Conceptual Program for Development of a Biblically Themed Recreation Attraction in Arbuckle Mountains, Oklahoma

Harrison Price Company
Charrette Summary

CONCEPTUAL PROGRAM FOR
DEVELOPMENT OF A BIBLICALLY
THEMED RECREATION ATTRACTION
IN THE ARBUCKLE MOUNTAINS, OKLAHOMA

Prepared For:
Jerry Hagee
January 13, 1985

Prepared by:
Harrison Price Company
876 South Bronson Avenue
Los Angeles, California  90005
(213) 937-3457
INTRODUCTION

Jerry Hagee and his associates (members of his family) have long had a deep seated ambition to build a biblically themed park that would become a landmark destination for the touristic visitor in general and the millions of evangelical Christians in the country, particularly in the South.

The family presently operates a successful, free enclosure, safari type zoo attraction and visitor center at its park in the Arbuckle Mountains on Interstate Highway 35, midway between Oklahoma City and Dallas/Fort Worth. This site is large and expandable and is considered as the primary location for the contemplated project.

The proposed project is a new and untried concept and for that reason, Harrison Price Company recommended that its evaluation be launched with a charrette conference, involving the Hagees, designers, and park planners as participants. The conference was held at the Los Angeles Athletic Club, December 4th and 5th, 1984, in two all day sessions. Participants were:

Jerry and Polly Hagee, the project entrepreneurial team.
John and Diana Hagee, providing input on the scholarly and historical aspects of the proposed theme.
Randy Duell and Al Lambinon from the firm of R. Duell and Associates, of Santa Monica, California, theme park designers.
Charles R. Paramore, a museum and attraction designer from Dallas, Texas.
Grady Larkins, an attraction designer from St. Petersburg, Florida.
Harrison Price and Nick Winslow of Harrison Price Company, functioning as organizers of the charrette process and economic and concept consultants.
An agenda used to guide the meeting is enclosed as Appendix A. A thoughtful statement volunteered by Grady Larkins dealing with the particular stringencies and requirements of the theme as it affects the design process is submitted in its entirety as Appendix B. In this writeup, he articulates his concerns about the special sensitivities of the content of the park and the expensiveness of the presentations proposed.

This summary statement follows in sequence the progression of the conference and more or less the format outlined in Appendix A. It endeavors to set the stage for the feasibility evaluations and conceptual definitions which are pertinent to the next step of project master planning.

THE SITE

The site is 1,100 acres, 70 miles south of Oklahoma City, now known as the Arbuckle Wilderness located just off Interstate 35, a main north-south viaduct primarily serving to connect the populous midwestern states (Kansas, Nebraska, the Dakotas, Missouri, Illinois, Iowa, Wisconsin and Minnesota) with Oklahoma and Texas. It is particularly important as the "snowbird" route to the Corpus Christi/Brownsville winter resort region. It is a scenic, wooded area known for its lakes and recreation destinations.

No zoning restraints are involved. The site has plenty of water and power connections. Sewer service is septic tanks, but service connection may be feasible or a separate treatment plant could be installed. Incorporation is possible or a special utility district can be created in the manner of Reedy Creek Improvement District at Disney World.

Labor is plentiful due to reductions of employment in nearby petro-chemical and petroleum operations.
Accommodations infrastructure is weak, +/- 300 rooms in the area. The region contains many campgrounds but no extensive private operations of this kind. Since the region is essentially non-urban in character, its development as a recreation destination will require the creation of an accommodations infrastructure containing hotels, motels, RV camps, camp grounds, bungalow parks, etc. The region is in the heart of an extensive religious summer camp operation. The Southern Baptist Youth Camp is the largest in the world, drawing 65,000 in 7 weeks in the summer. Other operations of this kind bring that total up to 200,000 to 300,000 during the summer.

The present operation, a wildlife Safari Park, draws on the order of +/- 200,000 annually. It contains a 13,000 square foot gift shop, visitor center, picnic area and restaurant, and supporting recreation (paddle boats, aviary, canal rides and a petting zoo).

