

## The Prophet Noah, the Flood Based on the Qurānic Revelation, the History Accounts and Archaeological Excavations

Prof. Dr. Hayati Aydın<sup>1</sup>

### Abstract

Bediyyat (Reality) is an important topic in Qur'ānic interpretation. Some of the commentators have conveyed many irrational and contradictory things as they interpret the Qur'ān without observing reality. One of them is the comments about the flood and the ark of Noah. The Islamic scholars and commentators who took advantage of the information in the Torah say that the flood is all over the earth and the earth is filled with water and the ship descends on Ararat (Ağrı). Today's archaeological studies are generally carried out on these mountains based on the information in the Torah. However, this thought is both geologically irrational and contradicted with the universal principle of the Qur'ān "No bearer of burdens will bear the burden of another. We will not punish unless we send a prophet" (al-Isrā' 17/15). Despite the great and long struggle of Noah they did not accept the invitation of Noah and thus were being destroyed by the flood. Already the Torah's which in circulation were written after the deportation of Jews to Mesopotamia famous for the exile of Babylon. In this period (BC. 586) Jerusalem was burned down by Nebuchadnezzar (BC. 605-562) and those who knew the Torah were slaughtered. Many mythological and wrong things and the expression of Ararat are thought to have entered the Torah during this period. Today, some Western researchers suggest that the Mount Judī, which the Qur'ān points to, is the best and right choice for where the ship landed, and they suggest that it is necessary to excavate here for the remains of the ship. Al-Kalbī, who gives information about the gods and beliefs of the Jahiliyya period, states in the Book that the deities of Noah's people are worshiped in various parts of the Arabian Peninsula. In fact, archaeological excavations in these regions are confirmed with this. Both Islamic sources and archaeological excavations indicate that the Flood event took place in Mesopotamia. Based on this information and materials, we can tell that the place where the Noah people lived is Mosul and its surroundings. Al-Kalbī, who gives information about the gods and beliefs of the Jahiliyya period in his Kitāb al-Aṣṅām, is mentioned that some of the gods worshiped in various parts of the Arabian Peninsula are the gods of the Noah people. The fact that Noah had lived in this region is almost evident. As a matter of fact, archaeological excavations in various ancient cities of Mesopotamia confirmed this information and it was understood that Noah was a prophet sent to the people in this region. At the same time, these findings indicate that the flood event took place in Mesopotamia in the late Sumerians in the end of the four thousand BC and the beginning of the three thousand BC, in the pursuit of the eighth king of this state. In this way, the determination of Noah's presence and the flood has made a great sense in the history of religions. Because Noah is the oldest prophet of mankind's history, the clear transmission of divine messages to society began with him. "When Our command came and the oven overflowed, we said, "Load upon it (i.e the ship) of each (creature) two mates and your family, except those about whom the Word (i.e decree) has preceded, and (include) whoever has believed. 'But none had believed in him, except a few" (Nūḥ 11/40). It can be said from the verse that very few people boarded the ship. "Load upon it... each (creature) two mates" although in this case it is interpreted as get a pair from each of the living species, this is not true and contrary to reality. Because it is appreciated that it is impossible to take a couple of animals from every animal in the world. In our opinion, this expression can be interpreted in two ways: First, it is meant pairs of animals needed. These animals are also pets that will help their ship survive the flood and give them milk and eggs. Couples are ram, sheep, lodge, goat, hen and rooster animals. Or, as Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī stressed it is meant the couples that are ordered by God to Noah to be loaded onto the ship. The Islamic scholar believes that the place where the ship landed was the Judī Mountain in Jizra. It was rumoured that some of the Muslims in the early periods of Islam saw the remains of this ship. Some

<sup>1</sup> Van Yüzüncü Yıl University, Divinity Faculty (Tafsir) VAN /TURKEY

historical narrations and archaeological findings support this. The fact that the Flood event is determined in historical information and archaeological materials reveals that the stories of the Qur'ān are not myths but they are pure historical fact. In addition, it is understood that this narrative is known in a wide geography and narration of similar events is through prophets and divine messages and it is widely inspired by the myths and legends of nations. In the Sumerian The Flood Noah was called as Ziusudra (the Longevity Person) and Babylon Gilgamesh epic as Ut-napištim (Living a Life) as the Qur'ān says it can be said that Noah's life was beyond normal, different from his peers and had a miraculous life. In this respect, examining the reality of Noah and the Flood and determining the truth is a very important issue. Our article aims to discuss and reach the conclusion of the Flood event, the place where the Flood took place, and the religious texts, Islamic culture and archaeological findings related to Noah's ark, the people who boarded him and the ark.

**Key Words:** Noah, The Flood, Ark, Ararat, Judi

## Introduction

The Flood is an event that occurred in the ancient history of mankind, which concerns not only Muslims but also people of the book and other nations. Generally, comments are made on the Torah verses about this event. Some Islamic historians and commentators who took advantage of the information in the Torah<sup>2</sup> also say that the flood covered the whole earth and Noah saved the boarded people by taking humans and a couple of animals from each species, and that when the flood passed, the ship landed on Ararat (Ağrı) and (or) Mount Judi.<sup>3</sup> However, regarding Noah, it is said in the Qur'ān: *"Indeed, We sent Noah to his people, (saying), 'Warn your people before there comes to them a painful punishment. He Said, 'O my people, indeed I am to you a clear warner...He Said, 'My Lord, indeed I invited my people (to truth) night and day but my invitation increased them not except in flight (i.e. aversion)'"* (Nuh 71 / 1-2; 5-6). As can be seen from these statements, Noah is a prophet sent to his people.

