

# The Ark of the Covenant

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 03 December 2023

Preacher: Malcolm Macdonald

[ 0 : 00 ] Welcome to ourselves this morning. As we come together to worship God, we would pray for his blessing in our time together.

Under the preaching of his word. We can begin by singing Psalm 84. Psalm 84 from the beginning. First, four stanzas, verses 1 to 3.

Psalm 84.

Psalm 84. Psalm 84. Psalm 84. Psalm 84. Psalm 84. Let us sing these verses, our love, this side-dwelling place, O Lord of hosts, to me.

A lovely earth's light, well-being bliss, O Lord of hosts, to me.

[ 1 : 32 ] The sovereign of the cross is our mercy.

Lord, let me My third Is so long To me It is my path to thee My very heart, yon blessed I am, O living on the goodly.

Behold the spiral, find it out, and us where in the rest.

Thus what I've owned so far, I shall have purchased in our hands.

In thine own altar, where she is, I am, one and sword may bring.

[ 3 : 29 ] O now, O my given heart of hosts, O Lord, my God, I am.

Let's turn together in prayer. Let's pray. O Lord of God, as we meet in your name, may your name be something that stirs us up, that causes us to reflect upon who you are and what we are.

Your name speaks of your creatorship. Creatorship, you are a God who is able to bring into being all that has no previous existence.

It's as simple as that. When we think of creation, the divine fiat, you, by the word of your power, in the space of six days, created all things.

And your own estimate of what you created was that it was good. When we are confronted even on a day such as this, on beauty within creation, and we consider it good, and yet it is a fallen world in which we live, and it is marred by reason of sin.

[ 5 : 15 ] Man has left his own indelible mark upon. The imprint of sinful hands is wherever we look.

Whether it is, you know, walking by the shore, and we see there the ruinous rubble that is cast upon shorelines, what is often considered detrimental to the well-being of sea life, and it is considered a vile and a heinous act on the part of those who are responsible for it.

And when we take our walk upon the moors, or any place that seems to encourage our enjoyment of the environment, everywhere we look we are confronted with what mankind has left behind.

And that so spoils the very thing that we consider beautiful. And yet, much more serious than that, than the effects that pollution causes upon the environment, the effects of sin is far greater, and the polluting influences that it exerts upon our lives, intruding upon our relationship as creatures with our Creator, demonstrably affecting our capacity to interact with our God, leaving us incapable of doing that by our own selves.

We give thanks for your word that teaches us that even though that is the case by nature, that you have not left us to perish in that way, but that you have made provision for us that would allow us to seek access by way of your Son, Jesus Christ, who is the alone Saviour for sinners.

[ 7 : 50 ] He is the way, the truth, and the life. He is the one upon whose name we can call and who allows us immediate access into the presence of his Heavenly Father.

Father, we pray for your blessing upon your word today in our midst, that which is preached on the pulpit, that which is taught in our Sunday school, that which is heard by those who are not present, who are dependent upon means other than that which is established properly for the disclosure of the grace of God here in this place, for those who are hindered and those who are thwarted from being able to come and are able to access means of grace in their own homes.

We give thanks for that opportunity. But we would ask that any who would avail themselves of that and who are not availing themselves of the opportunity to meet as we ought to meet in company with your people around your word, that you would remind them of the great demerit that they are causing themselves in not being able to fellowship with the saints and not being able to access the ministry of the collective as the Spirit of the Most High God does his work here in our midst.

not only are you able to bless individuals but through the blessing that is imparted to individuals others may have a share in it as you are so able to pour out your Spirit copiously upon us.

The vessels that we possess are small and yet they are able to overflow. We pray for your blessing then. Upon the gatherings of your people may we understand the privilege that we have to enjoy coming together to worship God on the Lord's Day.

[ 10 : 07 ] We pray for your blessing upon those who are deprived by reason of ill health those who are confined to their homes those in hospital recovering from surgery and awaiting surgeries and remember those who are suffering illnesses from which they have no assurance of recovery.

We pray Lord that you would sanctify such a knowledge to them that they would look to the physician of souls that whatever happens to our body and all our bodies are destined to return from whence it came but that those who make provision for the soul are assured that in Christ that to be with him is far better and the day for his people is a day that they have long awaited and they will never bemoan the fact that they have been withdrawn from the scene of time to enter the great eternity.

