

Clark Fork Seventh-day Adventist Church

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For Today: Gopher Wood

Scientific facts can sometimes yield surprising biblical insight. For example, lignins make hardwood trees hard. They are a complex group of organic compounds found in the cell walls of plants that give structural rigidity to the plants' overall growth. One type of plant lignin contains sulphur, while the other is sulphur-free. It's the sulphur-bearing lignins that form the fundamental structural basis of all hardwood trees used for lumber products.

This botanical fact casts an interesting theological light on Genesis 6:14, where God instructs Noah to build a large ship. The Ark allowed Noah, his family, and representatives of the animal kingdom to survive the Flood and repopulate the earth. Specifically, Noah is commanded, "Make yourself an ark of gopher wood."

Much confusion has been connected to the term "gopher wood." No one seems to know exactly what the Hebrew word really means, and this is the only place in the Bible where it's used. Digging deeper into the Hebrew, *gôpher* is actually a root of the word *gophrîth*, which is translated seven times in the Old Testament as "brimstone" in the context of God's fiery judgment on human wickedness.

In the New Testament Greek equivalent, it's used exactly seven times within the context of God's judgment on wickedness—a remarkable mathematical coincidence. The number seven represents completion, perfection, and veracity, as noted in the seven-day creation week and in Psalm 12:6.

Even more intriguing is that the biblical use of the Greek word *theion* is essentially the same as the similar word *theío*, which means sulphur and can be used interchangeably with the word "brimstone." When we put these original biblical terms into the context of the organic compounds that form the structural basis of trees and industrial applications of lumber, the coincidence is remarkable. God is speaking a scientific truth to Noah in telling him to use a form of plant material with sulphur-bearing lignin.

Read more at <https://www.icr.org/article/scientific-biblical-truth-converge-gopher-wood/>.

Even the scientific reality of biblical truth has much to reveal not only about the veracity of God's Word but about the omnipotence and eternal genius of our mighty Creator and Redeemer. Every detail of the Ark's construction shows His care, love, and redemptive purposes.



HAPPY SABBATH!



Clark Fork Seventh-day Adventist Church
Sabbath, September 19, 2020



