

NOAH AND THE ARK

Part of *The Beginning of the World*, a famous 14th century mystery play in the Cornish language

ENGLISH VERSE TRANSLATION BY ALAN M. KENT

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THIS VERSION HAS BEEN EDITED SPECIFICALLY FOR USE IN SCHOOLS
TEACHER NOTES AT THE END

CHARACTERS

God the Father

Noah

Noah's wife

Noah's son Shem

Shem's wife

Noah's son Ham

Ham's wife

Noah's son Japhet

Japhet's wife

Noah's daughters

A Raven sent out from the Ark

Two Doves sent out from the Ark

Here beginneth the story of NOAH and the Ark, and GOD says:

GOD THE FATHER

***Drog yw genef gruthyl den
precyùs haval dhymm certan.***

See Teacher Notes for pronunciation

**I am sorry that I made man
like me, in my ambitious plan.**

*Ow spyrys ny drig nefra
in corf mab den vÿth i'n bÿs.
Ha rêson yw ha praga
rag y vos kig medhel gwrÿs.*

**O my spirit will never live
or flourish in human physique,
and for this the reason I give
is that their flesh is far too weak.**

*Nyns eus den orth ow servya
len ha gwiryon, my a grÿs,
in oll an bÿs saw Noy
ha'y wreg ha'y flehes kefrÿs.*

**Faithfully, truly, I believe
there are no humans who serve me
better in this world, I perceive,
than Noah and his family.**

Then GOD THE FATHER shall come to NOAH, and He says:

GOD THE FATHER

*Sa' bàn, Noy ow servont ker,
deus gene' pols dhe wandra,
ha dhyso my a lever
intredhon taclow pryva.*

**Stand up Noah, my servant true.
Come, and talk with me for a bit.
I have some secrets to tell you,
some private matters to transmit.**

NOAH

*A Das Duw in uhelder,
benygys re by nefra,
rag genes in pùb tyller
parys ov dhe lavurya.*

**O my Father on high, my Lord God dear,
always blessed are Your words and Your face.
Speak of the secrets You want me to hear,
for I am willing to walk in Your grace.**

GOD THE FATHER

*Noy, mar leun yw an bÿs
lemmyn a sherewynsy
mayth yw dyweth devedhys
ino a gig pùb huny.*

**Noah, the world is so full
now of its wickedness and evil fun,
that I must stop it once and for all
and put an end to everyone.**

*Rag henna fysten kê gwra
gorhal a blankys plainyes
hag ino lies trigva –
rômys y a vÿdh gelwys.
Avês hag ajy yn tâ
gans pêk bedhens stanch urys,
ha tryhans kevelyn dâ
an lester a vÿdh a hÿs.*

**Therefore, go and construct a ship.
Of wooden planks make an ark,
with rooms stretching from bow to tip
and dwellings 'neath the seamark.
Inside and out, to stop the sea,
daub thick black pitch to make it strong.
In full size the vessel shall be
a good three hundred cubits long.**

NOAH

*Arlùth, kepar dell vynny,
an gorhal sur my a'n gwra.
Pÿth yw an ethom dhyn ny
cafos lavur a'n par-na?*

**Lord, I will do as You say
and certainly I'll make the ship.
But what is the need, I pray,
to labour so, the ark equip?**

GOD THE FATHER

*Noy, dre dha dhader brâs
ty a bew ow grâss nefra.
Kemmer dha wreg ha'th flehes
ha'ga gwrageth gorr gansa.
A bùb ehen best í'n wlas
gorr genes dew anedha.*

*A bùm kynda edhen vas
i'th gorhal gwait dew gorra.*

**Noah, because of your good heart
you will always have my favour.
Put your wife and all your sons smart
and their wives on this lifesaver.
From the land take every creature
and bring two of them with you.
Also, every bird should feature,
so find two for your ark's queue.**

*Rag liv brâs my a dhor
a gudho oll an norvÿs,
myns den eus i'n bÿs may fo,
kyns bos due an liv, budhys.*

**I will bring a great flood forth
which will cover the earth's sphere.
Humans all, from south and north,
for their sin will drown in fear.**

*A bùm ehen a gynda
gorow ha benow inwedh,
aga gorra ty a wra
in dha worhal aberveth.
Pùm maner boos i'n bÿs-ma
eus dhe dhebry may teleth
rag den ha best magata
in dha lester ty a'fÿdh.*