*"No bearer of burdens will bear the burden of another. And never would We punish until We sent a messenger"* (al-Isra'17/15); *"Whoever does righteousness-it is for his (own) soul; and whoever does evil (does so) against it. And your Lord is not ever unjust to (His) servants"*(Fuṣṣilat 41/46)

Based on this logic of the Qur'ān, it is understood that the flood came to his people on the grounds that despite Noah's great and long struggle; they did not accept the invitation and suffered a curse. Although some prophets were mentioned before Noah, the prayer and sharia began with Noah. Since humanity before Noah was a kind of childish, they were not given a special sharia. According to some scholars, the revelation they received from Allah was a kind of instinctive inspiration, as was the case with Mouse's mother, and their invitations were directed only to the family members.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>2</sup> This is said about the Flood in Torah: *"And the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the LORD that He had made man on the earth, and it grieved Him at His heart. And the LORD said: 'I will blot out man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and creeping thing, and fowl of the air; for it repenteth Me that I have made them.' And I, behold, I do bring the flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven; every thing that is in the earth shall perish."* See. *Kutsal Kitap (Torah)*, 3. Edition (Kitabı Mukaddes Şirketi (Holy Book Company), 2003). *"Genesis, 6/5 -7, 17"*.

It is also said that the ship landed on Ararat: *"And God remembered Noah, and every living thing, and all the cattle that were with him in the ark; and God made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters assuaged; the fountains also of the deep and the windows of heaven were stopped, and the rain from heaven was restrained. And the waters returned from off the earth continually; and after the end of a hundred and fifty days the waters decreased. And the ark rested in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, upon the mountains of Ararat"* See. *Kutsal Kitap (Torah)*. *"Genesis, 8/ 1-4."*

<sup>3</sup> Ali b. Muhammad Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil fi al-tārīkh* (Dār al-Kutub al-İlmiyya, n.d). 1: 58; Alī b. Ḥusayn al-Mas'ūdī, *al-Murūj al-dhahab* (Beirut: Maktabāt al-'Asrī, 2005). 1:32; Muhammad al-Tāhir, Ibn 'Āshūr, *Tahrir wa Tanwir* (Tunus: Dār al-Tunus, 1984). 20: 223.

<sup>4</sup> Rashīd Ridā, *al-Manār* (Qāhira: Dār al-Marifa, 1947). 2:276-278; Yusuf Şevki Yavuz, "Peygamber" (Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslām Ansiklopedisi (Religious Foundation of Turkey Encyclopedia of Islam).), erişim: 21 Ağustos 2019, <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/peygamber>.; Qādī Abdul Jabbar said, Adam and his children first began to live on the law of nature, observing the nature. Later, turned out that for the serenity of hearts and useful actions this was not enough. Allah sent the Prophets to them with revelations. (Ridā, *al-Manār*. 2: 278) Muhammad Abduh says that at first people had a single society and a homogeneous structure but when deviated from the right path the prophets were

The universal message belongs only to the Prophet Muhammad, and all the prophets before him were sent only to their tribes.<sup>5</sup> Therefore, it is necessary to accept that the flood was a local disaster and took place in the region where Noah people lived. Now, we will deal with the deluge and the events and phenomena related to the deluge in the light of religious texts, Islamic culture and archaeological findings, respectively:

## 1. *Place of The Flood:*

It is possible to determine the place where the flood took place only by the historical information and the material obtained from the archaeological excavations.

### 1.1. *Historical Information:*

The historical information given by al-Kalbī about the place of the flood is important for us. He says: After Abraham's son Ismail settled in Mecca, many of his descendants filled the valley of Mecca. Because Mecca was narrow for them, they expelled the Amalikans who had settled there. But when they multiplied, they fought each other this time. They spread to parts of Arabia. When they deviated from the belief of their father Ibrahim and Ismail into idolatry, they began to worship by revealing what they remembered from the idols of Noah's people.<sup>6</sup> One of the villages close to Madina, in Yanb'u, in Ruhāt, the Huzayl tribe (from the idols of the Noah tribe) Suva'a, Kalb tribe, in Dumetü'l-Cendel'de to Vedd, the Mazhic and Cüraş people to Yuğus, Mecca in Khayvān, two days travel away, they began to worship Yauk, and the Himyerites began to worship Nesr in Sebe, a place called Belha.<sup>7</sup>

Some of the commentators mentioned that these idols were the names of some righteous people who lived in the people of Noah, some of them were the names of the children of Adam (pbuh), and after their death their statues were erected at the meeting places and convey that later worshiped to these idols.<sup>8</sup> The Arabs knew these idols extensively, and before Islam they named their children Abdulvedd and Abduyağūs after these idols.<sup>9</sup> Abū Uthman al-Nahdī<sup>10</sup> states that Yagus is an iron idol, that the Arabs put this idol on a hairless camel and released it and that wherever the camel collapsed, they accepted it as fertile and acquired it.<sup>11</sup> However, the idol mentioned by al-Nahdī, although in Noah's time it was not recognised as being an idol of Yagus, was a copy of the idol at his time, but our aim in this article is not the idol itself but its recognition in Arabia. From all of the above it is understood that the idols of Noah's time were recognized in Arabia and some rituals related to these were arranged just before Islam. The statement of Ibn Kathīr that not only did the Noah people worship these idols but also they were worshipped in Arab, Acem and many other communities has become widespread since the period of Noah and that the statement of Qur'ān "*And already they have misled many*" (Nūh, 71/24)<sup>12</sup> supports this comment. Accordingly, Noah can be said to live in or near this region.