SIZE OF THE MARKET

Resident population close in is small but population expands rapidly as distance increases. Its breakdown by radial rings of distance is roughly estimated as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distance Segment (miles)</th>
<th>Contained Population (000)</th>
<th>Cumulative Population (000)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-50</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>285</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-100</td>
<td>1,382</td>
<td>1,667</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100-150</td>
<td>4,557</td>
<td>6,224</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>150-200</td>
<td>2,016</td>
<td>8,240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200-400</td>
<td>14,760</td>
<td>23,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>400-500</td>
<td>7,023</td>
<td>36,023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500-600</td>
<td>18,677</td>
<td>54,700</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Urban concentrations are noted as follows:
- The 100 mile ring contains Oklahoma City.
- The 200 mile ring adds Tulsa, Dallas, Forth Worth.
• The 300 mile ring adds Wichita, Little Rock, Shreveport, Austin, Amarillo.

• The 400 mile ring adds Lincoln, Omaha, St. Louis, Jefferson City, Memphis, Jackson, Baton Rouge, Corpus Christi, Laredo, Santa Fe.

• The 500 mile ring adds Lincoln, Omaha, St. Louis, Jefferson City, Memphis, Jackson, Baton Rouge, Corpus Christi, Laredo, Santa Fe.

• The 600 mile ring adds Des Moines, Sioux City, Springfield, Nashville, Birmingham, New Orleans, Brownville, Albuquerque, Denver.

In addition to this total population, the site is well located in what the charrette identified as the Southern evangelical market—which is heavily concentrated in the South Central and South Eastern states (the sunbelt less the Western states). In his work at the Christian Freedom Foundation, Mr. Hagee quantified that market at some 40 million. Religious groups so identified include, among others, the Assembly of God, The Nazarenes, Southern Baptists, Church of Christ, Pentecostals.

Family demography and character of the market is indicated by these 1983 median family income and age figures.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family Demography</th>
<th>Family Income</th>
<th>Age</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oklahoma City</td>
<td>$24,262</td>
<td>30.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tulsa</td>
<td>24,664</td>
<td>31.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dallas</td>
<td>26,519</td>
<td>29.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fort Worth</td>
<td>25,748</td>
<td>30.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. Average</td>
<td>23,420</td>
<td>31.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This is compared to other theme park markets as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Market</th>
<th>Family Income</th>
<th>Age</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>San Jose</td>
<td>$33,780</td>
<td>30.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anaheim</td>
<td>32,715</td>
<td>30.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Houston</td>
<td>28,588</td>
<td>28.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atlanta</td>
<td>25,804</td>
<td>30.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Los Angeles</td>
<td>25,280</td>
<td>31.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cincinnati</td>
<td>24,753</td>
<td>30.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kansas City</td>
<td>24,311</td>
<td>31.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orlando</td>
<td>22,282</td>
<td>31.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The tourist market is indicated by a 1977 National Travel Survey which showed these breakdowns:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Originating in Oklahoma (000)</th>
<th>Out of State (000)</th>
<th>Total (000)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Destination Visitors</td>
<td>5,307</td>
<td>4,707</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pass-Through Visitors</td>
<td>4,197</td>
<td>9,254</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9,504</td>
<td>9,254</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Trip purpose for the 10.014 million destination visitors was as follows:

- Visit friends/relatives: 54%
- Business/Convention: 19%
- Recreation/Entertainment: 13%
- Other: 14%

Average stay for destination visitors was 2.5 nights, relatively low. Origin of destination visitors was as follows:

- Oklahoma: 53%
- Arizona, New Mexico, Texas, Kansas, Missouri: 30%
- Southern States: 8%
- Great Lakes: 3%
- Other: 6%

Average party size was 2.6 persons; median age 29.4 years. The nature of Oklahoma visitation is heavily short-stay and pass-through. It will take an important destination and a very strong draw to change this characteristic.

**SPECIAL NATURE OF THE EVANGELICAL MARKET**

This market segment is dominated by several strong television personalities:

- PTL (Praise the Lord) Jim Bakker, in Charleston, South Carolina. See Appendix C. He is noted as a top force.
but sliding. Bakker would see the proposed park as competition. He has developed a resort destination with a major hotel, nostalgic old Main Street, campground and RV center, dioramas, and other features.

- TBN, Paul Crouch, in Orange County, California.
- CBN (The 700 Club), Pat Robertson in Norfolk, Virginia. "He will pass Bakker".
- Jimmy Swaggert, in Baton Rouge. He has 23 million viewers and a mailing list of 6 or 7 million.
- Oral Roberts in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

These people are big-time operators, turf minded. It would be important to collaborate with one or perhaps two of them. You can't play them all at once. Their key force for this proposed operation is television and its ability to mobilize all the families to want to visit this park. Organized tour marketing is a possibility. The structure of the market is also susceptible to efforts for raising money in a syndication format (See Appendix C).