**Of each and every species
there'll be a male and female.
Then put each creature at their ease
and inside place each snout and tail.
Stock up every sort of food
there is that's fit and good to eat.
Both men and beasts will be your brood.
On your fine ship there they will meet.**

NOAH

*Arlùth cuv, dha arhadow
y wruthyl res yw dhymmo.*

*Yth av heb iniadow
dhe wonys adro dhodho.*

**Lord, I respect Your command,
and will do all as you say.
This ark I do understand.
I'll set to it this very day.**

Here let GOD pass over to Heaven. Then NOAH shall go to his WIFE, and says to her:

NOAH

*Hedh ow bool dhymmo toth dâ,
ow thardar ha'm mortholow;
my a vynn mos alemma
dhe wruthyl ow negyssow.*

**Quick, hand me my axe to chop,
my auger and my hammer!
We have got to work non-stop,
so to each task give clamour.**

NOAH'S WIFE

*Mêster, yn scon my a wra.
Dhe'n Tas a nev caradow
pùb ober oll i'n bÿs-ma
a wren re bo plegadow.*

**Of course, Noah! Here they are!
Dear Lord indispensable,
may all the work here go far
to make us acceptable.**

Then NOAH shall go to build his ship, and he says:

NOAH

*A Duw ker, assa oma sqwith
prennyer derow ow trehy.
Vycketh powes my ny'm bÿdh,
mar vrew yw ow ow esely.
Gwynnvÿs a qwellen an jëdh
may fe erhys dhymm hedhy.*

Arlùth, warnas tregereth.

Goev a wra dha serry.

**Dear Lord, with tiredness I ache
from cutting down timbers of oak.
I'll never have a rest or break.
My limbs hurt with every stroke.
When You tell me the job is done,
that will be a marvellous day,
and though the risk of wrath I run,
have mercy on me, Lord, I pray.**

And then GOD THE FATHER shall come to Noah, and He says to him:

GOD THE FATHER

Lemmyn, Noy, i'th worhal ke,

ty hag oll mêny dha jy.

Drefen leun ty dhe'm servya

ow cres a'fydh bynary.

A bùb best kemmer wharê

gorow ha benow defry.

Oll a'n ydhyn ow neyja

gwait copel may kemerry,

**Noah, it's time to climb aboard.
With all your kinsfolk quickly stow.
Since you have fully served your Lord,
my peace you shall forever know.
Take a male and a female
of every animal on earth,
and of the birdies do not fail
to take a couple in each berth,**

anedha dhe sawya has;

rag seythen wosa hemma

dew ugans dëdh my a as

glaw dhe godha awartha.

Kenyver den eus i'n wlas

na tra i'n bÿs ow pêwa

saw unsel ty ha'th flehes

gans liv y whrav dhe ladha.

so later they may reproduce.
 Then just a week or so past this,
 for forty days I will induce
 rain to fall, the earth to kiss.
 Every person on the land
 and every other living thing
 will drown beneath the watery band,
 except your own and your shipping.

NOAH

*A Das benygys dell os,
 dha arhadow my a wra.
 My a vynn alemma mos
 dhe'm gwreg ha'm flehes totta.*

**O Father, blessed as you be,
 Your wishes here I will obey.
 I shall go home immediately
 to tell my children what You say.**

NOAH says to his WIFE:

NOAH

*A brias, heb falladow,
 mebyon ha myrhas kefrÿs,
 dre vodh an Tas caradow
 yma gorhal crev ordnys.
 Fystenyn fast bys dhodho,
 rag y teu liv wâr an bÿs
 may fo pùb den oll ino
 ha pùb best warbarth budhys.*

**O wife, sons, each and every daughter,
 be pleased that the ark we did equip.
 By the will of the loving Father
 we've been provided with this strong ship.
 Let us run quick before things worsen,
 for the flooding of the earth is set;
 and every single hapless person
 even beast bird and fowl, shall drown in wet.**

NOAH'S WIFE

A vêster ker, my a wra
 pùptra kepar dell vynny.
 Deun oll dhe'n gorhal toth dâ,
 gans liv na wryllyn budhy.

