

# WORLD OF THE BIBLE NEWS & VIEWS

NEWSLETTER OF WORLD OF THE BIBLE MINISTRIES, INC.

## The New Adventure on Ararat

by Dr. Randall Price

Back in the summer of 1972 I had the invitation to join an expedition in search of Noah's Ark on Mt. Ararat. The expedition was to be directed by Dr. John Morris, son of Dr. Henry Morris whose book *The Genesis Flood* was the first Christian book I had read as a new believer. The invitation had come to my friend Roger Losier and me as last minute replacements for one of the team leaders, Mike Turnage, who had developed a heart murmur and had to drop out. As a college student I had already been hired to work at a Christian youth camp that paid \$300 for the entire summer. Before me was the daunting task of raising, in a matter of only two weeks, \$1,500 for the trip to Turkey and the climb up Mt. Ararat. Roger made it and I didn't, but one reading of John Morris' book *Adventure on Ararat* that recounted the expedition, told me I was glad I hadn't! The team had been shot at, robbed, and struck by lightning that temporarily paralyzed them, and possibly contributed to John's later development of Multiple Sclerosis. Knowing my own penchant for disaster, I'm sure that had the Lord allowed me to go on that trip it would have been my pathway to heaven! Still, in the years that passed, I never stopped regretting that I had not been able to go to Mt. Ararat!

Move ahead with me to October 2008, some 36 years after the "adventure on Ararat" as I find myself looking up at the summit of Mt. Ararat in climbing gear. I cannot understand the ways of the Lord, for my 56 year-old body is not the same as the 20 year-old body that *could* have climbed the mountain back in 1972. I know this because my 23 year-old son Jon climbed in front of me (*far* in front of me!) to our 14,000 foot site on one of the mountain's glaciers. Despite coming in last place, I made it! Yet, this is just the beginning of the



"new adventure on Ararat" that lies ahead. But before we go there, let me bring you up to date on this amazing story.

For more than 25 years former Continental Airlines Captain Richard Bright has been on a search for the Ark. After so many years, this godly gentleman who has financed his own expeditions, was only a few months ago led by a local mountaineer (with whom he had long worked) to meet a Kurdish shepherd who claimed to have seen the Ark. More than that, this shepherd, when he was a boy had climbed on top of the Ark and looked into an opening. Inside he saw rows of wooden "columns" (probably support beams/posts). He was now prepared to take Richard to the very site! In itself, this is a

phenomenal event, for never in the history of Ark research has a living witness actually taken an Ark researcher to the very spot of his sighting!

Richard climbed to the site with this shepherd in September, and after descending the mountain, personal responsibilities in the states called him home, preventing a second climb. As Providence would have it, our team (myself, my son Jon, geologist Don Patton, and Don Campbell) was already in Turkey following up another Ark lead and was invited to do the follow-up expedition. On September 30 we started our ascent with the shepherd and the mountaineer, making base camp at 10,000 feet to spend the night in pup tents on packed snow at about 15 degrees below zero. The next morning (October 1) we started our six-hour climb to the glacier, balancing on the snow-covered and unstable volcanic boulders strewn on the path before us (what Richard Bright calls "that miserable rock pile"). The snow was knee to waist deep (sometimes deeper!), and trudging through it was painful. Finally, we made it to the sunlit summit before us (not the summit of the mountain, but of a ridge near a glacier), and the shepherd pointed out the area where as a boy he had walked on the Ark.

The site today is covered by a landslide of boulders, the remains of two peaks that we believe were blasted by the Turkish military in the 1990s either to eradicate PKK (Kurdish rebel) hideouts or, possibly to cover the known location of the remains of at least a part of the Ark (possibly even then covered by ice); the search for which had been increasingly attracting "religious people" to the mountain since the 1980s. An explosives expert on our team (Don Campbell) confirmed that the evidence

*Continued on page 3*

# Seasons Greetings from World of the Bible

It's that time of the year again when we rejoice in God's great gift of sending His Son to earth. After the last few months of the campaigns, the election, and the failing economic forecast, it is indeed a respite to be able to turn our eyes away from our problems and think about God's wonderful plan for His people.

