

Noah's Ark and the Flood in Judaism and Islam: A Bi-optic Perspective of Salvation and Sacred Space

Joshua Joel Spoelstra

Department of Old and New Testament

Stellenbosch University

Abstract

This article analyses Noah's ark and the flood events from the sacred texts and traditions of Judaism and Islam in an integrative manner. After juxtaposing the Flood Narrative in the Tanakh and the Noahic sūrah of the Qur'an, key cognate lexemes are examined and their ideological trajectories traced. It is argued, particularly, that, in addition to the evident message of salvation in the Flood texts and traditions, there is a discernible ideological motif of sacred space in both religions, specifically the ark of Noah equivalent to or associated with a temple structure. Further, the Noah's ark tradition seeps into various ancillary religious practices, both in various eras of Judaism and in Sunnism and Shiism. Thus, the convergences and divergences between Judaism and Islam, the Hebrew Bible and Qur'an concerning the reception history of a common patriarch (Noah) and shared spaces (ark, temple/mosque) is richly variegated from a bi-optic hermeneutical perspective.

Keywords: Noah; Ark; Flood; Judaism; Islam; Temple; Ideology; Theology; Qur'an; Hebrew Bible; Muhammad

Introduction

There are many convergences and divergences amongst the shared scriptural narratives of Judaism and Islam. Of these textual correspondences, the patriarch Noah, as well as the ark and flood, looms large in the Hebrew Bible and Qur'an. In this article, I examine the flood vessel in both sacred scriptures and trace its theological reception and various religious appropriations in Judaism and Islam. I will demonstrate that juxtaposing sacred texts and religious traditions mutually informs and illuminates Noah's ark as a sacred space, purporting temple ideology.¹

The hermeneutical methodology employed herein is that of a bi-optic perspective.² Through a bi-optic approach, I aim, rather than merely performing a comparative analysis, to present a balanced and complementary outlook of two distinct traditions (vs. pitting one tradition against another). Each ensuing section, therefore, heuristically seeks to intersect religious meaning from alternate avenues. From this appreciative,

¹ In previous works, I have addressed this complex issue. See Spoelstra 2023a; 2023b; 2020:107–19, 248–55, 338–40. Nevertheless, in this article I streamline and expand the argument, as well as engage an interfaith/inter-scriptural analysis in juxtaposition—which is original.

² The term and general approach are inspired by Paul Anderson (2001:175–88), though I appropriate it differently as indicated. Cf. also Sharma 2005; Roberts 2019:526–35.

multidimensional perspective, an interreligious composite richness comes into (bi-optic) focus.

The ark and the flood

From the sacred scriptures of Judaism and Islam, Noah's ark will be examined first. Then the nature and purpose of the flood events and the role of God will be analysed. Once the scriptural accounts of the Tanakh and Qur'an are established, with their major similarities and differences (cf. Dykgraaf 2009:233–43), then pursuant theological and ideological reverberations can be traced in each religious tradition.

Tanakh

The architectural design of Noah ark's, described in Gen. 6:12–14, is as follows. The general shape is quadrectangular or parallelepiped (Gen. 6:15), with the length longer than the width, which is longer than the height (Cassuto 1964:60; cf. Haupt 1927:4); its measurements are 300×50×30 cubits. Within the vessel there are three levels (Gen. 6:16b), distributed equally presumably, containing an unspecified number of compartments (*qinnim*) which are designed for occupants (Gen. 6:14aβ). The ark of Noah is made of *goper* wood (Gen. 6:14aα), likely a coniferous tree (cf. San. 108a). Its sealant is *koper*, that is, "bitumen" or "pitch" (Gen. 6:14b). A variant reading of *qēn*, meaning "nest" or "compartment" (Gen. 6:14aβ), would alter the orthography to *qaneh*, rendering "reeds"; consequently, reeds could be seen as the intermediate material between the wood and the sealant (Ullendorff 1954:95–6; Day 2013:113–22).

The craft is said to have a door (*petah*; Gen. 6:16aβ), which God closes (Gen. 7:16b). Also, it has a *šōhar*, idiomatically a "skylight" (Gen. 6:16aα); this cubit gap lines the craft between its vertical siding and roof, *roof* being another translational option for *šōhar*, the space between being a fixture of it (Armstrong 1960:328–33). Later in the Flood Narrative, a few other architectural features are foregrounded which were not previously enumerated in the ark construction scene; these include a window (*hallōn*; Gen. 8:6b) and covering (*miksēh*; Gen. 8:13bα), both apparently distinct from the *šōhar*.