---

sent with heavenly sharia to rule with justice and to guide them to the right path (Ridā, *al-Manār*.2: 77). In fact, it is said in the Qur'an that people first lived in a single society, but when they multiplied, there were differences between them and has been sent prophets to rule with justice. (See al-Baqarah, 2/213) This shows us that in the history of mankind, the sending of the prophets was after divisions and strife in society.

<sup>5</sup> This fact is emphasized in the verse: "*Elif, Lām, Rā. (This is) a Book which We have revealed to you, (O Muhammad), that you might bring mankind out of darknesses into the light by permission of their Lord – to the path of the Exalted in Might, The Praiseworthy*" (Ibrāhīm, 14/1).

<sup>6</sup> Abū I-Mundhir Hishām b. Muḥammad b. al-Sā'ib al-Kalbī, *Kitāb al-aṣnām* (al-Qāhira: Dār al-Kitāb al-Misrī, n.d.). 6.

<sup>7</sup> al-Kalbī, *Kitāb al-aṣnām*. 9-11; Ibn Kathīr and Alusī give approximately the same information. See. Abu al-Fida' Ismail Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'azīm* (Cīza: al-Maktabāt al-Shaykh li'-at-Tūrās, n.d). 4:142; Shihāb al-Dīn Alusī, *Ruh al-Meāni fi Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Azīm ve Sab'ı al-Mathānī* (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1987). 26:96.

<sup>8</sup> Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'azīm*. 4: 142-144; Alusī, *Ruh al-Meāni fi Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Azīm ve Sab'ı al-Mathānī*. 27: 96.

<sup>9</sup> Alusī, *Ruh al-Meāni fi Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Azīm ve Sab'ı al-Mathānī*. 27: 96.

<sup>10</sup> He was born in the era of Jahiliyya, a member of the Nahd branch of the Kudaā tribe who accepted Islam but did not meet with the Messenger of Allah and lived a reclusive life. This person did not meet with Abu Bakr during his caliphate. After Abu Bakr's death, he came to Medina and settled and participated in the conquests made since the time of Omar. He participated in the battles of Yermuk, Qadisiye, Jalūlā, Tūster, Nihavent, Azerbaijan and Bridge. When Nihavent war was won first this person informed Omer. See. İsmail Lütfü Çakan, "*Ebu Osman en-Nehdī (Abū Uthman al-Nahdī)*" TDV İslām Ansiklopedisi (Religious Foundation of Turkey Encyclopedia of Islam), <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/ebu-osman-en-nehdi> (21.08.2019).

<sup>11</sup> Alusī, *Ruh al-Meāni fi Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'Azīm ve Sab'ı al-Mathānī*. 27: 96.

<sup>12</sup> Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'azīm*. 4: 144.

According to historian Ibn al-Athīr, Mosul is the place where Noah lived.<sup>13</sup> As we will discuss in more detail below this is supported by the fact that the thick sludge layer was detected in the depths of the soil during the excavations in this region and that The Flood in Sumerian tablets took place in Mesopotamia. When we combine all these with the information given by al-Kalbī and Ibn Kathīr, it is understood that the place where Noah lived was Mesopotamia and the period he lived was in the time of Sumerians. The Sumerians built a great civilization which had religious and cultural influence in neighbouring lands like Arabia in their own time.

## 1.2. Archaeological Findings:

In particular, this situation, in the ancient cities of Mesopotamia, Ur 2.5 m thick, in various places such as Shuruppak and Kish 30-40 cm thick, Uruk and almost all of the soil in the cities of Mesopotamia in 4-5 m depth of a mass of mud was found that ~~it~~ covers everything that constitutes the ancient civilization. Even a large and thick layer of mud remains found on the high hills.<sup>14</sup> Gilgamesh Epic was found on tablets of the library of Assyrian King Asurbanipal (669-631 BC) found in the excavations carried out in 1853 in Nineveh in the neighbourhood of Koyuncu, the current name of Mosul city. The epic was written in twelve tablets and the eleventh tablet contained the flood. This epic - written in Akkadian, which is a Sami language - was added to the Babylonian version of The Flood and it was called Noah Ut-napishtim.<sup>15</sup> As Noah is an attribute given to some people, civilizations living in Mesopotamia have named it according to the languages they speak in their epigraphs and epics. The Sumerians named this as Ziusudra (the longevity) and the Babylonians as Ut-napishtim (Living a Life, Pīr).<sup>16</sup> In the Torah, the form of Noah, which is believed to be derived from the word Nāhā in the sense of longevity,<sup>17</sup> was named as Nūh in the Qurʾān. As we have seen, all of this supports the fact that the flood took place locally (in Mesopotamia) and that Noah and the flood were known to most civilizations in that neighbourhood. The epic describing the flood of the Sumerians ~~it~~ was written in the 2000's BC on a crushed tablet and was a scattered. It was written in Old Babylonian dialect and lyric atmosphere in the 1700's BC and in New Babylonian dialect in 1500 BC but with a philosophical identity as a whole. Probably his real name is Gır-Gameş and it means heavy buffalo.<sup>18</sup> Even in Turkish, A + gir, which is highly likely to come from the same root, and has been pronounced as heavy like Gilgamesh because of the difference in dialect and language. It is understood that the people of this period used the term Gilgames for the valiant men, as they called ulemāu'l-fuhūl (stallion scholars) to the great master scholars, şuarā'u'l-fuhūl (stallion poets) to the great master poets, brave men keḅş (rams). As the heroic element was more prominent in the epics, Deli Dumrul was called Gilgamesh as the hero of the epic on the grounds that he resisted the flood as in Hercules. According to the compiled clay tablets written by the Sumerians, Gilgamesh is the hero of the epic that lived at the end of the fourth millennium and the beginning of the third millennium<sup>19</sup> and it is estimated that the flood occurred between 3000-2900 BC. This was first understood by an archaeologist named George Smith and this understanding later continued with an archaeologist named Charles Leonard Woolley, and finally with a group of German and American scientists in the early twenty-first century and continues to date.

