

Chapter 7: The Ark of the Covenant

The average person would say that Moses and the Hebrews made and used the Ark of the Covenant as a way to talk and listen to God. This is not the viewpoint of the vast majority of academia. Their views are that Moses was a fictional character, the Exodus was a myth, Mount Sinai was a myth, the Red Sea crossing never happened, and—since all of the Biblical characters, places, and events were fictional—therefore everything that happened at Mount Sinai must have been fictional because Mount Sinai was fictional. They also say that the Ark, if it ever existed, was nothing more than a piece of statuary that could not speak to anyone. Their reasoning seems to be that because no academician¹ has ever found Mount Sinai therefore it does not exist. The Ark could not possibly have spoken to Moses or the Hebrews because their civilization had not evolved to building or understanding electricity, transmitters, radios or anything technologically advanced. Therefore, the Ark could not have existed. Since the Bible story relates that God “spoke” through the Ark in a supernatural way, and academia cannot see how the Hebrews could have had such technology, the only logical conclusion to them would be that the Ark did not exist *as described*, or it was just a myth like everything else in the Bible.

Fortunately for all of us, I know more than they do about the location of the true Mount Sinai and I have an unshakable belief that the Torah is basically a true story that had to be decoded before anyone could understand what the real message was that Moses left us. This Chapter will explain how the Ark of the Covenant worked and what the priests did when they knelt in front of it. Finally, I will explain who took the Ark out of Jerusalem in 587 B.C.E. just before the fall of Jerusalem and hid it safely away where it will one day be found again and used to speak and listen to God.

All the following dimensions are presented in sacred cubits (sc), with standard measurement equivalents in parentheses. As an interesting addition, all of the measurements or descriptions of all the objects are written twice in the book of Exodus.

How did Moses Know How to Build the Ark?

Moses received all of his instructions of how to build the Ark and the other Temple articles when he was in the cave at Mount Sinai. Moses did not build the holy objects himself, but rather God had somehow given the knowledge of how to build these objects to a few people, especially to one man, named Bezalel (also spelled Bezeleel), in Hebrew בצלאל.

[Exodus31:1] And the Lord spoke unto Moses, saying: [2] “See, I have called by name Bezalel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah; [3] and I have filled him with the spirit of God, in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship, [4] to devise skilful works, to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass, [5] and in cutting of stones, to setting, and in carving of wood, to work in all manner of workmanship. [6] And I, behold, I have appointed with him Aholiab, the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan; and in the hearts of all that are wise hearted I have put wisdom, that they may make all that I have commanded thee: . . .”

It is very unusual for anyone to acquire so much knowledge instantly. I felt there was something strange about this person. Therefore, I looked at what his name meant in Hebrew. There are two interpretations to his name: The Rabbis have used the translation, *in the shadow of God*. The first letter ב means *in*. The second part of the word צל, means *shadow*, and finally the last two Hebrew letters אל are another way of expressing the name of God. The other interpretation for his name is, *Only God*, because the first three letters בצל means “only,” and the last two mean *God*. Either Moses was trying to tell us that Bezalel received his instruction from God while he was in the shadows of the dimly lit cave, or Moses was telling us that God was the real designer of the Ark, and man was merely following instructions. My feeling is that it is most likely both.

After the Ark was built, Moses communicated with God through the Ark, and not from within the cave or from the Rod. The following verse describes a picture of the finished Ark, shown to the workers so they would know precisely what to build. This could be explained if they were looking at a hologram of the object, just as when Moses heard God's voice coming from a burning bush that was not consumed by fire.

[Exodus 25:8] And let them make Me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them. [9] According to all that I show thee, after the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the furniture thereof, even so shall ye make it.

[25:40] And look that thou make them after their pattern, which was showed thee in the mount. [Emphasis added.]

Overall Positioning of all the altars and platforms found on top of Mount Sinai

I am the first person since Baruch (587 B.C.E.) who has figured out and discovered where the real mount Sinai is located. My father did not tell me where it is nor did I have to spend years trekking all over the Sinai to find it. I figured out its location before I ever left my home in Washington State for Egypt. How I found Sinai is an interesting story by itself, but I will leave that for another book.

I also do not want to reveal the location of the mount, at this time, so vandals and souvenir hunters do not strip the place clean. I am also concerned that the Muslim-dominated Egyptian government would destroy the altars and the Mount to spite the Jews. Their hatred towards Jews is only surpassed by their desire to breathe.

Because my claims are extraordinary, I will show you photographs of the altars, so you will know the evidence I illustrate is overwhelming proof that this is the real Mount Sinai!