**Ah dear Noah, I will do
 everything that you would wish.
 Quick – to the ship that we view!
 We shouldn't swim like some poor fish!**

SHEM

*Dell yw gorhemmys dhyn,
 my a's gorr bys i'n gorhal
 kefrÿs bestas hag ÿdhyn,
 ha Cam degens boos heb fall.*

**This to us, our dear God told,
 that beasts and birds in their brood
 shall be lead in, to the hold,
 and Ham, bring over their food.**

HAM

*Otta saw boos wâr ow heyn:
 Jefet degens saw aral.
 Awos an Tas fystenyn:
 rag own namnag ov pòr dhall.*

**I've got their fodder 'ere on my back:
 Let Japhet carry another load.
 In the Father's name, let's onward crack,
 for I'm fearful as to how things bode.**

JAPHET

*Yma gene' unn begh dâ –
 gora hag ÿs kemyskys –
 oll dhe'n bestas eus omma
 a gev boos lowr dêwdhek mis.*

**I've a brave bit of food here:
 a lovely mix of corn and hay –
 enough food for twelve months or near,
 for all these beasts who'll with us stay.**

Then let all go in, men and cattle, and NOAH says:

NOAH

*In hanow an Tas gwella,
deun aberveth desempys;
agan gorhal awartha
gans glaw ev a vjdh cudhys.
Mergh, gwarthek, mogh ha deves
drewgh aberveth desempys;
saw an ydhyn benygys
y a neyj qwyck hag uskys.*

**In the Father's name, Lord of all,
let's get inside the vessel's hold,
for soon the rain will start to fall
and flood the world, so we've been told.
At once the horse and cattle herd,
for the pigs and the sheep search,
but each and every blessed bird,
they can fly up and find a perch.**

SHEM

*My a vynn lemmyn tyldya
gwartha an gorhal gans qweth,
ha henna a wra gwitha
na dheffo glaw aberveth.*

**The very top of the ark
I'll cover with tarpaulin.
Such work and luster I mark
will stop the rain from enterin'.**

HAM

*In hanow Duw, dh'y lawa,
tyld e, pò ny a'n bydh meth.
Yma ow tegensewa
hager-gowas, wàr ow fëdh.*

**In the name of the Father
we'm goin' to have a drop o' rain.
'Eave 'un over, good brother.
Our ark's dryness we'n maintain.**

JAPHET

*Otta cowas pòr ahas:
Ny's perth den mara pes pell:
a wrownd an nor strêmys brâs
ow tewraga gans meur nell.*

**Boys, see how 'tis enting down with rain.
Can anyone weather it for long?
Tidn' slowering up across the plain –
great streams of it do sheet down strong.**

NOAH

*Dre ras an nev a'gan Tas,
ny a's feth kyn fo mar fell.
Agan gorhal re neyjas!
Re'n sawyo Arlùth uhel!*

**By our graceful Father's decree,
we'll overcome it despite its strength.
See how our ship floats on this sea!
May the Lord on high preserve its length.**

GOD THE FATHER

*Marow yw pùptra esa
spyrys a vêwnans ino.
My a worhemmyn wharê
dhe'n glaw namoy na wrello.
An livwooth gwrêns omdenna:
my a gomond scon dodho:
Dh'y dyller kyns êns arta,
Noy gonys may hallo.*

**Now that everything is dead
wherein was the breath of life,
may the last droplet be shed,
and rain stop its drowning strife.
Let the floodwaters withdraw.
I command the rain this instant.
Somewhere else now let it pour.
Let the ark find earth emergent.**

NOAH

*Gallas an glaw dhe ves glân
ha'n dour my a grÿs bassys.
Dâ yw in mes dyllo bran
mars eus dor sêgh wâr an bÿs.*

**The heavy rain's gone clean away.
The waters, they will soon abate.
We'll send a raven o'er the spray
to see if land it can locate.**

SHEM

*My a's dyllo ahanan.
Ny dheu arta, my a grÿs.
Mar kev carynyas, certan
warnedha y trig pùpprÿs.*

**I'll send it out across the sea,
but it well might not come back.
If it finds carrion on its spree,
then it will stay and eat its whack.**

And then SHEM shall send out a raven which returned no more.

NOAH

*Gwir dhymm ty a dherivas
a'n varghvran na dhewhela:
yma wâr garynyas brâs,
ow tebry fest dybyta.
An golom glas hy lagas
in mes gwra hy delyfrya:
lella edhen, ren ow thas,
leverel ny wòn ple fe.*

**To your words, son, I must retreat,
for the raven has not returned
from feeding upon carrion meat.
Our hopes of finding land are spurned.
Send out the pretty grey-eyed dove.
I can't think of a loyaler bird.**

SHEM

*My a wra hy delyfrya
wharê, a das caradow,
ha hy a wra aspia
mars eus dor sêgh in neb pow.*

**Father, I will release the dove.
If it returns 'twil be most grand –
transversing space, below, above.
If it's there, he will find land.**

And then SHEM shall send out the dove which shall immediately return to the ship, and be taken in.