<sup>13</sup> Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil fi al-tārīkh*. 1. 58.

<sup>14</sup> Ömer Faruk Harman, "Tufān (The Flood)" (Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslām Ansiklopedisi (Religious Foundation of Turkey Encyclopedia of Islam), erişim: 21 Ağustos 2019, <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/tufan1>).

<sup>15</sup> See also. Ömer Faruk Harman, "Nūh (Noah)" (Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslām Ansiklopedisi (Religious Foundation of Turkey Encyclopedia of Islam), erişim: 21 Ağustos 2019, [https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/nuh.](https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/nuh.;); Elif Kanca, *Tufan efsanelerine sembolik bir bakış: Kültürel dünyanın yıkımı ve yeniden kuruluşu* (A symbolic look at the flood legends: the destruction and reconstruction of the cultural world.) (International Şırnak And Its Vicinity Symposium (14–16 May 2010). 43; Ali Fathalizade, *Kaynaklarda tufan, Nuh'un gemisi ve dağ* (II. International Symposium of Mount Ararat and Noah's Ark, 2009)., 165.

<sup>16</sup> Harman, "Nūh"; Bilal Aksoy, *Çağdaş Bilim Işığında Hz. Nuh (Prophet Noah in the Light of Modern Science.)* (Ankara: İnsanlık Yolu Publications, 1987).; 49-53; Fathalizade, *Kaynaklarda tufan, Nuh'un gemisi ve dağ*. 165; In 1914, the six-column tablet of the University of Pennsylvania's Nippur collection, which was broket the top, was published which include the Sumerian Flood's some parts. See. Fathalizade, *Kaynaklarda tufan, Nuh'un gemisi ve dağ*. 165

<sup>17</sup> Harman, "Nūh".

<sup>18</sup> In almost all Indo-European languages, the term *Gır* is used in the sense of heavy and large meaning. Like Grand Mother, Grand Father and Grand Parent, Geology is also called Granite. Even in Turkish, the word Ağır is probably derived from this expression in the form of A + gir. See. Aksoy, *Çağdaş Bilim Işığında Hz. Nuh*. 52. The historian al-Mas'ūdī says that the languages were first uniquely differentiated from the children of Noah. (See. al-Mas'ūdī, *al-Murūj al-dhahab*. 34) Based on what al-Mas'ūdī says, it is undestood that the origin of the languages is Mesopotamia and thus the origin of the similarity of Indo-European languages.

<sup>19</sup> Samuel Noah Karamer, *Samuel Noah Kramer, Sumerian Mythology* (Global Gray E Books, 1961). 22.

The fact that the flood is not only exclusive to this region but is known in large regions such as the Far East can be read as a reflection of the collapse of a great power like the Sumerians. As a matter of fact, according to Neşet Çağatay, The flood spread from Greece to India through the epic.<sup>20</sup> According to Abū A'lā al-Mawdūdī the sources of floods in some countries such as America and Australia were mentioned as the first human community in Mesopotamia, and as a result of the flood, they left the region and dispersed into various parts of the world.<sup>21</sup> Indeed, sources such as Ibn Isaac take the genealogy of the Messenger of Allah by counting names up to Ādam.<sup>22</sup> For this reason as some anthropologists have done, it is not right to return human history back to tens of thousands or millions of years by looking at some humanoid skeletons. However, it is understood that people lived in certain parts of the earth before Noah because of the ancient history of five thousand years BC like Egyptian civilization.

So it is understood that all these show that the flood took place in Mesopotamia during the term of the Sumerians and was later epicized by the Sumerians and the civilizations of the region. Although the Flood incident has divergent religions such as Judaism, Christianity and Islam as well as its divine religions, in many cultures except the African continent and some parts of Asia; Palestine, Greece, Assyria, America, Australia, India, Tibet, China, Malaysia, Lithuania, as well as a variety of peoples of various races and regions are expressed in the tradition.<sup>23</sup> Although it seems reasonable to say that the flood is known in the distant countries through the spread of epics, as Çağatay says, it is more reasonable to accept that it is spread through religions and prophets. Because in the Qur'ān, "We have already sent messengers before you. Among them are (whose stories) We have related to you, and among them are those (whose stories) We have not related to you"(al-Mu'min, 40/78) shows that there are some celestial prophets in the Qur'ān and some books are given to them. Probably these prophets and books mentioned the incident of the flood to the nations to which they were sent in the context of terror, as mentioned in the Torah and the Bible. This is evidenced by the fact that the Hindus spoke of the flood in their religious books, such as Catapatha Brāhmanā, and in the religious texts of Mecus.<sup>24</sup> They embraced these events and heroes that they learned through prophets and books; As the rightful king Dhul-Qarnayn mentioned in the Qur'ān by the Turks as Oghuz Khān, they gave him the hero of the flood and named he as prominent.

## 2. Noah's Ark:

Undoubtedly, one of the important issues of The Flood is Noah's ship. In terms of our subject, the existence of the ship, the size of the ship, boarders and the place where the ship landed are important.

