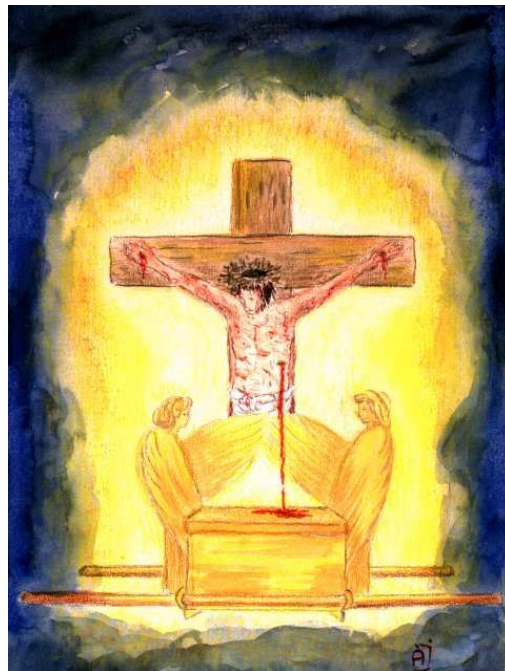


Ark of the Covenant

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The Story Begins

In 1978, Ron and his sons, Danny and Ronny, made two trips to Israel in order to drive to the western shore of the Gulf of Aqaba to go scuba diving in search of chariot parts in the Red Sea. This was during the time that Israel was occupying the Sinai Peninsula and therefore the place Ron believed to be the crossing site could only be reached by travelling from Israel instead of Egypt. During his 2nd dive trip, he learned a very painful lesson. He swam for hours, searching the sea floor, at a depth of about 30 feet- believing that the water would filter out the sun's harmful rays. However, this wasn't the case and as a result, his legs and feet became painfully swollen to such an extent that he couldn't get his fins on. Unable to dive, and with no motel in the area, he and the boys had no choice but to return to Jerusalem to wait until their flight from Tel Aviv left for the US.

One day, after the swelling in Ron's legs and feet went down a bit, he decided to go sightseeing in the immediate area around his hotel near the Damascus Gate. Walking along an ancient stone quarry, known to some as "the Calvary Escarpment," he began conversing with a local authority about Roman antiquities. At one point, they stopped walking, and Ron's left hand pointed to a site being used as a trash dump and he stated, "That's Jeremiah's Grotto and the Ark of the Covenant is in there." Even though these words had come from his own mouth and his own hand had pointed, he had not consciously done or said these things. In fact, it was the first time he had ever thought about excavating for the Ark. The man with him, quite out of character, also reacted strangely. He said, "That's wonderful! We want you to excavate, and we'll furnish your permits, put you up in a place to stay and even furnish your meals!"

But Ron didn't know what to think- he knew it was "supernatural" experience, but was it of God, or was it of "someone else"? By this time, Ron had made major discoveries in Turkey, and had found numerous chariot parts in the Red Sea. But not once had he ever had an experience such as this. It was like a thunderbolt out of the blue on a perfectly sunny day. He had to decline the man's offer, at least until he could figure out if there was any reason to believe the Ark could be in that location. So, he and the boys came home as planned. But once at home, Ron began some serious research and study.

Why Would the Ark Be in That Location?

In searching the Bible, Ron found the last mention in the Bible of the Ark's location: *2 CH 35:1 Moreover Josiah kept a Passover unto the LORD in Jerusalem: and they killed the Passover on the fourteenth day of the first month 3 And said unto the Levites that taught all Israel, which were holy unto the LORD, PUT THE HOLY ARK IN THE HOUSE WHICH SOLOMON THE SON OF DAVID KING OF ISRAEL DID BUILD; it shall not be a burden upon your shoulders: serve now the LORD your God, and his people Israel, 19 In the EIGHTEENTH YEAR OF THE REIGN OF JOSIAH was this Passover kept.*

This was about the year 621 BC, just 35 years before the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple by Nebuchadnezzar, when Judah went into the second phase of their Babylonian captivity. What did this tell Ron? It told him that the Ark disappeared from the Divine record sometime between 621 BC and 586 BC. Since the temple was completely destroyed, there is no doubt that it was NOT there after that time. As Ron continued to study, he noticed

something he found strange- in 2 Kings 24:13, 2Kings 25:13-18, and Jeremiah 52:17-23, a very detailed account was given of the items taken to Babylon from the "king's house" and the "house of the Lord"- it even mentioned small items like "spoons", etc. But the Ark isn't mentioned. Neither is it mentioned in the lists of things brought back from Babylon in Ezra 1:7-1:11. Since we are told in Jeremiah 28:3 that **everything** taken to Babylon from the "house of the Lord" would be returned, and since the Ark wasn't among the returned items, this proves that it was never taken there. Shishak and Sennacherib also took items from the "house of the Lord"- which didn't include the Ark.

So what happened to it? In 2 Kings 25:1, telling about the siege of Jerusalem by Babylon, we are told that they (the Babylonian army) "pitched against it" and built "forts against it round about"- which means they built a "siege wall". This verse further tells that the siege lasted over a year before the city was taken. And it was with this verse that Ron found the evidence which indicated to him that the Ark could be in the location he had pointed to. Of course, it wasn't positive proof- to Ron it only meant that it was a possibility. What did this "siege wall" have to do with the Ark?

The Siege Wall

Siege walls were built by attacking armies outside of the walls of the city under attack, at a distance outside of the range of the weapons used by that city- what were these weapons during this time? *2CH 26:14 And Uzziah prepared for them throughout all the host shields, and spears, and helmets, and habergeons, and bows, and slings to cast stones. 15 And he made in Jerusalem ENGINES, INVENTED BY CUNNING MEN, to be on the towers and upon the bulwarks, TO SHOOT ARROWS AND GREAT STONES withal.* Uzziah, spoken of in this verse, was king over 100 years BEFORE the destruction of Jerusalem, and we here learn that they had "engines" on the "towers" and "bulwarks" which shot "arrows" and "great stones". Catapults were capable of reaching over 1,000 feet, and therefore Ron reasoned that the siege wall would have been positioned out of the range of these massive devices, and therefore, further from the city wall than the site he had pointed to.

He concluded that:

- 1) the Ark had to have been hidden between the 18th year of Josiah, (when we are told he had it taken to Solomon's temple), and 35 years later, when the temple was destroyed;
- 2) it was NOT taken to Babylon, based on the information from the Scriptures which told what went to Babylon & what was returned;
- 3) **it was most likely hidden just prior to the destruction of the temple, when Jerusalem was surrounded by the Babylonian siege wall; and**
- 4) **it was hidden somewhere within the confines of the city wall of Jerusalem and the Babylonian siege wall.** The entire city AND the temple were destroyed in 586 BC by the Babylonians, so the Ark could have only escaped destruction or captivity by NOT being anywhere in the city.

Again, the site he had pointed to was, he believed, outside of the ancient city wall and within the siege wall. It was supposition based on study, but still only supposition. Yet, it was enough to base a decision on- he decided to go ahead with the excavation.

The Apocrypha

Before we continue, there ARE 2 references in non-Biblical sources which are interesting. In the Apocryphal book of 2 Maccabees, we read: *2:2 The records show that it was Jeremiah who... 4 prompted by a divine message, the prophet gave orders that the Tent of Meeting and the Ark should go with him. Then he went to the mountain from the top of which Moses saw God's promised land 5 When he reached the mountain, Jeremiah found a cave-dwelling; he carried the tent, the Ark, and the incense altar into it, then blocked up the entrance. 6 Some of his companions came to mark out the way, but were unable to find it. 7 When Jeremiah learned of this he reprimanded them. 'The place shall remain unknown ' he said' 'until God finally gathers His people together and shows mercy to them. 8 Then the Lord will bring these things to light again, and the glory of the Lord will appear with the cloud' as it was seen both in the time of Moses, and when Solomon prayed that the shrine might be worthily consecrated. The writer, in this letter to "Jewish kinsmen in Egypt, the Jews who are in Jerusalem, and those in the country of Judaea", explains where he got this information: "These same facts are set out in the official records and in the memoirs of Nehemiah Just as Nehemiah collected the chronicles of the kings, the writings of prophets, the works of David, and royal letters about sacred offerings, to found his library, so Judas also has collected all the books that had been scattered as a result of our recent conflict. These are in our possession, and if you need any of them, send messengers for them."*

Also worthy of note: the quote in 2 Maccabees, above, could have been mis-translated over the years and originally have stated that the Ark was hidden NOT in the mountain Moses was ON when he viewed the promised land (Mt. Nebo, Deu. 32:49), but instead it could mean that the Ark was hidden IN the mountain that Moses SAW when he viewed the promised land. From Nebo he would have been able to see Jerusalem because of it's altitude.

In the Pseudepigraphal book called "The Paralipomena of Jeremiah" (meaning "the remaining words of Jeremiah") it is also written that Jeremiah, in obedience to God's command, hid the sacred objects from the temple just before the destruction of Jerusalem. Now, neither of these books are to be trusted as completely accurate- however, they do show a strong tradition that has Jeremiah hiding, or having someone else hide, the Ark and other objects from the temple. Is there any truth in these 2 books? Perhaps- since Jeremiah WAS the prophet in Jerusalem during the time of Josiah (when the Ark was brought back into the temple) and he continued through to the time of the destruction of Jerusalem, it is logical to believe it **possible** that God directed him to have the Ark and other sacred items hidden. Also, Jeremiah wrote: *JER 3:16 And it shall come to pass, when ye be multiplied and increased in the land, in those days, saith the LORD, they shall say no more, The ark of the covenant of the LORD: neither shall it come to mind: neither shall they remember it; neither shall they visit it; neither shall that be done any more.* The implication here is that at the time he wrote this- (during the reign of Josiah, v. 6),- they still had the Ark in their possession. This entire passage, which begins with verse 6, is a plea to return from their apostasy, although their captivity was already foretold by Isaiah. Therefore, could this above verse about the Ark of the Covenant be a prediction that they no longer will have it when they return from captivity? Just 2 verses later, he writes: *JER 3:18 IN THOSE DAYS the house of Judah shall walk with the house of Israel, and THEY SHALL COME TOGETHER OUT OF THE LAND OF THE NORTH to the land that I have given for an inheritance unto your fathers.* The "land of the north" was Babylon where they would soon spend 70 years in captivity. If this understanding is correct, it indicates that Jeremiah DID have knowledge that they would no longer have the Ark when they returned from Babylon. But also important to note is that he CLEARLY indicated that "neither shall that be done ANYMORE", which is proof that there is no promise of it ever being reinstated. In fact, in Ezekiel, when he gives the instructions for the temple, he gives NO instructions which included the Ark. It was never mentioned.