HAM

*Hy delyfrya my a wra
in mes in hanow an Tas.
Lemmy'n kê aspy yn tâ
mars eus tir sêgh in neb gwlas.*

**Then I will send one out
in the dear Father's name.
Go, seek some sign of drought.
Find us some land to claim.**

Here the dove comes, bringing a branch of olive in her mouth.

JAPHET

*Devedhys yw, hag yma
in hy min branch olyf glas.
Hy hemeres my a wra
ajy dhe'n gorhal toth brâs.*

**It's back and carrying in its beak
a twig of olive green and new.
That I may have a closer peek,
I'll take it back inside to view.**

NOAH

*An Tas Duw re bo gordhyes.
Sensys meur on dh'y gara.
Nans yw an lîvow bassys
pàn eus gwÿdh ow teseha.*

*Ow mebyon, my a'gas pÿs,
in mes whath dylloagh tressa:
mar kev tir sÿgh, my a grÿs
dhyn ny ny dhewhel arta.*

**Dear Father God, so truly great,
we're in his debt until we die.
The floodwaters, it seems, abate,
for top parts of the trees are dry.
Sons, from where you both do stand
another grey-eyed dove let out:
and if it finds new dry land,
it won't fly back or turn about.**

JAPHET

*Kepar dell vynny, a das,
my a wra dha arhadow.
Colom wheg glas hy lagas,
kê, neyj a-ugh lies pow.
Tir sÿgh in gwel nag in pras
mar kefyth in gwir heb gow,
ino gwait yn tâ whilas
boos dhe'th ly ha dhe'th kynnyow.*

**Father, your wish I'll satisfy,
and I'll follow your command.
Sweet grey-eyed dove, now go and fly
off to some new discovered land.
And if you find a nice dry spot,
in truth and no word of a lie,
first, you take care of your own lot
and seek your food where'er you pry.**

SHEM

*Naneyl ogas nag yn pell
ny's gwelaf ow treneyja.
Hy re gafas diogel
dor dese-hys in neb le.*

**I hear not its 'coo' sound
nor see it in the air.
I'm certain it has found
dry, solid ground somewhere.**

NOAH

*In hanow an Tas uhel,
an gorhal gwren dyscudha.
Bos sëgh ha teg an awel,
dhe Dhuw y coodh dhyn grassa.*

**In glorious God's good name I cry:
let us open up the hatches,
and offer thanks to God on high,
that heaven's showing sunny patches!**

And let them uncover the ship, and NOAH says:

NOAH

*Gordhyanys ha grâss dhys, a Das,
desehys yw an norvÿs.
Nyns eus in gwel nag in pras
tus vew saw ny, my a grÿs.*

**Worshipful Lord, You've salv'd our gloom.
The world has seen the waters leave.
No others have survived their doom,
excepting us, so I believe.**

NOAH'S WIFE

*Gwrêns Duw y vodh ha'y vynnas,
pypynag vo in y vrÿs:
pòr wir y allos yw brâs,
in nev hag in tir kefrÿs.*

**Let dearest God His will make straight,
whatever 'tis in His mind's worth,
for verily His power is great,
both in Heaven and here on earth.**

Then GOD THE FATHER shall come to NOAH, and standing in the Plain say:

GOD THE FATHER

*Noy, my a worhemmyn dhis
kê in mes a'th worhal scon:
dha wreg ha'th flehes kefrÿs,
ÿdhyn, bestas ha prevyon.
Cressyowgh colenwowgh an bÿs
avell kyns, kettep mab bronn.
Rag may fowgh why sostenys,
ewgh dhe wonys gwel ha tonn.*

**Noah, leave the ark this instant,
and with you take your children, wife.
The birds and beast must make it vacant.
All things that creep and have a life,
they must go forth and multiply,
yes, each and every living thing,
and think about your food supply.
Teal the land and start ploughing.**

NOAH

*Dha volùnjeth in pùb le,
Arlùth uhel, my a wra.
In mes a'n gorhal wharê
my ha'm gwreg ha'm flehes â.
In onour Duw, dh'y lawa,
gwren unn alter, teg ha dâ,
may hyllyn sacryfia
dhodho wâr an keth honna.*

**Lord, I'll do just as You say,
and your wishes soon complete.
From the ark we'll step away
and dry land once again meet.
May our dear God be given praise.
First, let us a fine altar make
and then a sacrifice we'll raise
to honourable God for His sake.**

Here an altar is made ready, and let GOD THE FATHER stand near it.

