

HARVEST INSPIRATION DISCOVERIES

PRESENTS

'CAPTIVATING STORIES ABOUT NOAH'S ARK'

LOOK OUT! HE'S GOT A SHOTGUN!

Finally, after 17 years of waiting, Ron had enough money and vacation time to go to eastern Turkey and try to find the boat shaped object on his own. In 1975 Ron found out who went on the expedition in 1960 to the boat shaped object and contacted them. To their surprise Ron wanted to go to the site.

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They all tried to discourage him from going and were adamant that nothing was there. All of them were sure except one. Dr. Arthur Brandenburger, the photogrammetry expert from Ohio State University still believed it was a ship.

There was just one more hurdle for Ron to overcome. After 15 years of research all he had to do now was get directions to the site. His heart was pounding. He was talking to the very people who had been there. Now he would find out how to get there himself. But when he asked them for directions, their answer left him stunned. None of them knew how to get there. They had ridden many hours on horse back and were led by the Turkish military so they couldn't give him any information as to its exact location.

As you can imagine, Ron was tremendously disappointed. He had completed 15 years of research. He had learned so much and was convinced that this could be the remains of Noah's Ark. He had contacted those who had been there but alas, he didn't know much more now about its location than he did before.

Finally, after 17 years of waiting, Ron had enough money and vacation time to go to eastern Turkey and try to find the boat shaped object on his own.

On Aug. 9, 1977, Ron and his two teenaged sons arrived in Istanbul, Turkey to begin their search for the boat shaped object. They had to take a bus from Istanbul to Ankara, then a train to Erzurum, and then a taxi to Dogubeyazit. They spent over three days traveling. When Sharon and I went there it took just a few hours to fly from Istanbul to Van and then a passenger van to Dogubeyazit. Back in the early days though it was much more dangerous and time consuming to travel to Eastern Turkey.

Can you imagine being in a place where nobody spoke English? How would you communicate? Ron had acquired a flight map of the area but it listed only a few major roads. He didn't even have a general idea of where to begin to look. Their taxi driver didn't speak English, and they didn't know if anyone in the town would speak English. And even if they did, would anyone know where the boat-shaped object was located? It had been 17 years since the 1960 expedition and perhaps the townspeople had forgotten all about it.

Ron had a simple way of dealing with insurmountable problems. Ron told the boys that the only thing he knew to do was to pray that the taxi would stall where they were to begin their exploration. So they prayed. That's simple enough and as they approached Dogubeyazit, the taxi stalled. Can you imagine how excited they all were?

So they all climbed out of the taxi and piled some rocks on the side of the road while the puzzled driver peered under the hood of the taxi trying to figure out what was wrong. Now at least they had a starting point to begin looking for the boat shaped object. Once they got back in the taxi, it started right up and they continued on to Dogubeyazit. But then it stalled again. Now what?

With a little less enthusiasm, they piled up some more rocks along the road and when they got back in, the taxi started up again. Now they had two sites to deal with. But then it stalled a third time. Ron began to wonder if this was answered prayer or just a bad taxi. Each of them placed a single rock along the road and got back in the taxi. The totally surprised driver got it started again and they drove off to their final destination.

What do you think they did the next morning? That's right. They got a different taxi. After a good night's rest they found the closest pile of rocks and began walking in a perpendicular direction to the road while heading west.

As they approached a village some very threatening men approached them. One even had a shotgun. Ron used sign language and convinced them that they meant no harm and that they were tourists. The villagers volunteered to be their guides. Sharon and I found out when we were there that the villagers were only too happy to be tour guides. For a price of course, but it wasn't very much.

They walked over many miles of rugged, rocky terrain. The geology of the area is breathtaking and unique. After a while one of the villagers motioned for Ron to take his picture by a very large rock. When Ron looked through the view-finder of his camera he noticed that it had crosses carved on its face. This was an exciting discovery. Sharon and I had our picture taken standing beside that very same anchor stone and as you can see in the picture below, it is huge.

When the villagers from Kazan saw Ron's interest in the object, they were all too happy to show him several more in the area. These rocks were all shaped like ancient drogue stones except many times larger. Most had eight crosses on them but not all. The crosses were basically in two styles, Crusader and Byzantine. This was important because it indicated that they may have been carved by Christian pilgrims who were known to carve crosses on objects they associated with Biblical sites and events. I believe that they were convinced that these objects had something to do with Noah's Ark and so they carved the crosses on them to indicate that belief.

Directly adjacent to the village of Kazan is a cemetery which contains a number of ancient grave markers. It appears that several drogue stones were set upright and used as grave markers. Ron also found several drogue stones a long distance from the cemetery, all of which were lying on the ground. Sharon and I had an opportunity to visit this cemetery and view the many anchor stones there. One of them even had a ziggurat carved on it. The children from the village were very friendly. They all seemed eager to get their pictures taken and really enjoyed the candy we gave them.

It was the holes in these anchor stones that convinced Ron that these were once used as drogues or anchors on an ancient ship. The holes were all wider on the inside than on the outside. This would have allowed a rope to be attached with the knot inside the hole. The knot would swell when it came in contact with water and then be secured inside the hole preventing it from chafing and wearing. I was impressed with the size of these anchor stones as compared to those normally used in ancient times. They definitely were much larger than those found anywhere else in the world. Another interesting fact is that these anchor stones are nowhere near any body of water. This was an important discovery but Ron still had no idea where the boat shaped object was.

These anchor stones probably were used to keep the front of the boat pointing into the rough seas. Without such anchors I could picture the boat spinning around and around in the violent storm. They were probably suspended from the keelsons that extended past the end of the boat.

Scattered throughout the area around the village of Kazan were a number of massive stones or boulders which looked like petrified or fossilized wood timbers. They were far larger than any cut timbers Ron had ever seen. I believe they are large pieces of fossilized wood that had been cut into timbers prior to being fossilized. One of them still has the look of bark on one side and it also has crosses carved on it. Maybe it is part of the covering that Noah removed in Genesis 8:13? That gives me goose bumps just thinking about it! When I tapped it with a stone it had a unique sound compared to other rocks in the area.

In the village of Kazan, Ron found the remains of a mudbrick wall which appeared to have once extended the entire north-south length of the village and possibly surrounded it at one time. When he first saw it, there were sections still standing which extended many hundreds of feet from the main area of the village to the south. Even though the wall was in extremely poor condition with large segments missing, Ron could make out carved figures on the top portion. When Sharon and I visited the area there wasn't much left of the wall but what I found interesting was the joint between each row of mud blocks. The joint was very thin and perfectly straight. Better than any present day construction in the area. It indicated to me that in ancient times they had the ability to construct very precise structures.

The area of Kazan is rich in archaeological objects. The very name means 'Village of Eight' and it is located in the 'Valley of Eight.' You could literally spend days exploring that area. At the end of day one Ron still had not found the boat shaped object but he was tremendously excited about what he had found.

IN OUR NEXT ARTICLE ENTITLED, 'WHO DIED FIRST, NOAH OR HIS WIFE?', WE WILL SEE IF RON FOUND THE BOAT SHAPED OBJECT ON DAY TWO OF HIS FIRST TRIP TO EASTERN TURKEY.