noah's Ark from people who have been to Mount Ararat, another reason for this book was to promote unity among Ark researchers. I also wanted to include some new information and clues for future Ark researchers.

I hope you have enjoyed this attempt to bring together some of the world's leading researchers and explorers of Mt. Ararat as they shared their hopes and frustrations of searching for the elusive remains of Noah's Ark.

We leave Ankara airport to fly further east to Erzurum, Turkey. We stay at the Oral Hotel and get settled in. We have dinner at the hotel and Salih stops by to meet everyone and to pickup Rob.

Later that evening the Ark Research Ministries (ARM) team meets in Jim Hall's room. Jim shares his overall goals and visions for the project, then shares a long and detailed testimony. We have a time of fellowship and prayer, then it seemed only minutes afterwards that Jim goes into the bathroom and sounds sick. Most of us figured that it was something that he had eaten. He returned with us for a brief time, then returned back to the bathroom. The group broke up and decided to give Jim some privacy.

Only minutes later did Michael Holt knock on our door (Matthew Kneisler and B.J. Corbin) and said we need to get Jim a doctor. There was a large amount of blood in Jim's bathroom floor that had been coming out "both ends." I ran downstairs to the front desk and attempted to explain the situation. We soon had an ambulance to take Jim to a hospital in Erzurum. Michael rode in the ambulance with Jim as Salih Bayraktutan and Rob Michelson returned to the hotel from a pre-conference meeting. Salih Bayraktutan and family, along with the management and staff of the Oral Hotel, and the staff at the hospital all need to be commended for the excellent care and concern expressed to Jim in his time of need. They even donated their own blood to help him.



Jim Hall in Bed at Hospital in Erzurum with Matthew Kneisler 1998
 Courtesy of Michael Holt via B.J. Corbin

The team was obviously very concerned for Jim's well being, and had felt like we had witnessed a spiritual attack on Jim and the team, though logical explanations were offered.

Sunday 10/4/1998

This was one of the longer days of the trip. We were all concerned about Jim and visited him at the hospital. We were supposed to have a pre-meeting with Salih around 5 P.M. that evening, but later received a call from Rob stating that the meeting would be moved to 7 P.M. Around 9 P.M. the rest of the team is getting both anxious and frustrated. I recall Rob returning to the Oral Hotel around 10 P.M. to a semi-hostile crowd.

Monday 10/5/1998

The workshop began around 10 A.M. with opening statements from

Dr. Salih Bayraktutan. He expressed an interest in having an international team of researchers investigate all sites and areas of interest relating to the flood of Noah.

Professor Robert Michelson gave a detailed presentation for the Durupinar (boat-shaped) formation, though careful not to make any claims of discovery. He also echoed the call for collaborative scientific efforts for sites related to the flood of Noah.

David Deal followed Rob with his interpretation of aerial photos and historical references regarding the Durupinar site and to a new claim of discovering "Naxuan" or "Naxuana" in the hills above Durupinar. He boldly proclaimed that Durupinar was indeed the remnants of Noah's Ark, and the upper site was probably Naxuan. I personally found these statements to be total conjecture since Mr. Deal had never even been to either of these sites, and presented little in the way of conclusive evidence.

After lunch, Matthew Kneisler of ARM presented the team research proposal, in proxy, for Jim Hall who was in the hospital for intestinal bleeding.

B.J. Corbin presented a brief history of research on Mount Ararat and concluded with the most likely areas left



B.J. Corbin at Kazan west of Ararat with large stone that has a hole in it 1998
 Courtesy of B.J. Corbin



Ark Research Team in Richmond, Virginia 1998
 Courtesy of Jim Hall

to search on Mount Ararat, including the ruins at Eli, Korhan, and the St. Jacob's monastery.

Tuesday 10/6/1998

We left in three rented cars for Doğubeyazit, which is just south of Mount Ararat. We stop in Agri for lunch and photos opportunities. We encounter some typical communication problems at the entrance of the governor's office building because of the video camera. The situation was soon resolved and we were escorted out of town by police and registered with Turkish security.

After passing through several military checkpoints, we arrive in Doğubeyazit late in the afternoon. Salih needs to meet with local police, security, mayor, and military that we are in town and the nature of our visit.

We checked into the Hotel Grand Derya which was quite nice by eastern Turkey standards, and noticed that we had two Turkish security assigned to us in the lobby. There were also security posted outside of the hotel on our behalf.

Wednesday 10/7/1998

We stop at the military headquarters to see about our escort for the day. Two Turkish soldiers are assigned to protect us as we ventured on the Durupinar site, where a short, but solemn memorial service was held in honor of David Fasold, as David Deal sprinkled some of the ashes of David Fasold on the site.

The group also went up near the Iranian border to search for ruins of an ancient settlement. We did hear some gun shots, and were hoping these were only from target practice, or maybe warning shots from Turkish military, as we were very near the Iranian border. No ruins or artifacts were easily discernable to most of the group once we reached the upper site of interest.

We concluded the day with a drive to Kazan, a small village west of Mount Ararat, where some claim large stones are actually sea anchors or drogue stones from Noah's Ark. We arrived in Kazan near dark, and it was decided to wait until morning of the next day to visit the stones.

Thursday 10/8/1998

We went to Kazan to see the large stones. After about an hour or so, we returned to the Durupinar site, where the ARM team conducted an interview at the visitors center, and the others went back up to the upper site. We heard more gunshots, and could only hope for the best.

There was a brief period of tension during the afternoon, where most of the ARM team was left at the visitors center with no car or person that spoke Turkish. At one point, we got a little nervous where someone was crouched in the bushes for over a half an hour. Too long for a mere bathroom break! Not to mention the occasional gun shots in the background.

Salih, Rob and Dave announced the discovery of what they believed to be the top of a tomb at the upper site. I recall them saying that they found corners of a 3' by 5' stone slab. Due to some confusion, I did not go up to see the sites, but Rob later showed me some photos of the sites, which seem to warrant further investigation. Some members of the group claim to have found pieces of pottery and bone.

We eventually left for Erzurum around 4 P.M., stopping again in Agri for dinner, this time without incident.