Those aboard the ark are Noah and his wife, their three sons and their three wives, and pairs of all kinds of animals (Gen. 6:18–20), with seven pairs of clean animals (Gen. 7:1–3). Food supply is stockpiled in the ark (Gen. 6:21) to sustain all the creatures for the duration of the flood. The flood's duration is a year and ten days (Gen. 7:11 & 8:14), with 40 days and 40 nights of rain (Gen. 7:12, 17a; 8:2b–3a, 6a) and the floodwaters prevailing upon the surface of the ground for the remainder (Gen. 7:24; 8:3).

The impetus for the flood was God's perception of the wickedness of humanity and the corrupted state of the earth, filled as it was with violence; consequently, God sought to destroy and wipe out all living creatures on earth (Gen. 6:5–7, 11–13), and, in fact, the deluge wiped out (Gen. 7:23) and destroyed (Gen. 9:11, 15) all outside the ark in an act of judgement.³ Those inside the ark experience rescue and deliverance from the cataclysm (Gen. 7:7) unto a new life, a new world (Gen. 9:1–17).

³ The New Testament interprets the flood positively through typology: cleansing the world of sin (1 Pet 3:20–21). Cf. מרחץ (in Gen 6:5–7, 11–13; 7:23), often translated "wipe out", does carry a connotation of cleansing; see HALOT 1:567.

Qur'an

The Qur'an does not relay Noah and the flood events in one place, like the HB (cf. Segovia 2015:28–53). Rather, Noah features in many *sūrah*s and the flood events are partially recounted in several places to appropriate theological illustrations. When all the data from the Qur'an are assembled, the ark is not described thoroughly; although, it is more detailed than the description in Wis. 14:5–6 (a raft).

Noah's ark, constructed of planks and nails (Q. 54:13), was built under the watchful eye of Allah (Q. 11:37; 23:27; cf. Q. 36:42). Muslim exegetes attest that Noah fell 400-year-old teak trees measuring 300 cubits for the ark's lumber (Wheeler 2006:463; cf. *BerR* 30:7). During the flood, the ark was carried along by Allah's providence (Q. 36:41; 54:13), the name of Allah being its very sailing and anchor (Q. 11:41).

Aboard the ark were pairs of every kind of animal (Q. 11:40; 23:27); also, the persons safe within are those who believe Noah, which infers people beyond the household of Noah (Q. 11:40). However, not all of Noah's kin were among the believing;⁴ one was Noah's own son, who in vain sought refuge atop a mountain (Q. 11:42–43; cf. Q. 66:10) (Reynolds 2017:129–48; Newby 1986:19–32). The unbelieving wrongdoers are consequently drowned (Q. 7:64; 10:73; 23:27; 26:120; 21:77; 37:82; cf. Q. 69:11) by Allah in the flood; and the ark is a sign (Q. 10:73; 21:77; 26:121; 29:15; 54:15; cf. Q. 40:4–5) of Allah's judgement.⁵

"Muslim exegetes describe the flood as coming from 'pits' in the earth (Q. 11:40), the gates of the sky (Q. 54:11), and water boiling over the 'oven' of Adam and Eve (Q. 23:27)" (Noegel and Wheeler 2002:239; cf. Brinner 2003:540–1).⁶ Some Muslim exegetes maintain that Og (or Uj), a son born to Adam not of Eve, survived the flood due to his giantism (Wheeler 2006:464; cf. Makhmudjonova 2020:567–87). Whereupon the deluge subsided, the ark came to rest upon Mount al-Judi (Q. 11:44); thence, Allah bid Noah to disembark in peace to obtain blessing (Q. 11:48; 37:79–80).⁷

Ark terminology & religious traditions

The precise terminology of the flood vessel will now be given attention to further the analysis of Noah's ark and the flood in the Hebraic and Islamic traditions. From the study of the flood vessel nomenclature specifically and the flood events generally, both Judaism and Islam have related religious traditions that purport temple ideology. This is particularly attested in both the Sunni and Shia branches of Islam and in various expressions of Judaism since the dawn of the synagogue.

Hebrew & Rabbinic tradition

In Gen. 6–9, the term for the ark is תֵּבָה/*tēbā*, a word used in the HB only here in the Flood Narrative and in Ex. 2:1–10 concerning the craft in which infant Moses was lain

⁴ "Although the Qur'ān does not indicate how Noah's wife died, most exegetes claim that she died in the deluge, along with Lot's wife. In their tales of the prophets, however, both Ibn Kathīr and al-Kisā'ī follow the biblical tradition and report that Noah's wife was on board the ark" (Bakhos 2012:619). See Q. 66:10.

⁵ Haleem (2006:38–57) stresses Allah's salvation as it is relayed in the Qur'an over against judgement, which he maintains is a stronger emphasis in the HB.

⁶ This mirrors, to an extent, the imagery of Gen 7:11 and 8:2.