Many developers have discussed a religious format for a theme park—but no one has done it on any extensive scale.

**SEASONALITY**

Weather characteristics are outlined as follows:

**Temperature:**
- Average Max (August) 93°F
- Average Max (February) 53°F
- Average Min (August) 70°F
- Average Min (February) 30°F

**Rainfall:**
- Total Annual 31 inches
- June-September 13 inches = 42% of annual

**Snowfall:**
- November-March 9 inches
Relatively Humidity:

| August AM | 81% |
| PM        | 50% |

Wind Speed:

| Average February | 13.7 MPH |
| Average August   | 10.8 MPH |

It is a hot summer climate and weather protection is required. It is quite windy in the winter through April.

The "snowbird" movement in winter is some assist but it is destination bent farther South. A season from mid-March to Thanksgiving is functionable at the present operation.

Six Flags in Dallas gets 70% of its attendance June to August. The same period generates 75% in Atlanta, 81% in St. Louis. Due to climate and lack of urban concentration this kind of seasonal concentration is inherent. Mr. Hagee feels that the proposed operation can function on a 10 month season because of opportunity for specialized TV promotion in the evangelical market.

ATTENDANCE AT EXISTING ATTRACTIONS

- The 110 acre Oklahoma City Zoo draws 550,000, operates all year, charges $2 for adults.
- The Tulsa Zoo generates 267,000 on a similar basis with a charge of $2.50.
- Frontier City, a marginal amusement park with 13 major rides, 8 kiddie rides, arcade and games, operates in Oklahoma City - Easter to Labor Day. It's attendance is nominal.
- Bell's Amusement Park in Tulas has 20 major rides, 10 kiddie rides, water slide, 2 aerial rides, miniature golf, arcade and operates April to October.
A white water park in Oklahoma City is reputed to draw 600 thousand.

Three water parks in Dallas draw a total of 1.8 million.

The National Cowboy Hall of Fame is a popular museum in Oklahoma City.

Theme park attendance (in millions) in the region in 1984 was as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Park</th>
<th>Attendance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6 Flags, Dallas, Texas</td>
<td>2.261</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Astro World, Houston, Texas</td>
<td>1.673</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worlds of Fun, Kansas City, Mo.</td>
<td>1.366</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Flags, St. Louis, Mo.</td>
<td>1.224</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silver Dollar City, Mo.</td>
<td>0.911</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The same parks in 1978 drew as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Park</th>
<th>Attendance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6 Flags, Dallas, Texas</td>
<td>2.711</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Astro World, Houston, Texas</td>
<td>1.963</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worlds of Fun, Kansas City, Mo.</td>
<td>1.222</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Flags, St. Louis, Mo.</td>
<td>1.845</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silver Dollar City, Mo.</td>
<td>0.985</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The conclusion is that parks with conventional theming have a saturated market in the region.

Outdoor recreation in the area is strong with these reported annual attendances:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Attendance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lake Texoma, Kingston</td>
<td>11.0 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lake Murray, St. Paul, Ardmore</td>
<td>2.0 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Platt National Park, Sulphur</td>
<td>1.9 million</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DEVELOPERS' CONCEPT OF THE PARK

A key element of the project is Noah's Ark described in the charrette with reference to Unger as 517 feet long (300 cubits of 20.67"), 86' wide (50 cubits) and 51.7' high (30 cubits). It could be shrunk down to 450' long.
John Hagee described it as follows:

- Three stories high.
- One door, one window.
- Covered inside and out with tar made from gopher wood (Cypress).
- Flat bottomed.
- Slightly sloping roof.
- It contained one pair of all "unclean" animals, seven pairs of "clean animals".

Mr. Hagee's description of the development concept contained these highlights:

The first floor of the Ark would contain 1,000 or so stuffed birds and animals using audio-animatronics and taxidermy. Watering, feeding and food storage would be shown. Access would be some kind of walk through, ride through or moving sidewalk.

