

The elusive search for the Ark of the Covenant

By Yehudit Collins

“THE A.R.K. Report,” with A.R.K. standing for Archeology – Reveals – Kingdom of Israel, deals with the mysterious location of the Ark of the Covenant. In a disclaimer at the beginning of the book, author Harry H. Moskoff says, “No person can claim to know for certain where the biblical Ark of the Covenant lies. The precise location of this secret chamber will remain hidden until it is Divinely decreed to be revealed by means of Elijah the Prophet.” Of course, he does present us with a chapter called “The Moskoff Theory.” But when Moskoff was asked if, given the chance, he would enter the tunnels to locate the Ark, his answer was a resounding no! As Moskoff writes in his disclaimer, the contents of the book and the theories presented are strictly academic in nature.

It took me much longer than I thought it would to finish reading this book. This was not because the book was heavy or boring; on the contrary. This comparatively slim book punches far above its weight in interest and information. The book encompasses religion of course, but also politics, biblical and political history, ideology, opinions and even a dash of science and physics.

The reason it took me so long to read was because I was constantly trying to learn more and rather like the tunnels branching from tunnels under the Temple Mount, some known, some waiting to be discovered, my searches on the Internet led me on to more and more branches of intriguing fields. I have to confess that my sleep suffered as I switched between the book and the Internet, not willing to give up on a particularly intriguing fact and go to bed.

The search for the Ark of the Covenant has been the subject of many books and films. The most familiar one at this time would be Steven Spielberg’s “Indiana Jones Raiders of the Lost Ark.” For those who haven’t seen the film, a spoiler alert. When the vil-

lain of the piece, dressed in the Hollywood idea of the vestments of the high priest, before opening the Ark and meeting his doom, raises his hands and mutters an incantation; among the mumbo jumbo, Spielberg had fun inserting words such as “Tushbechan” from Jewish prayers.

But as Moskoff reminds us, Spielberg got one thing right: The Ark can and did have a deadly effect. In the book there is the theory, taught to me many, many years ago by my brother who was a physicist, that the Ark is an electrical conductor. Other theories hold that it is radioactive. In his book “Chariots of the Gods,” Erich von Daniken theorizes that the Ark of the Covenant was a radio transmitter allowing Moses to communicate directly with God, whom von Daniken describes as a space explorer from another, more advanced civilization from a planet, far, far away.

And clearly this leads to the question, should the Ark be located, who would be able to touch it given that no one in our modern age has the proven priestly lineage, or high degree of ritual purity?

Then politics rears its head, with even the CIA being interested enough to monitor archeological digs being conducted by Dr. Vendyl Jones (said to be the real-life model for Indiana Jones) at Qumran in an effort to locate some of the Temple artifacts. Yasser Arafat famously told Bill Clinton in 2000 that Solomon’s Temple was never situated in Palestine and therefore the Jews had no connection to the Temple Mount, because after years of digging, no artifacts had been found, a statement both tendentious and false. And should the Ark be located, it would cause a massive political upheaval throughout the world.

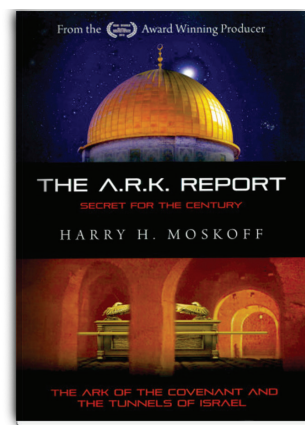
The Vatican also feels it has a stake in Israeli biblical history, and there is a persistent rumor that golden vessels, vestments and other implements used by the priests in

the Temple are secretly buried in its vaults, which it isn’t prepared to either acknowledge or deny.

Part of the book is taken up with interviews that the author gave to Governor Mike Huckabee and other prominent personalities. There is also a section of opinion pieces he wrote for The Jerusalem Post.

In his conclusion, Moskoff – a Canadian-born ordained rabbi who now lives in Israel with his family – theorizes that the search is not so much for the lost Ark of the Covenant, but for the chamber in which it lies hidden, which he believes is somewhere beneath the Temple Mount.

The sages dispute whether the Ark will actually appear in the Third Temple or not. While it never actually says in Ezekiel (Chapters 40-43) and in the Talmud that the Ark will return to the future Holy of Holies chamber, there are hints elsewhere that indeed the Ark will eventually be placed there, according to Moskoff. ■



The A.R.K. Report – The Lost Ark of the Jews and the Modern State of Israel
Secret for the century
Harry H. Moskoff
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