



# PROPHECY EXPO

## The Role of the Ark of the Covenant in the Book of Revelation

- I. To best way to understand the role of the ark of the covenant in the Book of Revelation is to see within the book a figurative representation of Jesus reenacting priestly duties in which He is both priest and sacrifice. As one scholar has said,

“The overall structure of the book of Revelation may be seen to follow the sweep of salvation history as set forth in the Old Testament festival typology.”<sup>1</sup>

- II. Jesus reveals Himself as the Passover lamb who was resurrected and now has the keys of life and death

“When I saw Him, I fell at His feet like a dead man. And He placed His right hand on me, saying, “Do not be afraid; I am the first and the last, and the living One; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades.”  
(Revelation 1:17-18; NASB189; SP1210)

- A.. Jesus walks among the seven candlesticks, and like a priest, was supposed to daily trim the lamps, a daily and continuous duty.

“Aaron shall burn fragrant incense on it; he shall burn it every morning when he trims the lamps.  
<sup>8</sup> “When Aaron trims the lamps at twilight, he shall burn incense. *There shall be* perpetual incense before the LORD throughout your generations.”  
(Exodus 30:7-8; NASB64; SP89)

B. Connected to the Passover was the Feast of Unleavened bread, celebrated for seven days following Passover. During this feast Jewish households were to search for leaven, which was to be removed from their houses, Like that feast period Jesus scrutinized the Seven Churches pointing out the “leaven found in each of the churches

“To the angel of the church in Ephesus write: The One who holds the seven stars in His right hand, the One who walks among the seven golden lampstands, says this: ‘I know your deeds and your toil and perseverance, and that you cannot tolerate evil men, and you put to the test those who call themselves apostles, and they are not, and you found them *to be false*.’”  
(Revelation 2:1-2; NASB189; SP1211)

III. The day of Pentecost was celebrated 50 days after the Passover. An old Jewish tradition had a candle burning between Passover and Pentecost and it is likely the Israelites arrived at Mount Sinai at the end of 50 days traveling from Egypt through the Sinai peninsula to Mount Sinai. In addition, traditional Jewish lectionary readings for Pentecost are Exodus 19:1 through 20:23 and the throne scene of Ezekiel 1

A. The feast of Pentecost celebrated the giving of the Law and being in the presence of God

“In the third month after the sons of Israel had gone out of the land of Egypt, on that very day they came into the wilderness of Sinai. When they set out from Rephidim, they came to the wilderness of Sinai and camped in the wilderness; and there Israel camped in front of the mountain.”  
(Exodus 19:1-2; NASB55; SP76)

B. So the feast of Pentecost is celebrated in heaven as is displayed in Revelation 4-5, while His disciples celebrated the feast of Pentecost with heavenly power that came to earth to bless them

“To these He also presented Himself alive after His suffering, by many convincing proofs, appearing to them over a *period of forty days* and speaking of the things concerning the kingdom of God.”  
(Acts 1:3; NASB91; SP1065)

“When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came from heaven a noise like a violent rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them tongues as of fire distributing themselves, and they rested on each one of them.”  
(Acts 2:1-3; NASB92; SP1066-67)

C. The Mount Sinai Experience and the inauguration of Jesus in to courts of heaven have similar affects. Jesus is our Passover lamb and is inaugurated into heaven as king, priest, and God

“Then the LORD said to him, ‘Go down and **come up again**, you and Aaron with you; but do not let the priests and the people break through to come up to the LORD, or He will break forth upon them.’”  
(Exodus 19:24, emphasis supplied; NASB56; SP77)

“So it came about on the third day, when it was morning, that there were thunder and lightning flashes and a thick cloud upon the mountain and a very loud trumpet sound, so that all the people who were in the camp trembled.”  
(Exodus 19:16; NASB55; SP76)

“After these things I looked, and behold, a door *standing* open in heaven, and the first voice which I had heard, like *the sound* of a trumpet speaking with me, said, ‘**Come up here**, and I will show you what must take place after these things.’”  
(Revelation 4:1, emphasis supplied; NASB191; SP1213)

Out from the throne come flashes of lightning and sounds and peals of thunder. And *there were* seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God;  
(Revelation 4:5; NASB191; SP1213)

IV. Just as the Feast of Trumpets was a call to the ancient Israelites to get ready for the Day of Atonement, the most holy day of the year, the trumpets in Revelation call the earth to get ready for the final executive judgment (the seven last plagues). The Seventh Trumpet calls the world to notice that the world now is in the hands of God

“Then the seventh angel sounded; and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, “The kingdom of the world has become *the kingdom* of our Lord and of His Christ; and He will reign forever and ever.”  
(Revelation 11:15; NASB194; SP1218)

A. What is found in heaven? The “Ark of the Covenant” representing the throne of God and Law of His covenant

“And the temple of God which is in heaven was opened; and the ark of His covenant appeared in His temple, and there were flashes of lightning and sounds and peals of thunder and an earthquake and a great hailstorm.”  
(Revelation 11:19; NASB195; SP1218)

B. That Revelation portrays the “Ark of the Covenant” in heaven, puts to the lie any idea that God’s law has been made void.