⁷ In Genesis, "peace", though it might be implied (cf. the *Chaoskampf* motif), is not explicitly mentioned; nonetheless, in Isa 54:9–10 the concepts of Noah, flood, and peace converge (cf. Batto 1987:187–211).

(Cohen 1972:37–51; Spoelstra 2014:484–99). The lexical nexus of תֵּבָה/*tēbā* in the Flood and Foundling Narratives is present in the Samaritan Pentateuch, the Targums, the Dead Sea Scrolls, and the Syriac Peshitta (Loewe 2001:113–45). Conversely, in the recensions of the Septuagint (LXX) and its daughter translations, e.g. the Vulgate, a different lexical terminological connection is made, one that links Noah’s ark with the ark (אֲרוֹן) of the covenant (Harl 1987:15–43; cf. Adamczewski 2021:5–19). This is the case in Greek (κιβωτός) and Latin (*arca*), and Eth. (Gə’əz) Jub. (*tabot*) as well (Zobel 2012:551–2; Ullendorff 1968:82–3, 122; Polostsky 1964:6).

Beyond the biblical scope, תֵּבָה/*tēbā* takes on an alternative reference in Judaism. “In Rabbinic Hebrew, *tēbā* refers to any chest, including the synagogue ark housing the Torah scrolls” (Propp 1999:149; cf. Scolnic and Eisenberg 2006:169). This may be a successive phenomenon to the Ten Commandments housed within the ark of the covenant. It is curious, indeed, that formerly Moses the lawgiver lay in a *tēbā* in Egypt, and in latter times the Law rests in a *tēbā* throughout the world. Furthermore, it is suggestive that this correlation has led to a tradition which preserves the same term for Moses’s basket and the ark of the covenant. On this note, I segue to a lexical discussion of Arabic and the Qur’an.

Arabic & Muslim tradition

In the Qur’an, several references are made to Noah’s ark (Q. 7:64, 10:73, 11:37–42, 23:27–28, 26:119, 29:15, 36:41); it is variously termed (Arab.) *fulk* and *safina* (Newby 2001:157–8; Agius 2008:489, 494). “A *safina* is generally known as a large ocean-going ship operated by sail” (Agius 2008:270). A *fulk* is the classical type of cargo ship able “to plough the waves in favourable winds and braving gales and storms” (Agius 2008:286). Alternatively, the Qur’an possesses a common (Arabic) term for the vessel of infant Moses (Q. 20:39) and the ark of the covenant (Q. 2:248): *tābūt*, a cognate of Heb. *tēbā* (Newby 2001:157–8; Hoffmeier 1996:138).

Noah’s ark has a close association to holy sites in both Sunni and Shia traditions. According to one tradition, Noah’s ark circumambulated the Ka’ba seven times during the flood as a precursor to the *hajj* ritual; subsequently, the Ka’ba was raised up to heaven to be the “visited temple” and the ark thence grounded upon a mountain.⁸ This tradition, accordingly, takes Adam to be the original architect of the Ka’ba in Mecca and Abraham and Ishmael as building a second Ka’ba (Fatani 2006:337; Hawting 2003:78; cf. O’Meara 2020:82). Furthermore, it is variously held that Noah’s grave is either in the mosque of Mecca or in a nearby town known as Kurk Noah (Wheeler 2006:464; Campo 2016; Noegel and Wheeler 2002:239–40).

In Shiism, the 10th day of Muharram commemorates, among other events, the day Noah boarded the ark as well as Ḥusayn b. ‘Alī’s martyrdom. There is a nexus, consequently, between Ḥusayn’s tomb at the Euphrates River as a site of pilgrimage and the Euphrates as the locale at which Noah’s ark came aground after the deluge (Sindawi 2004:249–69). Further, the tradition of *al-safina* advances a Shia hereditary argument—the household of Muḥammad is likened to Noah’s ark: whosoever enters will be saved and those who do not will be drowned (Haider 2014:36–7, 59; see also Wheeler 2002).

⁸ “The celestial archetype of the temple of the Ka’ba, the Inhabited House, is mentioned in Qur. 52:4” (Tottoli 2002:124n20).

Sacred space and temple ideology

Having established the terminology of Noah's ark and its residual religious associations in Judaism and Islam, it is reasonable to directly explore the extent to which Noah's ark corresponds to each religion's most sacred structure: the Jerusalem Temple and the Ka'ba. To buttress this viable connection, ancient Near Eastern flood accounts shall be incorporated into the examination, for the flood vessels of Mesopotamia are themselves richly imbued with temple ideology.