Since Jerusalem was surrounded by the Babylonian siege wall during the time the Ark seemed to have disappeared, Ron believed it may have been possible for someone to have taken it to a

location within the siege wall and not be detected. The quotes we read above agree with the "time", but we just don't know for sure- and again, these books are not inspired so we cannot rely on them.

The Location of the Site

Jerusalem is situated on 2 hills, traditionally referred to as "Mt. Moriah" and "Mt. Zion". Moriah is the one on the right, seen in the top right sketch, while Zion is on the left (although the Bible refers to the entire city as "Zion"). To the extreme right can be seen the beginning of the Mt. of Olives. "Moriah" is mentioned only twice in the Bible- first as the place Abraham was told to take Isaac and offer him as a sacrifice, and second as the place where the temple was built: *GEN 22:2 And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into **the land of Moriah**; and offer him therefor a burnt offering upon **one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.** 2CH 3:1 Then Solomon began to build **the house of the LORD at Jerusalem in mount Moriah**, where the Lord appeared unto David his father, in the place that David had prepared in the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite.*

The quarry which contains the site Ron was to excavate is part of the northern extension of Mt. Moriah. On the east, south and west sides of Jerusalem are very deep valleys which protect the city from foreign invaders. But on this north side, they were vulnerable. Therefore, a "dry moat" or trench was quarried out of "Mt. Moriah" on the north side to prevent an enemy from being able to simply reach and break through the wall along this ridge. Then, at some unknown point in time, the northern portion of "Moriah", now separated from the city, was used as a stone quarry. Starting on the south end of this now separated part of "Moriah", on the western side, stone was cut out of the mountain, lowering the ground level to that of the trench which extends just outside of the north wall.

The site Ron pointed to was along the quarried face (escarpment) of "Mt. Moriah". This cliff-face is referred to by some as "the Calvary escarpment" because it contains the "skull-face" that many believe was "Golgotha" or "Calvary" where Christ was crucified. It also contains the site traditionally called "Jeremiah's Grotto", the "Garden Tomb" (where many believe Christ was buried) and St. Etienne which contains a large complex of Jewish tombs dating to the 1st and 2nd temple periods cut into the side of the mountain. The escarpment is many hundreds of feet long. And it was Ron's belief that this WAS the general area of the crucifixion, and the Garden Tomb, he also believed, was indeed that of Joseph of Arimathea which had once held the body of Christ. But these things were not related to this project. He was now searching for the Ark of the Covenant.

The Excavation Begins

It was January, 1979 when Ron and the boys returned. Snow was on the ground. He now had to decide how and where to begin. The site he had pointed to was being used as a trash dump and appeared to hold very little promise to the human eye. It was located along this escarpment where the ground met the cliff-face. He had investigated the area adjacent to the escarpment and realized that the ground was raised to a much higher level today, which meant that the rock floor was many, many feet below the present ground level. In the past, Jerusalem has been destroyed many, many times. And the customary method of rebuilding these ancient cities was to simply build on top of the destruction level. Today, the debris is removed before rebuilding, but not so back then. This is why archaeologists are able to find evidences of many cities which have existed on the same site- they simply excavate through each successive level down to the next until they reach bedrock-which indicates that they have reached the first city to be established on that particular site.

The site Ron was to excavate had a ground level many feet higher than the quarry floor to the south before the city wall. So, he and the boys could do nothing but begin to dig straight down.

The original location that he had pointed to in 1978 contained an extremely large boulder just barely exposed above the surface, and Ron decided to begin digging several yards to the right. It was to be a job of mammoth proportions- these 3, Ron, Danny and Ronny, would eventually remove many tons of rock and debris, having to sift through all of it for any artifacts. This was a requirement of the Department of Antiquities which they would always comply with.

Their First "Discovery"

So, they dug straight down along the cliff face, forming a steep wall with the earth they removed. Almost immediately, Ron noticed a "shelf-like" niche cut into the face of the cliff. Digging down further, he discovered there were 3 of these "niches" cut into the face of the cliff with a smaller one on the right side. He was convinced that these were cut into the cliff-face to hold "signs" or notices. And because of the location- in the vicinity of the "skull-face", and because there were 3- of these, he believed they were where the notices stating the crime of the crucifixion victim in 3 languages were placed.

Roman Crucifixions

He had studied the available information on Roman crucifixions and had discovered that they used this form of punishment as a deterrent. The well-known quote of Quintillian explains: *"Whenever we crucify criminals, very crowded highways are chosen, so that many shall see it and may be moved by fear of it, because all punishment does not pertain so much to revenge as to example "*. Roman crucifixions consisted of 3 basic elements, all perfectly described in the account of the crucifixion of Christ-first, the scourging; then the carrying of the crossbeam by the condemned to the site; and finally the nailing or binding of the condemned to the cross-beam and then attaching this beam onto the upright post and setting it up..

But another element was also involved. In order to be a deterrent, the CRIME of the victim had to be posted in clear sight of the passers-by. For this purpose, they used a *titulus*, which was a board covered with gypsum, inscribed with black letters. This was usually carried ahead of the victim on the way to the crucifixion, and then posted above the cross in clear sight. The common conception about Christ's crucifixion was that a single sign written by Pilate was nailed to His cross above His head. This may very well have been- however, in order for the passers-by to be able to read these signs, written in 3 different languages, they would have had to have been quite large- much larger than a hand-written notice on a paper. Just recently we learned a great deal about the visibility of signs at our new museum. We put up signs that looked very large to us (6 & 8 inch letters) but when we placed them on our building and walked across the street, or even to the end of the parking lot, we discovered that they were very difficult to read. A sign written by Pilate on a piece of paper, nailed to a cross, would have been almost impossible to read even by those standing directly in front of the cross. Add to this the fact that in Jerusalem, 3 different languages were common- Hebrew, Greek and Latin,- and it becomes apparent that the signs above Christ's head were much larger than we have commonly believed.

"Jesus of Nazareth the King of the Jews"

When Ron read and reread the accounts of these signs at Christ's crucifixion, he discovered that although they had been translated to read "ON the cross", the Greek could just as accurately have been translated "**above** the cross" or "**over** the cross". *MAT 27:35 And they*

*crucified him,... 36 And sitting down they watched him there: 37 And set up over his head his accusation written, THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS. JOH 19:17 And he bearing his cross went forth into a place called the place of a skull, which is called in the Hebrew Golgotha: 18 Where they crucified him, and two other with him, on either side one, and Jesus in the midst. 19 And Pilate wrote a title, **and put it on the cross**. And the writing was JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS. 20 This title then read many of the Jews: for the place where Jesus was crucified was nigh to the city: and it was written in Hebrew, and Greek, and Latin.*

In the above quote from John it states that the "title" was put "on" the cross- the Greek word here translated to read "on" is "epi". In Luke, this following verse also tells about the same "title", but here, the word "epi" is translated to read "over": *LUK 23:38 And a superscription also was written **over** him in letters of Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew, THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS*. It certainly could NOT be translated to read "on" here! This same word, "epi", is also translated in other places to read "above"- therefore, the Scriptures do not specifically state that the "title" was nailed onto the physical cross. All it states for sure is that the "title(s)" were placed "over", "above", "about", etc., the cross. So with this understanding, and the information on Roman crucifixions and the *titulus* covered in gypsum and written in black ink that the Romans were known to use, he felt his conclusion was at least not to be ruled out. Little did he suspect how it would later be so incredibly confirmed.

When he first found the niches, he placed boards in them for demonstration purposes. Digging deeper, and showing that there were no more niches below these, he had signs painted in the 3 languages which they set up and photographed. He believed the much smaller niche was for the ever-present Roman eagle. But again, this wasn't the purpose of this excavation so they continued to dig.

In Danger of Collapse

As they continued to dig straight down, the cliff face was on one side, forming a solid wall. But on the other side, the earth wall began to exhibit signs of instability and Ron feared that it would soon collapse, perhaps burying them in the hole. He decided that they should move back along the cliff-face to the original site that he had pointed to. He dreaded it because of the huge boulder he had found just under the surface- but he felt he had no choice.

Back to the Original Site

Ron had felt justified in beginning the excavations several yards from the original site, because it was in the same general area. And with the discovery of the niches, he was satisfied that it hadn't been a completely wasted effort- but still he had another purpose for this excavation.

As they began to dig around the huge boulder extending out from the original site, he discovered that there was enough room behind it (between it and the cliff-face) to begin their dig. As they began to dig downward, they very soon came upon another item of interest. Carved out of the cliff-face was a hole which extended through a section of protruding rock allowing a rope or similar object to be threaded through it. The great care obviously devoted to chiseling out this object indicated that it had an important use, but they would learn that later.

The first site they had begun excavating was where the cliff-face was relatively vertical like a wall. Here, the cliff-face slanted inward, forming a "roof" over the place they were digging. As they dug down into the earth, they found open areas beneath the surface which contained a large amount of pottery shards, and even a few pieces still intact.

A Grain Storage Bin later Used as a Cistern

They reached bedrock 38 1/2 feet below the present ground surface. Carefully removing debris, they found themselves in an approximately 15 feet diameter round chamber carved out of the rock with steps chiseled into the shaft descending from the top in a spiral to the bottom. It was very similar to the photo at left. At some point in time it had been modified and plastered, reused as a cistern. Either of these explanations would explain the presence of the "rope hole" chiseled in the cliff-face- it was for the rope that held the bucket or jug which was lowered down into the shaft to retrieve grain or water. Ron chiseled through the plaster and found a large amount of pottery among the dirt and debris used as fill to form the cistern. When he turned these pottery pieces in to Antiquities and they examined them, they informed Ron that some of them date back to the Jebusite time (before David took the city). The latest dated specimens were from the Roman period, which tells us that the grain bin was plastered during Roman times.

As exciting as these discoveries were, again they weren't what Ron was looking for.

Tunneling Along the Cliff-Face

As they descended through the earth and debris, they were able to distinguish the Roman level because of the pottery and coins. Ron decided again that he needed to keep looking- that these things were not the object of his search. They covered up the circular shaft, careful to preserve everything, and began to tunnel under the present ground level along the cliff-face on the Roman level back in the direction of the first site they had begun to excavate. Ron was looking for an entrance into a cave or tunnel in the now underground cliff-face. But his next discovery was so gruesome that it still reflects in his face when he talks about it.

