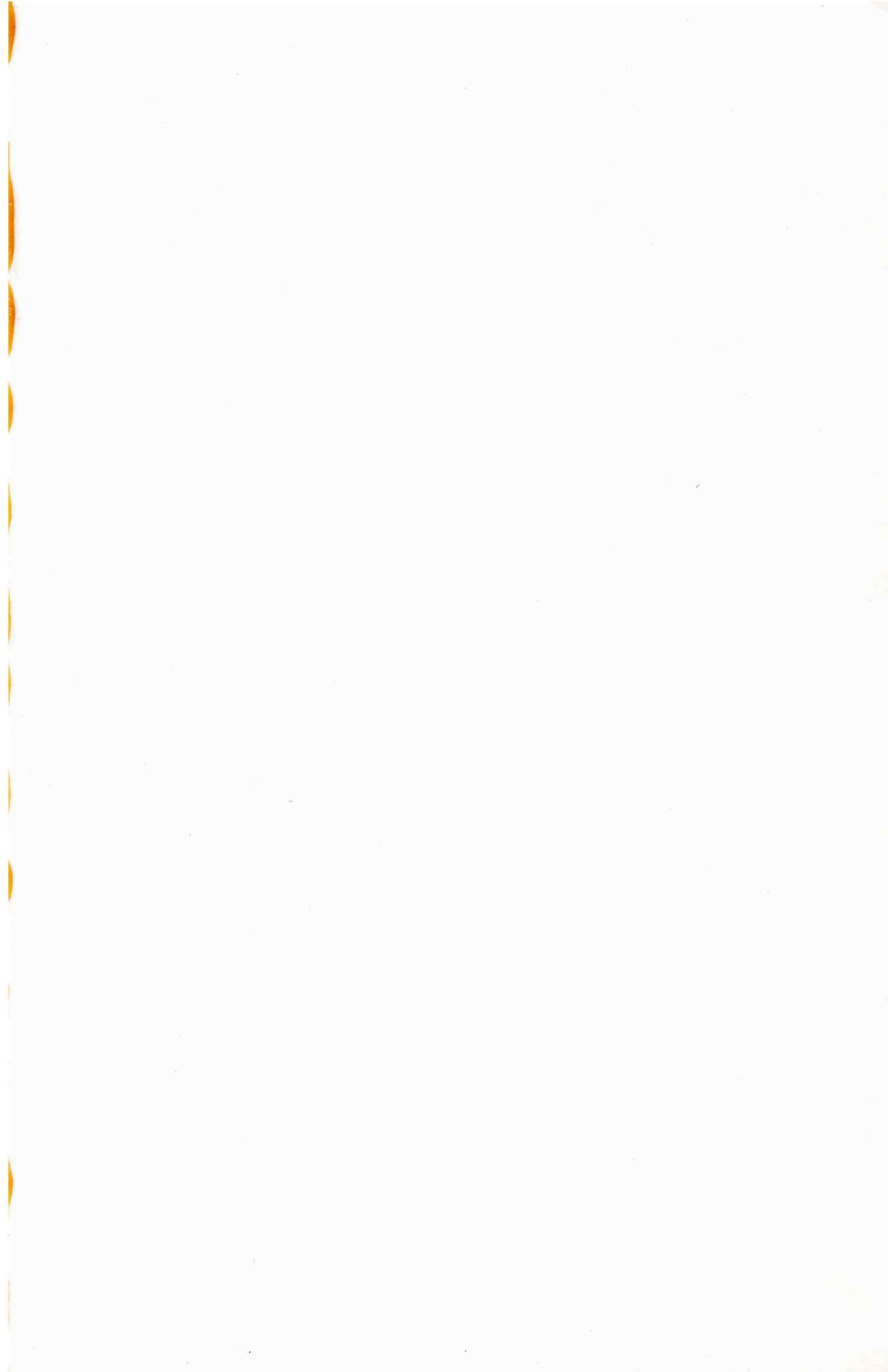


The
Exciting Discovery
Of
**The Ark of
The Covenant**

by
Dr. Anis A. Shorosh



The Temple model at the Holy Land Hotel as it appeared in the days of Jesus.



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**By
Dr. Anis A. Shorrosh**

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I

Intense Interest In And History Of The Ark

World-wide interest in the nature and whereabouts of the Ark of the Covenant has been intensified in the past few years. This is due to a great measure to the popularity of the fascinating film "Raiders of the Lost Ark."

The breathtaking news of the discovery of the mysterious Ark itself, soon after the release of the fiction thriller, reached me while I was on my semi-annual pilgrimage to my former homeland. In Jerusalem the rumor surfaced in December of 1981.

Now, after three more trips to the Holy Land, but more importantly an interview with Tom Crotser, who claims he found the Ark on Mount. Nebo in Jordan, I am better prepared to present my findings. My personal research and that of others into Biblical records, plus archaeological material and photographs have been brought together for your consideration. I leave it up to you to judge whether the Ark has really been found or not.

While in the final stages of putting this material together, I flew to Tulsa, Oklahoma on October 29, for an

engagement with Faith Baptist Church at nearby Claremore. To my delight the Pastor, Wayne Keely, shared my enthusiasm concerning this subject. Here is his personal story:

“In the early fall of 1975, I heard Dr. Shorrosh preaching at First Baptist Church in Clinton, Oklahoma. I was intrigued and spiritually aware that God had indeed given a special understanding of Prophecy to this man. During the course of the week I acquired a copy of his book, *The Fig Tree*, and made several notes in it concerning events he believed would come to pass in the future.

I was astonished as the whole world watched the signing of the Peace Treaty between Israel and Egypt in 1979 right on schedule with Dr. Shorrosh’s prediction that Israel would enter into a peaceful setting, moving them into the religious life at age 30.

In February of 1983 I heard of a meeting to be held in Tulsa, Oklahoma, by a Mr. Crotser who was to have proof of his finding the Ark of the Covenant. My wife and I discussed the possibility of such a discovery and remembered that Dr. Shorrosh had indicated his belief that such a discovery should be made. I went to the meeting at the Tulsa Assembly Center and was one of some 6,000 people who saw the slides and the discussion concerning the discovery and left excited that it is possible the long-long lost Ark has been found.”

In Exodus 25 we discover the first record in the scriptures concerning this significant topic, the Ark of the Covenant. (The new King James Version Exodus 25:10-22)

“And they shall make an ark of acacia wood; two and a half cubits shall be its length, a cubit and a half its width, and a cubit and a half its height.

And you shall overlay it with pure gold, inside and out you shall overlay it, and shall make on it a molding of gold all around.

You shall cast four rings of gold for it, and put them in its

four corners; two rings shall be on one side, and two rings on the other side.

And you shall make poles of acacia wood, and overlay them with gold.

You shall put the poles into the rings on the sides of the ark, that the ark may be carried by them.

The poles shall be in the rings of the ark; they shall not be taken from it.

And you shall put into the ark the Testimony which I will give you.

You shall make a mercy seat of pure gold; two and a half cubits shall be its length and a cubit and a half its width.

And you shall make two cherubim of gold; of hammered work you shall make them at the two ends of the mercy seat.

And the cherubim shall stretch out their wings above, covering the mercy seat with their wings, and they shall face one another; the faces of the cherubim shall be toward the mercy seat.

You shall put the mercy seat on top of the ark, and in the ark you shall put the Testimony that I will give you.

And there I will meet with you, and I will speak with you from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim which are on the ark of the Testimony, of all things which I will give you in commandment to the children of Israel."

The description in Hebrews 9:1-5 is very significant:

"Then indeed, even the first covenant had ordinances of divine service and the earthly sanctuary.

For a tabernacle was prepared: the first part, in which was the lampstand, the table, and the showbread, which is called the sanctuary:

which had the golden altar of incense and the ark of the covenant overlaid on all sides with gold, in which were the golden pot that had the manna, Aaron's rod that budded, and the tablets of the covenant;

and above it were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat. Of these things we cannot now speak in detail."

Since the mercy seat was on top of the Ark, there must have been a front opening. We find that it contained:

1. Two tablets of stone on which the ten commandments were written.

2. A sample of the manna in a golden bowl.

3. Aaron's rod which sprouted overnight.

Surprisingly, I Kings 8:9 records that at the dedication of Solomon's Temple the Ark contained nothing but the Tablets of Stone.

Nevertheless, my personal interest in this whole matter of prophecy started in the Summer of 1966. I had just resigned as pastor of the Baptist Church in Jerusalem because the Lord had been dealing with me about world-wide evangelism.

During that time the government of Jordan announced that they wanted to open the Golden Gate, called also the Eastern Gate. Their purpose was to provide another access into the busy, bustling, and crowded city of Old Jerusalem.

Ezekiel the Prophet declares in 44:1-2:

"Then He brought me back to the outer gate of the sanctuary which faces toward the east, but it was shut.

And the Lord said to me, 'This gate shall be shut; it shall not be opened, and no man shall enter by it, because the Lord God of Israel has entered by it; therefore, it shall be shut.'

I began a Biblical, historical search in my study coupled

with prayer and supplication that very day the announcement was made in the newspaper and it went on to 4:00 o'clock in the morning. The conviction grew in my soul that the coming of the Lord was really at hand.

In two weeks I was on my way to the first World Congress on Evangelism in Berlin. Then I went on to England and the USA. During December, the Lord convinced me through providential circumstances that I should not return to Jerusalem. War was coming. Therefore, my family joined me January 30, 1967, and the war broke out June 4th. I was grateful that my family was safe in Mobile, Alabama. However, by December we led the first pilgrimage to the Holy Land. My greatest interest was to see what had happened to Jerusalem since Israel took it, and specifically, what became of the project to open the Golden Gate. I was definitely impressed. The Gate was still sealed and the road which was being dug by the eastern wall was stopped:

The story of the Gate is not a complicated one. The prophet Ezekiel prophesied that the Lord will enter through it. We believe this took place on Palm Sunday. Then the prophet said it will be sealed until the Lord returns. Tradition has it that whoever attempted to open the Gate would lose control of Jerusalem. Turkey, England, and now Jordan in recent memory have lost control of Jerusalem. Their loss took place whenever they tried to open the Gate. I have been privileged to lead twenty pilgrimages to the Holy Land in the past fifteen years and the Gate remains sealed.