Before the flood in the Qur'ān, God proposes to Noah to build a ship: "And construct the ship under Our observation and Our revelation and do not addresses Me concerning those who have wronged; indeed, they are (to be) drowned" (Hūd, 11/37). However, the details of the ship are not provided. Katade says that the length of Noah's ship was three hundred cubits and the width was fifty cubits.<sup>25</sup> Qatāda b. Dī'āma's view is based on the Torah.<sup>26</sup> Al-Ḥasan al-Baṣrī says that the length is one thousand two hundred cubits and the length is six hundred cubits.<sup>27</sup> However, it is understood from the verse that "But none had believed in him, except a few"(Hūd, 11/40). This shows that the ship was not as big as it was thought. It is most reasonable to think of it as a medium-sized ship that could carry around ten people and some domestic animals with Noah, as we have wider contact below. Again, based on the statement "Va farrat-tannūr/ The oven overflowed", we believe that it is not right to say that it is a steamer, as some commentators do.<sup>28</sup> Steamers are one of the last achievements of civilization. In the early days of humanity, the use of the word steamer is not appropriate.

<sup>20</sup> See. Neşet Çağatay, *İslam Öncesi Arap Tarihi ve Cahiliyye Çağı (Pre-Islamic Arab History and the Age of Ignorance)* (Ankara, 1982). 6.

<sup>21</sup> Abū A'lā al-Mawdūdī, *Tafheem al-Qur'ān*, trans. Hamdi Aktaş (İstanbul: İnsan Publications, 1986). 2:371.

<sup>22</sup> Muḥammad b. Ishāq, *al-Sıyrā al-nabaviyyā* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutūb al-'Ilmiyyā, 2004). 1.

<sup>23</sup> Harman, "Nūh".

<sup>24</sup> Harman, "Tufān".

<sup>25</sup> Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil fi al-tārīkh*. 1: 56.

<sup>26</sup> In Torah, *Genesis*, VI/ 15-16. This is Said: "And this is how thou shalt make it: the length of the ark three hundred cubits, the breadth of it fifty cubits, and the height of it thirty cubits. A light shalt thou make to the ark, and to a cubit shalt thou finish it upward; and the door of the ark shalt thou set in the side thereof; with lower, second, and third storiesshalt thou make it."

<sup>27</sup> See. Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil fi al-tārīkh*. 1: 56.

<sup>28</sup> Muhammad Hamdi Yazır, *Hak dini Kur'ān dili (Right religion Qur'ānic language)* (İstanbul: Eser Publications, 1979). 4: 2781.

As a matter of fact, it is understood that the statement “*And We carried him on a (construction) planks and nails*”(al-Qamar, 54 / 13-14) the ship is composed of plates / planks fastened with nails and this is a medium sized primitive ship.

About the ship

وَلَقَدْ تَرَكْنَاهَا آيَةً فَهَلْ مِنْ مُدَكِّرٍ

“*And we left it as a sign, so is there any who will remember?*”(al-Qamar, 54/15) the pronoun in the statement goes to the ship in the first place and reminds that the remains are left for example. According to Qatāda b. Di‘āma the first generation of the Muslim Ummah is said to have seen these remains.<sup>29</sup> Abydenus, a student of Aristotle, stated that many Iraqis in his age had possessed some parts of the ship, and that they by immersing these pieces in water made the water as healing water for their patients.<sup>30</sup> However, commentators such as Ibn Kathīr say that,<sup>31</sup> with this pronoun, here it is clear evidence for us to carry them and their generations on the loaded ship and to create similar vehicles for them to ride (Yā Sīn, 36 / 41-42). According to this, pronoun goes to the ship, but it emphasizes the ship's first an example.

فَأَنْجَيْنَاهُ وَأَصْحَابَ السَّفِينَةِ وَجَعَلْنَاهَا آيَةً لِلْعَالَمِينَ

“*But We saved him and the companions of the ship, and We made it a sign for the worlds*” (al-‘Ankabūt, 29/15)

As a matter of fact, when we make the pronoun belonging to the ship in the expression of verse, we make the ship a sign for all people. Therefore, those who do not see Noah's Ark, remember Noah's Ark and draw lessons from it when they see the ships floating in the sea.<sup>32</sup> Based on this interpretation, we can say that Noah's ship was the first and therefore the primitive and midsize a ship on earth. However, it is also possible for the pronoun in the verse to go to the story. Ibn ‘Ashūr points to this possibility.<sup>33</sup> In this case, the meaning of the verse is that we made the story a sign for the worlds. As a matter of fact, Noah is adopted by many world nations. Noah released a dove during the flood to test whether the land was visible.<sup>34</sup> The dove returned to the land with a green olive branch, indicating that he had found peace and sanctuary. For this reason in peace with these nations, olive branch was the sign of the ritual of granting peace and releasing doves. Or, as in many parts of the Qur‘ān, we can say that these two situations are referred to for giving authority to the pronoun within the context of ambiguity of meanings in order to ensure the multiplicity of meaning.

As a matter of fact, in the first order regarding shipbuilding (Hūd, 11/37)

وَأَصْنَعِ الْفُلْكَ بِأَعْيُنِنَا وَوَحْيِنَا وَلَا تُخَاطِبْنِي فِي الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا إِنَّهُمْ مُعْرِضُونَ

It is possible that “The” in The Ship (Ful) statement could be both for the genus and for the “The”. If it is accepted as a breed, it becomes a ship of the known type; if it is for “The”, then it will be the same ship as Allah has inspired. However, considering the weaknesses of the possibility of knowing the existence of ships floating in the sea by everyone in the time of Noah, it is more appropriate to move to the meaning of “The”.