Genesis vis-à-vis Gilgamesh Epic

Noah's ark is only one of two divinely blueprinted pieces of architecture in the HB; the other is the tabernacle (Exod. 25), that wilderness sanctuary revealed to Moses atop Mt. Sinai. "[I]n the ancient Near East, when God commands a human being to construct a building, that building is a temple" (Holloway 1991:329). As a result, not only is the tabernacle a precursor to the Jerusalem Temple, the flood vessel, too, denotes a sacred aspect as an antecedent (see 1 Chr. 28). In fact, the Genesis ark is best seen as a sanctuary when compared to its Babylonian counterpart (cf. Baumgart 1999:506–31).

In the *Epic of Gilgamesh (GE)*, Utnapishtim's vessel is called an *elippu* throughout the eleventh tablet (Parpola 1997:124), meaning "ship", "boat" (CAD 4:90); though it is also once referred to as an *ekallu* (XI 95), "royal palace" (CAD 4:52). This poetic variant evokes temple ideology, which shall be borne out. The craft of *Gilgamesh* is also cubic in shape: 120 cubits along its length, width, and height (XI 30, 57–58); and each of the seven levels is divided into nine parts, or cells (XI 60–62).

The ziggurat, the Mesopotamian palatial structure, was typically a seven-storied temple in the approximate shape of a pyramid (Haupt 1927:10). Stephen Holloway (1991:341) advances that "the ark in the Gilgamesh epic was conceived along the lines of an ideal ziggurat of seven stages." Thus, the *ekallu* could be envisaged as a "floating Ziggurat... always a refuge in time of flood" (Mallowan 1964:65). Before seven tiers of the steeped structure was the standard size/height, ziggurats had three layers (Bertman 2003:195); that Noah's ark is a three-layered structure is somewhat synthetic with the former ziggurat.

Joseph Blenkinsopp keenly observes that the temple better resembles the Genesis ark, than the tabernacle, because the Jerusalem Temple had three stories (Gen. 6:15 || 1 Kgs. 6:6) (Blenkinsopp 1976:286; Morales 2012:146–62, 252–7). Both the ark and the temple share, in addition, the window (וַיִּלֶּךְ; Gen. 8:6 || 1 Kgs. 6:4) and a door in its side (Crawford 2013:7). Moreover, the dimensions of the ark and temple are proportionately similar—and the holy of holies of the Jerusalem Temple is cubical (1 Kgs. 6:20; 2 Chr. 3:3), just as Utnapishtim's ark is (*GE* XI 30) (Blenkinsopp 2011:138).⁹ Therefore, the temple ideology of Noah's ark may be theologically inferred vis-à-vis the Jerusalem Temple via the same association of the ark in *GE* (*ekallu*) and the Mesopotamian ziggurat (Holloway 1991:329).

⁹ Though Utnapishtim's ark is cubed and Noah's is parallelepiped in shape, by virtue of the Babylonian craft's bottom two-thirds being submerged in the water (*GE* XI 79), i.e. its draught, a similar quadrangular dimension would result.

Ka'ba vis-à-vis Atrahasis

The Ka'ba in Mecca is, of course, the most sacred mosque in Islam, to which all other mosques and prayers are directed throughout the Islamic world. "Allah has made the Ka'ba, the Sacred House, a foundation of religion for all mankind..." (Q. 5:97).¹⁰ The association between the Ka'ba and the qur'anic ark of Noah has already been mentioned; here the argumentation will be expanded.

Ka'ba means "cube", and as such, the cubical shape of the sanctuary finds analogues in the other ancient near Eastern sacred structures (see e.g. Hawting 2003:75; Fatani 2006:336). Furthermore, the Ka'ba's *kiswa*, the fabric covering which veils the most holy mosque, is reminiscent of the design of the Tabernacle in ancient Judaism (Wensinck 1978:317; Hawting 2003:75). Also, the Ka'ba's single door on the side matches not only the construction of the Solomonic Temple but the Genesis ark and the ark of Gilgamesh (Wensinck 1978:317). Paradoxically, however, the Ka'ba is not actually "'cubic' or 'quadrangular' (*murabba'*)" in form, but rather "an irregular oblong," measuring approximately 10 meters in width by 12 meters in length by 15 meters in height (Hawting 2003:75; cf. McClain 1978:60; Burckhardt 2009:2). What might the meaning and significance of this be?

Ernest McClain, in his article entitled "The Ka'ba as Archetypal Ark," examines the dimensions of the sacred structure and argues that this shape is a "sexagesimal cube" which was intentionally so constructed "to represent the Sumerian ark" of Atrahasis (the literary progenitor of *GE*), which served, moreover, as an "archetype of the later Babylonian and Hebraic arks" (McClain 1978:60).¹¹ The Sumerian flood hero's ark, christened *Preserver of Life* (x 8), had dimensions that were "equal" (III i 26), thus cubical, yet the measurements are not preserved in the tablets (*ANET* 104–6). Accordingly, there may be an ancient flood vessel serving as a template for a temple structure in the Islamic tradition too.