The Site Layout

During my last expedition to Mount Sinai in November 1999, I had a chance to measure the location and direction of all the altars and platforms found on top of the real mount Sinai. Figure 7-1 is the resulting site map of what I found on top.

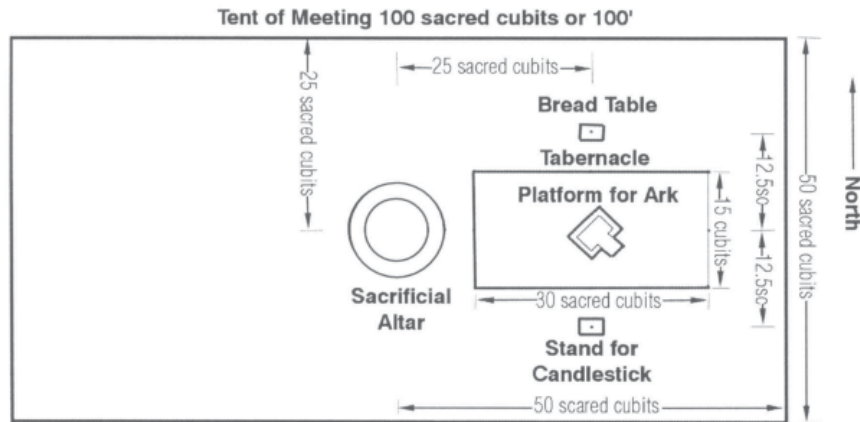


Figure 7-1: Site map of the top of Mount Sinai.

The Sacrificial altar was 48' to 50' due west of the center of the stone Ark altar. There is a problem with this measurement, because the center of the Sacrificial altar is difficult to ascertain. The altar has been greatly worn down, but I believe the measurement was originally close to 50 feet, because it means the layout of the Sacrificial altar is in position and symmetrical to its placement within the Tent of Meeting, and to the Tabernacle. In fact, one can analyze the placement of all the objects within the Tent of Meeting as a microcosm of the numbers used in the Torah. For example, the length of the Tent of Meeting is 100 sc ($100 \text{ sc} \times 24.136'' = 2,413.6''$). The distance from the Sacrificial altar to the east or west end of the Tent of Meeting is 50 sc ($50 \text{ sc} \times 24.136'' = 1,206.8''$). The Ark altar is equidistant between the sacrificial altar and the eastern wall of the Tent of Meeting, or 25 sc ($25 \text{ sc} \times 24.136'' = 603.4''$). And finally, the distance

of the bread stand and the candle stand are both equidistant between the center of the Ark altar and the north and south walls of the Tent of Meeting, which is 12.5 sc ($12.5 \text{ sc} \times 24.136'' = 301.7''$). All of these numbers (24,136; 12,068; 6,034 and 3,017) are used, below the surface, within the Torah. For this reason I am confident that these measurements are correct.

The Sacrificial Altar

The reference and dimensions for the Sacrificial altar are found in Exodus 27:1: “And thou shalt make the altar of acacia-wood, five cubits long, and five cubits broad; the altar shall be four-square; and the height thereof shall be three cubits.” The altar I found is about four-and-one-half feet high (Figure 7-2) and I am sure it was higher but, over the 3,300-plus years in the desert, it has been worn down and also damaged by the Bedouins in the area.² The brazen altar was described as five sacred cubits (sc), or ten feet square by three cubits, or six-feet high. The table was described as square. That means the supporting altar had to be round, so the table legs would fit underneath it. A complete description and drawing is covered later.



Figure 7-2: The sacrificial altar.

The Ark Altar

The Ark was placed on a stepped platform inside a prop-up portable building which the Torah calls the “Tabernacle.” My friend and assistant, Vic Ardelean and I fully measured the Ark altar and took a full set of pictures, including the bread stand and the candle stand. Moses, in Exodus, describes the construction of the Ark altar as follows:

“And if thou make *Me* an altar of stone, thou shalt not build it of hewn stone; for if thou lift up thy tool upon it, thou hast profaned it.”³

“Neither shalt thou go up by steps unto *Mine* altar, that thy nakedness be not uncovered thereon.”⁴ [Emphasis added.]

