

GLAD TIDINGS

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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Superseding the ark of the covenant

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Mystery over the ark of the covenant has been couched in legend for many years. One tradition has King Josiah hiding it in a most secret place prepared by Solomon in case the house of Jehovah would ever be set on fire. One legend has Jeremiah placing it in a hollow cave at mount Pisgah when Jerusalem was ransacked in 587 B.C. by the Babylonians.

According to some Ethiopians, it has been protected for many years. Their legend tells of King Menelik, supposedly the offspring of Solomon and the Queen of Sheba, bringing the ark of the Covenant back to Tana Kirkos in Ethiopia following his visit with Solomon in Jerusalem. Solomon is supposed to have sent it back with Menelik for protection. Now the Ark is said to be hidden northwest of Lake Tana in a small chapel in Aksum. It is guarded today by one man—a 69 year old monk named Abba Mekonen, who never leaves the chapel compound and will have the responsibility of guarding the Ark till his death (National Geographic, July 2001, pp.116-120).

This raises an interesting question, “What if the ark of the

covenant is found, how should a Christian react to the find”? The Christian should understand that facts connected with the purpose of ark of the covenant has been superseded by Christ.

The ark of the covenant was the place where God would make known His instructive and glorious presence. God says to Moses, “And there I will meet with thee, and I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim which are upon the ark of the testimony, of all things which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel” (Exodus 25:22). Today, God has spoken unto us in His Son (Hebrews 1:2-3). The “mercy seat” above the ark of the covenant, was the place where forgiveness or “the covering of sins” could be realized. Today, Jesus Christ is where we find God’s mercy for the forgiveness of sins. He, through his blood, is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world (I John 2:2, Romans 3:25).

The ark of the covenant was also called the ark of the Testimony because in the three feet by two feet by two feet chest, the tables containing the Ten Commandments were placed. The Law was

God’s testimony to His people and the foundation for His covenant with them (Deut. 10:5). Also, a pot of manna, reminding the Israelites of God providing for them in the wilderness, and Aaron’s rod that budded, reminding the Israelites of respecting God’s appointed authoritative leaders were placed before the ark, if not in it (Exodus 16:34). Jesus is the Word, who came to bear witness of the truth (John 1:1, 18:37). More than manna, Jesus is the bread of life giving eternal life (John 6:31-35). Jesus has been given all authority (Matthew 28:18).

Jesus supersedes everything connected with the ancient ark of the covenant. Pointing to include the Messiah’s rule, Jeremiah prophesied, “... they shall say no more, the ark of the covenant of Jehovah; neither shall it come to mind; neither shall they remember it; neither shall it be made anymore” (Jeremiah 3:16). The ark was probably stripped and destroyed by the Babylonians in 587-586 B.C. (2 Kings 25:8-17). Today, Jesus offers a better covenant based upon better promises (Heb. 8:6). So, what if they find the ark of the covenant?