

THE BOUNDARIES OF URARTU/ARARAT

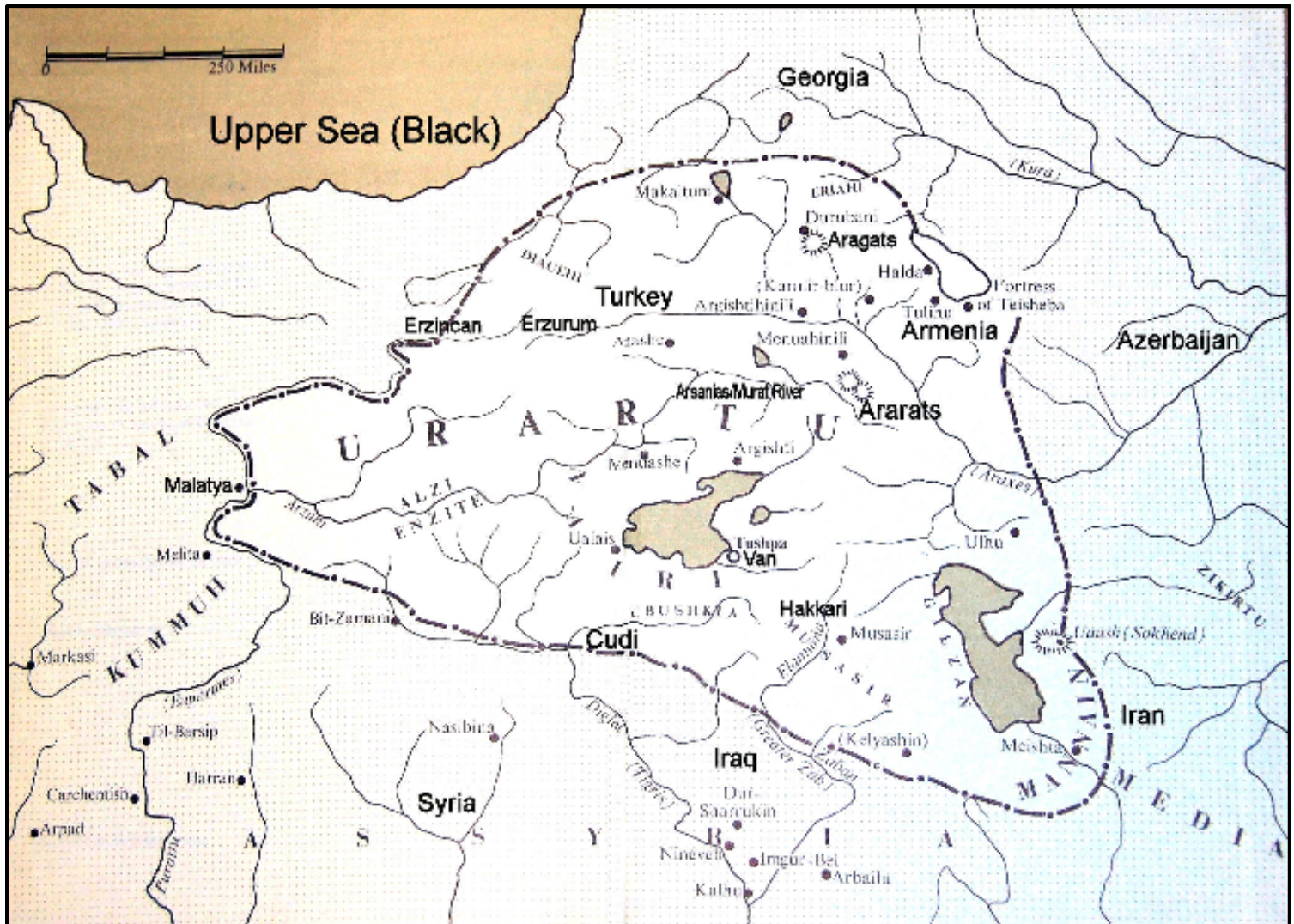
**By Rex Geissler, Gordon Franz, and Bill Crouse
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Introduction

Adventurer Robert Cornuke produced a new video which claims that remnants of Noah's Ark have been found in the Elburz Mountains about 54 miles from Tehran, the capital of Iran. A critique of the new video by Gordon Franz, Bill Crouse, and the author is available at [http://noahsarksearch.com/Cornuke The Search For Noah's Ark DVD Review.pdf](http://noahsarksearch.com/Cornuke%20The%20Search%20For%20Noah%27s%20Ark%20DVD%20Review.pdf). Among the other issues cited, one of the largest problems with Cornuke's view is that he distorts the boundaries of ancient Urartu/Ararat.