These verses were describing the stone altar or platform where the Ark was placed, because it is the only occurrence in the Torah where it reads, “make *Me* an altar” or “*Mine* altar.” Since God’s voice came from the Ark itself, that is where He resided. So that is why the possessive term is used. My next task was calculating the minimum size of the Ark altar. That was determined by the size of the Ark, which was 1.5 sc wide (36.204”) by 2.5 sc long (60.34”). So the platform altar had to be wider and longer than the Ark. We also measured the height of the altar, which we estimated to be about 2.5-feet. Figures 7-3 and 7-4 shows the altar where the Ark was placed. Figure 7-5 is a side view of the ramp on the south side, which enabled Moses and Aaron to ascend the altar without uncovering their legs, as required in verse 20:23. The length of the ramp is six feet, located on the southeast side of the altar. The center of the altar was exactly due west of the Sacrificial altar as it is described in the Torah. What was a surprise to me was the altar was not aligned in an east-west direction, but rather it was rotated about 30 degrees to the southeast, as the drawing in Figure 7-6 shows.

At first, this was a puzzle to me, but once I drew the layout I realized why it had to be aligned at an angle. The reason was so the incense table could be placed at the foot of the ramp. It measured one-sacred cubit square (24.136”). If the altar was aligned north-to-south, then the ramp would have faced us, with the incense table in front. That layout would have been logical, but it was impractical because the two staves used to carry the Ark were too long to rotate 90° inside of the Tabernacle. That means the staves were longer than 30-feet. The legends of the Jews imply the staves were 40 feet, but there is no reference in the Torah stating how long they were, so it is only guesswork, but there is a strong argument that the poles of the staves were 20- to 30-feet long. If the altar was aligned in an east-west direction, then the Ark could have been placed on the Altar, while holding the staves but the incense table would be too close to the south wall of the Tabernacle, or the Ark would have had to been placed closer to the north wall. By rotating the Ark altar 30 degrees, they placed the Ark in the center of the Tabernacle building and the incense table in front of the ramp, with enough room to go around it. I will explain later how the Ark worked and why the Ark had to be placed in the center of the Tabernacle.

After Vic and I completed measuring the Altar, I was able to come up with a drawing of the altar (Figure 7-7). You will notice that there was a step up to the platform where the Ark rested. You are able to see the steps when you look above them even though so many of the rocks were taken off the altars and used by the Bedouins for their nearby graves.



Figure 7-3: Northwest side of the Ark altar.



Figure 7-4: Southwest side of the Ark altar.



Figure 7-5: Side view of the ramp picture, taken with the camera on the ground. The ramp is clearly visible.

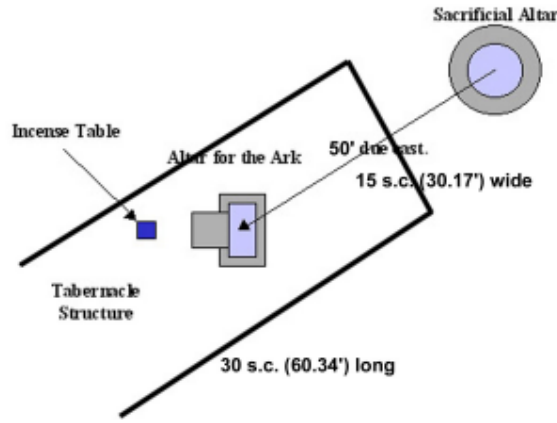


Figure 7-6: Layout of the Ark altar in relation to the sacrificial altar and the Tabernacle.

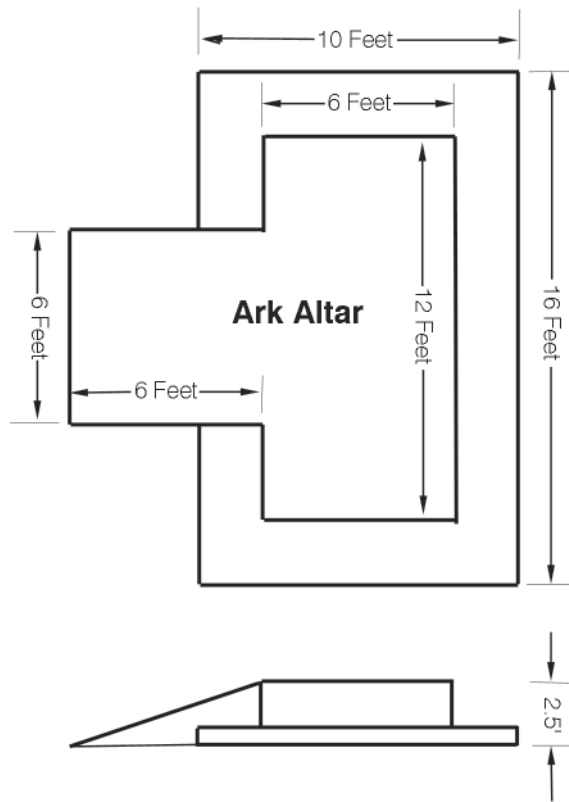


Figure 7-7: Drawing of the Ark altar derived from my detailed field measurements and photographs. The Ark measured 5.028' feet long by 3.017' wide, which means there was enough room on top of the Altar for the ark to be placed and for someone to walk around it.