In view of the several times the Ka'ba has undergone reconstruction efforts throughout the centuries, there is a curious Islamic legend which again associates a sea vessel with the Great Mosque. Once when a woman was censuring the Ka'ba, she accidentally set it on fire and it burnt down. Thence, "[i]t happened that a Byzantine ship was thrown ashore at Djudda...and the Meccans brought its wood hither and used it for the new building" (Wensinck 1978:319; Hawting 2003:75).

An alternative connection between a flood and temple in the Tanakh and Qur'an has been made by Brandon Wheeler. In Ezekiel's vision of the New Jerusalem Temple, the seer views at one point a life-giving stream which issues from the throne of God and inundates Jerusalem before flowing as a river to the Dead Sea; further, everything this stream encounters has a transformative affect unto new life and flourishing (Ezek. 47:1–12). Wheeler, in drawing a comparison to Islamic faith and ritual, espouses something akin to the function of the ancient ziggurat in times of flooding:

¹⁰ "The expression *al-ka'ba* occurs only twice in the Qur'an (Q 5:95, 97) and commentators naturally identify each as references to the Ka'ba at Mecca" (Hawting 2003:76).

¹¹ McClain (1978:63) elaborates: "Hebraic scripture assigns the cube of 60 to the second temple at Jerusalem. Solomon's first temple had a length of 60 cubits, a width of 20, and a height of 30 (1 Kings 6:2 and 2 Chronicles 3:3). The decree of Cyrus which ordered the rebuilding of the destroyed temple increased both breadth and height to 60 (Ezra 6:3). The holiness of the cube...is thus a long attested element in the Hebraic tradition."

...It is possible that a similar flood of water is conceived associated with Zamzam at Mecca. During especially severe rains, for example, the area around the elevated place of the Ka'bah, including most of the valley of Mecca, is flooded. Such floods might help account for an eschatological vision of a fertile sanctuary... (Wheeler 2002:87)

Thus, through two separate traditions the association of flood and a sacred structure is revealed; on the one hand, a temple (Ka'ba and envisioned New Jerusalem Temple) is the place of refuge and flourishing, and on the other, the ark of Noah is evocative of temple ideology based on its ancient Near Eastern precursor with more clearly pronounced shrine connotation: the Genesis ark vis-à-vis the Babylonian one in *GE* and the Ka'ba vis-à-vis the flood vessel in the Sumerian flood legend *Atrahasis*. The cubic nature of the Ka'ba, the Sumerian and Babylonian arks, and the holy of holies of the Jerusalem Temple comprise an interrelationship.

Noah

Noah is a patriarch of humanity, as recognised by Jews and Muslims. Delving further into his personage, the HB emphasises Noah's priestly role whereas the Qur'an underscores his prophetic role. The respective qualities of Noah corroborate, further, with each religious tradition's cultic priority as it relates to the aforementioned sacred structure theologies-ideologies.

Priestly aspect in the Tanakh

Noah is portrayed in a priest-like manner in Gen. 6–9. Initially, Noah is described as “a righteous man” (*tsaddiq*), “blameless in his age”, and one who “walked with God” (Gen. 6:9 TNK).¹² Yet, the most emblematic scene denoting his priestly role is when Noah makes sacrifice (cf. Jub. 6:2–3).

Then Noah built an altar to the LORD and, taking of every clean animal and of every clean bird, he offered burnt offerings on the altar. The LORD smelled the pleasing odor, and the LORD said to Himself: ‘Never again will I doom the earth because of man, since the devisings of man's mind are evil from his youth; nor will I ever again destroy every living being, as I have done. So long as the earth endures, Seedtime and harvest, Cold and heat, Summer and winter, Day and night Shall not cease.’ (Gen. 8:20–22 TNK)

The classification of the animals sacrificed is “clean” (vs. unclean), a stipulation in how many pairs of animals to load in Gen. 7:1–5. Though the sacrificial system has yet to be inaugurated at Sinai (see Gilders 2009:57–72), this sacrifice's affect as a *soothing odour* (ריח ניחח) signals the “technical term of an acceptable sacrifice to God” (Snaith 1947:53) frequently recorded in the Torah (cf. *GE* XI: 155–161). Thus, with this sacrifice transpiring atop Mt(s). Ararat nearby the ark, Noah is portrayed in a particularly priestly manner (cf. Morales 2012:162–91; Holloway 1991:344; *GE* XI: 156).

