
The Ark of the Covenant

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The Ark of the Covenant is described in Exo. 25:10-22, 37:1-9.

The Ark of the Covenant is so called because the ten commandments, or the Mosaic Covenant, were deposited in it.

Num. 10:33; Deut. 31:26; Heb.9:4.

It contained three items:

- the tablets of the Law,
- Aaron's rod that budded,
- and the pots of manna.

It is also called the Ark of the testimony, because it witnessed God's holiness and the people of Israel's sinfulness, Exo. 25:16, 22

It is called the Ark of God to indicate God's presence with Israel, 1 Sam. 3:3; 4:11.

As a symbol of divine presence, the Ark was carried at the head of the column of the army as the point, thus indicating divine protection of the Jews while in transit, Num. 10:33; Deut. 1:33; Psalm 132:8.

The Ark of the Covenant was involved in the crossing of the Jordan, Joshua 3:11-17; 4:7, 11, 18. The Ark held back the water.

The Ark was used as an offensive weapon on Jericho, Joshua 6:4-12.

The Ark was captured by the Philistines. They had nothing but trouble with it, so they sent it back, 1 Sam 4:3-11; compare also 5:7, 7:2.

The Ark stayed at Kiriath-Jearim (1 Sam 7:2) until David moved the Ark to Jerusalem,

A soldier was killed for handling it, 2 Samuel 6:1-19.

Solomon had the Ark put in the temple when it was built, 1 Kings 8:6-9. It stayed there except during the reign of Manasseh, who put up phallic images in the Holy of Holies. It was restored by the Levites, 2 Chron. 35:3.

The Ark was destroyed in 586 BC, under the fifth cycle of discipline, by Nebuchadnezzar. There is no record of its ever being replaced. Why? Because it was no longer needed, says Jer. 3:16.

The Ark in relation to the mercy seat, Hebrews 9:4; Romans 3.

1. The wood represents Christ's humanity, the gold His deity.
2. The tables of the Law represent sin in the sense of transgression of known divine laws.
3. Aaron's rod that budded represents sin in revolt against God's order.
4. The pot of manna represents sin as rejection of God's provision.
5. Sin inside the Ark is a picture of the work of the cross. Christ bore our sins inside of Himself.
6. The mercy seat is God's side of the cross. The cherubs represent the perfect righteousness and justice of the Father, both of which are satisfied by the blood of Christ, sprinkled on the mercy seat.
7. In the Millennium the presence of Christ replaces the Ark.

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