Here at World of the Bible Ministries we remember that the world we witness to each day in our ministry around the globe is the very world God chose for the birth of His Son and our Savior. Wherever else this busy world focuses day by day, it is a blessing to know that on at least one day it must turn its gaze toward tiny Israel, and still tinier Bethlehem. Surely the world must wonder why of all places God came to earth in this place. This is one of the reasons World of the Bible Ministries has been raised up – to show a watching world that the Land of the Bible remains the place of promise. Whether in the evidence of old artifacts dug from the dust of ancient lands or in the explanation of why the Middle East continues to be at the center of conflict or in exhorting the church to live in light of the Son's return to His homeland (and all that precedes this glorious event), our ministry has and will have one primary focus – our great God and Savior Christ Jesus!

We wish you and yours a most blessed time of worship this season as you cast your cares upon Him who cares for you (1 Peter 5:7) and give your gifts to one another in token of the greatest gift ever given (2 Corinthians 9:15)! We at World of the Bible Ministries look forward to being a part of blessing your lives in the New Year!

Yours for the  
World of the  
Bible,

*Randall and  
Beverlee Price  
Ken and Theresa  
Stanford  
Megan Mull*



## New Center for Judaic Studies Started at Liberty University

I am pleased to announce after discussion (starting with Jerry Falwell) over these last couple of years with Liberty University, that as of this fall the university made the decision to begin a school of Judaic Studies

and I have become the Executive Director of the Center for Judaic Studies. The plan is to set up a program in Jewish studies, biblical archaeology, and biblical prophecy, eventually offering degrees in connection with these fields. Some of these courses will also be developed for Liberty Online, Liberty's distance learning program that will allow you to take advantage of the courses by computer in your own home. I also will coordinate my excavations in Israel through the school, and am teaching a course in connection with our final excavation in December at the site of Qumran. I also am making plans to establish a Liberty Biblical Museum to exhibit my antiquity collection and what we hope to receive in the future as donations. At this point the faculty in our school includes Dr. Ed Hindson (prolific author and speaker on *The King is Coming* television broadcast) and Dr. Thomas Ice (who also is Executive Director of the Pre-Trib Research Center). The Center for Judaic Studies may be contacted at (434) 592-3249 Monday-Friday from 8 A.M.-5 P.M. (EST).

The work I will be doing with Liberty clearly is an application of what I am doing with World of the Bible Ministries, and I want to assure everyone that nothing has changed with respect to WBM. Even though my wife and daughter and I have relocated in Lynchburg, Virginia in order to set up the new program, our World of the Ministries office remains in San Marcos, Texas and is open daily. We also still receive correspondence at our home in San Marcos (where my son and his wife now reside), but if you wish to write or call us at our new address please contact the WBM office. I will continue to do everything I have ever done – conferences, tours, writing, etc., but now have a greater outreach possible through the resources and opportunities afforded by Liberty University, the largest Christian university in the country (11,000 students). Please know also that the ministry of WBM continues to need your support as much as ever and we are moving ahead in 2009 with many new publications and projects (including the Noah's Ark project).

*Randall Price*

## Back to Qumran: Final Excavation to Learn New Secrets!

This December 7-22 Dr. Price will again direct a group of students and other volunteers in an archaeological excavation of

the Qumran Plateau in Israel. The Qumran Plateau is the site of the Jewish community that produced and preserved the famous Dead Sea Scrolls. Five previous seasons of excavation at this site in 2002, 2004, 2005, and two in 2006 have uncovered significant remains of this ancient settlement that existed during the Second Temple period, a time that includes the era of Jesus. Discoveries made so far include a large circular pit (dump area) from the earlier Iron Age, a subterranean repository with steps and shallow tunnels, as well as many rare coins in bronze and silver, metal objects (such as plow points), and ceramic remains such as jars, juglets, bowls, plates, cups, and oil lamps. One of the most important finds has been hundreds of animal bones buried within scores of various kinds of pottery. These bones are the result of a communal meal and were buried inside and under the vessels used in the preparation of the meal as they often contain ashes.