II

Why The Discovery Is Extremely Important

One may ask *Why The Discovery Of The Ark Of The Covenant Is So Important?* The answer is this. According to II Thessalonians 2, The Anti-Christ is to occupy the temple and stop the sacrifices. It is accepted by the majority of prophecy students that the Ark must be discovered in order to initiate and organize the sacrificial system. The Annual Sacrifice must have its blood sprinkled before the Mercy Seat which is the covering of the Ark. Perhaps you are aware that many prophecy experts believe that the "Ashes of the Red Heifer" must also be found to legalize the sacrificial system. Vyndal Jones, a prophecy specialist and a friend of mine, has been looking for it in the Valley of Qumran where the Dead Sea Scrolls were found. Please read the Book of Numbers, Chapter 19 to learn of this special annual sacrifice. Vyndal has some fascinating theories about prophecy and Israel.

Now as to the discovery of the Ark. The story first appeared in November, 1981. It was published in the *Kansas City Star* detailing how some men had found the Ark of the

Covenant in Jordan. The story caused a lot of commotion in the Christian community to say the least. Of course, if indeed the ark has been found, then you can imagine what a tremendously exciting and significant find; archaeologically, theologically and Biblically to all peoples who believe in God, particularly the Judeo-Christian world. I would like to emphasize that more than anything else, this find commands our attention because of its relation to the end-time prophecy.

The situation does not need to be sensational, just factual. One of the most popular movies of all time is "Raiders of the Lost Ark". Why? The obvious answer is that the producers capitalized on one of the great mysteries of the ages using fast moving and spectacular plots of intrigue on land, sea and in the air. It is reported to me that the journalist who wrote the story gleaned much of his material from Vyndal Jones. Even the name of the star of the "Raiders of the Lost Ark" is called Indiana Jones!

Here is something which should cause much thinking and discussion.

Why would the popular *Biblical Archaeology Review* magazine take four pages of its May-June issue, 1983, to question the discovery of the Ark if there is nothing to it? The article, "Tom Croster has found the Ark of the Covenant Or Has He?", was written with no direct involvement between the magazine's staff and Crotser. He told me no one came to see him except Dr. Seigfried Horn, a Seventh Day Adventist professor who never even mentioned the magazine as his sponsor for the interview. Moreover, Dr. Horn was even misquoted by the magazine. A very unscientific approach to the subject is most obvious. The magazine blatantly states that before Dr. Horn, of Andrews University, went to see Mr. Crotser he was confident that Crotser had not found the Ark of the Covenant. It goes on to say, "nevertheless, he agreed to go. . . because he felt that the best way to handle such claims was to examine the evidence and then to report what artifacts

Crotser had erroneously identified as the Ark of the Covenant.”

Can you believe this! The archaeologist who has been digging at Tel Heshbon, four miles northwest of Mount Nebo for sixteen years, had already prejudged such a so-called scientific approach to the evidence?

The magazine article demonstrates that their anger over the cancellation of further excavations in Jordan far exceeds their joy at the discovery of such a fantastic treasure!

What more evidence does one want than seeing the pictures of the very object the four explorers found in the cave. The magazine’s position reminds me of the miracle of the young man whom Jesus miraculously healed from blindness. The members of the Sanhedrin in Jerusalem would not believe the evidence of the miracle. The blind man himself stood before their very eyes and he was no longer blind. The highest court in the land questioned him, his parents, and determined that this could not be so. Listen to the blind man’s response. John 9:25 emphasizes, “*One thing I know: that though I was blind, now I see.*”

Before we proceed any further, let me give you the basic references to the Ark in the Bible.

The ark led Israel across the desert (Num. 10:34-36).

The ark led Israel and Joshua across the Jordan (Josh. 3-4).

The ark was carried around the city of Jericho (Josh. 6:1-17).

God spoke to Joshua from the ark after Israel’s tragic defeat at Ai (Joh. 7:6).

The ark was in view as blessings and curses of the law were read from Mount. Ebal and Mount. Gerizim (Josh. 8:30-35).

The High priest Phineas received counsel from God concerning the civil war with Benjamin (Jdg. 20:27).

The ark resided in Shiloh during Samuel's and Eli's day (I Sam. 3:3).

It was captured by the Philistines (I Sam. 4).

It devastates the Philistines (I Sam. 5-6).

The ark returned to Israel, resting at Kirjath-jearim (I Sam. 6-7).

Saul brought the ark into battle against the Philistines (I Sam. 14-18).

David brought the ark into Jerusalem (II Sam. 6).

It was ignored by Saul during his reign (I Chron. 13:3), contrast with Psalm 132.

David planned to build the Temple to house the ark (II Sam. 7:2).

It remained, however, in a tent until the time of Solomon (II Sam. 11:11). Later David donated the gold for the cherubims (II Chron. 28:18).

The ark was carried out of Jerusalem and back during Absalom's rebellion (II Sam. 15:24-29).

Solomon worshiped God before the ark after receiving his gift of wisdom (I Ki. 3:15).

Solomon placed the ark in the Temple (I Ki. 8).

Solomon then moved his pagan wife (daughter of Pharaoh) away from the area of the ark (II Chron. 8:11).

The ark was placed back in the Temple during King Josiah's reign. It has apparently been removed previously. This is the last reference to it in the Old Testament (II Chron. 25:3).

III

Whatever Happened To The Ark In The Course of History?

First: The book of I Kings 14:25-26 records the first attack and plunder of Jerusalem as Israel's Capital. The absorbing novel and film "Raiders of the Lost Ark" follows that reference. The popular and exciting movie concludes that Shishak, King of Egypt took the Ark with him when he conquered Jerusalem in the year 925 B.C. However, none of the Biblical writers ever mentions such a possibility. Incidentally, Jerusalem has been conquered nineteen different times from the year 928 B.C. to the year 1967 A.D.

Second: According to a later Jewish tradition, the Ark was buried under the "Chamber of Wood" in the Temple prior to the Babylonian destruction. Some Orthodox Rabbis in Jerusalem today believe that the ark is underneath the Temple mount and will be recovered someday by archaeologists.

Third: It has been suggested that the Ark was either burned or broken up for the gold in it when Nebuchadnezzar destroyed the Temple in the year 586 B.C. However, no mention is made by Daniel, Jeremiah or Ezekiel of this ever happening to the Ark. Furthermore, neither the Talmud nor Josephus refer to such a calamity. It

is highly unlikely that the King of Babylon would have deliberately destroyed such a prized war trophy. Therefore, we can discount, with almost one-hundred percent certainty, that the Ark of the Covenant was destroyed when the Babylonians plundered and burned Solomon's temple in 586 B.C. (II Kings 24:13).

Fourth: Was the Ark taken back to Babylon along with the other temple treasures? We read in Daniel 1:2 that Nebuchadnezzar carried back to Babylon part of the vessels of the House of God. He did not take all the vessels. Neither Daniel nor any other prophet of the Babylonian captivity period, mentioned the Ark as being among the treasures looted by Nebuchadnezzar. Inasmuch as the Ark was the most valuable of all the temple vessels or furnishings, we are sure that it was not included in the spoils of war, else specific mention of it would have been made. The articles which Nebuchadnezzar did take, were listed by Josephus. In *Antiquities of the Jews*, (Book 10, chapter 8). These articles included the pillars of brass, the golden tables, and the candlesticks. Several hundred vessels of gold and silver were also taken to Babylon. It was these vessels that Belshazzar defiled in his drunken orgy according to Daniel, chapter 5. Josephus tells us that all these vessels were returned to Jerusalem when the second temple was completed. But, still, no specific mention was made of the Ark by the famous historian.

Fifth: Was the Ark taken up to Heaven? Inasmuch as the Apostle John writes in Revelation that he saw it in Heaven (Rev. 11:19) many believe the Ark is actually up there. However, we learn that the Ark was not the same one when we read Exodus 25:9. In that passage, God instructs Moses how to construct the tabernacle: "*According to all that I show you, that is, the pattern of the tabernacle and the pattern of all its furnishings, just so you shall make it.*" In short, the original or pattern is what is in heaven, not the Ark Moses made in the wilderness.

Sixth: A tradition says Solomon fathered a son called Menelik through the Queen of Sheba. As a young man,

Menelik visited Solomon, who presented the boy with an exact reproduction of the ark. However, during a farewell party, Menelik got the priests drunk and substituted the replica for the original. The late Haile Selassie claimed to come from the line of Menelik. He called himself the King of Kings, the Lion of Judah, Defender of the Christian Faith, Emperor of the Ancient Kingdom of Ethiopia, the Chosen of God.

Seventh: Was the Ark hidden in a cave in Moab? This would appear to be the most likely answer to the question of what happened to the Ark. The most common tradition, as substantiated by the Apocrypha, is that Jeremiah, by night, took the Ark and hid it in a cave on Mount. Nebo, prior to the fall of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. Mount. Nebo is located in Jordan about 45 minutes south of Amman the capitol where it overlooks the Dead Sea area.

To some Christians the word “Apocrypha” creates images of false or ungodly writings. I do not believe that this is the case. The Old Testament writings themselves refer to several books which are not in our Bible. Some of these are found in the Apocrypha. Furthermore, we find in Joshua 10:13 such a reference,

*“So the sun stood still,
And the moon stopped,
Till the people had revenge
Upon their enemies.
Is this not written in the Book of Jasher?”*

The Book of Jasher means “Book of the Righteous One.” It probably dates from the Fifteenth to the Tenth Centuries B.C. and was a collection of songs used in military training. We see this demonstrated in II Samuel 1:18 one more time:

*“and he told them to teach the children of Judah the Song
of the Bow; indeed it is written in the Book of Jasher:”*

In the concluding chapter of I Chronicles, verse 29, one may be intrigued to read of three Biblical sources.