The loss will be entirely on our side here in this world and not theirs who have gone into the fullness of the privilege of worshipping without hindrance the Prince of their peace the God of all grace.

we remember Lord those who are grieving and sorrowful today those who have sorrows to contend with that we cannot begin to enter in.

Sometimes death is long awaited because those who have been unwell for a time may have long to wait before the moment comes.

[ 11 : 55 ] Others it would so seem that they are still in the bloom of youth and yet suddenly taken from this world leaving those who are grieving and sorrowful having to contend with the thoughts that are so difficult to unravel.

May thy grace as the God who is gracious be applied to their souls. remember the world in which we live where there is much of the same where there are many today who are filling in graves of loved ones young middle aged and elderly taken from time into eternity in the blink of an eye and all because of the machinations of the wickedness that is in the heart of man.

hear our prayers and petitions that may the God of all peace who is our God may you find a way by which men and women young and old may it be drawn to yourself and that your name would be exalted and that your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

We pray Lord that you would remember the trials and the tribulations that have saved your people embroiled in such places. Those of your people are sometimes caught up in wars not of their own making.

Sometimes they are in places that they would much rather not be in but at other times it is their choice because they feel it their calling to bear testimony to the Lord and Saviour who is their Lord and Saviour.

[ 13 : 45 ] Remember them Lord and circle them with a sense of the power that is inexhaustible and the dependence upon the will of the one who is able to bring to fruition your purposes.

Hear our prayers on behalf of the needy of this world and mercy for our sins and pardon us in Jesus name. Amen. Boys and girls I think you're working your way through the shorter catechism and the commandments of God and today you're looking at the fourth commandment to remember the Lord's day to be holy.

Somebody preacher of many generations ago called the Lord's day the Sabbath day the pearl of the week and he thought it was the pearl of the week because no other day was ever like it.

It was the day that God spoke to him and he was able to speak to God at a level and with an intensity that other days did not allow because other callings other duties prevented him from having that time with God.

But God had ring fenced made this day special and because it was special to him what he enjoyed in it marked it out. And not only did he understand that the Sabbath day or the Sunday was a day to be kept sacred to be remembered he was of the habit to get up in the morning and whoever he met first or even the first encounter that he had with them or them and the blessing that he gave to them was the Lord is risen the Lord is risen indeed because he believed that the Sunday was the Lord's day and it was a day where we as Christians remembered the fact that Jesus Christ had died on the cross and that he had risen on the third day and every

[ 16 : 26 ] Sunday everyone was to be a celebration of that event a remembrance of a risen and exalted Lord for many to keep the Sabbath holy is a considerable inconvenience it's something that keeps them back from their work keeps them back from their play it prevents them doing the kind of things that they would much rather be doing but the reality is that not one of them can do without a Sabbath not one of them can physically exist without a day of rest or without time allocated Lord the Lord was wise when he saw the creation that was before and the pinnacle of that creation man he knew that man needed to rest and as he took rest of his work of creation so he prepared for his for his most favourite creation a time of privileged interaction with himself time of enjoyment time of worship and taking in

God's word and it is not in any way an inconvenience for those who are God's people it shouldn't be anyway to keep it is our greatest gift it's our greatest blessing and while we live in a day that has forgotten that and we live in a day where some days like every other day well God has not changed that's what we need to remember some people say well the commandments were alright thousands of years ago and we can ignore some of them we can pretend that they're not as important but I can think of one that is not every bit as important as the day that God gave it because God knows what we need and what we have to be doing in order to have these needs met do you remember the Lord's day because it is his day and nobody who keeps it will suffer because of it well we're going to sing now as we go out to

Sunday school verses from Psalm 99 from the beginning of the Psalm down to verse 7  
Psalm 99 from the beginning the eternal Lord does reign as king let all the people quake he sits between the cherubins let the earth be moved and shake the Lord in Zion great and high above all gods above all people is the great and dreadful name for this holy let them bless the king's strength also judgment love so settlest equity just judgment thou dost execute in Jacob righteously the Lord of God exult on high and reverently do ye before his footstone worshipping the Holy One is he to verse seven the eternal Lord doth reign as king eternal

Lord doth reign us sing let all the people quake his sins between the cherubins let the earth be good and great the Lord is high on great and high upper world he nourished thine great and dreadful give heart it and holy let bless the king slain the

Lord so judgment love the sin less equity just your judgment the who does execute in Jacob right to thee the Lord our God has on high and reverend he to thee mercado the true I worship him the holy hill who places can there from his trees

[ 22 : 47 ] But His name, O God, and He même Carvel.