After we came back from Egypt I wanted to find drawings of other altars which archaeologists strongly felt were also used for the Ark. Figure 7-8 is an artist's conception of the reconstruction of an altar found on Mount Ebal in

Israel. The archaeologist, Adam Zertal, found it on April 6, 1980. He estimated it was built about 1260 B.C.E. by Joshua. It was located just north of Shechem. Similarities between this altar and the altar I found on Mount Sinai, are obvious.

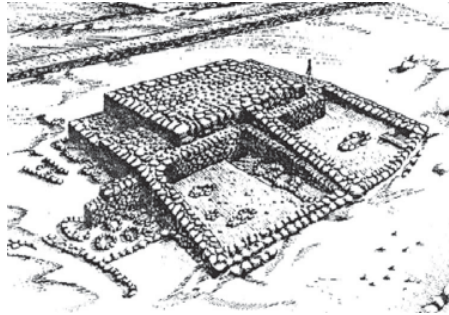


Figure 7-8: An artists conceptions of another stone altar near Shechem. Credit: Shechem organization, Israel.

They both have two levels to them, they both have ramps in the center leading up to the platform, and they are both made from unhewn stone. The only disagreement I would have with the picture of the altar is that I think the width of the ramp should be wider.

The missing keys—The Candle Stand and the Bread Stand

The last two platforms I found on top of Mount Sinai were crucial because they helped prove that my calculation of the length of the sacred cubit was correct, and that this mount was, in fact, Mount Sinai! These are the candle stand and the bread stand. In the following verses, Moses refers to the Tabernacle by saying, “without the veil.” The Tabernacle had a veil, or curtain, placed over the eastern opening.⁵ He is telling us that these two holy articles were not located inside the Tabernacle. Everything inside the veil was within the Tabernacle, and everything “without the veil” was outside of the Tabernacle. The book of Exodus informs us that both objects were not within the Tabernacle. The following scripture proves the point.

[26:35] And thou shalt set the table [bread table] *without the veil*, and the candlestick over against the table on the side of the tabernacle toward the *south*: and thou shalt put the table [the bread table] on the *north side*.

[27:21] In the tent of meeting, *without the veil* which is before the testimony [the Ark], Aaron and his sons shall set it in order, to burn from evening to morning before the Lord; it shall be a statute for ever throughout their generations on the behalf of the children of Israel.

[40:22] And he put the table [bread table] in the tent of meeting, upon the side of the tabernacle *northward, without the veil*. [23] And he set a row of bread in order upon it before the Lord; as the Lord had commanded Moses.

[40:24] And he put the candlestick in the tent of meeting, over against the table, on the side of the tabernacle *southward*. [25] And he lighted the lamps before the Lord; as the Lord commanded Moses. [Emphasis added.]

It is evident from the three verses that the bread stand and the candle stand were not inside the Tabernacle.

You will find some confusion in the *Legends of the Jews* about whether or not the candlestick and the bread stand were placed within the Tabernacle. They were not, for two reasons. First, I discovered the platforms for both holy objects and they were located outside of the walls of the Tabernacle. They were equidistant between the outside curtain (veil) of the Tent of Meeting, and the center of the Ark altar—a distance of 25 sc (50.28'), so both objects were located about 12.5 sc (25') from the center of the Ark altar. They were both placed exactly north and south of the Ark altar, exactly as the Torah describes. Figures 7-9 and 7-10 show the remains of the candle stand and bread stand. The Bedouins removed the majority of the stones for use on their graves.



Figure 7-9: Close-up top view of the candle stand platform, 24.5± feet from the Ark Altar.

The locations, directions and dimensions of the sacrificial altar, the Ark altar, Abraham's altar, the bread stand and the candle stand prove that this is the real Mount Sinai, because they all fit the Biblical story perfectly. The location and direction of the bread and candle stands fit the story perfectly. They are the keys that could fit no other lock. I discovered much more evidence which proves this hill is the real Mount Sinai, but the nature of the proof would also give away its location. I also found the first altar Moses built at the western base of the hill, I found Aaron's altar and the platform built for the golden calf just west of it. I found the location where the 12 standards are located. All that is left of them is 12 small piles of rocks in three rows of four each. I believe the physical evidence I have found irrefutably proves this is the real Mount Sinai.⁶