

Read or listen  
on your phone



5 MINUTE LESSONS ON THE KINGDOM OF GOD

# The Ark of the Covenant

## Going to Church for Information

I have studied the Bible for many years and one of the things that I've noticed about going to church is that the majority of people go to church to receive more information. As I've gotten older, I realize that I am no longer interested in more information, but what I am interested in is application. The pastor's sermon can be good information, but somewhere along the line we have to make the switch to bring this information into application. For the Scripture itself says that looking in a mirror and then not washing your face is not of benefit to anyone at all (James 1:23-24 NKJV).

Recently, I visited a Mardel Christian & Education store. It was around Christmas and I was looking for some gifts. One of the things I immediately noticed was a replica of the Old Testament Ark of the Covenant, or as it is sometimes referred to, the mercy seat (Hebrews 9:5 KJV).

As I made a decision to reread through the Scriptures new and afresh at the beginning of this new year, I found myself reading many passages about the Old Testament Ark of the Covenant. It appears that it was the place where God spoke and where God communed His messages to Moses and His people, Israel. I was struck by passages like Exodus 25:22 where God says concerning the Ark of the Covenant,

*"I will meet with you there, above the lid between the two creatures (cherubim) with wings. These are on the Ark of the Agreement (Covenant). There I will give you all my commands for the Israelites."* (Exodus 25:22 NCV)

I bought a replica of the Ark of the Covenant that I found in this Christian bookstore. I realized how holy this was to the Children of Israel. It would cause certain death to anyone who opened the lid and looked into it. It caused a man named Uzzah, that reached out his hand to stabilize the Ark that was being carried on a cart, to be suddenly struck dead, for they were forbidden to look into the lid or touch the Ark (2 Samuel 6:6-7 KJV). The Scriptures say that it caused King David, who was with Uzzah that day, to greatly fear God when Uzzah was smitten (2 Samuel 6:9 KJV). The majority of the time the Ark of the Covenant was hidden from the children of Israel in the Tabernacle, the Tent of Meeting and also later in the Temple in the most Holy of Holies.

When Jesus died on the cross the veil in the temple was torn in two. This was telling us that we now have access to a holy God because of the sacrifice of Jesus and the presenting of His blood on the mercy seat that now seems to be in the presence of God

in heaven. The Bible tells us that these Old Testament examples are a shadow of the reality of Christ fulfilling the Old Covenant and bringing to us a New Covenant. We are so used to Scriptures that refer to us as children of God, terms like Abba Father that actually mean that God is now our Daddy. We are so familiar with these kind of passages that we have lost the awesomeness of God's holiness. Although God indeed is our Father, and we are His children, He will always be God and we will always be His creatures.

We can learn much from reading the Old Testament of the awesomeness and Holiness of the God we serve. And may we always bow before his footstool or ottoman and bow before Him and cry holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty (Psalm 99:5 KJV). I am going to end this little teaching as I began, by saying it is time to go from information to application. And the whole point of application is that we might glorify our Father in heaven through the good works that He has ordained that we should walk in (Matthew 5:16, Ephesians 2:10 KJV). It is not a time to glorify your denomination, pastor, or your favorite Bible teacher. It is time to have a daily relationship with God our Father and with Jesus Christ His only begotten Son.

*“And this is eternal life: that men can know you, the only true God, and men can know Jesus Christ, the One you sent.”* (John 17:3 NCV)

The point that I am trying to get to about information and application is not just doing a bunch of religious things, but drawing from the God that was dwelling with His people in the Ark of the Covenant and drawing from the life of His Son (Galatians 2:20) to express the life of God on this earth. For the Christian life is not only hard to live, but it's impossible to live and can only be lived and manifested by the fruit and manifestation of His Spirit that we can tap into and express by faith (Galatians 5:22-23 KJV).

*“...I still live in my body, but I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave himself to save me.”* (Galatians 2:20b NCV)

## Questions

**1** Read and discuss the building of the Ark of the Covenant.

Exodus 25:10-22, 37:1-9 (NLT)

*“<sup>10</sup>Have the people make an Ark of acacia wood—a sacred chest 45 inches long, 27 inches wide, and 27 inches high. <sup>11</sup>Overlay it inside and outside with pure gold, and run a molding of gold all around it. <sup>12</sup>Cast four gold rings and attach them to its four feet, two rings on each side. <sup>13</sup>Make poles from acacia wood, and overlay them with gold. <sup>14</sup>Insert the poles into the rings at the sides of the Ark to carry it. <sup>15</sup>These carrying poles must stay inside the rings; never remove them. <sup>16</sup>When the Ark is finished, place inside it the stone*

*tablets inscribed with the terms of the covenant, which I will give to you.*

*17‘Then make the Ark’s cover—the place of atonement—from pure gold. It must be 45 inches long and 27 inches wide. 18Then make two cherubim from hammered gold, and place them on the two ends of the atonement cover.*