Within the pillar of the cloud, he unto heaven is thee.

Thy death's name, O is he then God, and Lord's name, O great.

Let us hear God's word as we hide it in the Old Testament of the first book of Samuel. And we're going to read chapter 4. 1 Samuel chapter 4.

We'll read the whole chapter. And the word of Samuel came to all Israel. Now Israel went out against the Philistines to battle, and pitched beside Ebenezer.

[ 24 : 22 ] And the Philistines pitched in Aphek. And the Philistines put themselves in array against Israel. And when they joined battle, Israel was smitten before the Philistines.

And they slew of the army in the field about four thousand men. And when the people were coming to the camp, the elders of Israel said, Wherefore hath the Lord smitten us today before the Philistines?

Let us fetch the ark of the covenant of the Lord out of Shiloh unto us, that when it cometh among us, it may save us out of the hand of our enemies.

So the people said to Shiloh, that they might bring from thence the ark of the covenant of the Lord of hosts, which dwelleth between the Jerubims and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, who were there with the ark of the covenant of God.

And when the ark of the covenant of the Lord came into the camp, all Israel shouted with a great shout, so that the earth rang again.

[ 25 : 32 ] And when the Philistines heard the noise of the shout, they said, What meaneth the noise of this great shout in the camp of the Hebrews? And they understood that the ark of the Lord was come into the camp.

And the Philistines were afraid, for they said, God is coming to the camp. And they said, O unto us, for there hath not been such a thing heretofore.

O unto us, who shall deliver us out of the hand of these mighty gods. These are the gods that smote the Egyptians with all the plagues in the wilderness.

Be strong and good yourselves like men of the Philistines, that ye be not servants unto the Hebrews, as they have been to you. Could yourselves like men and fight?

And the Philistines fought, and Israel was smitten. And they fled every man into his tent. And there was a very great slaughter, for there fell of Israel thirty thousand footmen.

[ 26 : 35 ] And the ark of God was taken. And the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were slain. And there ran a man of Benjamin out of the army, and came to Shiloh the same day with his clothes rent, and with earth upon his head.

And when he came, lo, Eli sat upon a seat by the wayside, watching. For his heart trembled for the ark of God. And when the man came into the city, and told it, all the city cried out.

And when Eli heard the noise of the crying, he said, What meaneth the noise of this tumult? And the man came in hastily, and told Eli.

Now Eli was ninety and eight years old, and his eyes were dim, that he could not see. And the man said unto Eli, I am he that came out of the army, and I fled today out of the army.

And he said, What is there done, my son? And the messenger answered and said, Israel is fled before the Philistines. And there hath been also a great slaughter among the people.

[ 27 : 50 ] And my two sons also, Hophni and Phinehas, are dead. And the ark of God is taken. And it came to pass, when he made mention of the ark of God, that he fell from off the seat, backward by the side of the gate, and his neck break, and he died.

For he was an old man and heavy, and he had judged Israel forty years. And his daughter-in-law, Phinehas' wife, was with child, near to be delivered.

And when she heard the tidings, that the ark of God was taken, and that her father-in-law and her husband were dead, she bowed herself and travelled, for her pains came upon her.

And about the time of her death, the woman that stood by her, said unto her, Fear not, for thou hast borne a son.

But she answered not, neither did she regard it. And she named the child, Ichabod, saying, The glory is departed from Israel, because the ark of God was taken, and because of her father-in-law, and her husband.

[ 29 : 08 ] And she said, The glory is departed from Israel, for the ark of God is taken. And so on. The Lord add his blessing, to a reading of this word, and to his name be the praise.

We are going to sing some verses from Psalm 78, at verse 56. Psalm 78, at verse 56.

Yet God most highly did provoke, and tempted ever still, and to observe his testimonies, did not incline their will. But like their fathers turned back, and dealt unfaithfully, aside they turned, like a bow, that shoots deceitfully.