The second floor of the Ark would deal with the Old Testament in the context of a Hall of the Prophets, animated stories of the bible depicting a spiritual basis for the coming of the Messiah. Among the many hundreds of possibilities for story material are the following:

- The parting of the Red Sea.
- The Wall of Water.
- Jonah and the Whale.
- Daniel in the Lion's Den.
- Solomon, the Wise Man.
- The Temptations of David and Bathsheba.
- Moses and the Plague in Egypt.
- Sodom and Gomorrah.
- David and Goliath.
- Samson, Delilah and the Destruction of the Temple.

These stories would be dealt with as shows and dark rides utilizing different stage/audience formats - see Appendix B.
The third floor of the Ark would chronologize major events in the life of Christ. The audience would participate in the story development. Some suggested story materials:

- Birth scene in the manger.
- Jesus wandering in the desert.
- Temptations of Christ.
- Forty days and nights.
- Baptism and Bar Mitzvah
- Teaching the elders.
- Storms at sea -- the vessel under attack by the elements and the panic of the crew.
- Trial at the temple.
- Palm Sunday and the crucifixion.
- Peter's sermon.
- The Tomb of Jesus.
- A transition to 20th Century Christian leaders like Billy Graham and reference to contemporary religious challenges and crises like Ethiopia.

The park would contain a city of Jerusalem containing:

- A coliseum with gladiators, animal acts, chariot races and a nightly 2 hour passion play.
- A merchant street and craft area.
- A carnival and games area.
- Herod's Palace and dancing girls.
- A show area for one act plays and other wholesome entertainment.
- A time machine - a ride-through from ancient times showing a prophecy fulfilled.
- A prehistoric display utilizing the ancient geology of the Arbuckle Wilderness hill forms.
- Ride attractions carefully themed in the format of the free fall, white water (flume), alpine slide (bobsled), and others like King Solomon's Mine (a coaster).
- Bike trails, skating trail.
- RV park near the river with fishing sites.
- Hotel site with view of the African plains and its wildlife.
• Water park.
• Kids activity park (McMillan variant).
• Christian Mother Goose land (akin to Sesame Street).
• Animal rides.
• Church wagon rides.
• Indian Village (not in the park itself).
• Masada (a Phase II expansion).
• Tunnel of the Revelation (a glimpse of hell and the Book of Revelations - Phase II).

Problems of visualization, cost and transportation were discussed. Jerusalem is considered as a hub around which the park would be developed. As the shopping list is conceived, cost is a problem. Certain elements could be outside the park like the passion play. Certainly, the existing zoo, overnight infrastructure and any Indian park would be outside and double gated. Space requirements were also discussed and roughly estimated as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attendance (Millions)</th>
<th>Design Day On Site Crowd</th>
<th>Acreage Requirements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>9,000</td>
<td>7,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>18,000</td>
<td>15,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>27,000</td>
<td>22,500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thus, 80 acres will handle park and parking for an annual visitation of 2.0 million.

Other conceptual problems discussed included the danger of boredom in a too static presentation, the need for live entertainment, and a "two day" minimum park venue to justify an overnight stay.
REFINEMENT OF THE CONCEPT

The preceding shopping list in its entirety would involve costs which can't be supported. Therefore, the second day of the charrette concentrated on scoping the project at a justifiable cost.

Our first cuts at project parameters which would have a feasible inter-relationship settled on these prototype values subject to later refinement and evaluation:

- Two million attendance.
- Per capita in-park revenues of $20
- Total park revenues of $40 million.
- Feasible development cost on the order of $80 million.
- Area requirements of 80 acres.
- "Ride" capacity requirements of 24,000 per hour.

CONCEPTUAL DETAILS OF THE ARK

The Ark capacity and physical size is based on a one floor space of 33,750 square feet and cubic area of 1.5 million cubic feet.

The Ark should contain a theater of 500 seats and a 500 seat restaurant of about 10,000 square feet. The theater could handle 1,500 per hour on a 3 turn per hour basis.

Working space on the Ark would be:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Square Feet</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exhibit area</td>
<td>45,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restaurant</td>
<td>10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theater</td>
<td>5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>60,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Effective capacity of the Ark would be:

Exhibit Area \((45,000/2^2)(10/14.5^2)(0.75)^1\) = 11,625
Restaurant \((500)(6)^2\) = 3,000
Theater \((500)(3)(10)(0.78)^1\) = 26,250

or 2,625 hourly

\(^{1}\) efficiency values.
\(^{2}\) six turns.
\(^{3}\) 50% exhibits, 50% people area 14.5 sq.ft. per person, one hour stay.
A hypothetical cost estimate is derived as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ship structure (1.5 m c.f. x $3.60/ft)</td>
<td>$5,400,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exhibits (15K at $400/sq.ft.)</td>
<td>12,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30K at $200/sq.ft.)</td>
<td>1,500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theater and equipment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL:</strong></td>
<td><strong>$18,900,000</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Windows may necessarily run the length of the Ark. Some of the show elements considered for the Ark could be offered outside the Ark.

