

How to build an Ark - "a box", the "vessel which Noah built" !!

Strong's H8392

תבה tēbâh tay-baw'

Perhaps of foreign derivation; a box: - ark.

BDB Definition:

1) ark

1a) vessel which Noah built (26 times)

Gen 6:15b The length of the ark (box) shall be three hundred cubits, the breadth of it shall be fifty cubits and its height thirty cubits. (a cubit is about 18 inches)

Gen 6:16 Make a roof for the ark (box), and finish the walls to within one and a half feet (a cubit) from the top. [An open space all around for light and ventilation.] Place the entrance in the side of the ark (box), and build a lower, a middle, and an upper deck.

1b) basket vessel in which Moses was placed (2 times) (Made of bulrushes/papyrus/reeds, "a boxlike structure" per the Bible Knowledge Commentary, exact size unknown.)

Part of Speech: noun feminine

A Related Word by BDB/Strong's Number: perhaps of foreign derivation

The basket was not just a simple open floating basket, since Pharaoh's daughter had to open it before she could see the child Moses! Exo 2:6 And when she had opened it, she saw the child: and, behold, the babe wept. **From Adam Clark's Commentary: "An ark of bulrushes -** תבת גומא *tebath gome*, a small boat or basket made of the Egyptian reed called papyrus, so famous in all antiquity. This plant grows on the banks of the Nile, and in marshy grounds; the stalk rises to the height of six or seven cubits (a cubit is about 18 inches) above the water, is triangular, and terminates in a crown of small filaments resembling hair, which the ancients used to compare to a thyrsus. This reed was of the greatest use to the inhabitants of Egypt, the pith contained in the stalk serving them for food, and the woody part to build vessels with; which vessels frequently appear on engraved stones and other monuments of Egyptian antiquity. For this purpose they made it up like rushes into bundles, and by tying them together gave their vessels the necessary figure and solidity. "The vessels of bulrushes or papyrus," says Dr. Shaw, "were no other than large fabrics of the same kind with that of Moses, Exo 2:3, which from the late introduction of planks and stronger materials are now laid aside." Thus Pliny, lib. vi., cap. 16, takes notice of the *naves papyraceas armamentaque Nili*, "ships made of papyrus and the equipments of the Nile:" and lib. xiii., cap. 11, he observes, *Exodus ipsa quidem papyro navigia texunt*: "Of the papyrus itself they construct sailing vessels."

Herodotus and Diodorus have recorded the same fact; and among the poets, Lucan, lib. iv., ver. 136: *Conseritur bibula Memphitis cymba papyro*, "The Memphian or Egyptian boat is constructed from the soaking papyrus." The epithet bibula is particularly remarkable, as corresponding with great exactness to the nature of the plant, and to its Hebrew name **גֹּמֶה** gome, which signifies to soak, to drink up."

Job 9:25 "My days are swifter than a runner; they flee away; they see no good.

Job 9:26 They go by like skiffs of **reed** (ESV/ISV/LITV/YLT - in KJV - swift ships) , like an eagle swooping on the prey. [Job probably being written during the time of the patriarchs about 2100 to 1900 BC.]

Isa 18:2 "That sendeth ambassadors by the sea, even in vessels of **bulrushes/papyrus/reeds** ..."

A ship first appears in Proverbs 30:19 as H591, about the time of Solomon, 971 to 931 BC, and later in Isaiah 33:21 as H6716.

Pro 30:18 Three things are too wonderful for me; four I do not understand:

Pro 30:19 the way of an eagle in the sky, the way of a serpent on a rock, the way of a **ship** on the high seas, and the way of a man with a virgin.

Isa 33:21 But there the LORD in majesty will be for us a place of broad rivers and streams, where no galley with oars can go, nor majestic **ship** can pass.

"that the ark was built in the form **not of a ship**, but of **a chest**, with **flat bottom**, like a floating house (actually a barn), as it was not meant for sailing, but merely to float ..." (Keil & Delitzsch Com.)

From the Bible Know. Com., page 38, "**a flat bottomed rectangular vessel**".