For they to anger did provoke him, with their places high, and with their graven images, moved him to jealousy. When God heard this, he walks at wrath, and much loathed Israel then, so Shiloh's tent he left, the tent which he had placed with men.

And he his strength delivered into captivity, he left his glory, in the hand of his proud enemy. His people also he gave over, and to the swords fierce rage, so sore his wrath in flame it was, against his heritage.

[ 30 : 39 ] We can sing these verses, Psalm 78, from verse 56. Yet God must highly did provoke, and tempted ever still. Yet God must highly did it grow, and tempted ever still, And to all services, and smonies, did not incline their will, But like, I did father's turn in my and let the one who flew as I did earn it like a mole that choose this holy for they too I'm girded from all in where this is high and with their given images move him to jealousy when God heard this he was in awe and as Lord is the land so shine those and he left in the tent which he hath blitzed with men unto his temple in equivalently

God bless His crown to offer you for thy glory.

All His crown into me is He, my Lord.

O'er the soul he gave o'er And did thy soul's pure strength So sore his wrath in blamid was Against his marriage Can we turn back to the chapter that we read In the first book of Samuel Chapter 4 We can read again At verse 3 1 Samuel chapter 4 And when the people were come Into the camp The elders of Israel said Wherefore hath the Lord smitten us today Before the Philistines

Let us fetch the ark of the covenant of the Lord Out of Shiloh unto us That when it cometh among us It may save us out of the hand of our enemies So the people sent to Shiloh That they might bring from thence The ark of the covenant of the Lord of hosts Which dwelleth between the Jeruboam And the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas Were there with the ark of the covenant of God So the people sent to Shiloh That they might bring from thence The ark of the covenant of the Lord of hosts Which dwelleth between the Jeruboam Israel had for many decades Been under the government of judges

[ 36 : 09 ] Appointed by the Lord God And some of these judges Were effective as they administered the rule of law Some were far less so You had good judges and you had evil judges And at the point at which we read this account You could say that we are approaching the end Of that sequence of government Samuel will carry on for a while But it will be his responsibility As directed by God To set aside a king To rule over Israel Because that was what the people wanted

And we have In the first book of Samuel The account of the miracle of his birth Hannah was able to bring forth A child Well past childbearing years And she Gave the child to God To serve God And that child Samuel Was going to be diligent In fulfilling His calling Initially he served with Eli The priest And One of the tasks that was given to him Was not a very comfortable one The Lord came to Samuel In the night And He said to Samuel Behold I will do a thing in Israel At which both the ears of everyone

That heareth it shall tingle In that day I will perform against Eli All things which I have spoken Concerning his house When I begin I will also Make an end For I have told him That I will judge his house forever For the iniquity which he knows Because his sons Made themselves vile And he restrained them not And therefore I have sworn Into the house of Eli That the iniquity Of Eli's house Shall not be purged With sacrifice Nor offering Forever And that was what God Gave to Eli By way of Samuel Samuel had to Much against his will No doubt He had to speak God's word To Eli And Eli himself knew That he had to hear These words So in this chapter We record

We find the record Of Eli's death As well as the death Of his two sons I want us To focus in particular As these chapters Four, five, six And into seven Focus on One main topic Although all of these other things Do come to play their part Focus on What God has to say About the place That the Ark of the Lord Has within Their lives It is a central Expression of God's interest And God's presence Amongst his people The Ark of the Lord Is something that Is quite unique And it Reminds the people Of God Of God's presence And God's

Their privilege Of being able To serve God So I want us to Think first of all Some of the things That we can glean From elsewhere About the Ark of the Lord And then I want us to notice How The two Races The race of Israel And the race of Philistine Are Comparable In the way That they Understand God Their Appreciation Of God Is on a par And that's not the way It should be But that was the way It was disclosed And I'll try and say Something about that And the second Third thing Final thing Is say something about Although the people Of God Were under God's judgment And he was

[ 41 : 13 ] Clearly A God Who Who Who condemned The people For their Behavior And they suffered For it And yet He was faithful To his covenant And his interest In the remnant Of his people Ensured that Some would be Spared to go on And just a word About that An important word I think Now these Few sentences Don't really tell us Much About What kind of thing The ark of the covenant Was The ark of the Lord But Essentially It tells us That Tells us Where the ark Was stored It was kept In Shiloh God had placed it there And His People Worshipped In Shiloh And