“Now the acts of King David, first and last, indeed they are written in the Book of Samuel the seer, in the Book of Nathan the prophet, and in the Book of Gad the seer.”

We have Samuel’s record, however Nathan’s and Gad’s writings are missing!

Surprisingly enough we find a similar situation in the New Testament. Colossians 4:16 spells the name of a book which we have not found in Paul’s writing.

“Now when this epistle is read among you, see that it is read also in the church of the Laodiceans, and that you likewise read the epistle from Laodicea.”

Where is the Laodicean letter?

Finally we see a reference to Enoch’s prophecy which again is a document we do not possess. (Jude 14.)

“Now Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men also, saying, ‘Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints, to execute judgment on all, to convict all who are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have committed in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him’ ”.

The Books of Apocrypha, in particular, were accepted by the Jews of Old Testament times as history and as valid writings. This is shown by the fact that when the Bible was being standardized, these writings were seriously considered for inclusion. There is much historical and spiritual value in them, although they are not uniquely inspired by God like the Bible.

One of the books of the *Apocrypha*, which I believe to be historically accurate, is 2 Maccabees 2:1-8. Here is the illuminating quotation from an American Translation by Edgar J. Godspeed, pages 447-448.

“It is also found in the records that the prophet Jeremiah ordered those who were carried away to take some of the fire, as has been described, and that after giving them the

Lae, the prophet charged those who were carried away not to forget the Lord's command, and not to be led astray in their minds when they saw gold and silver idols and their ornamentation. And with other similar exhortations he told them that the Law should not pass from their hearts. It was also in the writing that the prophet, in obedience to a revelation, gave orders that the tent and the ark should accompany him, and that he went away to the mountain where Moses went up and beheld God's inheritance. And Jeremiah came and found a cave-dwelling, and he took the tent and the ark and the incense altar into it, and he blocked up the door. And some of those who followed him came up to mark the road, and they could not find it. But when Jeremiah found it out, he blamed them and said, 'This place shall be unknown until God gathers the congregation of his people together and shows his mercy. Then the Lord will show where they are, and the glory of the Lord will appear, as in the days of Moses, and when Solomon asked that the place might be made very sacred.'

We do not know why the priests and Levites did not retrieve the Ark and restore it to the Holy of Holies in the Second Temple. I would surmise that they simply did not know where it was. It is apparent from the above that Jeremiah the prophet closed the cave entrance and kept the very location a secret so that it was never found again by the priests.

Furthermore, the Talmud declares that there is no real evidence that the Ark was ever in Zerrubabel's Temple or in Herod's Temple. Of course, this substantiates the fact that from the time of the Babylonian captivity until the time of Herod's Temple there is absolutely no reference to the Ark of the Covenant in Jewish history. It also means that the Holy of Holies was empty in both Zerrubabel's and Herod's temples.

Nevertheless, the blood was sprinkled in the air by the High Priest over the foundation stone where the Ark would have been placed. You may be surprised to learn that synagogues normally use a replica of the Ark for memorial purposes. For instance, The Jerusalem Great Synagogue which was dedicated August 4, 1982, has an Ark in it for the same reason.

IV

Rumors, Reports, and Realities

Now, comes the exciting and explosive news. Tom Crotser is Director of the “Institute for Restoring Ancient History, International,” located in Winfield, Kansas. He reported in the *Jerusalem Post* on November 22, 1981, that his group had located the Ark of the Covenant in a cave on Mount Nebo in Jordan.

His description of the Ark corresponds favorably with the Biblical description four feet in length, two and one-half feet in height, and two and one-half feet in width.

The immediate reaction of Israeli authorities on Jewish archaeology was to express doubt that the Kansas-based organization had actually found the Ark. Interestingly enough, we always are so skeptical that we can identify with the Apostle Thomas. You see, he did not believe anybody’s testimony but his own when Jesus had risen from the tomb.

Logically, one would have to conclude that the find is trustworthy, based on the reaction of the government of Jordan to the rumor. The Jordanian Prime Minister’s office, mind you, not the Department of Antiquities, ordered all archaeological excavations halted from the time the rumor started. Why? Apparently, Jordanian authorities

are convinced that the Ark is really on Mount. Nebo in Jordan. However they are justifiably fearful of losing it because Israel would certainly attempt to reclaim it at any cost.

Others theorize that if the Ark is truly found it would also be an incentive for Israel to rebuild a Temple on the original site of Solomon's Temple. The problem is that this particular area is controlled by the Moslems who have vowed to go into a Holy War against Israel if the Israelis ever attempt a takeover of the precious piece of real estate.

After sixteen years of research, Mr. Crotser went to photograph Mount. Pisgah and all the area around Mount. Pisgah. I have been there numerous times. In fact, Mount. Syagha is the Arabic name for Pisgah. It means "the Mount. of Goldsmiths." Do you suppose that the legend of its being the hiding place of the Golden Ark could have been behind the unusual name, Syagha, Goldsmiths?

At any rate, the sketch of the area was taken from a man named Mr. A. F. Futterer. He was the one who, in 1927-29, spent two years in that area searching for the Ark of the Covenant. Of course that has been a good number of years ago, but he did not find the Ark.

Mr. Futterer, himself, claimed to have gone into a large passageway and found a wall that had markings on it. He wasn't too sharp on inside photography so he copied down the markings. He took those markings, which he copied, to the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. There they told him that the markings, when deciphered, say "Herein lies the golden Ark of the Covenant."

While I personally lived in Jordan, I became acquainted with the foremost authority on archaeology in that part of the world, Mr. G. Lankester Harding. I want to quote from his outstanding book, *The Antiquities of Jordan*, published first in 1959 by Lutterworth Press, London, England.

"Mount. Nebo lies to the northwest of Madaba, and is one of the alleged sites of the tomb of Moses; the other is on the west side of the Dead Sea, on the road from Jericho to

Jerusalem. If the Biblical account is at all accurate (and it usually is), the latter site is impossible, unless one presumes that the bones of Moses were transported there at some time.

The principal ruins are a place called Syagha, and consist of a church and adjacent monastery. This church is first mentioned in an account of a pilgrimage made by a lady called Aetheria in about AD 394. She described a small church which contained the tomb of Moses, the place having been miraculously revealed in a vision to a shepherd. Nothing is said of the monastery, but she mentions the holy men who showed her around. In the late fifth, or early sixth century, a visit to the place is related in the biography of Peter the Iberian. The building is now styled 'a very large temple, named after the prophet (Moses) and many monasteries which are built round it', which seems to imply some enlargement of the buildings seen by Aetheria. A monk relates to Peter the story of the shepherd's vision which first caused the church to be built, and both Aetheria and Peter speak of the wonderful view from the summit. The site is mentioned again 1217 by Theitmar, who says that while on his way from Engeddi (Ain Jiddi on the western shore of the Dead Sea) to Shobak, he spent the night there in the monastery. A Portuguese Franciscan monk visited the site in 1564, but the buildings on the summit were then ruined and abandoned, though a small church at Ayun Musa (Moses' Springs), in a valley just to the north, was still in use. Nebo is mentioned in a document of the Seventeenth Century, but apparently the writer was unaware of any buildings or ruins on the site.

For many years, from 1933 on, the Franciscan Biblical Institute of Jerusalem conducted excavations here, and have revealed the church and the monasteries of the usual basilica type, and the raised platform-like structure with steps beside it at the east end of the south aisle, that correspond almost exactly with the tomb of Moses as described by Aetheria. The excavations confirm that in her day the church was quite a small one, and that it was enlarged in the late Fifth Century. In the room on the north side of the apse can be seen a curved wall completely destroyed, probably by earthquake, in the late Sixth Century and rebuilt by the year 597; this is the building which we now see."

Let's get back to Mr. Crotser. He talked also with another minister by the name of Clinton Locy. Reverend Locy lives in Kennewick, Washington. He was 87 years old at the time Mr. Crotser visited him. Reverend Locy gave Crotser a sketching of the area of Mount. Nebo prepared by Mr. Futterer, before Tom went on this last expedition. Although Mr. Futterer had died, Reverend Locy had a lot of his manuscripts which included the book, *Palestine Speaks*. Furthermore, Mr. Futterer had a museum in California including pictures illustrating some of the material in *Palestine Speaks*. He also used the book as a tour guide.

Moreover, Mr. Futterer spent two years there. During the same time, Edmond Rothschild was digging around the Wailing Wall as well as the western walls of Jerusalem searching for the Ark of the Covenant. The wealthy Jewish Rothschild family had been very intrigued with the Ark of the Covenant. Why? Because Orthodox Hebrews believe that whoever discovers the Ark of the Covenant will acquire sweeping powers as the result.

Mr. Crotser, after studying all of this material and all the available documents, made a preliminary trip to Jordan in 1980. He took photos of the area, came back, and studied those for some time. Later on, in October of 1981, it seems that our friend felt that the Lord was speaking to him. So Mr. Crotser went back to Jordan, drove to Madaba, and then to Jebel Syagha, or Mount. Pisgah, and the springs of Pisgah. He stayed in the area for about four days. Please remember that Mount. Nebo is a series of mountains. Pisgah is the highest point, 3,500 feet above the Dead Sea, which is the spot from which Moses surveyed the Promised Land.

Let us not forget that Deut. 34:11-7 says that Moses died there and he was buried somewhere near Pisgah.

Then Moses went from the plains of Moab to Mount Nebo, to the top of Pisgah, which is across from Jericho. And the Lord showed him all the land of Gilead as far as Dan. All Naphtali and the land of Ephraim and Manasseh, all the land

of Judah as far as the Western Sea. The South, as the plain of the Valley of Jericho, the city of palm trees, as far as Zoar. Then the Lord said to him, "This is the land of which I swore to give Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, saying, "I will give it to to give Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, saying, 'I will give it to your descendants.' I have caused you to see it with your eyes, but you shall not cross over there." So Moses, the servant of the Lord died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the Lord. And he buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, opposite Beth Peor; but no one knows his grave to thid Moab, opposite Beth Peor; but no one knows his grave to this day. Moses was one hundred and twenty years old when he died, his eyes were not dim nor his natural vigor abated.