The Boundaries of Ararat/Urartu

The major problem with the Cornuke thesis is that there is no evidence yet discovered that indicates the region of Urartu/Ararat ever extended as far east into Iran as he claims. In fact, in the video, Cornuke's map doesn't even cover the ancient capital of Ararat/Urartu on Lake Van! This is a grievous error. What is at stake here is the inerrancy of Scripture. As far as these authors are aware, no Urartian scholar would put the Kingdom of Urartu as far to the east as Cornuke claims even at the height of its empire in the 8th and 7th centuries B.C. when Urartu included about 500,000 square kilometers (193,000 square miles). At the most, it extended only a few miles south and east of Lake Urmia. Most scholars are in agreement that when the author of Genesis referred to the mountainous region of Ararat in Gen. 8:4, he was making reference to the region directly north of Mesopotamia, centered around Lake Van (Zimansky 1998: 2). The tribes and regional kings of Ararat (Urartu) are first mentioned in Assyrian literature in the 13th century B.C. meaning it could easily have been in existence and known by Moses (Zimansky 1998: 6).



Urartu Map based upon Soviet Archaeologist Boris Piotrovsky's Excavations in Armenia

The Urartu archaeological map extended with more labels is from noted Urartian Archaeologist Boris Piotrovsky, who was Director of the Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg for the Soviet Union and directed the Urartian excavations at Karmir-Blour, one of the greatest fortresses of Urartu in Soviet Armenia (1969: back cover). In order to accurately demonstrate how different Bob Cornuke's map of Urartu shown in the video, the archaeological map of Urartu based upon Piotrovsky and Zimansky (1998: 2, 230-231) had to be completely re-drawn below (outlined in red with Urartian archaeological sites) in order to add entire areas of landmass to take into account Cornuke's view of Urartu (outlined in blue and adapted from the locations shown on the video into a new map).

Cornuke literally leaves out 36,500 square miles of the accepted archaeologists' view of Urartu. In addition, it should be noted that Cornuke adds about 28,000 square miles of geographical area to his map of Urartu with no archaeological

support whatsoever, allowing his map to include some of the northern and central Elburz Mountains close to Mount Suleiman.



Archaeological Urartu (Red) with Urartian Archaeological Sites (Orange)
Using Urartian and Assyrian research from Dr. Paul Zimansky and H. Kessler and noting
the Mountain Buffer Zones of Gordyene, Taurus, and Zagros Mountains
Compared with Cornuke's Urartu (Blue)

The presumed Ed Davis landing site on Mount Suleiman, northwest of Tehran, is far outside the land of Ararat/Urartu (at least 250 miles as the dove flies from Urartu to Mount Suleiman), and deep inside the Land of Madaia of the Medes! This is a very crucial point to Cornuke's claims. Is Mount Suleiman, northwest of Tehran, in the Biblical land of Ararat/Urartu or not? The BASE Institutes case stands or falls on this question. Cornuke gives a vague, non-factual answer to this question when he states:

When people talk about the boundaries of Urartu -- which is the Assyrian designation, Armenia, [the] more modern designation -- They can't be precise. There is not a boundary that you can draw a line around. It expanded and contracted up to a thousand [1,000] miles based on war, or famine, or some kind of drought, very mercurial in the boundaries. So we can say it's just right in that area of Turkey, the area of Iran, the area maybe of Azerbaijan. It's just right in that area of the world; we just can't be precise where in the area when

we are talking about Iran. It's right where the Bible indicates it should be [12 min.:30 sec.-13 min.:08 sec. into the video].

However, in the video, a speculative map of Ararat/Urartu graphic is shown that includes Mount Sabalan and comes close to Mount Suleiman. Cornuke knows he must have the Land of Ararat/Urartu extend all the way over to the Elburz mountain range in order to give his discovery any kind of credibility. It is our judgment that this graphic is very inaccurate and, in our opinion, deceptive. As noted earlier, Cornuke's Urartu map does not even include the known historical capital and cultural center of Ararat/Urartu at Lake Van and its associated archaeological sites, the large Urartian site of Çavuştepe toward Hakkari or other numerous Urartian archeological sites between Lake Urmia and Lake Van, nor none of the traditional Hurrian highlands extending west to Erzincan and Elizağ. However, Cornuke's Urartu does conveniently extend southeast to the central Elburz Mountains and the edge of Mount Suleiman where not one piece of evidence for Urartian presence has ever been found.

Here is a brief summary of the region of Ararat/Urartu by noted expert Paul E. Zimansky and notice that none of the landmarks he mentions are deep within Iran. He states:

Urartian kings would have ruled all of the agricultural lands around Lake Van and Lake Sevan, and the southwestern shore of Lake Urumiyeh. The upper Aras, particularly the Armavir and Erevan areas, was firmly in their hands, and conquest took them as far north as Lake Cildir. Along the Murat, evidence for royal control is surprisingly meager, but sufficient to put the Euphrates at Izoli within the conquered zone and the Elazig area in the narrower sphere. Campaign inscriptions are found well to the east of Tabriz, but the nearest evidence for firm state control in that direction comes from Bastam, thirty-eight kilometers north of Khvoy. Missing from this picture are the large and fertile plains of Erzurum and Erzincan on the Karasu, the northwest shore of Lake Urumiyeh, the plain of Marand, and the middle Aras from Jolfa to the slopes of Mount Ararat. All of these are generally assumed to be part of Urartu in some sense, and it is worth examining other forms of evidence to see if there might be some grounds for including them within the perimeter of state control (1985: 10).

Zimansky does not include the Elburz Mountains in the area of Urartu. Thus, it is NOT, as Mr. Cornuke claims, *right where the Bible indicates it should be!*

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