It describes to us The fact Of God's Presence In an Oblique way It says The ark Of the covenant Of the Lord Of hosts Which dwelleth Between the Cherubins And it's the Lord of hosts That dwelleth Between the Cherubins And we need To go elsewhere To find out What he means By that Because We need to Find the Description Of the ark In order To discover That The cover That The ark Had Involved Two Cherubins Facing each other Looking down Upon The cover Of The ark And Nothing was Between The two Cherubins But The description Tells us This is where God dwelt

He dwelt To twin He dwelt Between The cherubins And it was There that he Made himself Known To his people Now they were Given instructions You find it in the Book of Exodus Some of it Some in Leviticus And sometimes It's not Particularly Clear Because Sometimes You have too Much detail And sometimes These details Are not Necessarily Always Consistently Saying the Same thing But just For For Illustration If you can Imagine The sizes That are Met And when We find Go back To the Original Location Where Instructions Were given For the Design And manufacture Of these Of this Box That they were Given explicit Instructions Measurements And the

Measurements Are given In the Old Form of Measure Now when it Comes to Translating That into Either Modern Meters And centimeters Or More recent Feet and Inches There was Always Difficulty In doing That Because in Other Places Over the Centuries The Measurements Even Within Judaism Itself The Form of Measure Changed Over The Centuries So that Sometimes When a Person From the Old Testament Scholars Came to Record The Measurements They Would Adapt The Measurements To To the Modern Their Own Modern Version But the Size of You can Imagine a Box And the Box is Three foot

Nine Times Two foot Three Times Two foot Three I'm not Going to Put it Into Centimeters That's Beyond That's Beyond Old Measurements But that's Just the Measurements That were Given By some Of the Scholars So if You can Imagine That Those Of you I'll just Confuse you If I Give you The Michter And Centimeters Version But it's An oblong Box And it's As wide As it Is High And the Length Of it Slightly Longer It also Has a Lid And even Calling it A lid Is a Misnomer It's a Confusion But it Does have A top And the Top is It's not

[ 46 : 16 ] Just like If you Think of A shoe Box That confuses You Because The actual Lid Itself Is of One Piece And Most Would agree That the Cherubins That are Sitting on Top of The lid Are formed Out of The one Piece Of gold The The actual Oblong Box Itself Is made Of shit And wood Covered In gold And Every part Of it Is covered In gold Apart From It is Suspected That The The The Jelly Bins Are Actually Solid Gold And They're Shaped Out of That gold Because it's Probably easier For you to Think of it Like that Then the Box Itself Is carried On the Shoulders

Of those Who are Required To carry It They're not They're not Allowed to Touch it They're not Allowed to Manhandle it So there Are four Rings Coming out Of the Side Of the Box And These Rings Are also Made of Wood Covered In gold And Into These Rings Are fitted The wooden Poles Probably Also Covered In gold That is Used for Carrying The box On the Shoulders Of those Whose job It is To carry Now Over the History Of The Jews The instructions That God Gave to Them Were Sometimes Forgotten And They suffered As a Consequent God Was jealous Of his Own glory So that When he Gave them Directions As to How to Do Things They were To do It And Anybody

Who Usurped His Authority Would Suffer The Consequences So that The occasion When The Ark Was Carried In a Way That God Not Ordained A Penalty From God Came And that Happened On more Than one Occasion Now Within That box I Hesitated To use The box Because that Sort of Downgrades It But within The box There were Set items Placed There were Two tablets Signifying The law There was A censure Or a Bowl With Manna And Aaron's Rod That Blossomed And These Were The only Things That Were Allowed Inside The

Box And All of That Detail Was Kept And All of That Detail Was Observed And Attired To And The Presence Of The Ark Indicated That The Presence Of God Was Assured To God's People At No Point Did God Ever Confuse Them By Saying That He Was The Box That He Was The Ark Or That They Should Assume That He Was The Ark The Ark Was A Symbol Of His Presence Among His People When They Worshipped Him They Worshipped Him With The Understanding That He Was Near To Them And It Reminded Them Of His Holiness It Reminded Them Of Many Things About Their Need For