<sup>29</sup> Abū Ja‘far Muḥammad Tabarī, *Jāmi‘ al-bayān an ta‘wīl’ āy al-Qur‘ān* (Hecl, n.d.).22: 128.; Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur‘ān al-‘azīm*.13: 297; Ibn ‘Ashūr, *Tahrir wa Tanwir*. 20: 223.

<sup>30</sup> See. al-Mawdūdī, *Tafheem al-Qur‘ān*. 2: 370-371.

<sup>31</sup> Ibn Kathīr, *Tafsīr al-Qur‘ān al-‘azīm*. 13: 297; Ibn ‘Ashūr, *Tahrir wa Tanwir*. 20: 223.

<sup>32</sup> Ibn ‘Ashūr, *Tahrir wa Tanwir*. 20: 223.

<sup>33</sup> Ibn ‘Ashūr, *Tahrir wa Tanwir*. 20: 223.

<sup>34</sup> In pagan culture, it is described as follows: The gods command Kisustros (a name given to Noah in Chaldeans) to build a ship. He makes the ship. The gods transfer to him the things that should be taken to the ship, them wife, children, friends. When the flood begins, the ship stays on the water for days. When the flood ends, he tries to find out the general situation by sending the birds. When the birds can't find a place, they come back. This work goes on for days. Finally, the birds return with their feet muddy. Thus, Kisustros understands that the water is drawn; He goes out with his wife, daughter, and the ship's coxswain, and closes down, devoting to the gods.” Aksoy, *Çağdaş Bilim Işığında Hz. Nuh..* 57-58.

In Torah, *Genesis*, 8. This is written: “*And it came to pass at the end of forty days, that Noah opened the window of the ark which he had made. And he sent forth a raven, and it went forth to and fro, until the waters were dried up from off the earth. And he sent forth a dove from him, to see if the waters were abated from off the face of the ground. But the dove found no rest for the sole of her foot, and she returned unto him to the ark, for the waters were on the face of the whole earth; and he put forth his hand, and took her, and brought her in unto him into the ark. And he stayed yet other seven days; and again he sent forth the dove out of the ark. And the dove came in to him at eventide; and lo in her mouth an olive-leaf freshly plucked; so Noah knew that the waters were abated from off the earth. And he stayed yet other seven days; and sent forth the dove; and she returned not again unto him any more*” Torah, *Genesis*, 8/6- 12

Moreover, if the ships were observed by Noah, there is no point in inspiring him to build the ship. Therefore, it is more accurate to say that Noah's ship was the first example of ships carrying primitive and cargo and staying on the sea for a long time.

### 3. Who and what got on board.

It is understood that a very small number of people were put on board. "When Our command came and the oven overflowed, we said, "Load upon it (i.e the ship) of each (creature) two mates and your family, except those about whom the Word (i.e decree) has preceded, and (include) whoever has believed. But none had believed in him, except a few" (Hūd 11/40). It can be said from the verse that very few people boarded the ship. "Load upon it... each (creature) two mates" although in this case it is interpreted as get a pair from each of the living species; this is not true and contrary to reality. Because it is appreciated that it is impossible to take a couple of animals from every animal in the world. It is not even possible to put an elephant on a ship made of handcrafted wood and nails. In our opinion, this expression can be interpreted in two ways: First, it is meant pairs of animals needed. These animals are also pets that will help their ship survive the flood and give them milk and eggs. Couples are as ram, sheep, lodge, goat, hen and rooster animals. The expression of "Load upon it... each (creature) two mates" is reminiscent of this meaning. Therefore, those who were on board during the flood have benefited from these animal's foods such as milk and eggs and survived. Or, as Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī stressed<sup>35</sup> it is meant the couples that are ordered by God to Noah to be loaded onto the ship. This commandment can be said to be a revelation as the shipbuilding was revealed, or the revelation of the information that took place in the life of the Messenger of Allah from time to time.<sup>36</sup>

### 4. Place of Ship:

As we mentioned above according to Ibn al-Athir, as mentioned above, Noah lived in Mosul, and the place where the ship landed was a mountain near Mosul.<sup>37</sup> According to him, Noah came down from this mountain on which the ship was sitting and found a suitable settlement by wandering around Mosul. Noah and every one of them on the ship, together with his sons, built for themselves a house. In total, the houses reached eighty and named it Semānīn in the sense of an eighty-house settlement. According to Ibn al-Athir, there is still a settlement known as Semānīn in Mosul, and it is probably the place where Noah and the people on board settled.<sup>38</sup> This place he expressed today is located in Şırnak (/ Jizra) on the north-eastern skirt of the Mount Jūdī and in the same sense it has named the Kurdish language Gundi Heştıyan (village of the eighties). Already Mosul of Iraq is located in the south, in the bottom of Judī mount and this village remains in Turkey's border in the province of Şırnak in the north of the Judī mount. There are currently several houses in this village. However, Ibn al-Athir's analysis is considered suspicious. Because this is contrary to the verse, "But none had believed in him, except a few" (Hūd 11/40). The expression of the verse proves that there are very few people who boarded on the ship with Noah. Probably the closest to this is the narration of Noah, three sons and his wives, consisting of ten people.