I suggest the Ark of the Lord was brought by Jeremiah and placed in the cave where Moses himself was buried.

Additionally, Madaba is the largest city near Mount Pisgah and boasts of a sizeable Christian population. Incidentally, God gave us one of the greatest revival experiences in the land of Jordan at the city of Madaba during the summer of 1966. At any rate, Madaba is only thirty-five miles southwest of Amman, Jordan's capital. It is also a twenty-minute drive from this great mountain, on which stands today a Franciscan monastery and an ancient church. Moreover, Madaba prides itself in having the only mosaic map in the world which dates back to the Fifth Century, showing most of the Holy Land. The remarkable map is in the floor of the Greek Orthodox Church and is accurate enough to the extent of showing the details of Jerusalem's city wall and main street.

For several years now, the archaeological department of the Kingdom of Jordan has been digging on top of the mountain near the monastery where the ruins of the ancient church building is located. It was delightful to see how some of the most beautiful mosaics one can ever behold have been discovered two to three feet under the old church's floor. They were from the Byzantine Period Fourth - Eighth Century A.D.

V

The Tom Crotser Connection

It is essential that we know as much as possible concerning the explorer who claims to have located the Ark of the Lord on Mount Nebo in Jordan, in October of 1981.

It was my privilege to finally talk to him by phone while I was preaching near Fort Lauderdale, Florida, on September 28, 1983. As the Lord would have it, I was preaching in Sedalia, Missouri two weeks later when four of us were able to make arrangements with Mr. Crotser himself to visit with him in Winfield, Kansas. The 600-mile round trip was worth every effort.

Captain Doyle Vaughn of Southwest Airlines drove the car since the weather did not allow us to fly. The captain lives in Dallas. His father, Mr. Lloyd Vaughn of Tulsa, Oklahoma, accompanied us; so did Pastor Charles Hendrickson of Sedalia, Missouri. We left after the church-revival evening service, arriving at Winfield at 3 a.m. Tom Crotser graciously provided us overnight accommodations on the compound of his organization.

Our interview began at 9 in the morning, although we would have preferred an earlier hour. Due to the fact that Tom has a daily Bible Study from 8:00-8:45 with the leaders

of about 200 people who work with him, we had to wait.

My immediate spiritual response was so positive upon meeting each other that we hugged each other instead of the customary handshakes. I had already sensed the fact that Tom is a born again believer who loves Jesus and the Word of God, through our three or four phone conversations. The three men who accompanied me testified later to the same spiritual perception in their own hearts. Here was a humble man who knows the Lord, believes, loves and knows the Bible. There was nothing pretentious about him whatsoever.

The interview consumed over two hours of our extremely hurried trip. The museum was our first stop where Mr. Crotser displayed a very well-rounded knowledge of history, archaeology, theology and anthropology. Although he holds no doctorate in those subjects, he is actually a very able and mature archaeologist.

The exhibits are basically what his nearly 20-year-old organization has discovered in ten trips to Turkey, six to Peru, several to the Middle East and other parts of the world. His financial support comes from a sizeable construction concern called the Christian Company. I called the chamber of Commerce in Winfield, Kansas, as well as the Police Chief, after I returned home. They gave not a single negative report whatsoever against this man or his organization. He is honest, sincere, and a humble Christian.

The central object of the small museum is the papier-mache cave with a window. When you bend down to look inside the window the picture of the golden Ark is seen in a spectacular manner. Since the cave-like exhibit is dark and the slide projected from the back of the screen which you are looking at is bright, the golden box seems to glow. It is a marvelous sight indeed. No nails can be seen anywhere in the box as the *Biblical Archaeology Review Magazine* reported. The flash light from the camera, when the picture was taken, does show the reflection of several dots which can be construed as tips of modern nails. However,

subsequent slides which Mr. Crotser graciously showed us dispelled any doubts that the golden box was all gold.

As to the design, it kind of looked different from what anyone pictured in his mind. Personally, I did not expect what I saw of the design. To say it is modern and possibly sheet metal is to call Tutankhamun's mask a fake because it looks so new and colorful. When you step into the tombs of the pharaohs in the Valley of the Kings in Luxor, Egypt, you get the feeling that some artist has just painted the spectacular hieroglyphics. The truth is, those words and pictures have been there for over 3,000 years.

He shared with us his background. Yet the most moving was his salvation experience. I must at least share the highlights.

"Since I was about twelve years old I have been searching for the Truth. My folks were Baptists. However, I attended the Methodist, Catholic and Alliance Churches to no avail. Then I went through Hindu and Buddhism rites when I was twenty-two while in Korea serving in the Air Force. Once, I was even trapped behind enemy lines in a fox hole. My buddy was shot and, laying under him, they did not know there was anybody else alive. For three days and nights I was crawling on my hands and knees before I found safety. My diligent study to find something to stabilize my life caused me to study many religions and philosophies; still no answer came.

"At age thirty, I was a married man, with three children, out of the Air Force, and involved in being a top-notch vaudeville magician. Much personal glory was gained, yet my heart was still hungry for truth.

"One day while performing a Houdini trick in Corpus Christi, Texas, I almost lost my life. A straight jacket was placed around me, then I was lowered by my feet, with a crane, into a glass tank of water. I was to get loose and be lifted out when the trap-show was demonstrated. Instead I was drowning. My wife was in the front row. I slumped into the bottom of the tank drowning. A friend of mine, also a magician, rushed to my aid shouting, 'I've seen this act

before. The man is really trapped.' In these fleeting moments, my life passed before me like a high speed movie. Everything that I had done was for my vain glory or personal gain. My life was empty and meaningless. What a horrible realization. Well, suddenly the glass box was snapped open and I rushed out of it with the gushing water.

"This miraculous experience haunted me for three days. Then God's Holy Spirit revealed to me the Truth. I understood that Jesus Christ died for me and He actually was raised from the dead for my justification. I was saved from real death during the trap show. But now I was saved, really saved, forever through the grace of God. *HALLELUJAH!* Since then my purpose in life is to bring glory to God, not myself, or our Institute For Restoring Ancient History International.

"Furthermore, I believe God allowed me and my three companions to locate the Ark in Mount Nebo in Jordan because the time has come for Israel to begin their sacrificial system and that announces the soon return of Jesus Christ."

Now the details of the discovery. Taking his cue from the Book of Maccabees and armed with the material which Reverend Locy gave him, Tom felt he was on the right track.

The visit to the Franciscan monastery on top of Mount Nebo was necessary, since the property on the mountain belongs to them. A permit was obtained from the military commander in the district to photograph the area, while another was granted by the director of the Monastery.

Strange enough is the discovery of a plaque inside the chapel which states that the Ark of the Lord was buried there. Yet, it is obvious that no one believed it, or else somebody would have looked for it.

Nevertheless, the four men stayed four days, spending nights in sleeping bags, while investigating the area and taking pictures particularly of the Pisgah Springs.

The location of the entrance to the cave where the Ark was, was discovered to be in close proximity to the monastery. In fact, if one were on the mountain itself, one will have to keep walking westward away from the peak and

the buildings. Near a bunch of trees, there is a cave which has been examined by numerous people. The four men walked beyond the obvious cave, and trees, locating an opening in the earth itself, which was covered by a metal sheet. At night they entered into the opening, which led to a tunnel 35 feet in length, 4 feet wide and 7 feet high. At the end, a primitive wall blocked the way. A portion was removed, to allow the explorers to enter one by one. Approximately 300 more feet of tunnel was ahead. On either side of the tunnel, ancient tombs on the order of the catacombs, were observed. The excitement was mounting.

Breathless, the four men ran into another wall. It was penetrated partially after knocking some stones down, and again one by one the men made their entrance. The simple room measured 10- x 12-feet and, in the dim light emitting from the hand-held flashlights, they beheld a large object covered with blue material sat in the cave. On the floor they observed some wrapped figures beside the box.

Tom Crotser felt God's presence in an overwhelming manner. Was this the long-lost Ark? He was not afraid to remove the blue cloth covering the object. However, he did not touch the extraordinary golden box which the sheets had covered for so long. He measured in front of it, 62 inches long, 37 inches high, and 37 inches deep. Tom never was bold enough to open it and see if the tablets of the Ten Commandments were there. Time was running out. The four men had to seal the two entrances after walking the entire distance of close to 700 feet before sun-up.

The pictures flashed in the cave did not all come out. Nevertheless, I personally saw enough of the slides to believe that what those four men beheld in the cave was definitely the fantastic Golden Ark of the Lord! Asked about the staves and rings, Tom explained;

"The interesting thing I found about the Ark of the Covenant was that I had always had a concept that the staves and rings were attached to the box itself. But I found out that they were not. They are attached to the legs and

those legs are taken off when the box sits flat on a leveled spot such as on a foundation of stone. Any time the Ark was transported or moved those legs fit up into the four sockets. Then the staves are carried with the rings and chains on the shoulders. That also takes care of how the staves must remain with the Ark all the time.”

The Mercy Seat was not on top of the Ark. Was it part of the wrapped articles? Where is it? Crotser declared to me that it was perhaps taken by Jeremiah to Ireland, along with King Zedekiah’s daughter when Jerusalem fell. I have been aware for a number of years that there are many who believe this. Furthermore, others theorize that even Queen Elizabeth descended from the Hebrew Royal line through King Zedekiah’s daughter. In my opinion, it is a far-fetched theory because at that time traveling that distance from Palestine was unheard of and certainly near to impossible due to the great distance and lack of navigable material capable of such a feat. Even Columbus, 2,000 years later, was considered a lunatic when he tried a long journey of this magnitude. Another possibility, according to Crotser, is that the Mercy Seat is actually in an underground cave reached through a well near Mount Nebo. An old native of Madaba secretly told Tom this story when he was spending a week in the area. Let me point out that the sketch Tom made of his penetration into the cave shows that the chamber is almost directly under the monastery.