Allegiance To Him And That He Was To Be Worshipped With Fear And Dread So If You Want To Find Out More About It There Are Passages That Are Very Dated About Its Construction And How It Was To Be Approached Within It Came Within The Tabernacle It Was To Be Kept Within The Holy Most Holy Place And The The Approved No No No One Was Ever Allowed Into The Most Holy Place Except Once A Year And Always The High Priest Would Be The Only Person To Do That And Only With Blood But The Ark Of The Covenant Was Something That Was Placed In There At A Later Date Or

[ 51 : 18 ] At When The Temple Was Reconstructed Whatever But What We Find Here Is That After The Defeat Of The Israelites By The Hand Of The Philistines That There Is An Understanding That This Was God's Doing Wherefore Hath The Lord Smitten Us Today Before The Philistines They Suffered Defeat And They Understand That Defeat Was God's Doing Wise Wisdom Wise And An Understanding That Was Quite Lucid And Cogent And Anything You Want To Call It They Were Able To Perceive This Was Down To God This Was God's Doing But The Response

To What God Had Done Was To Solicit The Help Of God And They Sent For The Ark Let Us Fetch The Ark Of The Covenant Of The Lord Out Of Shiloh Unto Us That When It Cometh Among Us It May Save Us Out Of The Hand Of Our Enemies It Seems A Simple Thing Seems A Very Rational Thing But It's A Major Misunderstanding Of What God Has Said Concerning The Ark And Concerning His Presence The Ark To Them At That Moment In Time Is Little More Than A Lucky Char Or Something That They Look To That Suggest To Them That God Will Intervene They've Got No Real Understanding Of Why

God Would Intervene Which Seems Strange If You Pardon The Anachronism I Think It's So Common That There Are So Many Who Written Up In A Christian Culture And They'll Adorn Themselves With Crucifixes Or Crosses Or St Christophers And These Are Christian Christian Icons And They Vest In These Icons A Great Deal Of Trust As If These Are The Means By Which They Are Going To Secure For Themselves Some Kind Of Preservation Or Protection And It Was No Different To Israel The Ark Was Summoned Because They Hope That The Ark Would Provide For Them Some Kind Of



Protection Whereas The Only Protection They Could Have Was God And When You Compare Their Desire To The Initial Reaction Of The Philistines Is There Not A Real Sense In Which Their Reaction And The Reaction Of The Philistines Is Not All That Different Because When The Ark Of The Lord Is Brought Into The Camp They Cry With A Shout They Shouted With A Great Shout So The Earth Ran Again And When The Philistines Heard The Noise Of The Shout They Said What Means The Noise Of This Great Shout In The Camp Of The Hebrews And They Understood What Had Happened The Ark And Then They Said God Is Coming

To The Camp Their Conclusions Were The Same As Israel God Is Coming To The Camp Now That Is Not The Same Thing That God Had Said To Them The Ark Of The Lord Was A Reminder To Them Of His Holiness A Reminder To Them Of What He Was And What He Would Do And What He Had Done And All Concerned All Who Knew Anything About The History Of The Ark Of The Covenant Would Know Of Its Construction They Knew The Bible They Would Know It Was Made Of Wood Covered In Gold It Represented Something Of God To Them They Knew It Wasn't To Be Touched It Was Holy It Was Something To Go Near To It Would Speak To Them Of The Awful Reality

[ 56 : 19 ] Of A Holy God And They Knew That And At The Same Time It Was Little Better Than A Lucky Charm And The Philistines Said Well This Is Their Gods Not Just One But Several God Has Come Into The Camp For There Hath Not Been Such A Thing Here To For Go To Us Who Shall Deliver Us Out Of The Hand Of These Mighty Gods They Didn't Know God As The God Of History They Didn't Know God As The Only Living And Through God They Didn't Know God The Only Appreciation Of A God They Had Was One Of Their Own Understanding And They Were Just As Wrong Together In Their Understanding Of Who God Was Now that Says to Me That Sometimes We May Go

Down The Path Of Believing That We Have Some Some Notion Of Religion Which Is Which Has Some Potency Which Has Some Power Which Has Some Efficacy Which Is Of Some Relevance To Living Our Life Here In This World Before God God And All It Is Really Is Just A Crown That We Give To Our Conscience That Is That We Are In Sumbly What We Are Not Israel Were So Far From God That They Had No Notion Of God's Holiness Or God's Goodness Or God's Grace And Their Lives Demonstrated That They Had Been Under The Supervision Of Godless Priests Who Were Themselves Virtual Pagans And