The belief is that these bones exhibit the ritual practices of the Second Temple period and were treated like the sacrifices in the Temple. Whether they were the remains of an ancient annual Passover at Qumran, a communal meal with a liturgical or eschatological focus, the examination of these bones have proven to reveal important information about the religious views of the community that inhabited this plateau. Since it has never been proven to all scholars' satisfaction exactly who lived in this community and what its purpose was, this data is crucial to making a case for the history books! In addition, these bones are now at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem and Rehovot and being studied by geneticists to determine if the animals represented by the bones may have a correlation with the animals whose skins were used for the Dead Sea Scrolls.

This season of excavation will seek to resolve unsolved questions about the nature and extent of the repository and the extent of the animal bone deposits to the north and east of our previous excavations. We ask for your prayers that our work might be done successfully with all bills paid and that we will make the necessary finds to further our research as we move toward the publication of our excavation results in 2010. 🍷



## New Adventure on Ararat

*Continued...*

was consistent with an explosion and other members of Richard Bright's team had earlier discovered remains of shell casings at the site and even an unexploded shell. Climbing on to the rubble, the shepherd stood above the very spot where he says he walked on top of the Ark in his youth. He estimated there was about 60 feet of rock now covering the ice under which the structure lies. Even though we could not see anything, the zealous conviction of this Kurdish shepherd was quite contagious and we all felt the rush of excitement that we could be ourselves standing on the Ark!

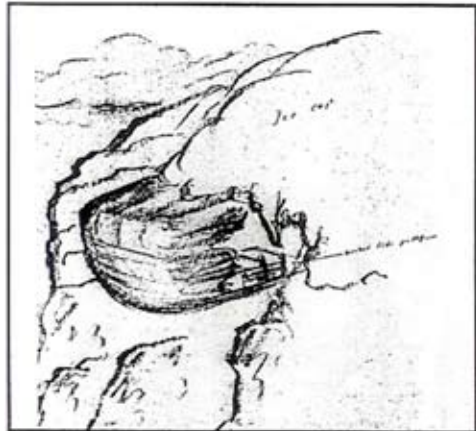
Of course, at this point in time, the only "proof" we have is the shepherd's story; however, I find it hard to doubt his sincerity for a number of reasons. First, he is a devoutly religious Muslim and will not take a single cent for his participation in this work. He believes by showing us the Ark he will fulfill the good deed he must do before he dies. Second, I interviewed him for two hours, asking through our interpreter every question I could to trip him up and expose a contradiction in his story. He has never been to school, cannot read or write, has other people buy his groceries, and has never been to more than three nearby villages in his life. He said that he did not know it was the Ark when he first saw it, but thought it was a big house. Only later in life did he hear about the story of Noah and the Flood from the Qur'an and realized it was the Ark he had seen. He did not go inside when he was a boy because a friend with him scared him by telling him a bear might be inside (bears frequent the mountain). Ever since he had wanted to get back to the Ark, but military restrictions to certain areas of the mountain prevented him from returning to the site. This summer the mountaineer was able to negotiate with some of the authorities to make their climb (and ours) possible. Third, his description of the Ark was accurate and consistent with two of the most reputable Ark eyewitness accounts as described below.

After my interview I showed him a number of sketches made by alleged eyewitnesses and drawings made from their descriptions of the Ark. He rejected most all of them (evidence he was not simply trying to please or agree with us), but was excited about two in particular - a drawing of the Ark as described by the Armenian George Hagopian (during his visit to it in 1904), and later rendered by artist Elfred Lee, and a sketch made by Army/Air Force navigation expert and pilot Vince Will after he had seen the



*For more than 25 years former Continental Airlines Captain Richard Bright has been on a search for the Ark.*

structure during a WWII flight where the aircraft commander decided to descend around the mountain while preparing a landing at the now Armenian airport of Yerevan. The year was 1943, and Vince was a member of the crew who witnessed the sighting. They had actually purposely searched for the Ark in the flight around the mountain, having heard that other pilots had seen the structure on a previous flight. This experience of witnessing the Ark protruding from a glacier so affected him that he later became a minister (and, providentially, a close friend of Richard Bright). After I left the interview, the



*Above: The shepherd pointing to the place where he saw it in his teens. Below: The eyewitness sketch from another source that the shepherd picked from other artist's drawings as what he remembered.*

interpreter told me he had a hard time convincing the shepherd that I had not been there and seen the Ark because I had real pictures of it! The interpreter explained that they were simply artist's drawings, but had been based on real sightings, like his. There is much more to this interview and the story behind it, which I hope to be able to reveal in the future. But what does the present hold?