The fact that the Mount Judī is relatively low and not high, and that there is flatness on it, makes it reasonable that the ship can land here or at the foot of the mountain. In some ancient Torah texts, it is stated that the place where the ship sits is Judī as stated by the Qur'an.<sup>39</sup> As a matter of fact, one of the ancient historians, Babylonian Berossus, in his history on Chaldeans, is stated that Noah's ship was sitting on the Judī.<sup>40</sup> When we take these as the basis and accept them correctly, the "al" in the expression of Qur'an al- Judī shows this famous mountain. The Islamic scholars preferred this option and interpreted the expression of al- Judī as this mountain.<sup>41</sup>

The people of this region believe this in this way and until 1984 in the location which the ship stranded they were celebrating a feast at the first three Friday of July in every year with tambourines and chanting according

<sup>35</sup> See. Fakhr al-Dīn al-Rāzī, *al-Tafsīr al-kabīr* (Beirut: Dār al-Ihyā al-Turas al- Arabī, 1998). 6: 348.

<sup>36</sup> Sometimes the Messenger of Allah (pbuh) was informed about some things by the revelation. This information does not appear explicitly in the Qur'an, but it is understood from the verse statements which revealed by Allah to the Messenger of him. Also you can see like this information about the arrangement that made by the ladies in the Sura of Tahrim in the Quran.

<sup>37</sup> Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil fī al-tārīkh*. 1. 58.

<sup>38</sup> Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil fī al-tārīkh*. 1. 58.

<sup>39</sup> Abdullah Yaşın, *Cudi Dağı ve Nuh Tufanı* (INTERNATIONAL ŞIRNAK AND ITS VICINITY SYMPOSIUM (14–16 May 2010.). 47.; Baki Adam, "Üzeyir" (İstanbul: TDV İslâm Ansiklopedisi (Religious Foundation of Turkey Encyclopedia of Islam), erişim: 21 Ağustos 2019, <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/uzeyir>).

<sup>40</sup> al-Mawdūdī, *Tafheem al-Qur'ān*. 2: 370

<sup>41</sup> al-Mas'ūdī, *al-Murūj al-dhahab*. 32; Tabarī, *Jāmi' al-bayān an ta'wīl' āy al-Qur'ān*. 1: 185; Ibn al-Athīr, *al-Kāmil fī al-tārīkh*. 1:58.

to a hadith which is mentioned that the salvation was a Friday. As a matter of fact, the fact that in Babylon Gilgamesh epic written on a broken tablet piece in K 63 in the British Museum “*On the mountain of Nimush the boat ran aground*” was a strong proof that the ship landed on Mount Judī. However, some scientists say that the place where Noah and Ad's tribe lived is Irem-centered Edom, and when the Qur’ān addressed the Jews he said in a form “*O descendants of those we carried (in the ship) with Noah*” (al-Isrā’\_17/3) they favored that the ship descend to a place where Jews would later gain homeland. If this view is preferred, it should be accepted that both the flood and the Noah tribe lived in this region or vicinity. At that time, “*Water was drawn, the work was finished, the ship sat down to the Jud*” in the verse the word Judī is not a mountain Judī (generous-abundance) is derived from the root of the word means that the ship landed in a fertile soil. This fits the God's instruction to Noah in the prayer that “*O my Lord! Put me in a fertile place. You are the most auspicious of the guests*” (al-Mu’minūn 23/29) as well as the Qur’ān's adjective names are also a place that will fit. However, this would be an interpretation that does not fit with historical news, archaeological findings and customs. Considering logic, there is no possibility to live in a place that has been submerged for a long time. Therefore, this opinion is unacceptable. Likewise, as stated in the Torah, the descent of the ship to Ararat (Mount Ararat) is both an unrealistic and unreasonable interpretation given that the summit can only be reached by professional mountain climbers. This is a second torment to Noah and the people of the ship, the animals that are loaded upon him. How will they get off the top of the mountain? Therefore, this opinion is also unacceptable. Already the Torahs in circulation were written after the deportation of Jews to Mesopotamia famous for the exile of Babylon. In this period (BC. 586) Jerusalem was burned down by Nebuchadnezzar and those who knew the Torah were slaughtered. The narratives of Ezra(Uzayr)'s dictating the text of the lost Torah from the recitation belong to this period. However, this kind of news originates from the Torah and is intended to ensure the authenticity of the Torah. It is already documented by the Qur’ān that the Torah has been manipulated. Therefore, the influence of this pagan culture is clearly seen in the writing of verses about the flood. Berossus, the priest of the Temple of Belus, who discussed the Flood and lived in the 4th century BC, wrote in his work that the people made a flaw in respect for the gods, on which they abandoned their sacrifices and the gods designed the flood. These statements are parallel to the verses of the Torah. Because of this, many mythological and wrong things and the expression of Ararat are thought to have entered the Torah during this period. However, the following possibility should not be kept out of sight when the ship landed on the mountain (Judī), Noah and his entourage, due to the fact that they are agricultural societies, may have descended from the mountain and searched for a suitable place for agriculture. Meanwhile, they may have arrived in Palestinian territory. As a matter of fact, the prophets Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Aaron, David, Solomon, Zechariah, Jesus and John were born in these lands, where they struggled for monotheism and died there. Today, some Western researchers, such as Bill Crouse and Gordon Franz, suggest that the Mount Judī, which the Qur’ān points to, is the best and right choice for where the ship landed, and they suggest that it is necessary to excavate here for the remains of the ship.