**The Village of Jerusalem**

The Village serves as the "Main Street of the Park" and a visit organizer. For major events it contains an open air coliseum of 3,000 to 5,000 seats capacity. It would feature comic shows (gladiators), competitions, chariot races, light plays. At 3,000 seats and 4 shows per day, it could handle 12,000 (1,200 hourly). Probable cost is $3.5 million.

**Herod's Palace**

Herod's Palace would contain a courtyard stage featuring bawdy shows, music and dancing, variety acts, Salome and her Seven Veils, snacks and refreshments. At 8 shows a day and 1,200 capacity, it could handle 7,500 to 8,500 per day (800 per hour). Estimated development cost is $1.5 million.

**The New Testament**

The New Testament story of Christ would be told as a quality audioanimatronic pagent or passion play in a theater structure of 1,000 seats and 2,000/hour capacity (20,000 per day). It's development cost is estimated at $8 million ($6 million for show development and $2 million for structure).
The Old Testament

An Old Testament element is conceived as a dark ride conveyance, 1,000' to 1,200' in track length, 8 to 10 minutes in duration. It would develop the story of great Old Testament histories such as the Fisherman's Story, Story of the Prophets, the battle of Jericho, and others, some 15-20 scenes (½ major, ¼ minor). It would handle 2,000 per hour in a 25,000 square foot structure for a development cost of $5 million.

King Solomon's Mine

King Solomon's Mine is conceived as a mild thrill ride with much glitter and fantasy, likely to be a stock ride with a theme setting. Its capacity would be on the order of 1,500 per hour, development cost $4 million.

Trip to Israel

An IMAX "Trip to Israel" would offer park visitors a first hand Holy Land tour de force. Ninety five percent of park visitors will never visit this historical shrine and the large screen IMAX with its clarity and impact would be a great attraction and draw. Much like Epcot's visit to China, it would be larger than life. Its capacity in a 500 seat theater would be 1,500 per hour. Cost for the film theater and equipment is estimated at $4.5 million.

Total merchandise and food space is estimated as follows in a 50/50 split:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Visitors</th>
<th>2,000,000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Per Cap (Merchandise and Food)</td>
<td>$8.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revenues</td>
<td>$16.0 million</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev/Sq.Ft./Year</td>
<td>$250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Required Footage</td>
<td>64,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cost of development for merchandise space is estimated at $125/sq.ft. or a total of $4 million. Cost of development for restaurant and refreshments space is estimated at $220/sq.ft., a total of $7 million. 

-14-
Other elements of the attraction include a McMillan Type children's activity park with some kiddie rides (Mother Goose Land), 5 miscellaneous unspecified rides, and a replica of an old temple containing historical exhibits relevant to the time of Christ (coins and other artifacts), a games arcade area and various kinds of filler entertainment throughout the park, story tellers, musicians, etc.

A cut at ride capacity and construction cost was developed by the charrette participants as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Hourly Capacity</th>
<th>Development Cost (000)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ark</td>
<td>2,625</td>
<td>$18,900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Herod's</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>1,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coliseum</td>
<td>1,200</td>
<td>3,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passion Play</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>8,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Story of the Prophets</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>King Solomon's Mine</td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td>4,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMAX Trip to Israel</td>
<td>1,500</td>
<td>4,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temple Exhibit</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McMillan Activity Park</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Five ride complex</td>
<td>4,000</td>
<td>3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Service</td>
<td>5,000</td>
<td>7,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merchandise</td>
<td>1,600</td>
<td>4,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilities for 20 units of Filler Entertainment</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 Games area and Warehouse</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>28,225</td>
<td>$63,500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An annual visitation of 2 million requires an hourly capacity of 20,000 to 24,000 so there appears to be an adequate ability to handle the crowd.