The "Stoning Ground"

The grain shaft/cistern was cut into the solid rock. When Ron began his tunnel back in the direction of the cut-out niches, he found that the rock floor abruptly ended about 3 to 4 feet from the edge of the shaft. Digging a 3 foot shaft straight down, he found a massive amount of fist-sized and larger rocks. As he sorted through them, he found several human bones, in particular some finger bones. He believed he knew what this represented-while it is common to find rocks in an excavation, it is NOT common to find them of this particular size in such a massive pile. It certainly wasn't a tomb- and the disarticulated bones among the large rocks led Ron to only one conclusion- this has been the "stoning ground" *ACT 6:57 Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord, 58 And CAST HIM [Stephen] OUT OF THE CITY, AND STONED HIM:*

A First Century Building

When Ron realized what he had found, he quickly climbed back up the shaft he had dug and he and the boys continued their tunnel back in the direction of the first site. Soon, they found the remains of a buried structure. This building was built directly adjacent to the cliff-face and a portion of the back wall extended along the actual face of the cliff. The foundations of the building were still in place. As Ron studied the best preserved sections, he discovered a hewn stone extending out horizontally from the wall against the cliff face- his first impression was that it was an altar (Below). It displayed smooth wear on its top.

It was below and in front of this "altar stone" that Ron noticed a very unusual large rock. When he examined the rock closer, he saw that it was covered in travertine- travertine is formed

when underground acidified water seeps through pre-existing limestone and dissolves calcium carbonate; as this water containing calcium carbonate flows over objects and begins to evaporate or lose its carbon dioxide, this dissolved limestone is redeposited in the form of stalactites and stalagmites, flowstone, etc. In this case, it was redeposited in the form of a coating over the rock which can be clearly seen, when examining the rock in person, in the layering of the coating. Ron thought this rock was much too symmetrical to be a natural-shaped rock, so he decided to pick it up and examine it more closely. When he lifted it, he discovered that it was covering a squarish hole chiseled into the bedrock.

The Hole that Held the Cross?

As should be expected, there was a great deal of dirt and debris everywhere. As he examined this hole and cleared away the dirt around it, he discovered that it had a large crack extending out from it. As they removed more dirt and debris, he discovered a platform-like shelf of bedrock which extended out about 8 feet from the face of the cliff, and this squarish hole was chiseled in this "shelf". (See diagram next page.) There were no more holes in the platform-like shelf, so he began digging into the packed earth in front of and level with the "platform". It was about 4 feet before he came to the lower level of bedrock, and here he uncovered 3 more squarish holes chiseled in the rock in front of this "platform". His measurements showed that the elevated "platform" with the squarish hole and crack were located 14 feet directly below the 3 cut-out niches in the face of the cliff, now above ground level. His earlier conclusion that the cut-out niches were for the signs stating the crucifixion victim's crime in the 3 languages of Jerusalem was now supported by the fact that he had found more square holes, all about 12 to 13 inches square, cut into the bedrock- holes he firmly believed once held crosses. The one elevated above the rest (on the shelf-like platform of bedrock), he believed, held Christ's!

The building structure that remained intact showed that a building covered the entire site. He concluded, based on the evidence they had found, that a Christian church had been built over the place of the crucifixion of Christ- the stone wall extended along the cliff-face directly behind the cross-hole that was on the "platform-like" shelf of bedrock. It appeared that this was the place where the "featured" criminal-victim was crucified, being elevated several feet above those crucified around him. The "altar stone" was set in the stone wall, extending out horizontally almost directly above the elevated cross-hole with the crack.

The "Crack" in the Cross-Hole

The crack extending out from the cross-hole on the elevated "platform" appeared to Ron to have been caused by an earthquake- it displayed no evidence of being chiseled. As he removed debris from the cross-hole, he finally reached the bottom and measured it- it extended 23 1/2 inches into the solid bedrock, while the crack appeared to extend much deeper. But at this time, he didn't attempt to clear it out nor did he measure it. It would be over a year later before he would learn that the crack extended about 20 feet into the bedrock.

"Dating" the Remains of the Building

He found coins during the course of the excavation which helped to narrow the date of the building. He found a Roman coin with Emperor Tiberius who was Emperor from 14 to 37 AD, which was the earliest dated coin they found. The latest coins were from about 135 AD, but no later.

This is consistent with the known history of Jerusalem and placed the date of the building between the time of the crucifixion and 135 AD. But further information indicates that it was most likely built after 70 AD. Prior to 70 AD, (when the city and the temple were completely

destroyed by the Roman general, Titus), Jerusalem was still under Roman rule and the crucifixion grounds would have remained in use. Josephus tells how Titus, during his siege of Jerusalem, had as many as 500 people a day crucified (Wars of the Jews, Book V, Chapter XI, para. 1).

After 70 AD- No More Mass Crucifixions

But after the destruction in 70 AD, with most of the Jewish inhabitants having been killed or sold as slaves, the city was reduced to a Roman camp. Vespasian offered the landed property of Jerusalem for sale to foreigners, although we have no records of who purchased any land there. The garrison of 800 Romans in the camp was stationed there to insure that the city was not rebuilt. The hatred of the Romans was for the Jews. Therefore, during the time after 70 AD, when Jerusalem was only a Roman camp with the occasional foreigner (non-Jew) living in the area, the use of crucifixion would be virtually eliminated.

The Christians were apparently tolerated by the Romans, as is supported by the fact that in 130 AD, when the Emperor Hadrian came to Jerusalem to rebuild it as a Roman city named Aelia Capitolina, he showed favor to the Christians while forbidding any Jew to ever set foot in the city again. This and other things contributed to a revolt among the Jews in Judea in 132 AD which finally resulted in the death of at least half a million Jewish men, and from this time on, Judea was no longer called by that name, but referred to by the old name of Palestine. The new Roman city of Aelia Capitolina remained a city, but did not prosper. The fact that the coins Ron found in the ancient building cease at about 135 AD indicates that whoever built and used this ancient structure apparently abandoned it at that time and left the region. The fact that the foundations are still intact indicates that it didn't suffer destruction at the hands of an invader, but most likely fell into disuse and decay. Eventually, over time, it was covered in dirt and debris. Whatever was the case, the evidence shows that the structures were not disturbed since the Roman time.

"A VERY GREAT Stone"

As they continued to clear the area outward from the cliff-face, the layout of the building was found to be very simple. One wall ran parallel to the cliff-face, along the top of the elevated "platform" section of bedrock. Two exterior walls extended out at 90 degree angles from each end of this first wall. They began to dig, searching for the last wall when they came to another hand-hewn rock. It was a little less than 2 feet thick, and the portion that was extending out of the dirt and debris looked as if it were curved, somewhat like a large, thick rounded table-top. Clearing more away from around it, Ron saw that it was of immense size and they decided not to continue digging. He theorized that perhaps this was the seal-stone from the tomb of Joseph of Arimathaea in which Christ was buried. If he was correct in his conjecture that this was an early Christian church building, perhaps they had incorporated this seal-stone into the actual building. It certainly appeared to be larger than any seal stone he had ever seen or read about. The largest that had ever been found, to his knowledge, was 5 1/2 feet in diameter. THIS stone would far exceed that. However, it would be several years later before he would learn it's true dimension- a little over 13 feet in diameter- when he used sub-surface interface radar from above the ground. *MAT 27:60 And laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock: and he rolled A GREAT STONE to the door of the sepulchre, and departed.*

"In the Garden a New Sepulchre"

In the same escarpment is the Garden Tomb which was discovered in 1867 when the landowner was digging a cistern on his property. As with the sites Ron was excavating, this tomb was beneath the ground level, buried in the debris of many, many years. When the

owner discovered the tomb, he abandoned his plans for a cistern. When General Gordon of Britain visited the area and became convinced that the "skull face" in the relatively near section of the escarpment was the true location of Golgotha, this tomb became the prime suspect for being the tomb of Christ. It met with strenuous opposition from the traditionalists who were adamant that the Holy Sepulchre inside the city was the true site-but it soon gained some adherents. When completely excavated, it did indeed exhibit characteristics which proved it was dated to the 1st century AD, the time of Christ. But the subject that now concerns us is the missing seal-stone from this tomb. Directly in front of the tomb is a groove for a rolling stone. The width of this groove is about 2 feet, the correct size for the stone Ron found buried in the earth.

Another tomb from the 1st century (time of Christ) is that of Queen Helena of Adiabene. It is also located in the same general vicinity, further north, and the groove is exactly the same size as is featured in the Garden Tomb. Not only are the grooves for the seal stones identical in size, hers also contains an inclined section at one end at which the stone was rolled into the groove- exactly as does the Garden Tomb.

Almost 2 Years of Excavating

By this time, Ron and the boys had been working here for almost 2 years. They had begun in January of 1979 and it was now late 1980. Of course, they weren't working constantly- Ron was (as he is still today) an anesthetist with obligations to the hospitals he worked with. Due to the nature of his work, he was able to arrange to come over numerous times a year, but they could only stay for a few weeks at a time. And Ron was getting anxious. They had made some wonderful discoveries, and provided details to the authorities of their finds along with any artifacts they found. Some, they were allowed to keep because they were deemed of no significant worth.

But they had explored the entire underground cliff-face, looking for an entrance into a cave or tunnel. If the Ark was in that location, it certainly would be hidden in a cave, he reasoned. Finally, as they continued to search, Ron made the comment to the boys that he was "impressed" that they should just break through the rock of the cliff-face. Ronny said he thought that was a good idea, but Ron resisted. That rock is extremely hard and he knew what difficult work it would be. Finally, when Danny told his father that he, too, believed they ought to do go ahead and break through the cliff face, Ron relented and agreed. It was the only option left.

With hammers and chisels, they began their work. It wasn't long before they broke through the rock into an open space. Enlarging the hole, they saw behind it a cave which was about 15 feet in height and of about the same width. Crawling through, they finally were inside the actual mountain called "Moriah".

Inside the Cave System

For almost 2 years, they had been tunneling underground, finding artifacts and uncovering exciting structures almost daily. But now, they were in a barren cavern that they would soon learn was only a very small part of a very extensive honeycomb of natural caves and tunnels within the mountain. For almost a year, they explored this area, finding no evidence of any human presence. These natural tunnels were not all connected to each other, and they spent many hours chiseling through cave walls, searching for adjacent tunnels which they eventually found. But they found nothing else.

As 1981 came to an end, Ron and the boys took their winter holidays to come to Jerusalem and work. Even though it is cold there in the winter, the cave system was always a very comfortable and constant temperature, both in summer as well as winter. But the work was beginning to take a toll on all 3 of them. They all began to develop a fever and slight chills. The dust they had inhaled over the years in those confined tunnels perhaps contributed to their pneumonia-like symptoms. Finally, on Christmas eve, Ron had to send Ronny back to the US because he was so ill. Danny had to follow on New Year's eve. Ron, too was sick but this was a very special trip.