NOAH

*Dêga oll a'gan ydhyn,
bestas inwedh magata,
warnedhy my a offryn
in gordhyans dhe'n Tas gwella.*

**The offering will be made
from birds and many a beast.
On the altar they'll be laid
for our sweet Father's feast.**

NOAH'S WIFE

*Buwgh offrynna my a vynn
wharê wâr an alter-na;
y ras re dhanvono dhyn
an Tas Duw a wrug pùptra.*

**A cow is what I'll install
upon the altar space.
May the Father Who made all
send us His loving grace.**

SHEM

*Colom genef vy yma.
In onour Duw my a wra
wâr an alter hy gorra.*

**I have brought this sweet dove,
in honour of God's love.
It is my sacrifice.**

SHEM'S WIFE

*Fesont, onen fat ha dê,
dhe'n Tas Duw a'n nev gwella
my a offryn heb lettya.*

**And now this plump pheasant
as our Father's present.
I hope he'll take a slice.**

HAM

*Goodh deg scon my a offryn
dhe Dhuw wàr benn ow dêwlin
hag a's gorr wàr an alter.*

**This 'andsome goose, it is my gift.
And on to my knees I'll shift
to offer up this bird.**

HAM'S WIFE

*Duw a dal dhywgh oll henna.
My a offryn mallart dê
in gordhyans dhe'n Tas Duw ker.*

**God'll repay you for your deed.
This quacking drake I've brought with speed
and give for God's sweet word.**

JAPHET

*Dhe'n Tas Duw in meur enor
wàr an alter my a worr
grugyar deg hag awhesyth.*

**In honour of Lord God so great,
I dedicate this fulsome plate –
of lark and tasty partridge.**

JAPHET'S WIFE

*In enor dhodho heb fall
my a offryn scon aral,
ha chapon dê, wàr ow fydh.*

**In honour to God and His word,
I'll sacrifice another bird –
this capon for his homage.**

And then GOD THE FATHER shall come to NOAH, and He says to him:

GOD THE FATHER

*Noy, rag kerensa orthys
my ny gemera' nefra
tromm-dial wàr oll an bÿs
na dre dhial pùb ladha.*

*Cressyowgh colenwowgh kefrÿs
an norvÿs a dus arta.
Wàr ÿdhyn, bestas, pùpprÿs
gallos a'fÿdh warnedha.*

**Noah, because such love you bring,
no more will I take retribution
on the world, or give no warning
of my vengeful persecution.
Now as I said, go forth, increase.
Fill the world once more with people.
Your own true goodness will bring peace
to fish, bird, insect, beast and cattle.**

*Kenyver best eus in tir,
ÿdhyn ha pùscas kefrÿs,
yw gostyth dhywgh yn pòr wir,
hag y boos dhywgh ordenys.*

**All animals that roam the land,
the fish that swim, the birds that fly,
they are your vassals, by my hand.**

NOAH

*Pandra amownt dhyn gonys
mar serryth orth den, heb wow?
Pàn vo oll dhyn lavuryes,
agan whel a vÿdh mothow.
Dre dromm-dial wàr an bÿs
ty a wra pùb oll marow.
Mar dhâ yw genef abrÿs
merwel kyns dos drog-ancow.*

**Lord, what gain is there in labouring
if You wreak wrath once more on man?
With land finely tealed and growing,
how could this fit into your plan?
You'll pass judgment without warning –
beast and plant will soon be dead.
Let me find some other dying
before your wrath falls on my head.**

GOD THE FATHER

*Noy, rag kerensa orthys
my a wra dhys ambos dâ:
leun-dial wâr oll an bÿs
ny gemeraf vynytha.*

**For all your love and for your sake,
Noah, I give you this promise.
Retribution I will never take
while you're here within my auspice.**

NOAH

*Ambosow orth tryhor gwrÿs,
anedha nys eus laha;
dre sorr kyn fêns y terrys,
dhe sonya my ny alla'.*

**Excuse me Lord, but there's no token
of forgiveness in your Creed.
If by You this word is broken,
there's little hope for us indeed.**

