

The Ark of the Covenant



- The ark of the covenant was made of acacia wood and covered with gold. The ark was the first item of furniture constructed after God told Moses to build the tabernacle. It was the place where God met with and talked with Moses (Exodus 25:10-22).
- The tabernacle was built to house the ark of the covenant. The ark was intended to be the central focus of the Most Holy Place in the tabernacle, and 400 years later in the temple (Exodus 40:1-21).
- The ark of the covenant rested in the Most Holy Place behind a thick curtain. This heavy veil in the temple was torn from top to bottom at the moment of Jesus' death (Exodus 26:31-33; Matthew 27:50-51).
- God set apart the tribe of Levi to carry the ark and stand before him, to serve him, and to bless his name. Only the high priest was allowed to enter the Most Holy Place. He entered once a year on Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, to sacrifice and to sprinkle blood on the mercy seat to atone for the sins of the people (Deut. 10:8; Lev. 16; Ex. 37:6-9).
- The mercy seat was placed on top of the ark of the covenant. It included the winged cherubim that faced each other. God dwelled between the cherubim and spoke to the priest (2 Samuel 6:2; Psalm 99:1).
- There are two lists in Scripture about the contents of the ark of the covenant.
 - Hebrews 9:4 says that the ark contained the stone tablets with the Ten Commandments (the "tables of the covenant"), a golden jar (pot) of manna, Aaron's rod (stick) that budded.
 - Exodus 25:16 and Deuteronomy 10:5 list the stone tablets with the Ten Commandments. Other verses mention that a jar of manna (Exodus 16:32-34) and Aaron's rod (Numbers 17:10) were laid before the testimony and were to be kept for future generations.

Atonement for Sins

	OLD COVENANT (OLD TESTAMENT)		NEW COVENANT (NEW TESTAMENT)	
Type of Sacrifice	Blood of animals	Exodus 12:5 Leviticus 1-7	Blood of Jesus	Hebrews 9:12; 13:12 1 John 1:7
Quality of Sacrifice	Not enough Offered over and over	Leviticus 1-7 Hebrews 9:7-9; 10:4	Enough Offered just once	Hebrews 9:12, 26
Quantity of Sacrifice	Many	Leviticus 1-7 Hebrews 10:1	One	Hebrews 9:25-26
Effectiveness	For a day, for a year	Exodus 29-30 Hebrews 10:1-4	Forever	Hebrews 7:26-27 Hebrews 9:12-15
Action or Result	Temporary	Exodus 30:10 Hebrews 9:25	Final	Romans 6:10 Hebrews 9:25-28

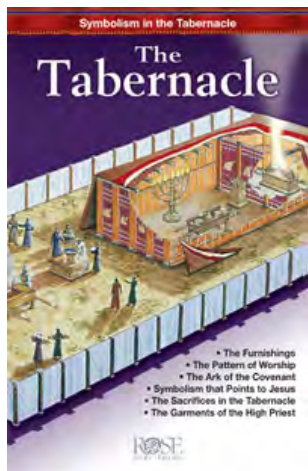
The Journey of the Ark of the Covenant from Mt. Sinai

- 1450 BC**
- God gives Moses directions to build the ark of the covenant. **Exodus 25**
 - The veil is woven. **Exodus 26:31-33**
 - The ark is placed in the tabernacle. **Exodus 40:1-21**
 - The ark is carried for 40 years in the wilderness. **Leviticus 16; Numbers 4, 10, 14; Deuteronomy 10**
 - Priests carry the ark across the Jordan River. **Joshua 3**
 - The ark is carried around Jericho; Jericho's walls fall. **Joshua 6**
 - After conquering the town of Ai, the covenant (law of Moses) was remembered at Mt. Ebal. **Joshua 8**
- 1400 BC**
- Ark taken to Bethel. **Judges 20:27**
 - Philistines take the ark of God. **1 Samuel 4**
 - The Philistines return the ark to the town of Beth Shemesh. **1 Samuel 6**
 - Ark brought to the house of Abinadab in Kiriath Jearim; stays there 20 years. **1 Samuel 7**
 - Ark moved on a cart to the house of Obed-Edom for three months; Uzzah struck dead. **2 Samuel 6**
- 1000 BC**
- David brings the ark to Jerusalem and places it in a tent that is set up for it. **2 Samuel 6:12-17**
 - Solomon has ark brought into Most Holy Place in the temple. **1 Kings 8**
 - Josiah recovers book of the Law and puts the ark in the temple. **2 Chronicles 34:14-35:3**
 - Jeremiah the prophet wrote that the ark would not be thought of or missed nor would another be made. It would be replaced by the LORD's presence. **Jeremiah 3:16-17**
- 500 BC**
- The Babylonians destroy and burn the temple in Jerusalem. **2 Chronicles 36:19**

Before the Babylonians destroyed and burned the temple in Jerusalem in 586 BC, they plundered it and removed the sacred vessels (2 Chron. 36:18). The ark was either taken by the Babylonians and destroyed, or hidden by the Levites. Its existence, or location, remains uncertain today.

Hebrews 9:7, 11-12 "But only the high priest entered the inner room, and that only once a year, and never without blood, which he offered [by sprinkling on the ark] for himself and for the sins the people had committed in ignorance.... But when Christ came as high priest of the good things that are now already here, he went through the greater and more perfect tabernacle that is not made with human hands, that is to say, not a part of this creation. He did not enter by means of the blood of goats and calves; but he entered the Most Holy Place once for all by his own blood, thus obtaining eternal redemption."

Revelation 11:19 "Then God's temple in heaven was opened, and within his temple was seen the ark of his covenant. And there came flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder, an earthquake and a severe hailstorm."



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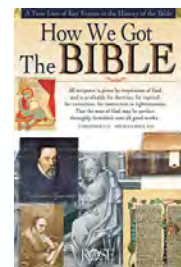
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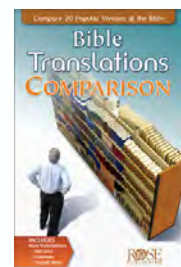
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