## “The Role of the Ark of the Covenant in Revelation” 4

Prophecy Expo—2009

David Merling, Ph.D.

### V. The Ark of the Covenant was made in connection to the building of the tabernacle

#### A. God wanted to live near His people

"Let them construct a sanctuary for Me, that I may dwell among them."  
(Exodus 25:8; NASB59; SP82)

#### B. He had Moses build a box (i.e., an ark) as a container for His law and dwelt just above the ark on the Mercy seat. The Testimony was another name for the Ten Commandments

"They shall construct an ark of acacia wood two and a half cubits long, and one and a half cubits wide, and one and a half cubits high. . . . "You shall put into the ark the testimony which I shall give you. You shall make a mercy seat of pure gold, two and a half cubits long and one and a half cubits wide."  
(Exodus 25:10, 16-17; NASB59-60; SP82)

"When He had finished speaking with him upon Mount Sinai, He gave Moses the two tablets of the testimony, tablets of stone, written by the finger of God."  
(Exodus 31:18; NASB65; SP91)

Unfortunately, too few Bible readers understand the relationship between obedience and the law. If they were more careful biblical readers, it would not be that way

### VI. Redemption is the foundation of the law. In both the Old and New Testaments God redeemed His people then asked them for a natural response. The Ten Commandments were not given to the pagans, but to those who were redeemed by God

"I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery 'You shall have no other gods before Me.'  
(Exodus 20:2-3; NASB56; SP77)

"For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, *it is* the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are His workmanship created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them."  
(Ephesians 2:8-10; NASB151; SP1152)

### VII. We all know that some things in the Bible are no longer applicable to Christians. How can we tell which things should be of concern to us, since there are Old Testament laws for cultic or religious purposes, laws that have to do with tribal Israelite issues, and also moral laws all mixed together. How can we tell the difference among them?

#### A. Guidelines that I have found helpful

1. Laws that are found before the time of the Israelites
2. Laws that are not specifically prohibited by New Testament writers
3. Laws that seem to be in force in New Testament times  
should be regarded by New Testament Christians.

“The Role of the Ark of the Covenant in Revelation” 5

Prophecy Expo—2009

David Merling, Ph.D.

B. Examples of those rejected and/or still binding would be,

1. Circumcision; even though found before the time of the Israelites (Genesis 17:10) it is specifically stated in the New Testament that it is not binding on Christians today

“For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh. But he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that which is of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter; and his praise is not from men, but from God.”  
(Romans 2:28-29; NASB120; SP1106)

2. Passover was a strictly Israelite tradition, which came about to their specific circumstances, so it is not applicable to current Christians. Jesus is our Passover experience

“Moreover, they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses in which they eat it. They shall eat the flesh that *same* night, roasted with fire, and they shall eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs.”  
(Exodus 12:7-8; NASB49; SP67)

3. The Sabbath was made at the creation of the world, long before Israelites were even thought of. In addition, no command is found in the Bible to change the Sabbath. It is a memorial of God’s creative work

“By the seventh day God completed His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done. Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.”  
(Genesis 2:2-3; NASB1; SP2)

“And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up; and as was His custom, He entered the synagogue on the Sabbath, and stood up to read.”  
(Luke 4:16; NASB47; SP1000)

4. Unclean/clean foods are mentioned in the flood account, suggesting that they represent part of the eternal covenant between God and man

“But I will establish My covenant with you; and you shall enter the ark-- you and your sons and your wife, and your sons' wives with you.  
<sup>19</sup> “And of every living thing of all flesh, you shall bring two of every *kind* into the ark, to keep *them* alive with you; they shall be male and female.  
(Genesis 6:18-19; NASB5; SP6)

“You shall take with you of every clean animal by sevens, a male and his female; and of the animals that are not clean two, a male and his female; also of the birds of the sky, by sevens, male and female, to keep offspring alive on the face of all the earth.  
(Genesis 7:2-3; NASB5; SP6)

“For behold, the LORD will come in fire And His chariots like the whirlwind, To render His anger with fury, And His rebuke with flames of fire. For the LORD will execute judgment by fire And by His sword on all flesh, And those slain by the LORD will be many. Those who sanctify and purify themselves *to go to the gardens*, Following one in the center, Who eat swine's flesh, detestable things and mice, Will come to an end altogether,” declares the LORD.”  
(Isaiah 66:15-17; NASB534; SP743)

“The Role of the Ark of the Covenant in Revelation” 6  
Prophecy Expo—2009  
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5. In the end, it is all about love for Jesus

"If you love Me, you will keep My commandments."  
(John 14:15; NASB85; SP1057)