As I write these words, permits are being negotiated to bring heavy equipment into the

site and start removing the rocks covering the structure the shepherd says is buried below. In addition, our team wants to ascend to the glacier on the summit above where we believe subsurface radar data shows another section of the Ark deep beneath the ice. We believe that the Ark was broken into two or more pieces by the earthquake of 1840 that deepened and enlarged the Ahora Gorge on the northern face. The pieces that may be in the radar image could be associated with the structure seen by the shepherd at the lower elevation and probably slid down the glacier and rested in the valley (now filled with collapsed debris). The intent is to use special ice-melting gear to cut a passage to the anomaly in order to take samples and confirm it is a wooden structure. These works will be part of an expedition planned for this summer. More urgent, however, is the need to raise funds to secure the permit by the middle of December. There is an official who has favored this work. Again, by God's direction, he is one of the rare, undisclosed Christians who is in the midst of a country that is 99.9% Muslim! However, he is to retire in the not too distant future and upon his retirement he will lose access to his authority to grant, or influence the peer authorities who will grant the permits. Moreover, he is the one who negotiates with the authorities who allow our team to work in these areas under strict military control. Without immediate funds for this man the permits cannot be obtained and our expedition cannot take place.

We believe God raised this man to his office for such a time as this and believe that God brought our unique team together for this moment and that we were all led to the shepherd—the only living eyewitness to the Ark that is known—at just this time. We must also believe that his retirement and the short time we have to raise the necessary funds are also in God's timetable! Therefore, we believe the Lord will provide the necessary funds to see this vital work accomplished. The amount needed is \$19,000 for the shepherd's site and \$37,000 for the higher more difficult glacier site. These funds are only to get the permission to carry out the expedition in these sensitive sites.

Gilbert Grosvenor, the first editor of *National Geographic* allegedly declared, "The discovery of Noah's Ark would be the greatest archaeological find in human history, the greatest event since the resurrection of Christ, and it would alter all the currents of scientific thought." Could we be on the threshold of uncovering this incredible discovery and being a part

*Continued on page 5*

# REPORT FROM JERUSALEM

## The Truth about the Gabriel Revelation

By Randall Price

By now many of you have heard of the so-called “Gabriel Revelation” which has created quite a sensation in scholarly circles. Some Israeli scholars have stated that it will shake the basic views of Christianity, while evangelical scholars have called it one of the greatest archaeological evidences in support of the Christian faith! What is the truth about the “Gabriel Revelation”?

The “Gabriel Revelation” is a three-foot-tall stone tablet containing 87 lines of Hebrew text written in ink in two neat columns similar to those on a handwritten Torah scroll. Discovered about 10 years ago near the Dead Sea on the Jordanian side, it was purchased from a Jordanian antiquities dealer by Israeli-Swiss collector David Jeselsohn. Only last year did he show it to Israeli epigraphist (expert on Hebrew writing) Ada Yardeni, who, along with fellow expert Binjamin Elitzur, identified the form and style of its script with Jewish sects like those who wrote the famous Dead Sea Scrolls. For that reason this text has been called a “Dead Sea scroll on stone.” Moshe Bar-Asher, president of the Israeli Academy of Hebrew Language and emeritus professor of Hebrew and Aramaic at the Hebrew University, who declared the text authentic, stated that it could date from no later than the first century B.C.

Although released to the scholarly community over a year ago through articles in archaeological journals, the public only recently learned about the text from several news sources in wake of its planned discussion at an invitational Dead Sea Scroll conference



held at the Shrine of the Book (home of the Dead Sea Scrolls) in Jerusalem this past June. I was present at this conference and met with the owner of the text as well as with those scholars who have been involved with its analysis. One of these, professor Israel Knohl, Yehezkel Kaufman Professor of Biblical Studies at the Hebrew University, presented his translation and interpretation of the text.

