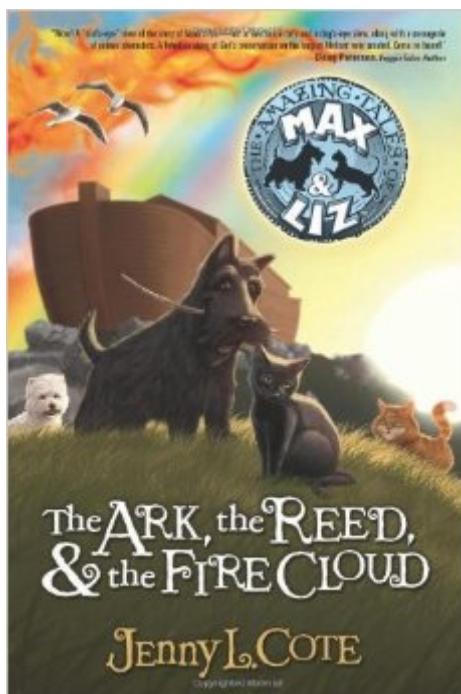


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# The Ark, The Reed, And The Fire Cloud (The Amazing Tales Of Max And Liz, Book One)



## **Synopsis**

Winner of the 2009 Gold Award in the Readers Favorite Book Review and Awards!Wit, Whimsy, Heartache, Tragedy, Triumph and Biblical Truth A magical adventure of animals traveling worldwide to Noah's ark Max, a Scottish terrier, takes his usual morning trot down to the loch where he hears a mysterious Voice humming in the reeds saying, "COME TO ME . . . FOLLOW THE FIRE CLOUD." He embarks on an unknown journey from Scotland, meeting other animals along the way including Liz, a brilliant, petite black cat from France. Max and Liz become the brave leaders for their group, and eventually, for the entire ark. The mysterious journey, filled with danger, humor, trials, and triumphs, leads them across Europe to the Middle East. The moment of arrival for these animals is spectacular as the ark is miraculously transformed into the animals' natural habitats. Throughout the prior one hundred years, Noah and family have to endure ridicule from villagers while building the ark. Now this family must painfully witness the loss of lives and total destruction of the earth through the mighty flood. After the journey to the ark, the voyage in the ark begins. Liz finds ways to keep the animals occupied, including daily exercise led by the flamingos and talent night where the animals entertain each other with their natural abilities. BUT a sinister plot develops. Someone is out to kill Noah and his family. Liz follows clues that lead her to discover a stowaway who has deceived them all. Max and Liz foil the plot, but at a high price. The end climaxes with unexpected twists and turns, taking the reader from despair to hope.

## **Book Information**

Lexile Measure: 770L (What's this?)

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Shipping Weight: 1.2 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 starsÂ See all reviewsÂ (71 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #93,022 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #13 inÂ Books > Children's Books > Religions > Christianity > Noah's Ark #254 inÂ Books > Children's Books > Literature & Fiction > Religious Fiction > Christian #716 inÂ Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Children's & Teens

Age Range: 8 - 12 years

## Customer Reviews

"The Ark, the Reed, and the Fire Cloud," is a clever and imaginative tale based on the Biblical story of Noah's Ark. The animals come to Noah from all parts of the world, thousands of them. These beasts and fowl are called by the "Maker" to follow the "fire cloud", a cloud in the sky that glows with the brightness of fire. The animals reach the ark safely, after many trials along the way, but things don't go smoothly while they are all aboard. There is "dissension among the troupes". How things are resolved is both amusing and thought-provoking. We start the story with Max, a Scottish Terrier, (Maximillian Braveheart the Bruce) traveling by himself. He soon meets up with Al, a cat. Then, they are joined by a pair of gulls, another cat, etc. Much of the first part of the story deals with their adventures and exploits, but as the story continues, we are introduced to other characters from other parts of the world. Max, and a cat named Liz, becomes the leaders of all the animals. The reed, which is carried by Max, plays an integral part in the story. Many of the animals have some type of quirk - A dog afraid of water; a giraffe afraid of heights; a horse that "runs in his sleep"; a rhino with "anger management" issues; etc. And, of course, each animal has its own personality. The animals come from many countries and speak many languages. Although the book is written in English, the characters manage to interject phrases from their respective countries into the dialogue. The reader is thus treated to snippets of Spanish, Italian, French, Japanese, and Russian, among others. This enhances the storyline and educates the reader, as well. There is also a section in the back of the book that lists the names of all the different types of animals mentioned in the book, their character names (if they were used as specific characters), their country of origin, and any foreign phrases (along with English translations) used throughout the book. There is much good to be said about this story, but alas, there are a few faults that I feel should be mentioned. First, there are a couple of discrepancies in the story line. At one point in the story, Al (one of the characters) takes off the seed bag he is carrying and lays it on the ground. Seconds later, he is sent crashing down a mountainside during an avalanche. There is no mention of his ever picking the bag back up, but somehow, the seed bag shows up later in the story without any explanation as to how it got there. There are also a few minor typos sprinkled throughout the text. And, there are places where the writing would benefit from a bit of editing. But, all in all, this is a very good story, as it is laced with lessons about obeying God and doing what's right. It's also a story about friendship and forgiveness and tolerance. And, this is the first in a series of books by this author, featuring Max and Liz. The next book is called The Dreamer, the Schemer, and the Robe (a story about the Bible).