As a result, The Flood is regional and it is understood that it took place in Mesopotamia. In the perception of the Flood as a universal event, the pagan culture of ancient history and the Torah formed under the influence of this culture played a major role. Noah's ship, on the other hand, carried medium-sized, primitive and very few people and pets. The Ararat (Ağrı) mountain is also related to the Torah. The Qur’ān, on the other hand, uses the term Judī in relation to the place where the ship landed. Some say it is a fertile place, so it is Edom in the Israeli campus, but it is unacceptable in tradition. The Islamic scholar believes that the place where the ship landed was the Judi Mountain in Jizra. It was rumoured that some of the Muslims in the early periods of Islam saw the remains of this ship. Some historical narrations and archaeological findings support this. The fact that The Flood is determined in historical information and archaeological materials reveals that the stories of the Qur’ān are not myths but they are pure historical fact. In addition, it is understood that this narrative is known in a wide geography and narration of similar events is through prophets and divine messages and it is widely inspired by the myths and legends of nations. In the Sumerian Flood Noah was called as Ziusudra (the Longevity Person) and Babylon Gilgamesh epic as Ut-napištim (Living a Life, Pir) as the Qur’ān says. It can be said that Noah's life was beyond normal, different from his peers and had a miraculous life. Probably it is natural to live a long life in an environment where the natural conditions do not deteriorate and belong to the early period of human life. But beyond that, the life of Noah is a miraculous life. Miracles are unconventional and unexplainable.

## References

Adam, Baki. “Üzeyir”. İstanbul: TDV İslâm Ansiklopedisi (Religious Foundation of Turkey Encyclopedia of Islam. Erişim (Access): 21 Ağustos (August) 2019. <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/uzeyir>.

- Aksoy, Bilal. *Çağdaş Bilim Işığında Hz. Nuh (Prophet Noah in the Light of Modern Science.)*. Ankara: İnsanlık Yolu Publications, 1987.
- Alusī, Shihāb al-Dīn. *Ruh al-Meāni fī Tafsīr al-Qur’ān al-‘Azīm ve Sab’ı al-Mathānī*. Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, 1987.
- Çağatay, Neşet. *İslam Öncesi Arap Tarihi ve Cahiliyye Çağı (Pre-Islamic Arab History and the Age of Ignorance)*. Ankara, 1982.
- Çakan, İsmail Lütfü. “Ebu Osman en-Nehdī (Abū Uthman al-Nahdī)”. TDV İslām AnsiklopedisiSalıTürkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslām Ansiklopedisi (Religious Foundation of Turkey Encyclopedia of Islam)., n.d. Erişim(Access): 21 Ağustos (August) 2019.
- Fathalizade, Ali. *Kaynaklarda tufan, Nuh’un gemisi ve dağ. II. International Symposium of Mount Ararat and Noah’s Ark*, 2009.
- Harman, Ömer Faruk. “Nūh (Noah)”. Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslām Ansiklopedisi (Religious Foundation of Turkey Encyclopedia of Islam. Erişim (Access): 21 Ağustos (August) 2019. <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/nuh>.
- Harman, Ömer Faruk. “Tufān (The Flood)”. Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslām Ansiklopedisi (Religious Foundation of Turkey Encyclopedia of Islam. Erişim (Access): 21 Ağustos (August) 2019. <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/tufan1>.
- Ibn al-Athīr, Ali b. Muhammad. *al-Kāmil fī al-tārīkh*. Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyya, n.d.
- Ibn Ishāq, Muḥammad. *al-Sıyrā al-nabaviyyā*. Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-‘Ilmiyyā, 2004.
- Ibn Kathīr, Abu al-Fida’ İsmail. *Tafsīr al-Qur’ān al-‘azīm*. Ciza: al-Maktabāt al-Shaykh li’- at-Tūrās, n.d.
- Ibn ‘Ashūr, Muhammad al-Tāhir. *Tahrir wa Tanwir*. Tunus: Dār al-Tunus, 1984.
- Kalbī, Abū l-Mundhir Hishām b Muḥammad b. al-Sā’ib al-. *Kitāb al-aṣnām*. al-Qāhira: Dār al-Kitāb al-Misrī, n.d.
- Kanca, Elif. *Tufan efsanelerine sembolik bir bakış: Kültürel dünyanın yıkımı ve yeniden kuruluşu (A symbolic look at the flood legends: the destruction and reconstruction of the cultural world)*. International Şırnak And Its Vicinity Symposium (14–16 May 2010), n.d.
- Karamer, Samuel Noah. *Samuel Noah Kramer, Sumerian Mythology*. Global Gray E Books, 1961.
- Kutsal Kitap (Torah ). 3. Edition. *Kitabı Mukaddes Şirketi (Holy Book Company)*, 2003.
- Mas’ūdī, ‘Alī b. Ḥusayn al-. *al-Murūj al-dhahab*. Beirut: Maktabāt al-‘Asrī, 2005.
- Mawdūdī, Abū A’lā al-. *Tafheem al-Qur’ān*. Trans. Hamdi Aktaş. İstanbul: İnsan Publications, 1986.
- Rāzī, Fakhr al-Dīn al-. *al-Tafsīr al-kabīr*. Beirut: Dār al-Ihyā al-Turas al-Arabī, 1998.
- Rıdā, Rashīd. *al-Manār*. Qāhira: Dār al-Marifa, 1947.
- Tabarī, Abū Ja’far Muḥammad. *Jāmi’ al-bayān an ta’wīl’ āy al-Qur’ān*. Heccr, n.d.
- Yaşın, Abdullah. *Cudi Dağı ve Nuh Tufanı. INTERNATIONAL ŞIRNAK AND ITS VICINITY SYMPOSIUM (14–16 May 2010)*, n.d.
- Yavuz, Yusuf Şevki. “Peygamber”. Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı İslām Ansiklopedisi (Religious Foundation of Turkey Encyclopedia of Islam). Erişim (Access): 21 Ağustos (August) 2019. <https://islamansiklopedisi.org.tr/peygamber>.
- Yazır, Muhammad Hamdi Yazır. *Hak dini Kur’ān dili (Right religion Qur’ānic language)*. İstanbul: Eser Publications, 1979.