The work was done by night so as to not attract attention. On the last night after the exciting discovery, the men closed every hole that they had made in the two walls and left quietly. Tom spoke to the director of the archaeology department at the University of Jordan who informed him that Jordan was not interested in this sort of thing.

Mr. Crotser and his companions crossed the border into Israel. Still, nobody believed them, although the *Jerusalem Post* printed a brief story on November 22, 1981.

VI

Proofs, Predictions and Perplexing Problems

In March of 1983, I shared with an archaeologist, Dr. Eugene M. Keebler, the news of the Ark. To my utter amazement Dr. Keebler related to me an astonishing story, (he was instrumental in my coming to the U.S.A. in 1953 to attend Clarke College in Newton, Mississippi), of an extraordinary experience while on Mount Nebo in 1980.

His group, which he was leading to the Holy Land, made a special trip to Mount Nebo to view the plains of Jericho and the mountains of Jerusalem at sunset. While several members of the group began to walk back to the bus, four others joined him as he sat on a stone ledge to watch the panorama which Moses must have observed. Suddenly, and without warning “the sound of hovering wings of being around us and over us was felt. It was wonderful to experience. It was powerful, quiet, reverent presence and like holy silence. Then, as another group of tourists was coming over to our spot the presence began to ascend. I told my four companions if we prayed, the Divine presence may return. We immediately prayed, and sure enough the

awesome presence returned. We had a tremendous sense of joy because our prayers were answered. A few moments later it was lifted.”

This experience of Dr. Keebler’s is significant because in a way it substantiates the belief that Mount Nebo is the spot where the sacred Ark was found. The Divine presence is known to accompany the Ark.

Gene Keebler holds a Th.D. from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and a Ph.D. in Education from Mississippi University. Besides being an archaeologist, he is Vice President of Palm Beach Atlantic College in West Palm Beach, Florida. He was, however, Vice President of Mobile College, Mobile, Alabama when this experience took place.

In June of this year, 1983, my wife, daughter, and other pilgrims stood with me on Mount Nebo. We had our usual singing, scripture reading, and prayer. Knowing how close I was to the tunnel and the possibility of going in there to see what Tom Croster and his three friends had seen, sent cold chills up and down my spine. I concluded that I was not bold enough to attempt that by myself. Maybe I’ll go there someday with some trusted friend. Yet, the awesome significance of the Ark of the Lord as symbol of the Divine presence is something to reckon with anytime, anywhere.

Mr. Crotser declared emphatically that he is willing to go anywhere and be interviewed on TV, radio, as well as by newspapermen to tell of his finding. Yet, because he is neither visible nor a famed professional, nobody seems interested.

The truth of this reality, that you need to be visible in the media to be covered by the media, was demonstrated a few weeks ago. The astronaut, Jim Irwin, was accorded front page coverage when he went on an expedition to Mount Ararat looking for Noah’s Ark. Whereas, Tom has been there ten times! Can you imagine ten times, bringing pictures and even gopher wood from Noah’s Ark, yet it never made the papers but once. Incidentally, Jim Irwin and a companion called me from Amman, Jordan in 1975. They

were going that morning to Mount Nebo to search for the Ark and asked me for further information because they had read or heard my conviction about its being in Mount Nebo! Anyway, we asked Mr. Crotser why didn't you bring the Ark of the Covenant out to show the world. He replied, "God sent me only to locate the Ark. I was not to open it, neither was I to bring it out." Death struck the unauthorized touching or looking into it (I Sam. 5-7; II Sam. 6).

You may wonder, as I have wondered, how was the Ark transported if the eyes of common men were forbidden from beholding it. The Ark, when transported, was enveloped in the "veil" of the dismantled tabernacle first. Then the curtain of the badgers' skin covered that and finally a blue cloth covered the two (Num. 4:5,20). The Ark, therefore, was not seen except by the High Priest. To God's people the Ark contained inviolate the divine autograph of the two tablets, the "covenant" from which it derived its title "The Ark of the Covenant." Furthermore, the Ark supported the Mercy Seat, which materially symbolizes for all God's people the "Covenant" as that on which "mercy" stands.

The "Institute for Restoring Ancient History International" is publishing their findings in November of 1983. The title of the book is *The Ark of the Covenant*. A pamphlet, of four pages, in full color, was released last year with a summary of the book. The pamphlet alone costs \$4. The book is to sell for \$14.95 when released.

VII

The Ark and The Anti-Christ

An amazing belief of Mr. Crotser presents the idea that none other than Mr. David Rothschild of London, England, will actually be able to undertake such a project. I must interject a very important statement which Tom made to me. "I am just relating what I believe...but if someone proves to me that I am wrong I will change my position. My conscience will tell me and the Holy Spirit will condemn me when I am wrong."

Later, the more I contemplated Tom's explanation that David Rothschild will spearhead the project of retrieving the Ark from Mount Nebo and bring it back to Jerusalem, the more I could see the feasibility.

The financial wizard, the richest Hebrew in the world can get the hot object out of worried Jordanian government hands by offering a sizable sum of money. Then he could offer it to the Orthodox Jews with two stipulations. He

could demand first that they must bring it with the Biblical instructions carried on the shoulders of the Levites and place it in the Jerusalem Great Synagogue. Then he could declare that the sacrificial system must be reinstated according to the Mosaic Law.

With the achievement of getting the Ark out of Jordan with a sizable financial profit to Jordan on one hand, and providing the Jews with their priceless treasure of the Ark on the other, no one will be in a better position to negotiate a peace treaty between the warring sons of Abraham. The brilliant man, in solving the Palestinian problem in a grand fashion, will of course, capture the imagination of the whole world.

One is mystified upon the discovery that the Rothschild establishment in London, England sets the price of gold for the rest of the world's financial institutions on a day to day basis. Daniel 11:38 predicts:

“But in their place he shall honor a god of fortresses; and a god which his fathers did not know he shall honor with gold and silver, with precious stones and pleasant things.”

We wonder, was it coincidental that a shocking newspaper ad about Christ's appearance came from London?

Millions around the globe awoke to a great surprise on April 25, 1982. They opened their newspapers only to be greeted with full-page display ads brazenly proclaiming *The Christ Is Now Here*

From Rome to Jerusalem, from Kuwait to Karachi and from New York to Los Angeles in more than 20 major cities newspaper readers blinked in shocked disbelief as they tried to digest this particular piece of “news” along with their breakfast.

The \$500,000 plus ad campaign featured the following copy:

The World Has Had Enough...
Of Hunger, Injustice,
War.

In Answer To Our Call For Help,
As World Teacher For All Humanity. . .

The Christ Is Now Here.

You can find more information if you acquire Constance Cumbey's very recent book *The Hidden Dangers...Of The Rainbow*. It is published by Huntington House, Shreveport, Louisiana, 1983.

An Indian associate of our organization, Dr. B. A. Prabhakar, happened to be visiting in America when the flashy ad appeared. Discussing the subject over the phone we completely agreed that since Prabhakar will be passing through London on his way to his home of Hyderabad he would stop over in London long enough to interview the man behind the scene. And so it was.

Prabhakar's report was in writing and quite detailed. At any rate, I will give the highlights. Dr. Benjamin Creme's wife appeared at the door, welcomed him, then handed him her husband's famous book plus a magazine they publish, called *Share*. She indicated that Dr. Prabhakar could peruse through them in the living room until Creme came. *The Reappearance of the Christ and the Masters of Wisdom* was released in 1980 by Tara Centers throughout the world.

Prabhakar asked, "If the Christ is here, according to your ads, when and from where did he come?"

Creme answered, "The Christ came from the Himalayas where he was for thousands of years. He came from the Himalayas to Pakistan, then by air to London. He is now living in London among the Pakistani community."

"How will he speak to the world at the same time as your ad announced?"

"He will appear on world TV and radio. Furthermore, he will speak to everyone by telepathy."

“Is this Christ you are talking about the Lord Jesus Christ?”

“No. He is not Jesus nor is he God. He is not the one and only Son of God.”

The interview went on for two hours. Dr. Prabhakar indicated how sleepy he became, at times feeling himself fall off the sofa to the floor. We know now that Creme has been trained in hypnosis, occult, and mind control. Many, during his lectures, experience the same thing being under hypnosis, even to the red eyes and glazed look. The New Age movement was proud to claim Jim Jones as their own until the Jim Jones Tragedy took place in Guyana.

Jesus warned us explicitly of deceptive or so-called Messiahs.

“For many will come in My name, saying, ‘I am the Christ,’ and will deceive many.” Matthew 24:5

The aging Britisher Creme, the dictatorial Moon, Jim Jones, the spell-binding Sahi Baba of India, plus the numerous greater or lesser figures of history of our own day should be recognized as they really are false Messiahs.

Any particularly intelligent man can fit the concept of the New Age Movement of the Messiah. Their word for him is “Maitreya.” What does it mean? Well, it is supposed to be, of all things, the name of the fifth incarnation of Buddha. But wait a moment. In order to appeal to the Christians and Jews he is called Christ. To the Muslims he is Mahdi. To the Hindus he is Krishna. Yet the most frightening is the unveiling of the name Lucifer as the most favored! No. 666 to the New Agers, is a sacred number. They want to establish a new world government, religion, universal credit system, food authority, universal tax, universal draft. In other words, the New Age Movement is getting our world ready for the appearance of the Anti-Christ.

Now back to Mr. David Rothschild. One may ask;

What can keep such a brilliant, powerful, wealthy man from controlling the world? Once the Ark is back in

Jerusalem and through his mediation Arabs and Jews are at peace, why he can just about get anything he wants! Whether he or any other such person, his popularity will be world-wide as his health, wealth, and wisdom will be lauded and glorified.

The third act of the scenario is the election of this highly intelligent man to the presidency of the new third world power the U.S.E. It is only a matter of time that the United States of Europe will emerge from the ten nations of the Common Market as a formidable power to reckon with as well as seek to balance the two superpowers of America and Russia.