¹² Comparatively, few people in the HB are of Noah's moral calibre (cf. Gen. 5:24; 17:1; Job 12:4; Ezek. 14:14, 20).

Prophetic aspect in the Qur'an

Whereas Noah speaks only through his actions in the HB (i.e. Noah does not possess direct discourse), Noah in the Qur'an is loquacious—precisely because Noah is a prophet (57:26; cf. 2 Pet. 2:5). Indeed, in Islamic tradition, Noah is unambiguously a harbinger of deliverance, with one *sūrah* named after the prophet: 71 (*Nūh*).¹³ The qur'anic Noah repeatedly warns people of their sins, confronts his opponents of coming judgement, and laments that he is not being heeded (cf. Segovia 2015:63–9).

As is common with prophets, Muhammad had similar experiences of trying to convince and not always being believed; indeed, “[Noah] is viewed as the prototype of the prophet Muḥammad” (Brinner 2003:540; cf. Segovia 2015:102–13). Juxtaposing the prophetic careers of the qur'anic Noah and Muhammad *vis-à-vis* the Ka'ba, moreover, is striking. Just as the first prophet Noah (*ḥadīth* 36) circumambulated the Ka'ba from within the ark during the flood, so this foreshadowed and parallels when Muhammad, the seal of prophets, circumambulated (*tawāf*) the Ka'ba seven times after his conquest of Mecca in 630 CE.¹⁴ Further, while Muhammad denounced the false gods thereby cleansing the temple, so similarly may the Ka'ba have been cleansed during the flood.¹⁵

Conclusion

This inter-religious and inter-scriptural bi-optic analysis has touched on many aspects of the person of Noah and the accounts of the flood events, with a focus on the ark and its concomitant temple ideology in Judaism and Islam, in the Tanakh and Qur'an. Through this bi-optic hermeneutical approach and perspective, the unique emphases of Judaism and Islam as well as their complementary nature are appreciated. Noah is akin to a prophet *and* priest; the flood is viewed as judgement from God *and* God's mode of cleansing, God's wrathful destruction *and* God's salvific rescue.

Because in Islam Noah is predominantly a prophet, it follows that the Qur'an registers this as well as emphasising the judgement and wrath of Allah against sin and the wrongdoer. As a prophet, who according to tradition, encircled the Ka'ba from the ark, the qur'anic Noah is a fitting forerunner of Muhammad, who himself was a prophet and who established the *tawāf*, the sevenfold circumambulation of the Ka'ba while cleansing the cube and great mosque after the conquest of Mecca in 630 CE. Because in Judaism Noah is mainly portrayed in a priest-like role in the HB, there is a tenable connection between the biblical ark and the later tabernacle and temple, and even synagogues. The priestly tradition revived in Second Temple Judaism and was able to flourish more than the monarchic branch of governance, though not before it was reinvented at the start of the era of Rabbinic Judaism and beyond. Furthermore, it has been theologically-ideologically argued that the Genesis ark can be seen as a precursor to the Jerusalem Temple, via the even more palpable nexus of the flood vessel and ziggurat in Babylonian literature. Similarly, the Ka'ba as a cubed mosque may have been designed upon the flood vessel of *Atrahasis*; regardless, the several connections between

¹³ “Whereas readers of the biblical account are left wondering why God did not warn the people of the impending destruction, the deluge is anything but a sneak attack in the Qur'ān where Noah confronts his people” (Bakhos 2012:617).

¹⁴ Hadiths viewed at <https://ahadith.co.uk/>.

¹⁵ More precisely and poignantly, the black stone, installed in the Ka'ba, is that which cleanses sins via imputation.