According to him, the name “Gabriel Revelation” comes from the end of the text where the angel Gabriel appears as a speaker. While it is not clear that he is the only speaker, the whole of the narrative has been called his angelic apocalypse (“revelation”). This is significant in comparison with biblical apocalypses such as that of Daniel in the Old Testament and the Book of Revelation in

the New Testament, both of which contain revelation by angelic messengers. However, what becomes evident from a close reading of the text is that much of it has been influenced by the Book of Daniel, particularly chapter 8 where the angel Gabriel is mentioned (verse 16). Yet, even the mention of the angel Gabriel is significant for Christianity in that he is the figure connected with the announcement of the Messiah’s birth in the Gospels (see Luke 1:19, 26). Other influences in this text can be discerned from the books of the Old Testament prophets Zechariah and Haggai, both from passages whose context deals with the eschatological period (Zechariah 12 and Haggai 2).

The text itself describes a time of war against Israel in which national redemption is sought from a messianic figure. In this regard the text appears to look to two messianic figures, one a Davidic deliverer (King Messiah) and one embodying Israel’s long history of suffering known as “Ephraim” (a son of Joseph). This dual interpretation developed from the Jewish attempt to reconcile conflicting images of the Messiah in the Old Testament as both a suffering servant (such as Isaiah 53) and yet as a conquering king (such as in Zechariah 14:9). This can be seen in lines 19-21 of the tablet which says “In three days you will know that evil will be defeated by justice,” and then speaks of a suffering messianic figure who is killed by his enemies. The controversial conclusion to this account is found in the more difficult line 80, which Professor Knohl translates “In three days you

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shall live, I, Gabriel, command you.” For Professor Knohl, this account of a suffering, dying, and resurrected messiah from before the birth of Jesus suggests that the story of Jesus’ death and resurrection was not unique but part of a recognized Jewish tradition at the time. Such concepts are indeed found in less explicit form in the Dead Sea Scrolls and in other apocryphal and pseudepigraphical documents from the pre-Christian era, although this is the first text to use the expression “after three days” in relation to a messianic resurrection.

Professor Knohl said in our conference that “This should shake our basic view of Christianity since it runs contrary to nearly all [Christian] scholarship.” His reason for making this declaration came from his exclusive acquaintance with higher critical scholarship (such as the Jesus School), which has claimed that Jesus did not rise from the dead and that the resurrection was a much later theological interpolation made by the church, since such a concept did not exist in Jesus’ day. However, what he thinks will shake up [liberal] Christianity in fact confirms evangelical Christianity, which has always understood the core of the gospel message to be that Jesus died and rose after three days “according to the scriptures” (1 Corinthians 15:3-4). Although the professor believes that church theologians borrowed this Jewish concept and put it in Jesus’ mouth when He

predicted His suffering and resurrection in the Gospels, a more plausible (and biblical) understanding is that such an extra-biblical text simply collaborates the affirmation of Jesus and the Apostles that “the things which God announced beforehand by the mouth of all the prophets, that His Christ should suffer, He has thus fulfilled” (Acts 3:18; cf. Acts 17:3). Indeed, Jesus found this concept in many of the prophets, including the Prophet Jonah whose “three days” inside the great fish He saw as the pattern (“the sign of Jonah”) for His own three days in the tomb (Luke 11:29-32). Even though the concept exists in extra-biblical texts, this can be best explained by their earlier presence in biblical prophetic texts such as Isaiah (53) and Daniel (9), upon which many such apocryphal texts depend, as does the Gabriel text with its allusions to Daniel (8). Jewish-rooted interpretations, such as that in evangelical Christianity, finds no problem with the Jewish messianic hope contained in the Gabriel Revelation.

Therefore, despite Professor Knohl’s misunderstanding of Christianity’s understanding of Jesus’ own messianic consciousness, he is right when he argues (he thinks against Christian scholarship) that Jesus shed His blood for the redemption of national Israel. True, He shed His blood for the Gentiles also, but the Gabriel text reminds us that Jesus, as the Jewish Messiah, came to “save His people from their

sins” (Matthew 1:21) and will come again as a Risen Savior to fulfill this mission when “all Israel shall be saved” (Romans 11:26-27). With the Gabriel Revelation we have another archaeological attestation of the accuracy and authenticity of the text of the New Testament. 🌟