The People That They Served As Priests Followed In Their Example And God Not Only Allows Them To Fall Pre To Their Enemies But He Does So Knowingly And Understanding That What He Does Is To Bring Them Back To A Sense Of Who He Is You Know When You Read The Fact That In The First Skirmish And It Was A Skirmish Skirmish In A Sense 4,000 Men Died But Then At The Next Battle Israel Was Smitten A Very Great Slaughter For 30,000 Fulton Fell And The Ark Of God Was Taken Huge Numbers Were Killed And

God Wasn't Absent God Wasn't Asleep God Wasn't Unaware Of What The Philistines Were Doing But These Men And Women Understood That To To Play Around With God And To Forget Who God Was Would Bring The Displeasure Of God Upon Them Divine Divine Implications Upon Others When

The Lord May Feel The Need To Chastise Ourselves When His Justice And It Begins With Our House Our Home Our Family But It Is A Clear Fact That While We May Lose Our Way God Does Not And That He Never Loses Sight Of What His Promises Entail He Also Understand That He Always Has A Godly Remnant He Insists That That Is The Way It Is And There Is No Question But That Eli The Priest Of God However Wayward He Was And You Have To Understand That He Is Directly Revealed To Us Here As Someone Who Who Was Wrong And Who Was Culpable In The Way That His

[ 61 : 22 ] Sons Had Carried Out The Priesthood They Slept With The Temple Prostitute They Probably Introduced Them Their Whole Use Of The Worship Of God Was Corrupt And It Was A Vile Way Of Doing What They Were Doing And It Wasn't Being Done Without God Saying What They Were Doing But It Wasn't Being Done Without Eli Knowing It Was Done As We Read There In The Words That Samuel Had To Speak To Eli The Iniquity Of Eli's House Shall Not Be Purged With Sacrifice Nor Offering Forever So When Eli Dies He Dies As A Consequence Of

Hearing The News Of God's Displeasure Being Pulled Out On The People But The Interesting Thing Is That When You Read Of His Death And It's So It's So Sad He Was Somebody He Was Nearing A Hundred Years Of Age And The News Comes To Him Of The Death Of Thousands Of Israelites Amongst Them His Own Two Sons And Yet The News That Vexes Him Most Is That The Ark Of The Lord Is Taken And I Think That Tells You That While Eli Had Got So Many Things Wrong He Was Still A Man Of God And There's A Terrible Terrible Revelation Made

To Us There Of How Far A Person Can Go Away From His God And God Permitting That To Happen And Yet He Is Still Somebody Who Loves The Lord It's A Very Solemn Thing Then Again You Look At The Death Of Of The Wife Of Phineas And She Dies In Childbirth And Her Last Words Are The Glory Is Departed From Israel Because The Ark Of God Was Taken And Because Of Her Father In Law And Husband I Think There Is Not As Clear A Suggestion There About Her Relationship With God But I Think There Is One And

It Wouldn't Have Been An Easy Life She Had Knowing The Kind Of Life Her Husband Lived Probably I Don't Know These Versures Are Not As As Clear As We Would Want Them To Be As Far As Clarifying The Kind Of Relationship That Existed But Clearly God Is Displeased With Israel Because They Have Gone Out Of The Way And They Fallen By The Wayside As Far As Their Relationship To God Was Concerned But He Had To Teach Them Grievous Lessons And They Had To Learn Learn From These Expressions And If You Go Into The Next Chapter There's A Very Strange Occurrence Where The Ark Of The Lord Is Taken Into Dagon's

Temple And The God Of The Philistines Falls To The Ground And The Effect That God Produces In That Experience It's As If God Is Saying Well I'm Going To Teach My People Israel A Lesson They're Going To Learn What It Means To Disobey And To Live As If I'm Not God But I'm Not Going To Overlook The Fact That These Idolaters Must Also Learn And Be Taught And He Does That As Well God Did Not Allow Their Crass Indifference To God's Holiness To Go Unpunished And It Was The Last Thing They Wanted Because The God They Want Is A God Of Their Own Devising A God That They Comfortable With A God That They Willing To Serve But On Their Terms