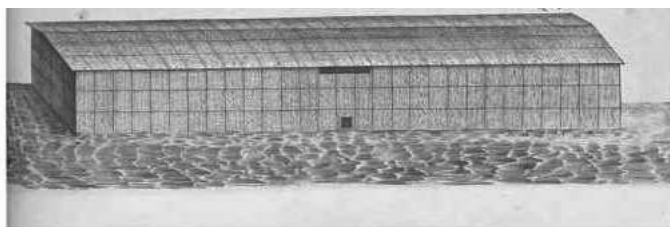
"as the Jewish Encyclopedia notes, **gopher/go'-fer** may have been derived from the Assyrian word **giparu** for "reeds" or "a woven reed mat used as a wedding bed" per Wikipedia. [H1613 consonants G-P-R, same as Assyrian giparu] In Gen 6:14 the word translated as "rooms" (H7064 q'en kane, a nest) in the KJV is found in Assyrian as quinnim 'nests'," as a bird nest made of sticks and dry grass.

Adam Clarke in his commentary disparagingly notes: "The Syriac and Arabic trifle with the passage, rendering it wicker work, as if the ark had been a great basket!" .

The flat tar sealed base of the Ark (box) must provide sufficient buoyancy to float the entire structure, the reed covered pole and beam barn fastened on top, including all supplies onboard and all of the occupants for any severe weather condition it may encounter !! The tar covering would add to the strength of the entire structure !!

[From Wikipedia-reed boats: The oldest known remnants of a boat made with reeds (and tar) are from a 7000 year-old seagoing boat found in Failaka Island, Kuwait. Tar as a waterproofing and adhesive.]

Gen 6:14 (KJV+) Make^{H6213} thee an **ark**^{H8392} of **gopher**^{H1613} **wood**; ^{H6086} **rooms**^{H7064} shalt thou make^{H6213} (H853) in the ark, ^{H8392} and shalt pitch^{H3722} it within^{H4480} ^{H1004} and without^{H4480} ^{H2351} with pitch. ^{H3724}



Noah's Ark. From John Wilkins, *An Essay towards a Real Character, and a Philosophical Language*. London, 1668. (Wellcome Library, London)



Noah in his reed covered ark was floating on an extremely flooded Aras/Araxes river and the landing spot was somewhere in that river valley. [The Aras/Araxes river being the river Gihon of Eden.]

H1613

גפר gôpher

BDB Definition:

- 1) cypress?, gopher, gopher wood
 - 1a) wood of which the ark was made
 - 1b) meaning and exact type unknown

H6086

עץ 'êts

BDB Definition:

- 1) tree, wood, timber, stock, plank, **stalk, stick**, gallows
 - 1a) tree, trees
 - 1b) wood, pieces of wood, gallows, firewood, cedar-wood, woody flax

H7064

קן qên

BDB Definition:

- 1) **nest**
 - 1a) **nest (of bird)**
 - 1b) cells (like **nests** in Noah's ark)

Only in Genesis 6:14 is H7064 translated as "rooms", the 12 other times it appears in the KJV it is translated as '**nest**' !! [It appears that the translators were mainly considering the Ark as a temporary protective home for the eight human occupants and not the many, many animals onboard !! "Only the animals necessary to man, or unusual to the region covered by the deluge, required to be included in the ark. It seems likely that wild animals in general were not included. It is obvious, therefore, that we cannot calculate the number of animals preserved in the ark, or compare the space they would require with its recorded dimensions. We may rest assured that there was accommodation for all that needed to be there." (Albert Barnes' notes)]

Noah's Ark was not a boat or a ship constructed of wood planks, but instead was a large floating box (barn) made of bundled reeds/sticks/poles !! H6086 'êts may indicate wood of all forms, but H1613 têtâh does not, it specifically designates a vessel made of mainly bundled bulrushes/papyrus/reeds !!! Moses used a word from the Assyrian language for the name of the basket he was put in and for Noah's Ark to designate a specific type of bundled reed construction and sealing with a pitch covering !!

Gen 6:14 Make an ark (box) of bundled reed stalks; nests you shall make in the ark, and cover it inside and outside with bitumen (pitch/tar).