Total development cost was estimated approximately as follows:
Basic Budget $63,500
Entrance facilities 500
Picnic area 200
Restrooms (6 at $150K) 900
Landscaping 3,000
Wall ways 500
Graphics/signage 300
Park equipment 1,500
Parking lots (1.8 million sq. ft.) 1,800
Roadways (200,000 sq. ft.) 200
Site Preparation 1,000
Utilities 3,500
Warehouse, Maintenance and Office (60,000 sq.ft. at $25) 1,500
Tram Systems (Parking lots and Hill lift) 80,600
A&E at 8.5% 6,851
Contingency at 10% 96,196
Preopening 4,000
Total development cost is approximated at $100 million which suggests that the park must draw more or cost 20% less to be in economic balance.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

The general conclusion reached by participants in the charrette is that the proposed project as conceived and evaluated merits additional economic study and conceptual development.
Charrette Agenda

BIBLICALLY THEMED RECREATION ATTRACTION
ARBUCKLE MOUNTAINS, OKLAHOMA

Part 1 (Orientation and preliminary market support parameters)

1. Introductions and orientation
   • Participants
   • Role of this charrette in the planning process

2. Project background
   • Development objectives
   • Review of site characteristics (size, location, accessibility, surrounding land uses)
   • Possible constraints on operations (weather conditions/seasonality, site terrain, local availability of supporting infrastructure—hotels/motels, campgrounds, food service)

3. Preliminary indications of market support
   • Resident market size and characteristics
   • Tourist market
   • Means of overcoming problem of distance from major population centers
   • Competitive environment (other attractions in area and attendance experience)

4. Experience of other major theme parks
   • Market size and characteristics
   • Market penetration and attendance
   • Operating season
   • Admission prices

5. Preliminary estimates for proposed attraction
   • Market penetration and attendance
   • Design day attendance
   • Physical capacity requirements
   • Overall acreage requirements (first phase plus future expansion)

Appendix "A"
Charrette Agenda  
(continued)

Part 2 (Concept development)

6. Basic development parameters
   • General scope of project vis-a-vis indicated market support
   • Recommended operating season
   • Major components (existing wildlife park, new development)
   • Visitor length of stay objective

7. Specific content
   • Principal theme sections
   • Entertainment/recreation activities in each section
   • Food/beverage service facilities
   • Merchandise sales facilities
   • Overnight accommodations
   • Administrative and support facilities
   • Probable phasing of development

8. Summary and adjournment
   • Recap of charrette findings
   • Projected schedule of study completion
   • Assignment of individual responsibilities
   • Adjournment
During the brief contemporary history of theme park design the use of politics and religious oriented subject matter has been either entirely avoided or carefully controlled within the confines of the theme park. The spread of appeal is so select, the subject matter so passionate and the theme identity so well perceived that it is difficult to place a generic qualification—that is, a common identity acceptable to all—on the subject. The enthusiasm of patriotism ebbs and flows but our founding fathers are generally "safe" territory if treated with respect, and with a certain reverence. The range of selectivity is narrow, though, because of the general public’s awareness of appearance and locale of various subjects—Washington, Jefferson, Franklin, the 13 colonies, Philadelphia, etc. None of them are usually thought of as light subject matter. The theme opportunities of religion closely parallel politics—the awareness of the locale and the familiarity with personalities. There is a major difference—the singular intensity of the subject.

In many religions it is forbidden even to reproduce the images; in others, the picture, or perceived image, is so well known as to invite criticism if there is any deviation from the accepted tradition. In general, and in design terms, religious subject matter is so tightly bound in perceived image that it negates most attempts to apply it out of context—anything other than a religious context.

How, then, can the context of a religiously themed park be put into any other than a nonsecular environment? This question was the charge of the design and feasibility charrette in Los Angeles when designers and investors and religious leaders approached the problem—Is a Christian oriented theme park possible.

This report is one designer’s reply.

At first thought, the concept has too narrow an audience and a very real chance to offend rather than please. However, with the clear understanding of the goal, as explained by Jerry Hagee, the pursuit was to be: a little education and a lot of entertainment presented in an artistic and dramatic manner, the sum of which is FUN.