[ 66 : 25 ] Is That Not The Way Of It We Want God To Be The Way We Want Them To Be What God Says To Us Using The Illustration Or The Images The Symbolism That Is Contained Within The Ark I Am Holy There Is Nothing In This World That Compares To Me Holiness Radiates From The Presence That Is Spoken Of The Unseen Presence Of God Between The Cherubim And Yet How Often That Is That Is Treated As If It Was Nothing The Ark What Does The Ark Say To You Today Well The Ark Spoke To Us About The

Person Of The Lord Jesus Christ Most Of The New Testament Scholars Anyway Who Look At That They Say Well When You Look At The Ark And The Symbolism Is Probably Something That You Have To Guard Against Being Over Inventive And Trying To Understand It Always When You See Wood Being Used As Always The Imperishable Nature Of The Wood Meant That It Was Long Lasting That It Would That Wouldn't Corrupt The Normal Wood So This Wood Was Chosen And Then It Was Covered In Gold To Speak About The Reality Of The Divinity Of Christ As Well As The Humanity Of Christ It Speaks To Us Of The Contents Of The Ark Being Reminders To Us Of God's Law And The Word Of God Christ Is The Only One

By Which His Word Is Communicated To Us The Manna That Is Contained In The Vessel Who Is The Manna The Hidden Manna Christ Is He Is The Bread Of Life He Is The One Who Sustains His People He Is The Word The Authority The Rod His Word Is The Last Word As He Is Also The Resurrection And The Life The Rod That That Blooded Even Though It Was Dead All All All Of All of These Elements Are There And They Are Probably Something You Can Reflect On I Wouldn't Insist On Any Of These Interpretations Being The Only Ones But God Speaks To Us Through The Symbolism And We Need To Remind Ourselves That We Are Not Looking At Him As If He Is Some Kind Of Lucky Charm

Or Some Kind Of Person That We Touch Wood If We Say Something Touch Wood Maybe This Won't Happen Just Our Natural Inclination Is To To Be So Full Of Of Of Some Kind Of Mystical Experience Which Is Divide Of Truth Christ Is The One Who Is Held Up Before Us As To Glory In Our Midst The One To Whom We Turn And Whose Presence With Us Is An Encouragement To Go On With Him Live For Him And Trust His Word To Be The Word That Sustains In All Kinds Of Situations Anything Else Is Anything Else Is Just Hocus Pocus And That's What Many Have In The World Who Knows What They Believe And What They Trust In And

They Take It To Be Christian Well I Can Take The Christianity For Them But I Doubt If I Can Take From Them What They Didn't Have To Begin With Christ Is The Son Of God Who Is Born Into This World And Who Became Man And Continues To Be Man He Died On The Cross He Rose Again And I Trust My Soul To His Keeping Is That Your Christ Is That The One You Look To Or Are You Something Someone Who Is Happy To Trust In In A Figment Something Less Satisfying Let Us Pray Lord Our God As We Can Before You We Acknowledge How Often We Are No Better Than Those Who Have Gone Down A Road Where Human Superstition Is All That Is

[ 71 : 31 ] Held And It Is So Divided Of True Meaning Lacking In Virtue Or Value Help Us To Look To The Holy True God The Living And The True God And Trust In Him Forgive Us Our Transgressions In Jesus Name Amen Psalm 81 We Sing Psalm 81 Verse 13 To The End Three Verses Psalm 81 Verse 13 Oh That My People Hath Be Heard Israel My Ways Hath Chose I Had Their Enemies Soon Subdued My Hand Turned On Their Foes The Haters Of The Lord To Them Submission Should Have Fained But As For Them Their Time Should Have Forever More Remained He Should Have Also Paid Them With The Finest Of The Wheat

Of Honey From The Rock And Thy Fill I Should Have Made The Eat Oh That My People Had Me Heard Israel My Ways Of Chose Oh That My People Half Such The Heart Beyond My Hand turned on their hold.

The hitters of the Lord to him submission should have paid.

My eyes more than their time should come forever more again.

He should have also fed with the finest of the weight of honey from the rock day fell.

[ 74 : 27 ] I should have made. Amen. N mark■ at next note in the sons of the room and