character Joseph). 4 stars.

Jenny L. Cote captures the imagination of the juvenile reader in "The Ark, the Reed, & the Fire Cloud." Fantasy and allegory reminiscent of C. S. Lewis help the young reader understand God's provision and preservation through this fresh interpretation of the Biblical story of Noah's Ark. Max a young Scott Terrier and Liz a petite black cat from France follow the call of the Maker to "Come to Me." During their journey across Europe to the Middle East they become leaders of a menagerie of worldwide animals, arriving on time to meet Noah and board his Ark before the rains came. The story takes a unique twist after the landing of the ark. Cote comes through with an ominous plot to kill Noah, the discovery of a stowaway on the ark, and an encounter with Charlatan, the Evil One. Cotes has created a winner in "The Ark, the Reed, & the Fire Cloud." I am sure we will hear more of the magical adventure tales of Max and Liz in the near future.

One misty dawn Max the Scottish terrier left his burrow and trotted to the loch, where he heard a strange humming in the reeds: COME. COME TO ME. FOLLOW THE FIRE CLOUD. Startled, Max climbed the Glen for advice from his wise friend Gillamon, an ancient and well traveled goat. Gillamon pondered a while and told Max that he was being called by the Maker and had to accept the challenge. Max, brave but humble, took a reed from the loch and struck out on his epic journey. The Ark, the Reed, and the Fire Cloud (The Amazing Tales of Max and Liz, Book One) is the tale of Max the terrier and Liz, the sleek black cat from France, who lead a swelling progress of animals around the world to join Noah in his epic water journey. Their party includes Al, a big orange Irish cat, and the wee terrier Kate, also from Scotland; seagulls Bethoo and Crinan; and Craddock the whale. Animals from all parts of the world join them, each called to follow the fire cloud. Snippets of Noah's trials are woven through the story. Noah and his family spent one hundred years building the ark at God's direction, undeterred by the ridicule of the surrounding population. Finally the two stories intersect, the animals board the wondrous ark, and the rains begin. The trials of Max and Liz are by no means over because the ark contains the seed of the same wickedness God is purging with the floods. Can the two brave friends contain and overcome the threat? What will be their reward for courage and faith? What's at the heart of the magnificent fire cloud that inspires and leads this unlikely crew? Clearly the themes of religion and morality underpin this fantasy adventure. Whether or not the idea of a Bible-based morality tale attracts you, author Jenny L. Cote's writing and characterization are bound to enchant any reader. While aimed at the 9-to-12-year set, this is a book for the entire family to enjoy -- in fact the complex themes beg to be

discussed en famille. The animals speak in the accent and idiom of their home countries, a real feast for any parent or teacher who enjoys dramatic reading (though possibly an obstacle for children reading for themselves). Don't miss the glossary of main characters by country, with a key to their "lingo." This book is the first in a planned series about Max and Liz. Other reviewers have mentioned that giant in the genre, C.S. Lewis. THE ARK, THE REED, & THE FIRE CLOUD is more explicitly Bible-based than the Narnia series, but in spite of its antediluvian roots the story is fresh, full of fantasy and wonderful characters, scary at times -- thoroughly modern. I can't wait to get a look at the next book in the series. I'm settling on four stars, only because of the challenging accents. Recommended for readers and listeners of all ages. Linda Bulger, 2008

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