

GOPHER WOOD

CULTURAL INSIGHTS

The phrase “gopher wood” only appears once in the Old Testament in reference to Noah’s ark, meaning that it is unclear from Genesis what kind of wood the ark was built out of. The word “gopher” is simply a transliteration of the Hebrew word. Some Hebrew scholars have suggested that it derives from a word meaning “pitch” or “resin,” so the term “gopher wood” could then refer to some kind of resinous wood. The Aramaic Jewish translations known as the Targums understood “gopher wood” to mean “cedar wood.” The ancient Greek translation of the Bible translates “gopher wood” as “squared wood,” indicating that those ancient translators were also not sure what kind of wood was being described in Genesis 6.

Related verses

Genesis 6:14

Credits

Author: Avram R. Shannon

General Editor: Taylor Halverson

Associate Editor: Morgan Tanner

Senior Editor: Sarah Whitney Johnson

Assistant Editor: Verlanne Johnson

ScripturePlus Design: Jasmin Gimenez Rappleeye