the Ka'ba and other holy sites in Islam with the Qur'anic ark of Noah substantiates the association and yields implications related to sacred space and shrines.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Adamczewski, B. 2021. Noah's Ark and the Ark of the Covenant. *Collectanea Theologica* 91(2):5–19.
- Agius, D.A. 2008. *Classic ships of Islam: From Mesopotamia to the Indian Ocean*. Leiden: Brill.
- Anderson, P.N. 2001. Mark and John—the Bi-Optic Gospels. In Fortna, R. and Thatcher, T. (eds.), *Jesus in Johannine tradition*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 175–88.
- Armstrong, J.F. 1960. A critical note on Genesis VI 16a. *Vetus Testamentum* 10(3):328–333.
- Bakhos, C. 2012. Genesis, the Qur'an and Islamic interpretation. In Evans, C.A., Lohr, J.N., and Petersen, D.L. (eds.), *The Book of Genesis: Composition, reception, and interpretation*, VTSup 152. Leiden: Brill, 607–632.
- Batto, B.F. 1987. The covenant of peace: A neglected ancient Near Eastern motif. *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 49:187–211.
- Baumgart, N.C. 1999. *Die Umkehr des Schöpfergottes: Zu Komposition und Religionsgeschichtlichem Hintergrund von Gen 5–9*, HBS 22. Freiburg: Herder.
- Bertman, S. 2003. *Handbook to life in ancient Mesopotamia*. New York: Facts on File.
- Blenkinsopp, J. 1976. The structure of P. *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 38(3):275–292.
- _____. 2011. *Creation, un-creation, re-creation: A discursive commentary on Genesis 1–11*. New York: T&T Clark.
- Brinner, W.M. 2003. Noah. In McAuliffe, J.D. (ed.), *Encyclopedia of the Qur'an*. Leiden: Brill, 3:540–543.
- Burckhardt, T. 2009. *Art of Islam: Language and meaning*. Bloomington, IN: World Wisdom.
- Campo, J.E. 2016. Kaaba. In *Encyclopedia of Islam*, 2nd ed. New York: Facts On File.
- Cassuto, U. 1964. *A commentary on the Book of Genesis: pt.2—From Noah to Abraham: Genesis VI₉-XI₃₂*. Abrahams, I. (trans.). Jerusalem: Magnes.
- Cohen, C. 1972. Hebrew *tbh*: Proposed etymologies. *Journal of the Ancient Near Eastern Society of Columbia University* 4:37–51.
- Crawford, C.D. 2013. Noah's architecture: The role of sacred space in ancient Near Eastern flood myths. In George, M.K. (ed.), *Constructions of space IV: Further developments in examining ancient Israel's social space*, LHBOTS 569. London: T&T Clark Bloomsbury, 1–22.
- Day, J. 2013. *From Creation to Babel: Studies in Genesis 1–11*. London: Bloomsbury.
- Dykgraaf, C. 2009. The Mesopotamian flood epic in the earliest texts, the Bible, and the Qur'an. In Sabbath, R.S. (ed.), *Sacred tropes: Tanakh, New Testament, and Qur'an as literature and culture*, BIS 98. Leiden: Brill, 233–243.
- Fatani, A.H. 2006. Ka'ba. In Leaman, O. (ed.), *The Qur'an: An encyclopedia*. New York: Routledge, 336–338.

- Haider, N. 2014. *Shī‘ī Islam: An introduction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Haleem, M.A.S.A. 2006. The Qur’anic employment of the story of Noah. *Journal of Qur’anic Studies* 8(1):38–57.
- Harl, M. 1987. Le Nom de ‘L’arche’ de Noe dans La Septante: Les choix lexicaux des traducteurs alexandrins, indices d’interprétations théologiques? In *Alexandria: Hellenisme, judaïsme et christianisme à Alexandrie: Mélanges Claude Mondésert, S.J.* Paris: Cerf, 15–43.
- Haupt, P. 1927. *The ship of the Babylonian Noah and other papers*. Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs’sche Buchhandlung.
- Hawting, G.R. 2003. Ka‘ba. In McAuliffe, J.D. (ed.), *Encyclopedia of the Qur’an*. Leiden: Brill, 3:75–79.
- Hoffmeier, J.K. 1996. *Israel in Egypt: Evidence for the authenticity of the Exodus tradition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Holloway, S.W. 1991. What ship goes there: The flood narratives in the Gilgamesh Epic and Genesis Considered in Light of Ancient Near Eastern Temple Ideology. *Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 103(3):328–355.
- Hadith 36. Accessed at: <https://ahadith.co.uk/>.
- Koehler, L. and Baumgartner, W. 2001. *The Hebrew and Aramaic lexicon of the Old Testament [HALOT]*, 2 vols. Leiden: Brill.
- Loewe, R. 2001. Ark, archaisms and misappropriations. In Papoport-Albert, Ada, Greenberg, Gillian (eds.), *Biblical Hebrew, biblical texts: Essays in memory of Michael P. Weitzman*, JSOTSup 333. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 113–145.
- Makhmudjonova, G. 2002. Depictions of the Ark of Noah and the Giant Uj in *Kulliyat-i Tarikhi of Hafiz-i Abru* (Style and Iconography). *Sanat Tarihi Dergisi* 29(2):567–587.
- Mallowan, M.E.L. 1964. Noah’s flood reconsidered. *Iraq* 26(2):62–82.
- McClain, E.G. 1978. The Ka‘ba as archetypal Ark. *Sophia Perennis* 4(1):59–75.
- Morales, L.M. 2012. *The Tabernaclepre-figured: Cosmic mountain ideology in Genesis and Exodus*, BTS 15. Leuven: Peeters.
- Newby, G.D. 1986. The drowned son: Midrash and Midrash making in the Qur’ān and *Tafsīr*. In Brinner W.M., Ricks, S.D. (eds.), *Studies in Islamic and Judaic traditions: Papers presented at the Institute of Islamic-Judaic Studies, University of Denver*, BJS 110. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 19–32.
- _____. 2001. Ark. In McAuliffe, J.D. (ed), *Encyclopedia of the Qur’an*. Leiden: Brill, 1:157–158.
- Noegel, S.B. and Wheeler, B.M. 2002. *Historical dictionary of Prophets in Islam and Judaism*, HDRPM 43. London: Scarecrow Press.
- O’Meara, S. 2020. *The Ka‘ba orientations: Readings in Islam’s Ancient House*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Oppenheim, A.L. ed. 1958. *The Assyrian dictionary [CAD], vol. 4 E*. Chicago: Oriental Institute.
- Parpola, S. 1997. *The standard Babylonian Epic of Gilgamesh*, SAACT 1. Finland: Vammalan Kirjapaino Oy.