GOD THE FATHER

*My ny dorraf bys vycken
an acord eus lemmyn gwrÿs
intra my ha lynnyath den;
bys vynytha ev a bes.
In record, in tôkyn len,
ow gwarak a vÿdh settyes
in bàn in cres an ebron
na allo bones terrys.*

**I will not break in my lifespan
this covenant which is now made
between me and the race of man.
It will be lasting and not fade.
There, in the middle of the sky,
a wondrous rainbow I will place,
and it our trust will signify.
This bond is fixed, so is my grace.**

*Homma a vÿdh tôkyn dâ
 a'n acord eus gwrës, heb fall.
 Kyn fynnaf wâr an bÿs-ma
 tÿwlel venjans na dial,
 my a vir scon orth honna
 hag a'n acord a'm bÿdh cov:
 gans liv ny wrav bynytha
 ladha an dus, gwyls na dov.*

**A rainbow shall be the symbol
 of that covenant which is made.
 I will take it as my counsel
 if my tolerance should fade.
 If some bolts of wrath I wish to hurl,
 I'll not forget this covenant,
 and never more the flood shall swirl:
 your tribe shall now be permanent.**

And then GOD THE FATHER goes away from him and NOAH says:

NOAH

*Arlùth dell os dres pùptra,
 dha worhemmyn a vÿdh gwrÿs.
 Mos dhe wonys my a wra,
 ha'm gwreg ha'm flehes kefrÿs.
 See Teacher Notes for pronunciation*

**Father, whom I so regard,
 all of Your wishes will be done.
 I'll get on now, and work hard,
 with children, wife, and everyone.**

TEACHER NOTES

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The original title of the play is *Origo Mundi*. It is the first part of the Cornish mystery play cycle known as the *Ordinalia* – literally the ‘Prompt Book’. The principal manuscript is now in the Bodleian Library in Oxford. It was written in the fifteenth century. But the plays were more likely composed in the late fourteenth century. They seem to have been written somewhere near Penryn.

In the fourteenth century Cornish was still the language of ordinary Cornish people from Bodmin to Land’s End. Generally only the elite would have been bilingual in Cornish and English. Most people were illiterate, and anyway the Bible was only known in Latin, so was read by very few people. Yet Christianity was the bedrock of society, and everyone was familiar with the most significant Bible stories. The common folk learned these tales in their community: from clergymen, and from popular plays performed in *Plain an Gwary*.

The ‘script’ of *Origo Mundi* is in Cornish rhyming verse. This made it easier to follow for the audience; more memorable for everyone; it certainly helped the actors learn their lines by heart. The play is also full of opportunities for visual spectacle, and we can be confident the local community would have made the most of each scene, with ‘extras’ playing non-speaking parts, ‘scenery’ and ‘props’ to make the action as vivid as possible, and musical accompaniment at suitable moments.

Specifically, the section ‘Noah and the Ark’ allows the ‘director’ to assemble an ingeniously constructed Ark as the audience watches; then to bring into it, two by two, an array of colourfully costumed animals and birds. There is opportunity here for dance. There is also the possibility of creating a ‘Heaven’ on the other side of *Plain an Gwary* where God the Father may preside with his Angels. The dispatching from the Ark of a Raven and two Doves into the Plain again invites a choreographic approach.

Everyone will naturally be interested in the story of the building of the Ark, and of the Flood itself. To a modern audience there is reduced narrative momentum as the play presents the aftermath of the Disaster. The offering of the sacrifices is handled with deliberate humour, deflating the fact that the Altar is being used in a pre-Christian way. If there are only two of each animal and bird left alive, and they are needed for breeding, where do the sacrifices come from? The illogicality is obvious, and part of the fun. So the sacrifices can be represented with light-hearted props.

However, all who are involved with the production must try to understand how important it was, for a superstitious mediaeval audience, to hear God's promise that he will never take wrathful vengeance on Mankind again. The ending is not in any way an anticlimax. It will be appropriate for men, women, animals, birds – and also God and his Angels, with suitable dignity – to join together in a set-piece musical and choreographed finale.

You can find the Bible story of Noah and the Ark in the Book of Genesis (which is the first book of the Old Testament). It starts at Verse 9 of Chapter 6, and runs to the end of Chapter 9. In the Middle Ages many still believed that all the Semitic peoples (Arabs and Jews) were descended from Shem, all the African peoples from Ham, and all the European peoples from Japhet.

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