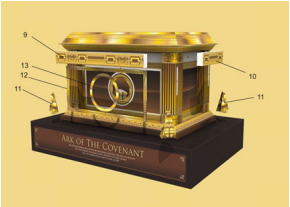
The Ark of the Covenant is described in the Bible as a sacred container, wherein rested the Tablets of stone containing the Ten Commandments as well as Aaron's rod and manna. According to the Biblical account, the Ark was built at the command of God, in accord with Moses' prophetic vision on Mount Sinai (Exodus 25:10-16). God communicated with Moses "from between the two cherubim" on the Ark's cover (Exodus 25:22). The Ark and its sanctuary were "the beauty of Israel" (Lamentations 2:1). Rashi and some Midrashim suggest that there were two arks - a temporary one made by Moses, and a later one made by Bezalel.

The Biblical account relates that during the trip of the Israelites, the Ark was carried by the priests ~2,000 cubits (Numbers 35:5; Joshua 4:5) in advance of the people and their army or host (Num. 4:5-6; 10:33-36; Psalms 68:1; 132:8). When the Ark was borne by priests into the bed of the Jordan, the river was separated, opening a pathway for the whole of the host to pass over (Josh. 3:15-16; 4:7-18). The Ark was borne in a seven-day procession around the wall of Jericho by seven priests sounding seven trumpets of rams' horns, the city taken with a shout (Josh. 6:4-20). When carried, the Ark was always wrapped in a veil, in tachash skins (the identity of this animal is uncertain), and a blue cloth, and was carefully concealed, even from the eyes of the Levites who carried it. [More at Wikipedia]

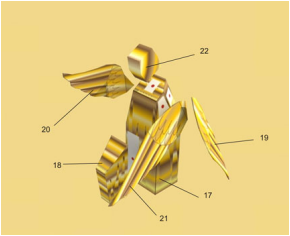


Terminology

The Hebrew word aron is used in the Bible to refer to any type of ark, chest or coffer, for any purpose (Book of Genesis 50:26; 2 Kings 12:9, 10).

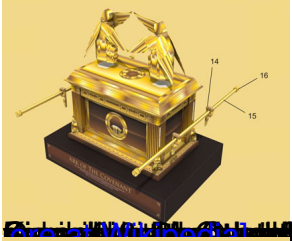
The Ark of the Covenant is distinguished from all others by such titles as:

* Taboot fia Sakina Holy Quran](Chapter 2 Al Bakra Verse 248)
* Holy Ark
* Ark of God, (1 Samuel 3:3)
* Ark of thy God's strength
* Ark of the Covenant, (Josh. 3:6; Hebrews 9:4)
* Ark of the Covenant of the Lord of all the Earth
* Ark of the Testimony, (Ex. 25:22) [More at Wikipedia]



Description

The Bible describes the Ark as made of shittah-tree wood (acacia), known to the Egyptians as the Tree of Life and an important plant in traditional medicine containing in many cases psychoactive alkaloids. It was 1.5 cubits broad and high, and 2.5 cubits long, conforming to the golden ratio. (~130 x 78 x 78 cm or 4.27 x 2.56 x 2.56 ft, using the Egyptian royal cubit). The Ark was covered all over with the purest gold. Its upper surface or lid, the mercy seat (Hebrew: Kaporet), was surrounded with a rim of gold. [More at Wikipedia]



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