The premise of the park, and the subject matter, lends itself to the story-telling mode and narrowly to architectural theme. The locale is an Israel of 2,000 years ago or earlier. The buildings will reflect that time and appearance and the centerpiece of the park—the ARK—fits that format. There is not an option on the choice of locale.
as all the stories from the Bible are set in one general area. This means that the visual impact of the architecture will have little variation, area to area. Since the nuances of Mesopotamian architecture are not household knowledge for the average American public there are only minor architectural variations possible, probably a selection limited to Israeli, Egyptian, Roman and possibly Babylonian. This means that the emphasis of the park must fall on the content and impact of the story. These stories, the best known in Western culture, must consist of an many formats as possible for their telling. There can be no surprises, everyone knows the endings, so the methods of storytelling becomes of paramount importance. This means that the techniques of the telling are, for the major attractions, going to be large scale and expensive processes. The main method probably should be in a 'dark ride' context with animation and filmic techniques (similar, for example, to Disney's Pirates of the Caribbean). The variations will be in how the guest will view the production and there are a few options available for that viewing. 1) static, seated in an auditorium, with a continuous performance; 2) static, while a stage changes scenes before the audience; 3) the audience moved via some sort of conveyance system (water, tracking, etc.) past various scenes. My recommendation is that all systems be used--the physical effect on the guest must be varied as much as possible, event to event. These techniques are expensive.

The most important element in the park will be the recreation, as close as is possible, of the Ark. The Ark is unquestionably a major attraction feature. Even the most blasié of the average public would express at least an interest as to its visage. The problem with the selection is the danger of attempting to put too much in a single feature. The tendency, in the meeting, was to feel a need to FILL the structure. This might be necessary if the Ark was a single attraction but it limits its capacity and, as the charrette team most emphatically stated, the attraction must be available to all and still balance the needs of the park. To achieve this requires a careful balance of the attraction's potential with the other features of the park. The balance achieves not only even dispersal throughout the park but relieves the strain on a single facility that can dangerously overload a single area of the park. Proper park design, regardless of the subject matter or importance of the attractions, must balance the guest usage and dispersal of events in the park to not only ensure that the guest enjoys as many events as possible but also that the individual investment components are utilized to their full potential.

The reliance on the park, and therefore the designer also, is to provide a never-ending menu of spectacle, scenery and effects. This could lead to each event being compared to the other because of their inherent similarity which can then lead to a perceived single-note level, or sameness, to the events in the park. Tedium, or numbness, can become a factor to overcome or the guest becomes bored regardless of the caliber of the attractions. The variety is not in the content, it is in the execution.
Luckily there are options that have been considered by the investor team that will relieve this problem. Many of the options are, unfortunately, either out-of-theme, of questionable appropriateness in such a park or unstintingly educational. It is most important that the client realize that what might be welcomed and appropriate, or possibly only tolerated, within the limits of the church walls and the fixed time span of a religious service will appear highly out of context in a FUN environment or in any other than a sanctified atmosphere. Conversely those things that are taken for granted in secular theme parks such as game booths and fast food outlets could be viewed with distaste by those patrons seeking a certain spiritual enrichment. Therefore the placement of those events--games, cafeterias, etc.--becomes critical in the park plan. Normally a high capacity dark ride would exit its guests directly into revenue generating centers. However, in this park it could be highly unsettling if the exit to the Prophets event or the Life of Christ event is routed through such a center.

All of this requires a form of planning unknown in theme park design. While the vast richness of the Bible gives seemingly endless opportunities for effects, scenery and message, the import of such subject matter greatly inhibits and alters the formula for the 'impulse-spend' format of today's theme parks.

In summary, the impact of the park is intellectual because of the storied events with variation achieved with the viewing methods. There cannot be the reliance that most theme parks have for the thrill of 'iron-rides', that is up, down, sideways, fast and slow. The impact of those events is purely physical and mostly youth-oriented. With iron-rides there is also no 'message' per se, and no need for a progression of events, storied or otherwise. This is not to say that a Biblical theme park will be devoid of such events, it just is that no reliance will be made on them for impact and ultimate park impression.

There is also no direct reliance on architectural theme or the variance of theme such as the visual variety offered at Six Flags or similar parks. The realization of the land of the Bible must be done very well for the same reason as the familiarity problem of the stories. Everyone has their own perception of the way things should appear. The architecture will have to be a careful blend of the accurate and the perceived, even in the structure of the Ark, for the visual image to be successful. Too much reliance on historical accuracy can stifle the creative effort. Historical content can cause overresearch and the image becomes bound in accuracy. Again, in the context of a park atmosphere, this can have a numbing effect. There must be a careful balance of historic and dramatic content--poetic license with restraint, bowing to the many traditions that abound.
This restraint isn't limited to just architecture or themed rides--from game premiums to food service menus and gift shop merchandise, the park will have to explore new boundaries and establish new limits in park design and management parameters.