**New Adventure on Ararat**  
Continued...

of ushering in a new era of evidence with which the unbelieving world will have to contend? We can only know the answer if we can complete the expedition this summer. If you can help in any way you can make your checks to World of the Bible Ministries so you will be able get a tax-deductible receipt for your donation. We will immediately send every cent of your donation to Richard Bright of Ark Search LLC for distribution to the official in Turkey. Please remember that this contribution is only for the Noah’s Ark project and that World of the Bible Ministries has its own need for support at this time. Above all, please pray that the Lord will honor our efforts to reveal His glory on the mountains of Ararat and that if it is His time to have the Ark discovered that He would grant wisdom to our team! 🌟

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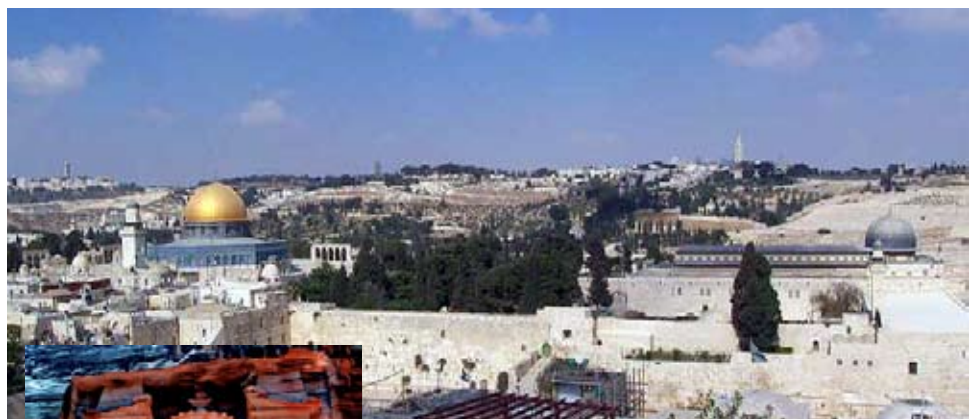
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Ken Stanford, WBM



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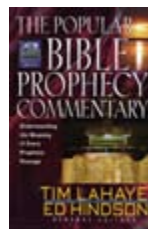
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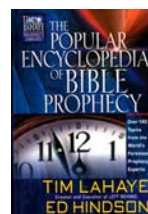


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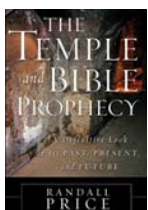
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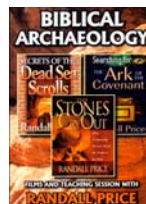
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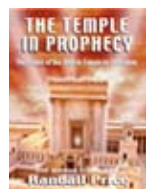
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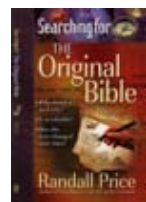
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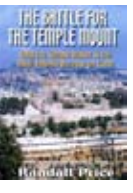
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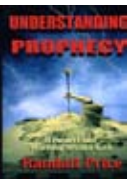


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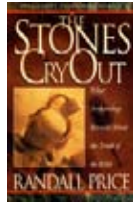
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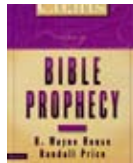


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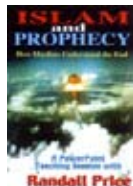
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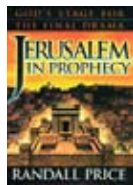
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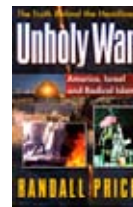
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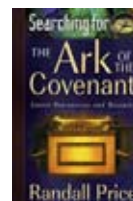
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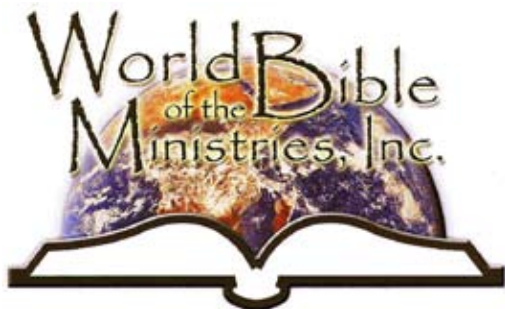
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