What or who can stop him from uniting the monetary systems of the world? Or who will not agree with him to a one world religion? As the most powerful man on earth, such a man becomes the supreme ruler as he demands the placing of a laser-tattooed 666 digit number in three layers on the back of the hand or forehead. A person becomes a walking credit card, thus doing away with cash money. The number will be invisible except under the infra-red scanner. "The Beast", nickname for the largest existing computer in the world, located in the Common Market Building in Brussels, will facilitate this numbering scheme since it has the capability of providing a number for every human on earth.

Finally, the mighty ruler will demand that he be worshipped as God in the recognized center of World religions—Jerusalem. II Thess. 2:3-5 predicted such an event over 1900 years ago:

"Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshipped, so that he sits as God in the Temple of God, showing himself that he is God. Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things."

Therefore, it seems feasible that the Anti-Christ will

actually appear on the horizon of World history followed by the Armageddon wars before this century comes to a close.

Among the numerous characteristics of such a personality is his having to be a Hebrew in order for the Hebrews to even consider him as their Messiah. Imagine the fantastic combination of a candidate who is a Hebrew, named David, and is exactly the same age as the nation of Israel? A large number of prophecy students have long believed that the Messiah has to be same age as Israel's age since 1948's rebirth. Moreover, the Matthew 24:35 prophecy is interpreted from Hebrew in a unique manner. "*This newborn one shall not pass away till all these things shall be fulfilled.*" The English term "generation" is from the Hebrew "new-born one," which can be taken to mean Israel. Figuring the birth took place in 1948 and a generation is 50 years, the man should be about 35 years old right now.

Here are some verses to support my conclusion that the generation is 50 years:

1. Numbers 4:3 "from thirty years old and above, even to fifty years old, all who enter the service to do the work in the tabernacle of meeting."

2. Numbers 8:25 "and at the age of fifty years they must cease performing this work, and shall work no more."

3. Leviticus 25:10 "And you shall consecrate the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout all the land to all of its inhabitants. It shall be a Jubilee for you;"

It seems to me that from age 40-50 the years of declension, destruction, death and devastation will begin 1988-1998, concluding with the Second Coming of Jesus. The Rapture may happen from now till 1988 with His return 7-10 years later.

VIII

Of Temples, Synagogues And The End Of The World

Those of you have gotten my new book, *Jesus, Prophecy and The Middle East*, need to look at page 41. I refer to Dr. Asher Kaufman, a physicist, who spent ten years looking for the original site of the temple and finally found it to have been north of the Dome of the Rock. This is definitely another exciting bit of information. In fact, the Dome of the Spirits, 333 feet from the Dome of the Rock, may mark the stone of foundation where the Ark was placed in the Temple of Solomon. When he was asked why he was doing that, the response of the professor was, "I don't know." His research took him to the ancient writings, called *The Middot* dating to the period of the second temple. Also, he dug deeply into the aerial photographs of Jerusalem made by German aviators in 1918. Furthermore, he continued to read the Old Testament scriptures as well as Josephus and others.

It is remarkable that it took him ten years instead of his Sabbatical year. He presented the fascinating material in *Christian News from Israel*, March, 1980. *Biblical Archaeology Review*, March 1983, had on its front cover the "Dome of The Spirits or Tablets" and a long article with pictures in color covering the new discoveries by Dr. Kaufman. "The picture of the second Temple," says the professor, "which has been pieced together from

archaeological and other sources is no longer a mere sketch. Rather it approaches the architectural plan of an actual building. And most importantly, it would appear that divine providence has insured that no major structure occupied the actual site of the temple. The magnificent Dome of the Rock stands south of the Temple site.”

Some valuable historical information in connection with the Temple of Herod should be mentioned here.

Herod began the rebuilding in 20 B.C. The Temple was completed in A.D. 64, long after his death. Hardly six years later, General Titus completely obliterated it.

The dimensions were: 150 feet x 150 feet, including the courts; it was 750 feet long x 600 feet wide. The bronze altar inside was 48 feet square and 24 feet high.

Herod's Temple was the most beautiful building in the world. It was made of gorgeous marble and gold which gleamed from afar as if it were a mountain of snow glittering in the sun.

Surprisingly enough, as great and glorious as Herod's Temple was, history tells us that for the first Temple, King David provided 3,000 talents of gold (3.6 million ounces)\$1,800,000,000. He provided 7,000 talents of silver, or \$84,000,000 towards the building (I Chronicles 29:4-5). Yet, the total amount of gold gathered for the great project calculated at 100,000 talents and 1,000,000 talents of silver, plus untold quantities of bronze and cedar wood. Some scholars estimate from Biblical records that the First Temple was built at a cost of 75 billion dollars!

Spacious enough, the Second Temple could easily hold 120,000 worshippers. Today, during Ramadan and special Moslem Holy Days, the Temple mount accommodates practically the exact same number of people.

There was one High Priest in Herod's temple, along with 200 Chief Priests, who could trace their lineage back to Zadok.

The regular priests numbered 7,200 divided into 24 priestly clans, each serving a week at a time. Their

responsibilities included lighting the altar fires and sacrificing the animals, plus burning the incense and baking the unleavened bread.

There were 9,600 Levites serving as guards, policemen, doorkeepers, singers and musicians.

The normal daily Temple ritual demanded 1,000 Priests and Levites. However, during the Passover, the Feast of Weeks, and the Feast of Tabernacle, all 24 clans were required to attend. Thus there were 18,000 Chief Priests, regular priests, and Levites.

Almost six centuries after the destruction of the Temple by Titus, Jerusalem fell to the Moslems in A.D. 639, and the magnificent dome was finished in A.D. 691. The octagonal architectural marvel is 528 feet in circumference, rising to a height of 108 feet, towering over the skyline of ancient Jerusalem.

The origins of Jerusalem are lost in the mists of antiquity. It was first mentioned in the Bible during the time of Abraham under the name of Salem which means peace. *"And Melchizedek, King of Salem brought forth bread and wine, and he was the priest of the most High God."* (Gen. 13:18)

In the Tenth Century B.C. David captured the city from the Jebusites, made it his capital, and brought into it the Ark of the Covenant.

965-922 B.C. Solomon beautified the city and built the Temple.

586 B.C. The Babylonians captured the city, destroyed the Temple and carried the Jews into captivity to Babylon.

538 B.C. The Jews returned to Jerusalem and rebuilt the Temple.

332 B.C. Alexander the Great captured Jerusalem.

168 B.C. Antiochus Epiphanes razed its walls.

167-163 B.C. The Jews enjoyed independence under the Hasmonean kings.

63 B.C. The Romans captured the city.

37 B. C. Herod was appointed King of the Jews. As a great builder, he beautified Jerusalem, built its walls and rebuilt the Temple more magnificently than Solomon's. Herod's Jerusalem was the city that Jesus knew.

70 A.D. In fulfillment of the prophecy of Jesus (Luke 19:41-44; 21:24) Jerusalem was destroyed by Titus after the crushing of the first Jewish revolt.

132-135 A.D. After the crushing of the second Jewish revolt of Bar Kokhba, Hadrian rebuilt Jerusalem as a Roman city and called it Aelia Capitolina. Roman temples were built over Jewish and Christian sacred sites. The Jews were forbidden to enter the city under penalty of death.

330 A.D. Constantine converted Jerusalem into a Christian city.

614 A.D. The Persians conquered Jerusalem and destroyed all its churches.

636 A.D. Jerusalem passed to the Arabs who held it for almost 500 years.

1099 A.D. Jerusalem was taken by the Crusaders and became the seat of their Latin Kingdom.

1187 A.D. It was reconquered by the Moslems under Saladin.

1517 A.D. The city fell into the hands of the Turks and remained under their control for the next 400 years.

1917 A.D. It was taken by the Allies under General Allenby of the British Army.

1948 A.D. During the Jewish-Arab war, Jerusalem was partitioned between Israel and Jordan.

1949 A.D. Modern part of Jerusalem was made the capital of the State of Israel.

1967 A.D. During the Six Day War, Israel took the Old City, which had been in Jordanian hands since 1948.

Now, what about the Great Synagogue which was dedicated in Jerusalem on August 4, 1982?

Talking about synagogues and temples, has it ever occurred to you that we will perhaps end up with seven temples before the end of the world? You say, why seven? Well, because seven is a perfect number derived from Number 3 and Number 4. The first (3) stands for Divinity Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit. The latter (4) stands for the creation, or as the ancients would say, "the four corners of the earth." The combination represents perfection. Furthermore, God created the world in seven days. We also have a world-wide acceptance of this fact inasmuch as there are seven days to the week with Sunday or the Sabbath being the day of rest.

We also have the seven words of Jesus on the cross, the seven churches of Revelation, plus the seven years of Tribulation and the seven plagues.

Nostradamus prophesied in the Sixteenth Century in France about numerous events. During the later part of the 1970s and this decade, the French Jewish "Prophet" has been rediscovered. Here is a particularly intriguing prophecy about the number 7000:

When twenty years of the moon's reign pass
Seven thousand years, another will hold dominion
When the sun resumes its waning days
My prophecy will be fulfilled and finished.
(Some see the end of the world here.)

According to the Jewish calendar we are fast approaching the year 7000. To millions it ushers the 1000 years of rest of the Millennium.

Another engaging prophecy is found on page 90, X 74, of *The Prophecies of Nostradamus* 1980 edition:

The year of the great seventh number passed
An apparition at time of ritual sacrifice
Not far from the age of the millennium
When the buried go out from their tombs.

Be that as it may, I have held for several years that more than likely we will end up with seven temples before the end of time as we know it.

1. In as much as a temple was a spot, a place, a mountain where man met God, we discover Mount Moriah to be the first. It was there God led Abraham to go and bring his son as the first sacrifice. (Genesis 22.)

2. Five centuries later, King David erected the Lord's Tabernacle on the same spot, Mount Moriah in Jerusalem. (II Samuel 6:12; 24:18.)