Herein lies the risk. Not only has no one even attempted such a venture of this scale or scope, no one has ever designed such a venture--the attempt to captivate and entertain the public for triple the time usually attempted for a religiously oriented event. The American public is fickle regardless of their religious conviction and actually has a low tolerance level of an entertainment format. This can be overcome by realizing that above all else the park represents high calibre entertainment--the investors are in show business. The degree of dilution of that representation will ultimately determine the success of the park. The noble purpose of the park--the story of the Bible--is not sufficient of itself to sustain the intensity level required, or the length of stay required, to render the park successful as a theme park. The key to business success is presentation and variety, as has been the key to all successful parks, while the message, the story, will carry the impact that carries far beyond the conventional park format.

The park will be expensive and difficult to design, build and manage, especially compared to similar sized attractions. But the venture is into an untapped market, it might well be ... incredible.
PTL’s Grand Hotel Opens As Retreat For Christians

Charlotte (AP) — PTL president Jim Bakker has unveiled a $37 million hotel, 23-story enclosed mall, 650-seat cafeteria and conference center complex which he says will be the "bait to win people to Jesus Christ."

The PTL’s new Heritage Grand Hotel and the Partner Center represents what the ministry feels it must have to net followers for Jesus Christ as the 21st century approaches.

In about a year, the ministry is expected to own the largest hotel between Atlanta and the Washington area. The distinction now goes to Charlotte’s 588-room Adam’s Mark Hotel.

The 11-year-old ministry will accomplish little, Bakker said, if Heritage USA headquarters south of Charlotte resembles the run-down or rugged camps Bakker says typify this country’s Christian retreats.

"Jesus said, basically, that we were to be fishers of men," Bakker said. "And with some of the bait that we have in the church, I call it 'dill pickle religion.' I’ve never seen anyone catch a fish with a dill pickle and sourpuss religion. We’re using better bait to win people to Jesus Christ.

"Why neglect the masses where the world is building Holiday Inns and Hiltons and Marriotts and resorts?" Bakker asked. "It used to be the church people would take their vacations and go to a Christian center on their vacation. They’re not doing that anymore."

Bakker said people are not interested in going to places that are "tacky and falling apart."

"So I can’t give God junk," Bakker said. "That’s why you don’t see junk in this hotel. I won’t do it."

PTL opened 320 of the hotel’s 501 rooms Saturday, which signaled a dramatic step at the 2,200-acre Heritage USA.

Within a month or so, as it finishes and opens the hotel’s remaining rooms, PTL will own the biggest hotel in South Carolina. Heritage USA is centered in York County north of Ft. Mill.

Since September, Bakker has been raising money for a 20-story, 300-room, $19 million hotel addition. Work on the "Towers" addition is expected to begin in January, with opening in about a year.

By next February, when work on the Main Street shopping mall, Grand Palace cafeteria and the 14,000-square-foot conference center is expected to be complete, PTL expects its year round payroll to number about 1,100.

With its effort to raise money for the complex, PTL expects 1981 revenues to reach a record $100 million. For 1982-83, the latest fiscal year for which reports are available, the tax-exempt organization reported revenues of $31 million.

At Heritage Grand, PTL partners will find what PTL calls a "world class" hotel with a swimming pool, a sauna and hot-water spa, its lobby, and four floors of 70-a-night rooms which feature remote control television and custom-made furniture.

Bakker said he has tried to build a retreat of beauty, a place for people to overcome their problems and realize their potential.

To pay for the Partner Center, PTL offered viewers the opportunity to get three free nights a year in the hotel for the rest of their lives in return for a $1,000 non-deductible donation. Offering about 30,000 such lifetime memberships, the ministry raised $30 million.

Theme parks also have made their impression on Bakker — notably the Disney parks in Florida and California — and PTL officials have discussed building a Christian theme park.

"I was so impressed with the quality and the beauty and the excitement of the place," Bakker said. "Why is it we can almost enshrine a mouse, a Mickey Mouse or a Donald Duck?"

"Why not have something where young people will be connected to Jesus Christ?"

"Somehow, there is almost an unseen force that says religion has to be boring and dull and dreary. And I rebel against that," Bakker said.