

THE JOURNEYS OF ISRAEL'S TABERNACLE

Chronology & Events

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1490 BC. Work on the Tabernacle began c.1 August 1491 BC: first erected at **Mt. Sinai** (Abib 1, [Exodus 40:17](#), Sat. 4 April) 11½ months after the Abib 15, 1491 BC Exodus (March 30).

1451 BC. (Abib 10, [Joshua 4:19](#), Thur. 2 April) The camp and the Tabernacle were set up at **Gilgal** after crossing the Jordan. Being centrally located, Gilgal remained the base camp for Israel while they conducted a seven year war with the Canaanites (cp. [Joshua 14:6](#)).

1445 BC. The seven year war with the Canaanites ended near the end of this year and Joshua then began to divide the land on the west side of the Jordan by giving the tribes of Judah and Joseph (i.e., Ephraim and the half tribe of Manasseh) their portions ([Joshua 15 & 16](#)).

1444 BC. Early this year, the Tabernacle was moved to **Shiloh** ([Joshua 18:1](#), [19:51](#); [Judges 18:31](#)). The rest of the land west of the Jordan was then divided among the remaining 7 tribes ([Joshua 11:23](#), ch. [15–17](#)), and the men from the 2½ tribes east of the Jordan returned home. Before this, Israel had lived off the crops planted by the Canaanites, volunteer crops, and supplies from the 2½ eastern tribes ([Joshua 5:12](#), [24:13](#), [4:12–13](#); cp. [Numbers 26:7](#), [18](#), and [34](#)). This was the beginning of their tillage; hence, from this year are reckoned the Sabbatic and Jubilee years (1444 – 49 = 1395 BC, the first Jubilee year; see [Leviticus 25:3](#), “six years thou shalt...gather in the fruit thereof”).

1444 to 1122 BC. The Tabernacle **remained at Shiloh** ([1 Samuel 2:22](#)) these **322 years** until, in the days of 98 year old Eli and the young man Samuel, the Philistines captured **the Ark** (which the Jews had carried into battle; [1 Samuel 4:11](#)) and **razed Shiloh** ([Jeremiah 7:12](#), [26:6](#); [Psalms 78:60-61](#)).

Though not directly recorded in Scripture, it is obvious that before the triumphant Philistines could travel from the field of combat to Shiloh, the Tabernacle was removed by the Israelites to a place of safety for we find it mentioned again at Nob some 57 years later (1065 BC, in the days of Saul and David and near the end of Samuel's life).

1121 BC. After keeping **the Ark** of the Covenant seven months ([1 Samuel 6:1](#)), the Philistines returned it to Bethshemesh and the men of Kiriath-jearim came and, with Shiloh destroyed, brought it back to the **home of Abinadab** where it remained for 20 years ([1 Samuel 7:1-2](#)).

1101 BC. After 20 years of **the Ark** under the care of Abinadab's son Eleazar, Samuel gathered all Israel to Mizpah, judged their sin and brought them to repentance whereupon the Lord responded with a mighty deliverance over Philistia ([1 Samuel 7:3-14](#)).

1065 BC. We next find the Tabernacle at **Nob** (a priest town, apparently near Jerusalem, [Isaiah 10:32](#)). David fled there from Saul whereupon Ahimelech the high priest gave him and his men the showbread and Goliath's sword. As a result, Saul had the priests slain and Nob destroyed. But Ahimelech's son Abiathar escaped and came to David with the Ephod ([1 Samuel 21:1-23:6](#)).

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1047 BC. Soon after becoming king over all the 12 tribes (in 1048), David sent to the **house of Abinadab** (located on *hill* Gibeah [cp. [1 Samuel 7:1](#)] in Kiriath-jearim where **the Ark** had stayed for 74 years: 1121 – 1047 = 74). He intended to bring it into Jerusalem, his new capital city. However, instead of having the Levites transport it by its staves as Moses instructed ([Exodus 25:14](#); [Numbers 4:15, 7:9](#)), it was placed on an oxcart just as the Philistines had done. The oxen stumbled and when Uzza seized the Ark to steady it, God slew him ([2 Samuel 6:1-7](#); [1 Chronicles 13:1-10](#)).

Fearing the Lord over the Uzza incident, David had the Ark placed in the house of Obed-edom, a Gittite, for three months ([2 Samuel 6:9-11](#); [1 Chronicles 13:12-14](#)). When David saw that the Lord had blessed Obed-edom, he brought the Ark to Jerusalem in the way God had directed ([2 Samuel 6:12](#); [1 Chronicles 15:1-15, 25-28](#)) and placed it inside the tent the king had pitched for it ([1 Chronicles 16:1, 37](#)).

1047 BC. At this point, the **Tabernacle** was **divided**. **The Ark** was brought into **Zion** and put inside **David's tent** (i.e., the tabernacle of David; [2 Samuel 6:17](#), cp. [Amos 9:11](#); [Acts 15:16](#)), but the Tabernacle itself and the brazen Altar of sacrifice were removed (from Nob?) to the high place at **Gibeon** ([1 Chronicles 16:38-40, 21:29](#); [2 Chronicles 1:3-6](#), about six miles northwest of Jerusalem).

1004 BC. The last mention of the Tabernacle in the Bible is when Solomon dedicated the Temple in **Jerusalem**. Having completed building the latter in the *eighth* month of his 11th year (Oct. or Nov., 1005 BC, [1 Kings 6:38](#)), the king dedicated it in the feast of the *seventh* month ([1 Kings 8:1-2](#); [2 Chronicles 5:2-3](#): the Feast of Tabernacles, which is the 15 day of the month – [Leviticus 23:34](#), esp. note: [2 Chronicles 7:8-10](#)) of the *following* year (demanded as the dedication in the seventh month follows the completion in the eighth month in the narrative).

At this time, Solomon had the priests bring **the Ark** of the Covenant, the ancient wilderness **Tabernacle** and all its' Holy vessels into the Temple where they were **rejoined** after 118 years ([1 Kings 8:3-11](#); [2 Chronicles 5:4-14](#): separated in 1122 BC until 1004 BC = 118 years).

586 BC. In the 19th year of his reign, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon set Jerusalem as well as Solomon's Temple on fire and broke down the city walls on the seventh day of the fifth Hebrewsrew month (9 August, Wednesday; [2 Kings 25:8-10](#)). Presumably, the Tabernacle perished at this time.

Much speculation has been written over the years concerning the whereabouts of the Ark of the Covenant. Without going into any of these vacuous theories, the Word of God tells us that it is in the true Temple in heaven ([Revelation 11:19](#)). Further, the Lord revealed through the prophet Jeremiah that when Messiah Jesus returns and establishes the Millennial Kingdom, the Ark will no longer be of any consequence to mankind. Although it pleased the Creator for Israel to use the Ark and learn of Him from it (as well as us today) for the 904 years from 1090 BC to 586 BC, the time will come when it will neither be spoken of, come to mind nor even be missed ([Jeremiah 3:16-17](#)). This is because the Lord of Glory Himself, of whom it spoke, will dwell among His people. The shadow will be replaced by the substance ([Hebrews. 10:1](#), cp. [8:5](#)).

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