Ark of the Covenant

One of the most mystifying objects from the past that still creates conjecture today is the "Ark of the Covenant". There are many different interpretations as to what the Ark of the Covenant truly was, ranging from a cult object symbolizing the presence of God to a weapon of massive destructive potential. So exactly what was the "Ark"? Now I will attempt to draw together many ideas from many sources in an attempt to establish the real nature of the Ark.

The Ark: The Ark of the Covenant is first mentioned in the Bible. Following Israel's deliverance from slavery in Egypt, God instructs Moses to build a Tabernacle (or tent) in which the Israelites will worship God. The Ark of the Covenant was the most sacred object in the Tabernacle. Its primary function was for God to communicate with Moses and to give detailed instructions about what was allowed and what was prohibited. It was to be made with acacia wood and overlaid with gold. Dimensionally, the Ark was to be 2.5 cubits (1 cubit is approximately 18 in.) long and 1.5 cubits wide and high. Atop the Ark were two gold cherubs that stood with their wings covering an area of the Ark known as the "Mercy Seat".

What were in the Ark? The Ark of the Covenant contained three items of extreme significance to the Israelites. The first was two stone tablets bearing the divine inscription of the Ten Commandments. The Ten Commandments formed the foundation of God's covenant with Israel, commonly referred to as "The Law". The second item in the Ark was the rod of Aaron. The last item was a golden pot of manna. Manna was the starchy food God miraculously provided for the Israelites during the 40 years they had to spend wandering in the desert.

Ark in the Quran: There is a brief mention of the Ark of the Covenant in The Quran and Islamic literature. According to a few Muslim scholars, the Ark of the Covenant does not have a religious basis in Islam and Islam does not give it any special significance. Others believe that it will be found by Imam Mahdi at the time of the end of days.

Mysterious Powers: Is the Ark of the Covenant as powerful and terrifying as some have portrayed it to be? "Legends of the Jews" by Louis Ginsberg contains many records of ancient oral traditions relating to the Ark, many of which refer to "sparks" or "fiery jets" that jump spontaneously from the cherubim and destroyed nearby objects. It is said that in a march from Sinai and at the crossing of the Jordan the Ark of the Covenant burned the thorns and other obstructions in the roads through the wilderness. Sparks from between the two cherubim killed snakes and scorpions. During the crossing of the Jordan, the river grew dry as soon as the feet of the priests carrying the Ark touched its waters; and remained so until the priests left the river with the Ark!

Present location: Where is the lost Ark of the Covenant? There are numerous theories and claims. Unfortunately, nothing substantial has ever been produced about the Ark's present whereabouts. In 1989, the late Ron Wyatt claimed to have seen the ark and taken photographs. All the photos came out blurry!! Some sources suggest the Ark was smuggled to Egypt. Today, it is believed by some that this refers to the Tomb of Tutankhamen. Some believe that what was found there are the described treasures including the Ark of the Covenant.

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Media references: Scholars continue to provide new insights into the history of this ancient relic. The Ark of the Covenant was focused on in the highly popular 1981 adventure film *Raiders of the Lost Ark*. The plot suggests that Adolph Hitler wanted to acquire the Ark in order to rule the world. The Ark is seen again in *Honey, I Blew Up the Kids*.

The Ark of the Covenant disappeared off the pages of history by the time of the Babylonian Captivity. Was the Ark truly destroyed, or was it stolen or hidden somewhere? This is the question that has consumed men's lives for centuries. It seems that its location would not be revealed until God is ready for it to be found! **-Source: Internet**