The "Promise"

As I explained in an earlier issue, Ron has never heard God speak audibly- he just prays about what he should do and then sometimes receives an "impression". By now, he had been excavating for such a long time, he was beginning to wonder if he was wasting his time and had misinterpreted what he was supposed to do. He, as usual, prayed and asked to know what to do before he scheduled this December 1981 trip. This time, although he still heard no audible voice, in his mind came the promise that he would find the Ark of the Covenant on that trip. And he believed with all his heart that it was a true promise from the One Who could make such a promise and keep it. But things couldn't have looked worse- Danny and Ronny were both very sick, and Ron was probably equally as sick but far more persistent (or stubborn)- he stayed to keep working. And alone without the boys, he needed some help.

When excavating over the years, he had hired locals to help, mostly with the above ground work, such as hauling off debris. Each time they opened their excavation and worked, they had to completely restore the above ground area before they left-this was a condition of their being allowed to continue. And they had moved tons of earth and debris over the years which required local assistance in hauling it off above ground.

He had met one young local whom he had discovered was very honest and trustworthy, and he began to use him in the actual excavation when Ronny and Danny weren't available. Those of you who have read our account of the "Cave of Machpelah" excavation have already been introduced to this young Arab man, whom we called "James" to protect his and his family's identity. His family owns the land which contains the burial cave in Hebron we believe to be the true Cave of Machpelah. In addition to earning Ron's trust, "James" was small and slender-perfect for squeezing through the tight tunnels of the excavation. And it was "James" that Ron hired to assist him when Danny and Ronny left.

Exploring Every "Nook and Cranny"

Ron and the boys had explored most of the tunnels over the last year, but there were always more. Ron's plan this trip was to leave no possibility unexplored. He and "James" crawled through the vast system of tunnels, now much larger and extensive because of the passages they had opened up and the walls they had chiseled through. Ron would decide where to go next and he and James would follow that tunnel. If and when they found a small opening, Ron would enlarge it enough for "James" to crawl through, and he would carefully check it out and report to Ron everything that he saw.

They followed one particularly difficult passageway which took them through a "chimney" which extended straight up and a tight tunnel which was so small that Ron had to exhale in order to squiggle through. He had to stop to take a breath and when he inhaled, the tunnel was so tight he couldn't fill his lungs completely. When they got through, Ron saw a very small opening in the wall of the tunnel they were now in. Directly in front of it was a stalactite about 16 inches long which almost appeared to be "guarding" the tiny hole. He knocked the stalactite

off (and ended up bringing it home where we still have it today). Peering through the tiny hole, he could see nothing. So, he enlarged it enough to peer in. All he could see with the aid of his flashlight shining through the hole, was a chamber completely full of rocks (all larger than "fist" size) with about 18 inches of clearance between the rocks and the ceiling. It didn't look promising at all, but he was leaving nothing unexplored. So he enlarged it enough for "James" to crawl through.

"What's in There? What's in There?"

Almost as soon as "James" crawled through the tiny opening, he frantically came tumbling back out, shaking and shouting "What's in there? What's in there? I'm not going back in there!!" Ron saw in his eyes sheer, complete and utter terror- yet, James said he had seen nothing! But whatever he experienced was real, for he left not only that chamber, but the entire cave system, never to return.

It was "James'" reaction which sparked the hesitant excitement in Ron- he would have never given that chamber another look if not for "James'" terror. Now alone in this vast cave system, he took his hammer and chisel and enlarged the hole, crawling through. With only about 18 inches clearance, he had to lie on his stomach with nothing but his flashlight in his hand for light. Expectant after what happened to "James", he looked at his watch- it was 2:00 pm, Wednesday, January 6, 1982. Shining his flashlight down through the massive pile of large rocks, his eye caught a glimpse of something shiny. He began slowly removing the rocks one at a time and discovered some dry-rotted wooden timbers just beneath the rocks, and then some also dry-rotted remains of animals skins that turned to powder when he moved them. The animals skins were covering a gold veneered table with a raised moulding around the side which consisted of an alternating pattern of a bell and a pomegranate. It only took him a moment to realize that at the least this WAS an object from the first temple! But he was in such a confined space, he couldn't uncover the entire table. He later concluded, after closer examination, that this was the Table of Shewbread.

The Discovery of the Earthquake Crack in the Ceiling

With adrenalin flowing through his veins and great anticipation, he looked around to see what else he could see, which wasn't much. He shined his flashlight around the open area and then up to the ceiling. There, he saw something that caught his eye- it was a crack in the ceiling with a black substance within the crack. Crawling slowly and painfully over the rocks to the rear of the chamber, he saw a stone case extending through the rocks. It had a flat stone top which was cracked completely in two and the smaller section was moved aside, creating an opening into the stone case. But the top was too near the ceiling for him to look inside. Yet he knew what was inside- the crack in the ceiling was directly above the cracked part of the lid, where it was open, and the black substance had fallen from the crack into the case because some of it had splashed onto the lid. It was at this time, as Ron recalls, as the instant realization of what had happened here dawned on him, that he passed out. When he realized that the crack in the ceiling was the end of the crack he had found in the elevated cross-hole many feet above him, and the black substance was blood which had fallen through the crack and into the stone case, he KNEW the Ark was in the stone case. But the most overwhelming realization was that Christ's Blood had actually fallen onto the Mercy Seat.

When he came to, it was 2:45 pm. A mere 45 minutes had passed since he entered the chamber, yet in that short time, he became the first witness to the literal fulfilment of the "type" represented by all the sacrifices made by God's people since Adam and Eve, and later specifically directed by God, Himself, in the laws of the sacrificial system. Now he knew why he and the boys had to do the last 3 years of excavation that he had sometimes felt was useless.

If they had not found first, the cut-out niches, and then the elevated cross-hole with the earthquake crack, he would not have recognized what had happened here. And the promise Ron believed he had received HAD been fulfilled- he DID find the Ark of the Covenant on that trip. But he didn't even lay eyes on it. And in his frustration and complaining, he received another VERY strong impression- *"I only promised that you would FIND it. It will come out when the time is right."*

The condition of the chamber, completely full within 18 inches of the ceiling, made it impossible for Ron to do anything else. He could not foresee any possible way of bringing anything out unless the entrance to the chamber through which the objects were originally taken in was found. He climbed out the small hole, back through the tortuous series of tunnels and sealed the passageway with a stone. To anyone looking through the tunnel, it would appear that it came to an abrupt end. However, the rock could and would be easily removed by Ron when he returned.

Ron didn't report his experience to anyone at that time. He needed time to think and it would be a long time before his mind quit whirring with everything he had experienced. He had expected to find the Ark and bring it out, but that now seemed impossible. He made several more trips into the chamber, and eventually reported to the authorities as to what he had found. Perhaps not able to believe what he had told them he had found, or perhaps recognizing the problems that this could cause if made known, his superiors told him not to tell anyone about his discovery. However, it was too late for that because Ron had already told a few people and he confessed this fact to them. Realizing that "what is done is done", they then ordered him not to reveal any MORE details than he already had revealed. Therefore, from this point on, we cannot be as specific as we have to this point.

The time came when Ron provided something to the authorities from the excavation which DID convince them that he HAD at the least discovered SOME items from the first temple. Then a plan was devised by authorities to "test" the water so to speak- they wanted to carefully determine the public reaction should the announcement be made that the Ark of the Covenant HAD been discovered. The officials that Ron dealt with were serious government servants, concerned with the welfare of the people, and they realized that such an announcement would most likely set off a bloody clash between those who would want to immediately destroy the mosque on the temple mount to rebuild the temple, and the Arabs. While they did not necessarily have the religious belief that any temple would ever be rebuilt, they were well acquainted with the passion and fanaticism of those who did. Their efforts to test public reaction to the rebuilding of a new temple resulted in much bloodshed, and many deaths. Until this day, it is an extremely critical issue and the Israelis will, with great care, handle the situation the way they handle everything else-by a no-nonsense approach with the best interests of the people's safety foremost. What that approach will be, we don't know and perhaps even they won't know until the time arrives.

Verifying that the Ark was in the Stone Case

Ron returned to the chamber on several occasions- one time he took a "Trinkle Drill" used by Orthopedic surgeons and a colonoscope used to look into the human body. He wanted to be sure the Ark was in that stone case. He tried to drill a small hole with the "Trinkle Drill" but it wouldn't penetrate the stone. So he took his star-tipped stone chisel and hammer to accomplish the job. He would hammer the tip a little, then turn the bit, hammer then turn, over and over until he had an approximately 5/8" hole into the stone case. The colonoscope is an optical device with a powerful light source which allows doctors to peer into the human body, and Ron had borrowed one from one of the doctors at the hospital he worked at. Inserting the colonoscope through the tiny hole, he guided it downward, rotating the lens until he saw what he recognized as the bottom of the crown-molding around the top of the Mercy

Seat and then he saw the flat golden side. Since the colonoscope doesn't allow viewing of a large area, and since he had little means to guide it other than a small latitude of rotation, he couldn't see a great deal. But he saw enough to KNOW it was the Ark.

Measuring the Depth of the Earthquake Crack

On one trip, he had one of his helpers sit by the elevated cross-hole with the earthquake crack while he ran a metal tape measure through the crack in the ceiling of the chamber. It extended through to the cross-hole and when his helper grabbed it to show that it had come through, Ron noted that the crack extended through 20 feet of solid rock.

The Contents of the Chamber

During his several visits to the chamber, he tried to thoroughly explore the contents. He measured the chamber and found it to be 22 feet long by 12 feet on 2 sides, while the other 2 sides followed the line of the cliff-face, forming a chamber that narrowed down in one corner. The objects he saw in that chamber that he feels confident in identifying are: the Ark of the Covenant in the Stone case; the Table of Shewbread; the Golden Altar of Incense that was in front of the veil; the Golden Censer; the 7 branched Candlestick holder, (which didn't have candles but had tiny, bowl-like golden oil lamps which are built into the tips of the candlestick); a very large sword; an Ephod; a Miter with an ivory pomegranate on the tip; a brass shekel weight; numerous oil lamps; and a brass ring which appeared to be for hanging a curtain or something similar. There are more objects, but these are all Ron could positively identify. All of these objects were covered by the dry-rotted dark-colored animal skins, then dry-rotten wooden timbers on top of the skins, and finally the large rocks piled over everything.