3. The third temple was built in seven years by Solomon. (I Kings 8.)

4. Zerubbabel built the fourth one. (Haggai 1:14.)

5. Herod built the largest over a period of more than 50 years.

6. Jerusalem Great Synagogue began in 1969 and dedicated in 1982.

7. The most elaborate of all has its blueprint in 40-47 of Ezekiel. Such a temple has never been built. It is very likely it will be during the Millennium after the destruction of the sixth temple by the Anti-Christ.

Now what about the Great Synagogue which was dedicated in Jerusalem on August 4, 1982?

During our recent twentieth Pilgrimage to the Holy Land in January, 1983, we did stop in front of this magnificent Temple and took pictures. It was an unusual day because snow had fallen over Jerusalem! Six months later we toured the fabulous synagogue. It is located in the heart of modern Jerusalem. Tunneled out of the solid rock, beneath the basement, are auto parking facilities, bomb shelters, and adequate fortifications and survival facilities.

It also has a retractable roof which enables the officiating Rabbi to conduct the Orthodox Jewish wedding which is to be conducted under the open sky. Beautiful stained glass windows face the Dome of the Rock approximately one mile away to the East.

On June 24, 1969, the ceremony of the laying of the foundation stone of the Jerusalem synagogue occurred. Present at this function were the President of Israel, the chief rabbis, cabinet and diplomatic members, Jerusalem's mayor, and distinguished Jewish leaders from around the world. This ceremony was repeated on August 4th, 1982, when the synagogue was dedicated.

The Jerusalem Great Synagogue was built from that beautiful Jerusalem stone which is known to change its color throughout the day, the sun giving it a golden tinge toward evening hence the expression "Jerusalem the Golden."

The exterior architecture of the building has its own individual style, the central feature being a high tower depicting the two tablets of stone bearing the Ten Commandments.

Special materials to insure the maximum acoustics have been used so that the service can be heard in every part of the synagogue without the need of a microphone.

There are twelve stained glass windows and a specially designed window which divides the two tablets forming the central tower. This window, facing the ancient city and site of the Temple, is twenty meters in length.

The Great Synagogue has no center beams, and the Ark of the Covenant can stand beneath the great windows providing an unobstructed view to all the worshippers. This synagogue can provide all the requirements of the Tribulation Temple. If this is not it, once again we would have to say that the eminence of the Lord's return would be delayed as the present temple has been some years already in the building. The Anti-Christ is going to sit in the temple and show himself to be God (II Thess. 2:3-4). It certainly looks as if that time is fast approaching.

A Summary

To summarize our entire presentation, I must remind you that Jesus declared, "*Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God.*" (Matthew 22:29.)

1. We need to know the scripture through studying it. We must also experience the power of God through prayer.

2. The Golden Gate is awaiting the return of Jesus, to welcome Him as King of Kings and Lord of Lords, to open wide its sealed entrance.

3. The exciting discovery of the Ark of the Covenant on Mount Nebo in Jordan, is by and large a fact which time will reveal to be true. A controversy or even a war may erupt between Jordan and Israel over the ownership of the Ark very soon if someone does not remove the sacred vessel.

4. The Temple which scholars call the "Tribulation Temple" is more than likely the one dedicated August 4, 1982, and named, "The Jerusalem Great Synagogue." The Ark may end up in it.

5. The coming of our Lord Jesus Christ is certainly drawing nearer, as the days go by, through the fulfillment of the great commission as found in Matthew 24:14, "*And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.*"

Have you ever connected the establishment of Israel, the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls, the tablets of Ebla, the finding of Noah's Ark, and the rediscovery of the Shroud of Turin to Biblical accuracy and prophecy? Is God Almighty trying to confront, convince and convert modern, scientific and sophisticated man through the overwhelming evidence of the truth of His Word?

These and other facts must prompt us to seek several objectives:

1. The Holy Spirit's power must be demonstrated daily as we are prompted to holier living if we are Christians already.

2. Faithful and earnest prayer should be exercised, coupled with sincere efforts to seek the lost.

3. We must boldly undertake the fulfillment of the Great Commission through sacrificial giving of our time, talents and treasures.

4. If you are not converted, born again, saved, Christian, the time has come for you to ask God to forgive your sins and Christ Jesus to come into your life as your Savior and Lord. Time is running out. The noblest decision in the human existence is when one believes in Christ. His promise is true, "*I have come that they may have life and have it more abundantly.*" (John 10:10.) Again He promised, "*And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.*" (John 8:32.)

X

Incredible And Fascinating Picture Section

Dome Of The Tablets

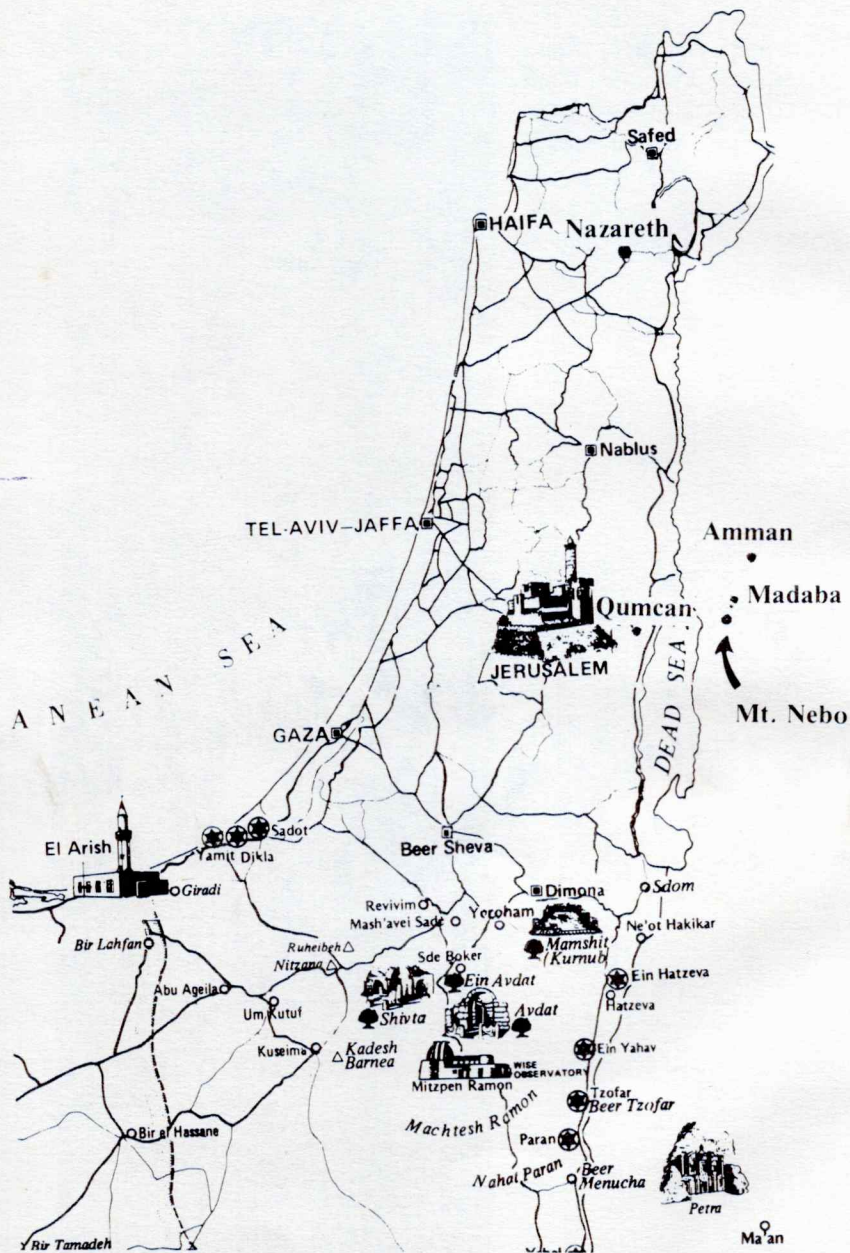
Scholars have long supposed that the impressive golden-domed mosque called the Dome of the Rock stands on the site where the Temple once stood, and that as Sakhrathe bedrock sheltered beneath the domeis the Foundation Stone of the Holy of Holies in the Temple. Yet if one were to enter the Temple Mount by the Golden gate, as could be done in antiquity, continuing straight ahead would not lead directly to the Temple, assuming it stood on the site of the Dome of the Rock. This can be seen clearly in the photograph of the Temple Mount behind the Old City's east wall: walking through the Golden Gate directly west onto the Temple Mount would lead not to the Dome of the Rock but to a small cupola Moslems call the Dome of the Tablets. The alignment of the Golden Gate with the Dome of the Tablets may be seen more dramatically in the photo at the right. Dr. Kaufman suggests that the Dome of the Tablets, not the Dome of the Rock, marks the location of the Holy of Holies of the Temple.



