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## **In search of the ark: Lovelander claims recent discovery points to evidence of biblical craft**

*By Amber Baker  
Loveland Reporter-Herald*

A Loveland man who has written books and produced movies about the search for Noah's ark said a recent discovery could "turn things upside down."

In April, Hong-Kong-based Noah's Ark Ministries International announced that Chinese and Turkish explorers had found what the Christian group believes are the remains of Noah's ark.

What appeared to be rooms with wooden beams were found at an altitude of 13,000 feet on Mount Ararat in Turkey.

David Balsiger of Loveland, senior producer for Grizzly Adams Productions, which has produced documentaries on Noah's ark and hundreds of family-friendly television specials, said he is about 99.9 percent convinced that the discovery is valid.

But then, he has long been confident that the boat that the Bible says carried two of every kind of animal lies at the top of Mount Ararat.

He has done extensive research and co-authored several books on the subject.

It's something that has fascinated him for more than 35 years, since he first encountered French explorer Fernand Navarra, who had brought back a piece of wood from the site.

Carbon-14 testing placed the age of the wood around 5,000 years old, Balsiger said.

"I always thought of it as just a story, but it became a reality for me then," he said.

Some have cast doubt on the validity of the latest discovery, calling it a hoax.

Balsiger doesn't believe it is. "If it's a hoax, it's a very elaborate hoax," he said.



**By Don Reilly**

Loveland resident David Balsiger holds a piece of wood brought back from Mount Ararat more than three decades ago. Balsiger believes Noah's ark sits on the nearly inaccessible mountaintop in Turkey.

“Historically, there has never been any record of a shrine or any other structure built up there,” Balsiger said. “To me, that points that it could in fact be Noah’s ark.”

It would be almost impossible to build any sort of structure at the peak of the volcanic Mount Ararat, he said.

Explorers face severe weather conditions and a treacherous climb. The route is mostly shrouded in fog, and loose lava rocks often tumble down at any moment, he said.

“How do you get down into a crevasse and build a structure?” he said.

Also, he said aggressive Armenian terrorists are notorious for shooting Turkish officials and anyone who ventures into what they view as their territory.

The Chinese explorers plan to return to the site in August or September, he said.

Balsiger said their success will depend on several factors.

First, the snow must have melted enough for them to locate the site.

“They will also need a good local guide who knows what he’s doing, knows where to look,” he said.

The Turkish government has become more supportive of the venture and likely will be lending resources, Balsiger said.

Still, he gives the expedition’s success just a 50-50 chance.

If the explorers do succeed in bringing back more evidence that the find is indeed the ancient ark, he believes it could have significant archaeological and theological implications.

“From an archaeological standpoint, it would be the oldest artifact in the world,” he said. “It would precede what we currently know as ancient civilizations.

“Theologically, it would prove that the earliest chapters of Genesis are absolutely true, and that Noah’s ark is not a myth.”

He added, “It would definitely turn things upside down.”

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