Ron has explained basically how the Ark looked, which we won't repeat here since we covered that in newsletter #4, which is also contained in our "Discoveries Volume". The Tables of Stone are still within the Ark, under the Mercy Seat. On the back of the Ark is a small open cubicle which still contains the "Book of the Law" and is presumably the one Moses, himself, wrote. To the best of his knowledge, the Book of Genesis is not there- only Exodus, Numbers, Leviticus, Deuteronomy. The thing that amazed Ron was that these Scrolls, written on animal skins, are in perfect condition today.

Oil Lamps Inside the Chamber

Just inside the chamber, by and near the original entrance which was now sealed up, he found a total of 7 oil lamps that Ron believes had to have been left behind by those who brought the items into the chamber. The soot on the lamps and the rocks they sat upon clearly showed the direction of the breeze that followed them into the tunnel. One of the lamps is very ornate and displays Assyrian characteristics, which is consistent with the cultural influence of Judea at the time just prior to the Babylonian captivity. The picture (left) of this particular oil lamp was not taken with a camera because the design on the lamp doesn't show up well in a photo. This picture was made by placing the lamp on a copier and it revealed a little of the design, which we find very interesting. The center depicts a goat or a ram standing upon its hind legs, eating from a grape vine. This scene is very similar to the statue found in a grave in the Sumerian city of Ur, seen above right. The suggestion has been made that this may represent the ram caught in the thicket at the very moment that Abraham was about to sacrifice his son, Isaac, which served as the substitute sacrifice, sparing Isaac's life- a "shadow" of the coming Messiah.

This concept is further seen in the Hittite "tree of life", as it has been interpreted, which can be seen in the frieze at right from Gordium which dates to the 6th century BC, the same

approximate time of the lamp Ron found. It is an interesting thought to consider the possibility of a relationship between the design on the lamp and the story of the "ram in the thicket" that was the substitute sacrifice- because the lamp was left in a chamber INSIDE Mt. Moriah where Abraham had brought Isaac to offer him as a sacrifice; and this same Mt. Moriah was where the Messiah died, the "substitute" sacrifice for fallen mankind. But this is just interesting conjecture on my part.

Sealing the Passageway to the Chamber

After his last visit to the chamber, a number of years ago, he permanently sealed the runnel which led to the chamber. Ron has learned many lessons over the years, and some he had to learn the hard way. One lesson he learned this way was that he had to be very careful whom he shared his information with. During the course of their work there, they had numerous experiences with people which could have been disastrous without Divine Intervention. For example, one famous evangelist stumbled upon the hole into the excavation one day and Ron invited him to come down into the cave. Believing the man to be honest, Ron told him what they were searching for and big promises were made of assistance. To make a long story short, a team of individuals from this evangelist's group later returned to the site, telling the authorities they were with the Wyatt expedition and that Ron would arrive in a few days (which wasn't true)- and they went down into the cave system and began to dig. The cave walls where they were digging suddenly collapsed and they just narrowly avoided being burried alive in the debris. They immediately packed up and returned home. No real harm was done except that Ron and the boys had to re-excavate the entire area of the collapse.

This and other similar incidents led Ron to seal the passage. With the honeycomb of tunnels, it would be almost impossible for anyone to find the correct passage, and this one now looked-even up close- as if it was a natural stone wall. Ron had done all that he could do using that passageway, anyhow. It would be impossible to get any large object out of the chamber through that original passage. All his attempts to photograph anything in the chamber resulted in photos or slides that looked like a complete blur, so he concluded that he simply wasn't supposed to take any photographs. (He later understood why- at that time, he was much freer with sharing his information and this could have caused a lot of serious problems if some of the "unsavory characters" he came in contact with over the years had SEEN evidence that this solid gold object REALLY existed. Remember how Noah's wife's grave was plundered.) The next order of business would be to find the main entrance into the chamber- the passage through which the items were originally taken.

The Original Passage Used to Carry the Ark into the Cave

Before permanently sealing the passageway, Ron had gone into the chamber with the Ark and opened the original entrance to see if he could follow it to it's point of origin. When he opened it, he discovered on the other side a very large tunnel which extended in both directions. He observed that the tunnel appeared to be a natural tunnel that had been enlarged as he saw chisel marks. But the bad news was that it was completely blocked with large stones in both directions. The problem now to be solved was determining the path taken by those who put the items in the chamber.

To resolve this question, Ron began by using simple reason. The items had been in the temple- that was their point of origin. They were now in this chamber, many feet below ground level. A great number of tunnels have been found under the temple mount and the city, but none that he knew of were heading in this direction. Was the entrance into the tunnel within the city or was it somewhere across the street in front of the northern wall? Ron had an idea as to where to begin his search.

"Zedekiah's Cave"

In the winter of 1854, Dr. Barclay, a physician and missionary, went for a walk in Jerusalem. He was walking to the site of the traditional "Jeremiah's Grotto" which is along the same Calvary escarpment. As he walked past the Damascus Gate, suddenly his dog, running ahead of him, vanished. As he searched for his dog who didn't respond as he usually did to his owner's whistles, he heard a muffled barking coming from the direction of the city wall. When he approached the wall, he noticed a deep hole and when he peered inside, he heard his dog's familiar bark. And this is how "Zedekiah's Cave" was discovered (or rediscovered.)

This vast cavern is located underneath the Muslim section of the city, extending 750 feet into "Mt. Moriah", beginning at the trench or dry moat separating the northern and southern portion. It is 325 feet wide at the maximum point and the average height is almost 50 feet. It was clearly a stone quarry, but at what point it was in use, we really do not know. There are those who believe it's stone was used in the first temple, and that may be true. But it's existence was not a well known fact and most likely it was always kept completely sealed for fear of any enemies trying to tunnel into the city. So little is known for sure about the giant quarry, but one point everyone agreed on was the fact that there was no entrance into the city from the quarry.

Viewing the diagram (right) of it's layout, the dark areas are pillars of solid rock left in place to support the ceiling, like the pillars left in a coal mine. As the miners work their way back out of the mine after depleting it of all it's coal, they remove these pillars of coal and the mine usually caves in. These were obviously left in place to prevent the cavern from collapsing since part of the northern city is above it. As Ron examined the quarry carefully, he noticed one thing that bothered him. When Ron tackles a project, the first thing he does is determine the easiest way to accomplish the task that requires the least work and as he walked the giant quarry, something didn't make sense. He tried to put himself in the "shoes" of the ancient stonecutters as he surveyed this massive quarry. Seeing how deep into the side of the mountain the quarry extended, he thought about how much work it would have been to bring all that stone out of the quarry, carry it through one of the northern gates and into the city. It would have been easier to quarry it out of the quarry across the street than to haul it out of that cavern. To Ron, the solution was obvious- to cut a hole through the ceiling of the quarry and simply haul the rocks up into the city. The more he thought it about, the more obvious it became to him- yet, no one had ever found an entrance into the quarry from the city. So Ron began to examine the rock pillars. And sure enough, he found one that wasn't a stone pillar at all. It was a giant mound of earth and debris, piled up, he believed, to the ceiling and through the hole in the ceiling. On the surface it would look like normal ground. But unable to examine the section above ground, he didn't know if the rock had been cut in a manner that would allow the cut-out section to fit back over the hole like a "man-hole cover" or if it was only the piled up earth that filled the hole. But he was convinced that the hole is there.

A Tunnel in the Quarry

With this new information, Ron wondered if there were any tunnels leading from the quarry. If so, perhaps the Ark and other items had been lowered through the hole from the area north of the temple mount into the cavern, and then through a tunnel to it's present location. So he began to look for tunnels. And sure enough, he found one. Almost completely hidden from view by boulders and overhanging rock, there was an opening into the cave wall that was sealed with several large cut rocks and it was heading in the right direction. But it was a long ways from the site Ron had worked in all those years. If this was indeed the tunnel which led to the chamber, Ron would have quite a project ahead of him in clearing such a long tunnel.

"The Guardian Cherub"

In the late 1800s the cavern was systematically researched and plotted by Frenchman Charles Clermont-Ganneau who surveyed every nook and cranny in the mammoth quarry, making sketches, drawing maps and diagrams. During this survey, he spotted a flat etching in the rock, which he carefully sketched. It appeared to be a creature with wings, a lion's tail and body, and a man's head with a long, flowing beard wearing a strange-looking hat. The etching was removed by chiseling a slab of rock around it and it was taken to the Palestine Exploration Offices in London. We haven't been able to examine the actual etching, but the drawing made by the Frenchman is reproduced on this page. The similarity in basic features between this creature and a cherub from the Israelite palace in Samaria (sketch below) can be seen. The style of the etching (according to authorities that specialize in that area of expertise) indicated that it was to be dated to the approx. 7th century BC when Israel was under the cultural influence of Assyria. This would place it before the Babylonian captivity, which WAS the correct time-frame during which Ron believed the items were hidden. And if we return to the passage in considered reliable, there IS a remark about some of Jeremiah's companions during the time he supposedly had the objects hidden in the cave: *"Some of his companions came to mark out the way, but were unable to find it. When Jeremiah learnt of this he reprimanded them."* Was this etching done by these "companions"? It's an interesting theory, but- who really knows?

Ron still believed it was significant. IF the tunnel Ron had found WAS the passage through which the Ark and other articles from the temple were transported to the chamber, just possibly someone did etch this cherub as symbolically "guarding" the tunnel entrance. Remember Eden? *GEN 3:24 So he drove out the man: and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden CHERUBIMS, and a flaming sword every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.* The etching WAS located near the blocked entrance... but, of course, again this is just a theory.

Radar- A Tunnel under the Road

Ron used the sub-surface interface radar in later years to check for the existence of a tunnel running from the underground quarry to the area of the escarpment. He did find a tunnel like void crossing under the street in the correct direction that was, as best he could determine, about 20 feet under the road. But because it is quite a distance to the site he had excavated, and because of the buildings, etc. now built in the area, he couldn't follow the line of the "void" to its final "destination".

He used the radar on the blocked up entrance in the underground quarry and found that there was a void behind the blocks. All that was now left was to open up the entrance, which he did. And there was a tunnel. But several feet inside, the passageway was again blocked with big rocks and dirt- to Ron, it looked as if whoever had blocked it had tried to camouflage the fact that it was a plugged tunnel and make it look like natural earth and rocks. The next decision he had to make was whether to attempt to clear out the extremely long tunnel or keep working within the original site and try to find the main tunnel from that end.

Time Passes By

Danny and Ronny were now young men with lives of their own. They both entered into specialized areas of construction work and had responsibilities which didn't allow them the luxury of taking off work to travel back and forth to the Middle East. With the passageway that led to the chamber that held the Ark now solidly blocked, Ron had to rely on others to help with the work. Just since the time I entered the picture (1988) I've seen the hazards of having to rely on people Ron didn't know too well. Sometimes, he had wonderful volunteers who were willing to follow instructions and abide by the rules. Othertimes, people who seemed like nice,

trustworthy folks turned out to be a "cursing" instead of a blessing. The "Ark of the Covenant" seemed to attract it's fair share of those who had "their own agenda".