- Polostsky, H.J. 1964. Aramaic, Syriac, and Ge'ez. *Journal of Semitic Studies* 9(1):1–10.
- Pritchard, J.B. ed. 1969. *Ancient Near Eastern texts relating to the Old Testament*. 3rd ed. [ANET]. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Propp, W.H.C. 1999. *Exodus 1–18, AB 2*. New York: Doubleday.
- Reynolds, G.S. 2017. Noah's lost son in the Qur'ān. *Arabica* 64:129–148.
- Roberts, K. 2019. Towards a new comparative methodology in religious studies, *Journal for Cultural & Religious Theory* 18(3):526–535.
- Scolnic, E. and Eisenberg, J. 2006. teba. In *Dictionary of Jewish words: A JPS Guide*. Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, p.169.
- Segovia, C.A. 2015. *The Quranic Noah and the making of the Islamic Prophet: A study of intertextuality and religious identity formation in late Antiquity*, JCITTT 4. Berlin: de Gruyter.
- Sharma, A. 2005. *Religious studies and comparative methodology: The case for reciprocal illumination*. New York: SUNY Press.
- Sindawi, K.A. 2004. The Cult of the Euphrates and its significance among the Imāmī Shī'a. *Der Islam* 81(2):249–269.
- Snaith, N.H. 1947. *Notes on the Hebrew text of Genesis I–VIII*. London: Epworth.
- Spoelstra, J.J. 2014. Hebrew תִּבְאָ: A Kompositions- und Redaktionsgeschichte, *Journal for Semitics* 23(2i):484–499.
- _____. 2020. *Life preservation in Genesis and Exodus: An exegetical study of the Tebā of Noah and Moses*. CBET 98. Leuven: Peeters.
- _____. 2023a. Noah's Ark: Hebrew Bible/Old Testament. In Furey, C.M., LeMon, J.M., Matz, B., Römer, T., Schröter, J., Walfish, B.D., and Ziolkowski, B. (eds.), *Encyclopedia of the Bible and its reception*. Berlin: de Gruyter, 21:forthcoming.
- _____. 2023b. Noah's Ark: Islam. In Furey, C.M., LeMon, J.M., Matz, B., Römer, T., Schröter, J., Walfish, B.D., and Ziolkowski, B. (eds.), *Encyclopedia of the Bible and its reception*. Berlin: de Gruyter, 21:forthcoming.
- Tottoli, R. 2002. *Biblical prophets in the Qur'an and Muslim literature*. London: Routledge.
- Ullendorff, E. 1954. The construction of Noah's Ark. *Vetus Testamentum* 4(1):95–96.
- _____. 1968. *Ethiopia and the Bible*, SLBA 1967. London: Oxford University Press.
- Wensinck, A.J. 1978. Ka'ba. In van Donzel, E., Lewis, B., and Pellat, Ch. (eds.), *The encyclopaedia of Islam*. Leiden: Brill, 4:317–322.
- Wheeler, B.M. 2002. *Prophets in the Quran: An introduction to the Quran and Muslim exegesis*, CIS. New York: Continuum.
- _____. 2002. *Moses in the Qur'an and Islamic exegesis*. Oxford: RoutledgeCurzon.
- _____. 2006. Nuh. In Leaman, O. (ed.), *The Qur'an: An encyclopedia*. London: Routledge, 463–464.
- Gilders, W.K. 2009. Sacrifice before Sinai and the priestly narratives. In Sheckman, S. and Baden, J.S. (eds), *The strata of the priestly writings: Contemporary debate and future directions*, AThANT 95. Zurich: TVZ, 57–72.
- Zobel, H.J. 2012. תִּבְאָ. In Ringgren, H, Fabry, H-J, and Botterweck, G.J. (eds.), *Theological dictionary of the Old Testament*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 15:551–552.