





LATE IS AS GOOD AS NEVER™

## **The Ark**

In the year 2006, the Lord came unto Noah, who was now living in England and said, "Once again, the earth has become wicked and overpopulated and I see the end of all flesh before me. Build another Ark and save two of every living thing along with a few good humans."

He gave Noah the computer-files with the CAD-Drawings and all the specifications - saying, "You have six months to build the Ark before I will start the unending rain for forty days and forty nights."

Six months later, the Lord looked down and saw Noah weeping in his yard, "But no Ark Noah !!" - he roared - "I'm about to start the rain - Where is the Ark ?"

"Forgive me, Lord," - begged Noah - "but things have changed, I needed a Buildings Regulations Approval. I've been arguing with the Fire Brigade about the need for a sprinkler system. My neighbours claim that I should have obtained planning permission for building the Ark in my garden because of the development of the site, even though in my view it is a temporary structure. We had to appear to the Secretary of State for a decision."

"Then the Department of Transport demanded a bond be posted for future costs of moving power lines and other overhead obstructions to clear the passage of the Ark's move to the sea. I told them that the sea would be coming to us but they would hear nothing of it. Getting the wood was another problem. All the decent trees have Tree Preservation Orders on them and we live in a Site of Special Scientific Interest set up in order to protect the spotted owl. I tried to convince the environmentalists that I needed the wood to save the owls - but no-go! When I started gathering the animals the RSPCA [Royal Society for the Protection of Animals] sued me. They insisted that I was confining wild animals against their will. They argued the accommodation was too restrictive and it was cruel and inhumane to put so many animals in a confined space."

"Then the County Court, the Environment Agency and the Rivers Authority ruled that I couldn't build the Ark until they had conducted an environmental impact study on your proposed flood. I'm still trying to resolve a complaint with the Equal Opportunities Commission on how many BME's I'm supposed to hire for my building team."

"Professional organizations and trade unions say I cannot use my sons. They insist I have to hire only professionals and workers with Ark-building experience. To make matters worse, the Customs and Excise seized all my assets, claiming I am trying to leave the country illegally with endangered species."

"So, forgive me, Lord, but it would take at least ten years for me to finish this Ark and that's without snagging and delivery reviews by all stakeholder parties!"

Suddenly the skys cleared, the sun began to shine and a rainbow stretched across the sky. Noah looked up in wonder and asked "You mean you're not going to destroy the world?"

"No" - said the Lord - "The Government beat me to it".

This comment - from November 2006 - was sent to a small newspaper in Somerset in South-West England