More Work in the Cave System

Ron decided to continue to search for the original entrance into the chamber from within the cave system. With better hi-tech equipment, such as the radar, he was able to detect voids behind solid rock walls which was extremely useful. From one particular location within the cave system, he KNEW he was within a certain number of feet of the chamber-but getting from point A to point B through many, many feet of solid limestone just wasn't that easy. He followed many false leads, such as a rock wall they found within the cave system which followed along the contour of the cliff-face, just as the wall of the chamber had done. But this lead didn't pan out.

I couldn't understand the problem when Ron tried to explain everything to me- that is until I went into the cave system myself. As I entered the small hole, I expected to find myself in a large cave, like the ones I had been in as a child. Instead, I discovered the small hole went through a jagged shaft about 25 feet STRAIGHT DOWN- I had to hold onto a rope and sort of "repel" off the rocks. Exiting the shaft, I found myself standing on some wooden planks which was the only "floor" and it was quite small- the open cavern continued on another 40 or more feet beneath me. It was nothing like I had expected. By the time I had twisted and turned, trying to conform my body to the narrow shaft which led into this area, I discovered that I had absolutely NO idea of what direction I was facing. Without a compass, I was completely disoriented. Then, when I went through a couple of the small openings from the main chamber, I was absolutely amazed at how tight the areas were. Tending a bit towards claustrophobia, I had a brand new respect for Ron, Danny and Ronny- I couldn't imagine how they did it, and I still can't.

I had earlier thought, "If you know how many feet it is to a certain point, why don't you just measure it and go there?" But now, I understood why. In the tight confines, with cave walls and rocks everywhere, it seemed impossible to measure anything. Or even knowing the correct direction seemed impossible to me. Of course, Ron had worked in these caves and tunnels for so many years, he pretty much knew it like the back of his hand but this was not going to be easy.

"Impending Doom"

In addition to searching within the cave system, Ron took his team to the blocked-up tunnel entrance in the quarry to open it. Removing the blocks, there WAS the void Ron had detected with the radar as we explained earlier, and then the tunnel was plugged. So, Ron crawled inside and began to remove the rocks and debris, passing the buckets down to the next person, who passed it to the next, etc., until the last person who dumped or disposed of the contents. (This is the same method they used inside the cave system- the "bucket brigade" we call it, sometimes consisting of 10 or more people.)

As I was writing this, Ron reminded me of an experience he had during this time. While clearing the tunnel with a group of good friends from Florida, he suddenly was struck with a feeling of impending "doom" or "disaster". He told everyone about this "impression", and explained that he didn't know what was going to happen but that they all needed to quickly pack up the equipment and "get outta there". All the guys did as he said, and just as they started walking out, everyone heard a loud booming thud coming from the area of the tunnel. A huge boulder in the ceiling of the tunnel had fallen right where Ron had been sitting.

They returned the next day and Ron simply broke it up and removed it- the feeling of "doom" was gone and they continued working. But the debris plugging the hole appeared to have no end. They replaced the blocks exactly as they had found them and gave up, at least for the time being. For now, we have no idea if the tunnel is completely blocked the entire way, or even if it is the correct tunnel. However, the last time Ron went back into the tunnel, Ronny was able to take time off work and return with him- and Ronny found a Roman coin with Tiberius on it which indicates that the tunnel was opened in Roman times but then resealed. We could not find this particular coin in our list of Imperial Roman coins and therefore assume that the coin was a "city coin".

Digging Straight Down

Ron's last resort was to attempt to dig a shaft through the solid rock into the chamber that held the Ark and other objects. But this was a very precarious approach- the shaft could cave in and damage some of the objects, or they could expend all that effort and discover they had missed the chamber. It would be a tremendous undertaking, requiring an awful lot of work. But one trip, after his main excavation team had left for home, Ron and a couple of faithful assistants began the shaft. They now had jackhammer-drills and much better equipment than he and the boys had used during the early years. They began drilling the shaft and got through about 10 feet of solid limestone over several trips but the end didn't seem anywhere in sight. And Ron experienced something that is common to the human species- he became frustrated at the tremendous effort and expense that appeared to be yielding absolutely no results.

Of all the projects Ron has worked on and the discoveries he has made, his sense of unworthiness to work on this one was and is ever-present in his thoughts. The Biblical examples of those who did a work for God but at some time or another failed in some manner (such as the time Moses struck the rock when he was told to SPEAK to it, which cost him the privilege of being allowed to enter the promised land) are vivid reminders to Ron of how serious the consequences could be if he should allow any of his actions or motivations to go against God's will. Sometimes, it was easy to discern his course of action, but other times it wasn't. Plus, he reasoned that if the time came that he had failed and God could no longer use him, how would he know? And by this time, he was beginning to wonder if he was being "taken off the job". He has always known that God didn't NEED him to get His work done- he could always find someone else. His efforts didn't seem to be paying off- it had now been almost 10 years since he first found the Ark.

"God Bless You in What You are Doing Here"

The next trip, Ron and one assistant had gone to Jerusalem to work on the shaft. A month or 2 earlier Ron had spoken at a church and one man present took a particular interest in the Ark of the Covenant. I well remember when he called here and began to question me about when Ron was going over, etc. He sounded like a nice enough person and I told him I didn't know for sure (which I didn't) but that it would be in a few months. He then asked me where they stayed because, he explained, he was going to Israel and wanted a relatively cheap hotel. So, I told him where we usually stayed- it seemed like an innocent enough question. But I was soon to learn a terrible lesson- that we cannot tell anyone when he is going overseas to work, whether it be Israel or Egypt, or wherever.

When Ron and our friend who was helping him arrived at the hotel, there was this man who had called me. He somehow had found out Ron's arrival date (I hadn't told him)! It turned out that this man was under the impression (or delusion) that he was some sort of "prophet" and intended to impose himself into the project. So here was Ron and his digger, ready to go to work- but there was no way Ron was going to let this man know anything important, so they

went into the main cave system but couldn't do the work they intended to do- not with him present.

As Ron explained it to me, this episode was the straw that sort of "broke the camels back". He had prayed, as he always does, about going over and had been convinced it was what he was supposed to do. At this time, Ron had to pay all the expenses out of his own pocket and this one was costly. Adding it all up, it was approximately \$7,000.00 to \$8,000.00 down the tubes, which is a LOT of money to us. So, Ron began to question if he was really doing what God wanted him to do, or if he was just fooling himself. At this time, it had been almost 10 years since he had first found the Ark- had he done something wrong that God could no longer use him? Whatever was the case, Ron decided on that trip that he was through- finished. He would close up the cave system and never return. And let me tell you, this is NOT like Ron at all. He was very excited when he left here, and the experience with the "prophet" showing up must have been a terrible blow. What little he has told me about the incident indicates that it was a far worse experience than it sounds. But whatever happened, it completely deflated Ron, who interpreted the failed trip to mean that he had been "taken off the job".

But then Ron had an experience that changed his life. One day, he and the "prophet" were sitting on the ground just outside the entrance into the cave system- Ron's helper was inside. Ron was working on the radar scanner- changing the paper or something- and the "prophet" was in the shade of a large bush eating his lunch. Where they were sitting was, at that time, many feet lower than the ground level just behind them because this was where Ron had excavated down years earlier. It's necessary to understand this in light of the next event. Ron heard a voice behind him say "God bless you in what you are doing here", and he looked up. Standing on the much higher ground many feet above him was a tall, slender man with dark hair wearing a long white robe and head covering similar to that worn in Biblical times- except that it was all pure white. Startled, mainly because he didn't TELL anyone what he was "doing here", he wondered who this man was. He tried to make polite conversation and asked him if he was from around the area. The man replied simply "No" then remained silent. Ron then asked him if he was a tourist, and he again replied simply, "No". More silence, then the figure in white said, "I'm on my way from South Africa to the New Jerusalem". Ron was so startled that he couldn't say anything, but just stared at him. Then, the man again said, "God bless you in what you are doing here", and then turned and walked away. After a moment, the "prophet", who couldn't see the man because he was beneath the shade of the bush, said, "Ron, do you think we've been talking to an angel?" Ron replied, "At least..."

I remember his call like it was yesterday. If you don't know Ron personally, let me explain that Ron is very low-keyed. He never acts excited or angry- his voice rarely gives away his true feelings. But I knew something had happened even though his voice was calm. He told me what had happened, and explained how just hours earlier, he had silently given up- frustrated, tired and simply worn down, he had lost his belief that what he was doing was God's will. Then, this stranger appeared and he repeated word for word their conversation. He was glad that the "prophet" had at least heard the conversation- at least he knew for sure that it really happened. And when he questioned the locals who worked along the only path anyone could take to enter the area, he discovered that NO one had seen anyone of that description either come into the area or leave. Although the escarpment is extremely long, today it is surrounded by buildings, fences and stone walls which prevent anyone coming into the area except through one particular street. And the vendors along that street have been there day after day as long as Ron had worked there and he knew them well. There was no doubt about it- the stranger in white had been seen by no one else. And then Ron told me that he believed it was more than just an angel- he was deeply impressed that it was Christ, Himself.

Whether Christ, or an angel, the experience was enough to encourage Ron and convince him that his efforts had NOT been in vain, and that he WAS still in God's will. And since then, I

have seen the results of that experience over and over, in both of us. From that moment forward, nothing could or will ever dampen Ron's zeal or belief in that or any other project. When he and his group were kidnapped about a year later in eastern Turkey, I know the knowledge of that experience gave me complete peace- I never once (after the initial shock) believed Ron was in serious danger because I knew he still had work to do. My calm was so noticeable that when Ron returned, his friends at the hospital ribbed him, saying "Your wife sure must not care too much for you because she was AWFULLY calm on TV when talking about her kidnapped husband." Ron doesn't talk about this experience with "the man in white" a great deal, but I believe it literally changed his life, giving him enough encouragement to endure whatever it takes to get the work finished. And since that time, Ron, like everyone else, has been waiting for the most part.