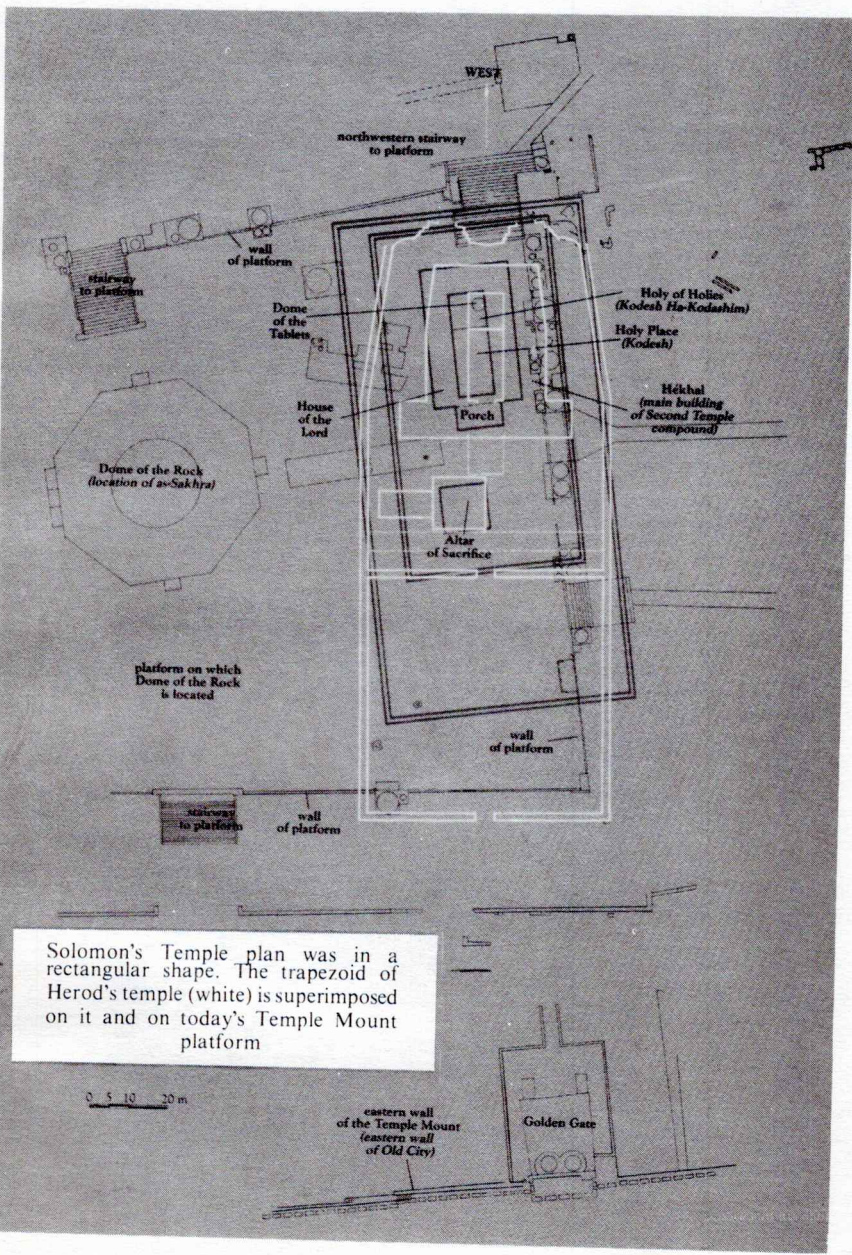
The Dome Of The Tablets in the northwest corner of the Temple Mount covers a small area of flat bedrock. The rest of the Dome of the Rock platform is paved with flagstones. Perhaps this ancient Arabic name preserves the memory of the Foundation Stone in the Temple where the Tablets of the Law were kept. Another Arabic name for this cupola, "Dome of the Spirits," also suggests the holiness of the site. The flat stone is only one meter lower than the rock-mass in the center of the Dome of the Rock.

This photo clearly shows that walking straight from the Golden Gate west onto the Temple Mount would not lead to the Dome of the Rock but to the small cupola called Dome of the Tablets.





Modern Israel and part of Jordan showing where the Ark has been located. Amaan, the capitol, is north of Mt. Nebo and Madaba.



Solomon's Temple plan was in a rectangular shape. The trapezoid of Herod's temple (white) is superimposed on it and on today's Temple Mount platform

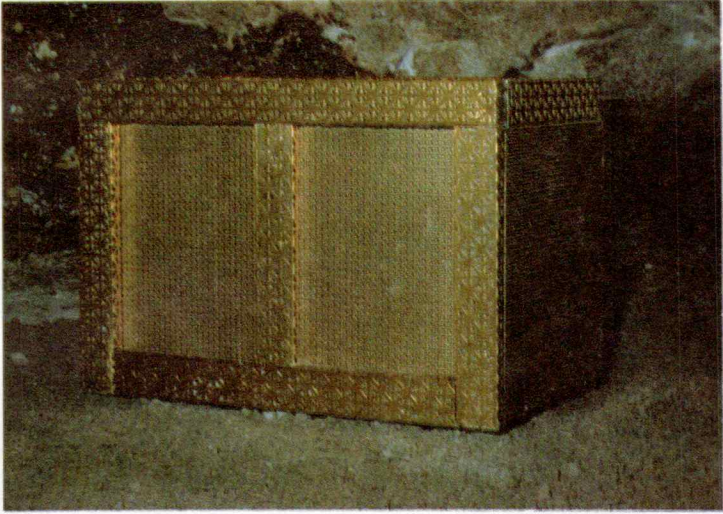
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The fantastically beautiful Synagogue's main entrance. It was dedicated August 4, 1982 and could become the tribulation temple.



The inside view of the most expensive synagogue building in the world. The spectacular furnishing of this gorgeous edifice points to the fact that it is the most beautiful synagogue ever built since the destruction of the Temple of Herod.



The golden box as it appeared to the four men in the dark cave on Mount Nebo. The staff and rings were near this unusual box. Is this the Ark?

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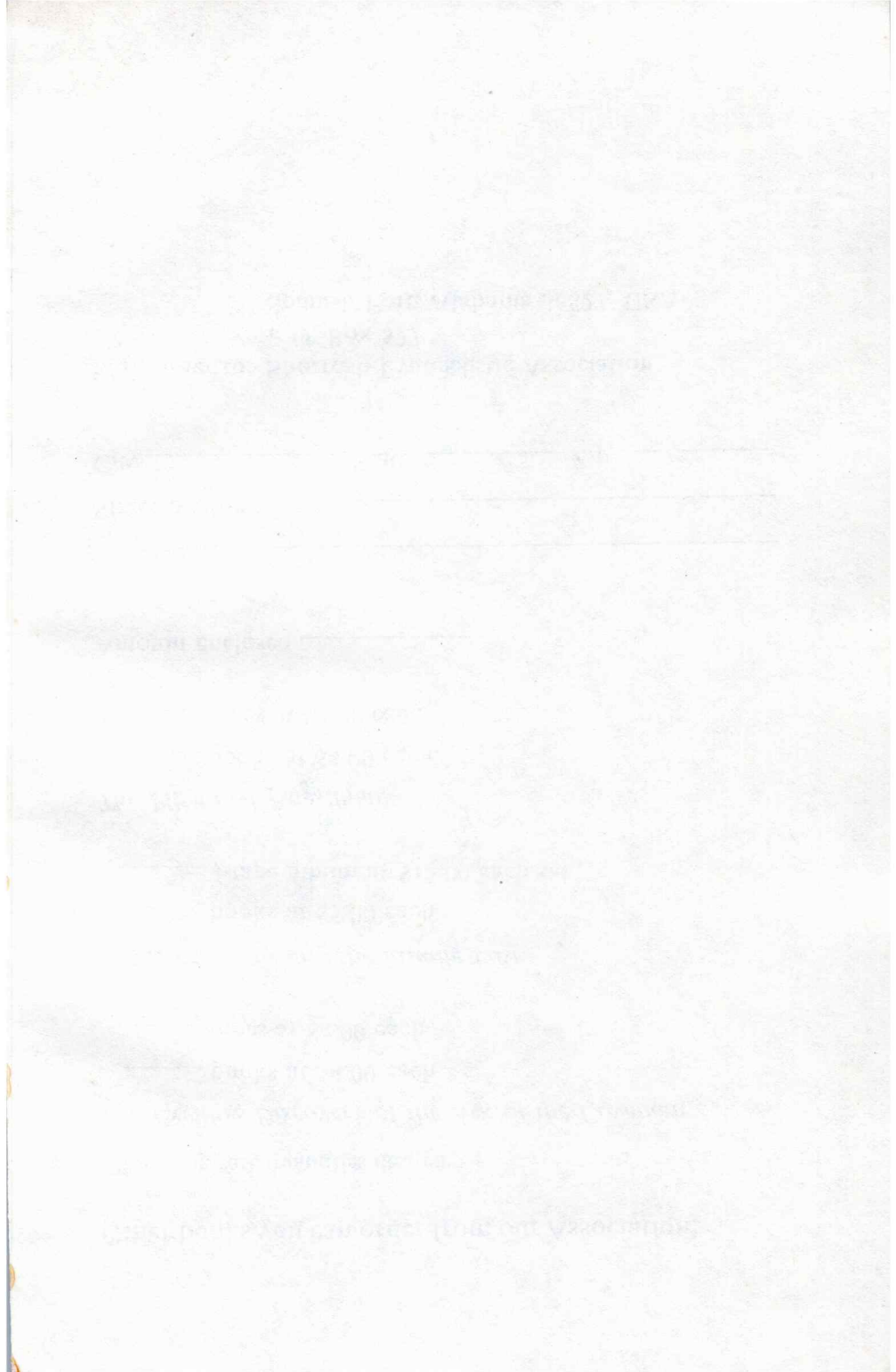
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Dr. Anis A. Shorrosh is a native of Nazareth, the hometown of Jesus.

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Served as pastor and evangelist in the Middle East from 1959-1966. Three of these years were pastoring the Baptist Church in East Jerusalem.

In 1966, responded to God's definite call to world evangelism while at a retreat at Emmaus, near Jerusalem. Now, through the Shorrosh Evangelistic Association supports National evangelists in India, Nepal, the Holy Land, and other countries.

Author of several books, such as: *The Ultimate Reality; An Ambassador for Jesus*. The newest are *Jesus, Prophecy and Middle East*, published by Thomas Nelson and *Where Jesus Walked; A Pilgrim's Guidebook*.

Subject of a best-seller biography, *The Liberated Palestinian*, published by Victor Books and written by James and Marti Hefley.

Honored by being the *Moody Monthly* cover story January 1975, and written up in the outstanding *Christianity Today* in February 1982.

Producer of 16 mm documentaries on Jordan, India, and Egypt. Just released a powerful two part documentary, "Where Jesus Walked." Each has been presented as TV specials.

Conducted six preaching tours around the world; during the third he took his entire family with him traveling five months. Dr. Shorrosh conducts Holy Land Pilgrimages twice a year to his native land.

Dr. and Mrs. Shorrosh live in the Mobile Metropolitan area and are the parents of four children, Salam, Paul, Steve, and Victoria.