The Blood Tests

No one was any more surprised when Ron first publicly told about the results of the blood tests on the specimens he had taken from the Mercy Seat than I was. (All that he has stated about this can be seen in his talk on our "Presentation" video and will not be repeated here.) As I have said, there is a great deal he hasn't told even me, and this was one of those instances. He had taken other specimens from along the crack where it extends through the bedrock adjacent to the cross-hole and I myself had been able to take a small sample, rehydrate it over a 3 day period, and view the red blood cells through the microscope. But even then, he never mentioned to me any actual lab analyses being done. Nor have I ever seen the other specimen. Therefore, all I can report here is what he has already said, as he has told me that when the time is right, he plans to have 2 unbiased geneticists go into the chamber, take their own samples, and each do his own independent analysis which will be filmed in progress. Again, this is HIS plan - what HE hopes will occur- but as with everything else, we do not know for sure exactly how, when or where everything will ultimately occur. But for now, he has nothing more to say on the subject. He learned from his experiences with Noah's Ark that even when he had the lab analyses filmed as they were done, there were those who came up with incredible reasons for discounting the results, such as saying that Ron "made" the specimen, etc. All one has to do is watch a bit of the O. J. Simpson trial to see how important blood tests can be. My personal opinion is this: IF the Lord intends that His Son's Blood be shown publicly to have such unique characteristics that His humanity and divinity cannot be denied, He will arrange for this evidence to be presented in a manner that "clever" men cannot "explain it away" from honest people. Since the time Ron found the Blood, genetic (DNA) research has come a long way, perhaps indicating that God is preparing mankind for the proof that will not remain silent, but will shake the world. So, for now, just consider what Ron has told, and again, watch and wait.

The "Dark" Side

Ron recalled to me the 5 people who had lost their lives at the very time they were attempting to interfere with or even halt the excavation. We will not make these public because of their families. But we still have the newspaper article- the front page of the Nashville Banner- telling about the death of one. This man had stumbled upon Ron and the boys as they were coming and going from the excavation and began to ask questions. He soon found out what was going on (at this time, Ron had already seen the Ark) and was determined that "the world" needed to know. He called a "press conference" in which he was going to announce "a great discovery". When Ron learned of this, he and the boys immediately changed their flight and left the night before it was scheduled. It was to take place in a nearby alley-way that was relatively secluded. When Ron arrived back home, he found the account on the front page of the Nashville newspaper. The man had been found dead in that alley-way, shot in the head by a single "sniper's" bullet when the journalists arrived. No further explanation was given.

I could easily write volumes on the experiences Ron has had with those who have tried to interfere with the work, as well as those who have taken it upon themselves to try to discredit his and his work with hearsay and personal opinions. I know of 2 people who worked with Ron on one discovery (not this one) who both expressed to me that- bottom line- they "turned on him" because they simply cannot believe that he found the Ark of the Covenant. Well, the way I look at that is - Thomas wouldn't believe Christ was really standing before him until he saw the imprint of the nails in His hands and the wound in His side- and Christ DIDN'T chastise him for this. In fact, his very episode may have happened for the benefit of those who would come later and COULDN'T see Him, but would read of Thomas's need of "proof". It is no "sin" to require evidence. "Faith" is not blind- it is based on reality which is all around us. But what was sufficient in the past is no longer sufficient to the "man" of today who is bombarded by so-called "scientific" evidences which the "experts" interpret to us as "positive evidence" that the Bible is a "myth". God, in His mercy, is providing hard-core evidence for a generation that has been taught to believe "as gospel" the "word" of our educators and men of "higher learning". NO one should accept anyone's word on anything until they can see evidence. However, when someone has backed up other claims with solid evidence, that is sufficient reason to consider something they may claim but be unable to prove at the time. Educate yourself on the subject and withhold final judgment until solid evidence is shown "yea" or "nay".

THE ARK AND THE JEWS- SACRIFICES, AGAIN?

Another question we are asked is if we believe the Jews are to re-institute the sacrificial system when the Ark is revealed. If we believe the Word of God, the answer can only be "no". As we discussed earlier, Jeremiah, who prophesied during the time of the Ark's disappearance, wrote: *JER 3:16 And it shall come to pass, when ye be multiplied and increased in the land, in those days. saith the LORD, they shall say no more, The ark of the covenant of the LORD: neither shall it come to mind: neither shall they remember it; neither shall they visit it; neither shall that be done any more.*

The Lord was telling the Jews that if they returned to Him, He would do marvelous things for them. But this prophecy, being conditional, never came to pass. However, the verse we have just read was to tell them that the day would come when the Messiah would die for them, all sacrifices would cease, and they would be His lightbearers to the world. The fact that they, as a people, rejected God's pleas and finally apostatized, did not change the fact that the day would come when sacrifices to Him would be an abomination: *ISA 66:3 He that killeth an ox is as if he slew a man; he that sacrificeth a lamb, as if he cut off a dog's neck; he that offereth an oblation, as if he offered swine's blood; he that burneth incense, as if he blessed an idol. Yea, they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delighteth in their abominations.*

The verse in Jeremiah indicates that God will never return the Ark to the Jews for this purpose. But aside from this, when the Jews went into captivity in Babylon and the temple was destroyed, God spoke through His prophet Ezekiel in giving them new instructions regarding the sacrificial system- instructions which no longer included the Ark of the Covenant. See Ezekiel 44 through 46. And when they returned from captivity, they continued the sacrificial system as God has instructed, but without the Ark. During the time of Christ, they were still performing the sacrificial system, again- without the Ark. There is no reason why they need the Ark to perform the sacrificial system. All they would have to do is build a "table of the Lord" as instructed in Ezekiel 41:22.

Let us never forget that Satan was once a covering cherub- he lived in the very Presence of God. And he knows the truth-he knows what's going on, and his aim is to obliterate God's

Truth. He inspires men to come up with ideas and theories which do away with sacred truths, that we may be deceived. And for even the true believers, our only safeguard is in His Holy Word.

We are of the opinion that many churches have applied prophecies which refer to "Israel" to the literal Jews, when they in fact refer to the "people of God"- *GAL 3:29 And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.* As a result, many prophecies which refer to events which occur after the Second Advent of Christ, are misunderstood to be events which occur after His First Advent (and thusly before He returns.)

Mary Nell Wyatt

THE BURIAL PLACE OF CHRIST by Ron Wyatt

ISA 53:9 And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. 10 Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. 11 He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.

This text specifically refers to what Christ would accomplish on earth and where he would be buried. We have carefully and prayerfully investigated the burial place of Our Saviour. As you know, there are traditions that would have us believe that He didn't actually die, but that He "migrated to America" and possibly other places. The Moslems are taught that an "image" was used during the crucifixion and burial events, and that Christ did not actually die. While their "prophet" instructed them to believe the Gospels and New Testament, they were not taught the great truth that Paul explained: *HEB 9:22 And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.* They disregard the complete justice of God, or that He is aware of every injustice. Rev. 6:9; Gen. 4:10 and Gen. 9:6. Even among those who do believe that Christ died and was buried, there are differing opinions as to where He died, and where He was buried.

There are many burial caves and sepulchers near Jerusalem. It appears that many of the professed followers of God desired to be buried near Abraham's resting place in Hebron, as we discussed earlier. Later, Jerusalem, the location of the first and second temples, was considered the first choice of a burial place. The statement that He (Christ) "made His grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death", had long puzzled me. Joseph of Arimathaea was rich, but was not wicked. And his tomb was new- what did it mean when it said He was buried with the wicked?

During our last trip to the Jerusalem and Hebron areas, many questions about these things were cleared up. Those of you that have been on tour with us have seen the chisel marks radiating inward across the face of the Garden Tomb's face where a great slab of stone was removed to be shaped into a giant seal stone. You have seen the sheared-off iron shaft that the Romans drove into the stone face of the tomb at the left edge of where the 13 ft. seal stone would have been. This was done in an attempt to prevent the stone from being rolled to the side and the tomb being opened. Mat.27:60 and 66. Also, Mark 16:4 tells that the seal

stone of Christ's tomb was not only a "very great stone" but that it had been "sealed". In the Copper Scroll (found with the Dead Sea Scrolls) it mentions that a certain amount of silver was hidden beneath the "great seal stone" from "Zadok's tomb"- Zadok, meaning, "The Just One", which is Christ.

There is overwhelming evidence that the Garden Tomb is Joseph of Aramathaea's tomb and the one in which Christ rested over the Sabbath, and from which He arose, gaining the victory over the grave for us. He was buried in a rich man's tomb, but what about His grave being "with the wicked"? Approximately 50 feet from the Garden Tomb to the left as you face the tomb, is located a large complex of tombs that belonged to wealthy Jews. One of these is hewn to the exact dimensions of the Holy and Most Holy chambers of Solomon's temple. The royal Egyptian cubit is used (20.6 inch=cubit). There was a brass box recessed into the floor that now, we were told, has been stolen, and the chamber cut into the stone floor left behind is exactly the dimensions of the table of Shewbread (20.6 in wide by 41.2 inches long/or one cubit by two cubits!) The burial crypt in this chamber is of the size and position of the Most Holy place! This would imply that the owners and users of this tomb considered themselves equal to God. How much more wicked could one get- to be buried only a few feet from this blasphemous tomb is certainly being "with the wicked".

This complex of tombs to the northwest of Joseph's (Christ's) tomb were hewn into the face of the dry moat that was cut across the ridge of Mount Moriah. This was done to make the north wall of Jerusalem less vulnerable to attack. The tombs were hewn in a north-west to south-east progression. It is obvious that these were the tombs of the wealthy and priestly class. They were hewn during the first temple period and used until the Babylonian captivity. During the captivity, the portable ossuary was introduced and used, as revealed in the ancient Jewish records. These stone boxes were of a size to contain the bones of one individual and were designed to make it possible for the bones of the Jews to be transported back to Jerusalem and interred in the family tomb. The families who owned these tombs began using them upon their return from the captivity and they were used through the Persian and Greek periods. In some cases, the tomb entrances were sealed with slabs of stone bearing Greek inscriptions and some researchers present this as proof that the tombs date from the Greek period. This view fails to take into consideration that such a tomb, and such a choice location was a matter of pride for the family, and they, of course, would have their inscriptions updated to the most popular and widest read language as newer members would die and be interred there.

The Garden Tomb is located in the next available position, immediately southeast of these first temple period tomb complexes. There would be no need for the old, rich and priestly families to hew other tombs. No Jew wished to be buried anywhere but in their ancestors' tomb. Foreign kings had their tombs hewn near the highest points around the city; as higher indicated greater importance. The Garden Tomb location is the obvious first choice for the burial of "the new-rich" of Christ's time. And Joseph of Arimathaea was just such a person. Bible scholars and believers have no doubt that he had his tomb hewn by Divine Providence just at the right time to allow for the fulfillment of the Isaiah prophecy about Christ's burial.

THE ARK REVEALED!

We are all anxious for the Ark to be revealed. But let us never forget that the Ark does not belong to man- it belongs to God. *EXO 25:8 And let them make **me** a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them. 9 According to all that I shew thee, after the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof even so shall ye make it.*

All things in the sanctuary were patterned after the things in Heaven: *HEB 9:25 It was therefore necessary that **the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.***

In God's perfect time, His Ark will be a witness to all the world, and He will prove to us that His Word endures throughout eternity- His Law remains: *PSA 89:34 My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips.*

God has perfect foresight- He has never made a mistake; no changes are needed. The New Covenant didn't change what God commanded- it fulfilled the promise of salvation shadowed in the ordinances of the Old. Never was the Old Covenant designed to last forever, for there was no forgiveness of sins in those sacrifices: *JER 31:31 Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: 32 Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake,...: 33 But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts;... 34 And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.*

All countries have their laws- but the Bible tells us that God's Law is the only true law. And it is this law that the 4th beast of Daniel seeks to change: *DAN 7:25 And he shall speak great words against the most High and think to change times and laws:* We cannot let man nor "beast" tell us God's law is changed, for He alone can do that. Yet, He has told us His Law will never change: *LUK 16:17 And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail. 1 JO 5:3 For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous. PRO 7:2 Keep my commandments, and live; and my law as the apple of thine eye.*

Note- This paper and WAR's video entitled "Presentation of Discoveries" contain all that Ron is able to discuss on this subject at this point in time (Oct. 1995). When will these things be made public? We do not know. It is Ron's hopeful expectation that it will be within the next year; however, let it be noted that if it does not occur in 1996, he has no plans to give up and quit Nor is this statement to be construed to be a statement of "fact" that it will occur in 1996. Based on the information we have at the present, we believe the time is near. But it is ultimately in God's Hands and will happen exactly when it is His perfect time, and in His perfect manner.

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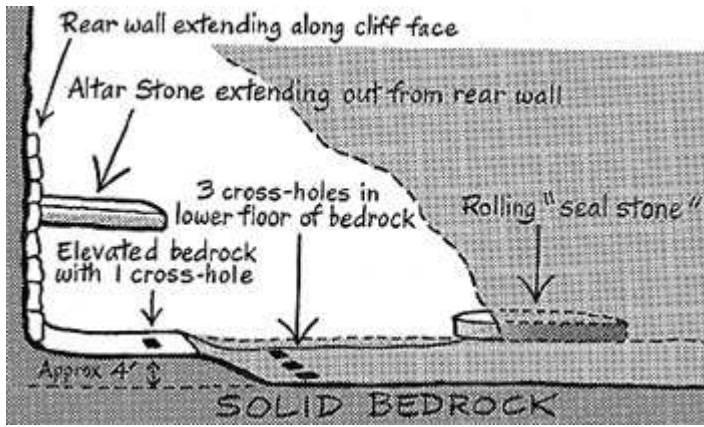
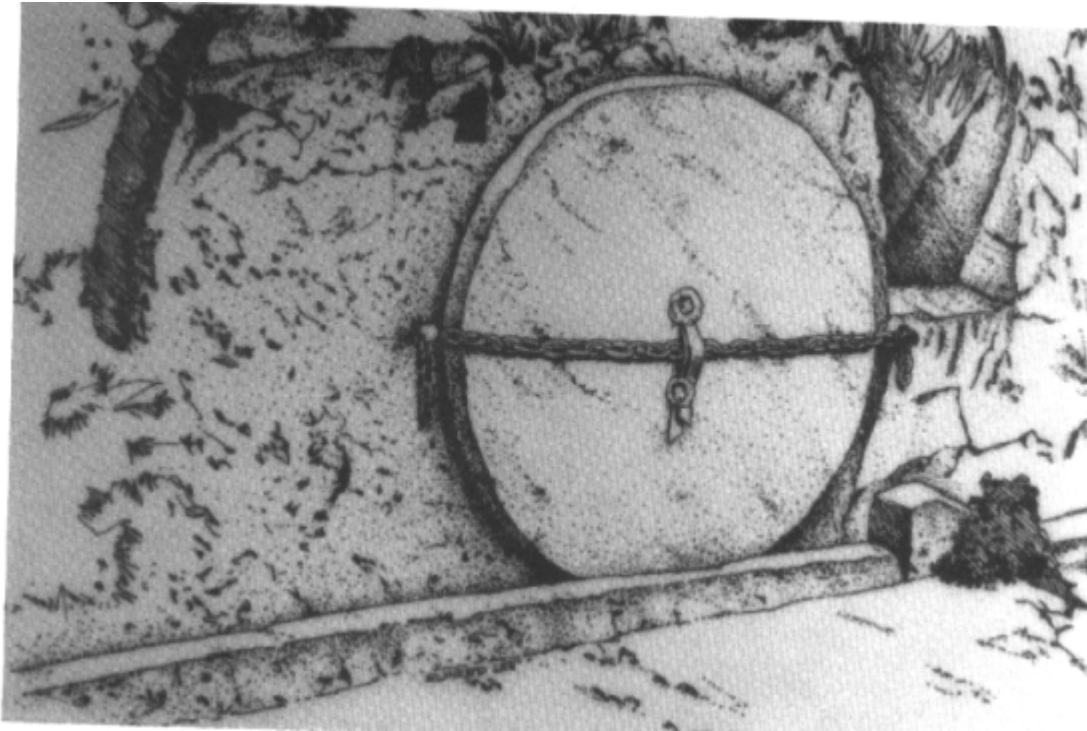
1. Ark of the Covenant
2. Table of Shewbread
3. Altar of Incense
4. 7-branched Lampstand
5. Serving utensils including a Censer
6. A 5' 2" sword, most likely that of Goliath.

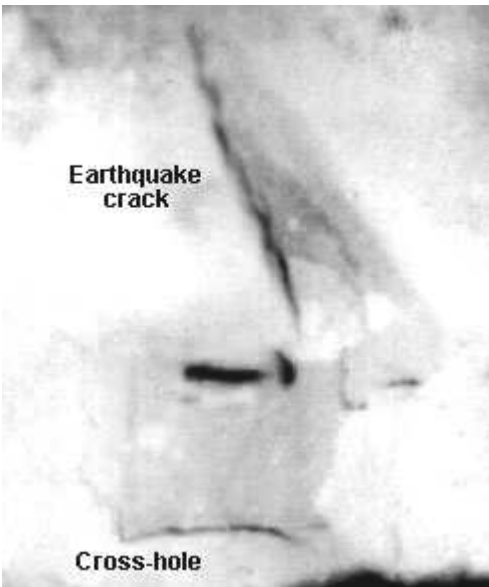


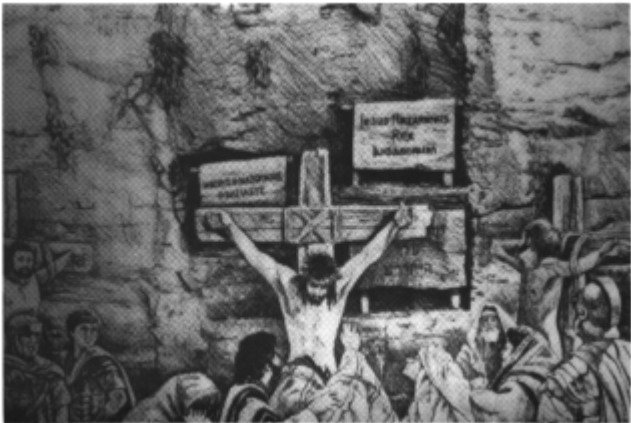
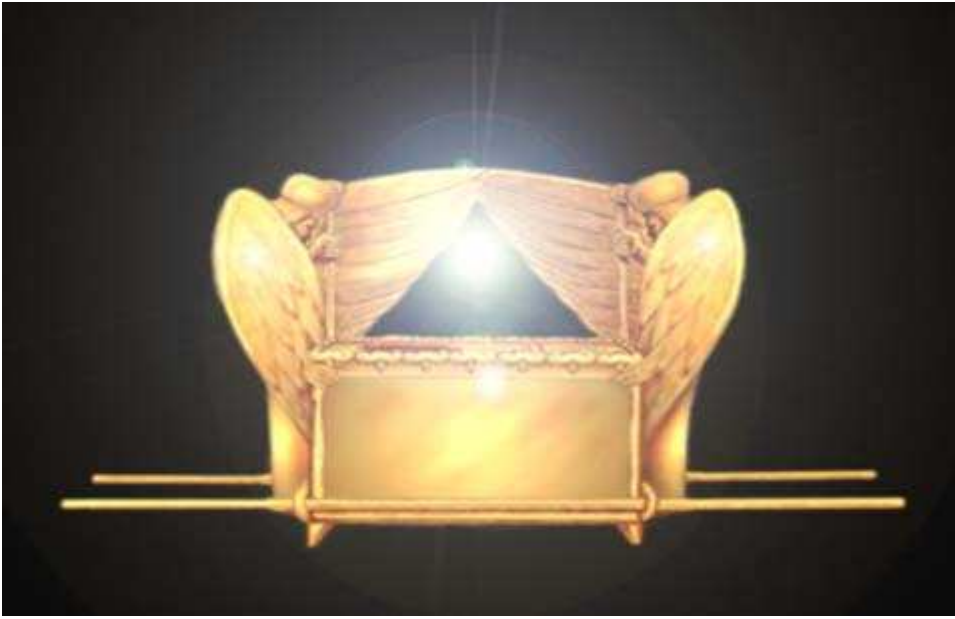
Gordon's tomb





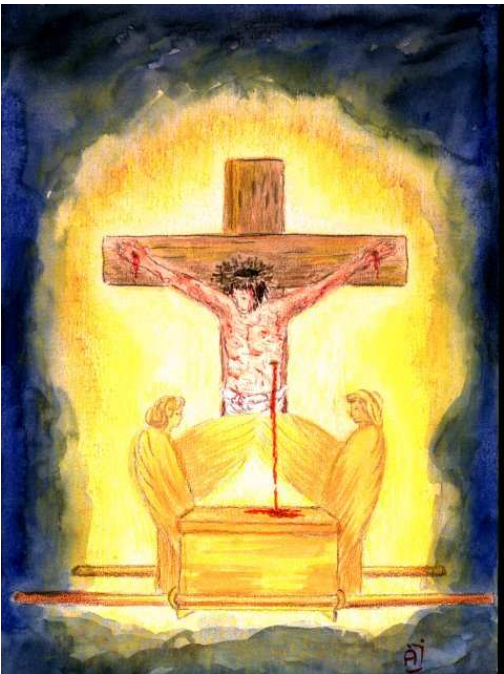






The crucifixion scene, according to the new evidence





Jeremiah's Grotto