*19Mold the cherubim on each end of the atonement cover, making it all of one piece of gold. 20The cherubim will face each other and look down on the atonement cover. With their wings spread above it, they will protect it. 21Place inside the Ark the stone tablets inscribed with the terms of the covenant, which I will give to you. Then put the atonement cover on top of the Ark.*

*22I will meet with you there and talk to you from above the atonement cover between the gold cherubim that hover over the Ark of the Covenant. From there I will give you my commands for the people of Israel.*

*1Next Bezalel made the Ark of acacia wood—a sacred chest 45 inches long, 27 inches wide, and 27 inches high. 2He overlaid it inside and outside with pure gold, and he ran a molding of gold all around it. 3He cast four gold rings and attached them to its four feet, two rings on each side. 4Then he made poles from acacia wood and overlaid them with gold. 5He inserted the poles into the rings at the sides of the Ark to carry it. 6Then he made the Ark’s cover—the place of atonement—from pure gold. It was 45 inches long and 27 inches wide. 7He made two cherubim from hammered gold and placed them on the two ends of the atonement cover. 8He molded the cherubim on each end of the atonement cover, making it all of one piece of gold. 9The cherubim faced each other and looked down on the atonement cover. With their wings spread above it, they protected it.”*

*- Exodus 25:10-22, 37:1-9 (NLT)*

**2**

Read and discuss the crossing of the Jordan River. Joshua 3:1-17 (NLT)

*“1Early the next morning Joshua and all the Israelites left Acacia Grove and arrived at the banks of the Jordan River, where they camped before crossing. 2Three days later the Israelite officers went through the camp, 3giving these instructions to the people: ‘When you see the Levitical priests carrying the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord your God, move out from your positions and follow them. 4Since you have never traveled this way before, they will guide you. Stay about half a mile behind them, keeping a clear distance between you and the Ark. Make sure you don’t come any closer.’*

*5Then Joshua told the people, ‘Purify yourselves, for tomorrow the Lord will do great wonders among you.’*

*6In the morning Joshua said to the priests, ‘Lift up the Ark of the Covenant*

*and lead the people across the river.’ And so they started out and went ahead of the people.*

*<sup>7</sup>The Lord told Joshua, ‘Today I will begin to make you a great leader in the eyes of all the Israelites. They will know that I am with you, just as I was with Moses. <sup>8</sup>Give this command to the priests who carry the Ark of the Covenant: “When you reach the banks of the Jordan River, take a few steps into the river and stop there.”’*

*<sup>9</sup>So Joshua told the Israelites, ‘Come and listen to what the Lord your God says. <sup>10</sup>Today you will know that the living God is among you. He will surely drive out the Canaanites, Hittites, Hivites, Perizzites, Girgashites, Amorites, and Jebusites ahead of you. <sup>11</sup>Look, the Ark of the Covenant, which belongs to the Lord of the whole earth, will lead you across the Jordan River! <sup>12</sup>Now choose twelve men from the tribes of Israel, one from each tribe. <sup>13</sup>The priests will carry the Ark of the Lord, the Lord of all the earth. As soon as their feet touch the water, the flow of water will be cut off upstream, and the river will stand up like a wall.’*

*<sup>14</sup>So the people left their camp to cross the Jordan, and the priests who were carrying the Ark of the Covenant went ahead of them. <sup>15</sup>It was the harvest season, and the Jordan was overflowing its banks. But as soon as the feet of the priests who were carrying the Ark touched the water at the river’s edge, <sup>16</sup>the water above that point began backing up a great distance away at a town called Adam, which is near Zarethan. And the water below that point flowed on to the Dead Sea until the riverbed was dry. Then all the people crossed over near the town of Jericho.*

*<sup>17</sup>Meanwhile, the priests who were carrying the Ark of the Lord’s Covenant stood on dry ground in the middle of the riverbed as the people passed by. They waited there until the whole nation of Israel had crossed the Jordan on dry ground.” - Joshua 3:1-17 (NLT)*

**3** Read and discuss the capture of the Ark by the Philistines. 1 Samuel 4:1-22 (NLT)

*<sup>1</sup>And Samuel’s words went out to all the people of Israel.*

*At that time Israel was at war with the Philistines. The Israelite army was camped near Ebenezer, and the Philistines were at Aphek. <sup>2</sup>The Philistines attacked and defeated the army of Israel, killing 4,000 men. <sup>3</sup>After the battle was over, the troops retreated to their camp, and the elders of Israel asked, ‘Why did the Lord allow us to be defeated by the Philistines?’ Then they said, ‘Let’s bring the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord from Shiloh. If we carry it into battle with us, it will save us from our enemies.’*

<sup>4</sup>So they sent men to Shiloh to bring the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord of Heaven's Armies, who is enthroned between the cherubim. Hophni and Phinehas, the sons of Eli, were also there with the Ark of the Covenant of God. <sup>5</sup>When all the Israelites saw the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord coming into the camp, their shout of joy was so loud it made the ground shake!

<sup>6</sup>'What's going on?' the Philistines asked. 'What's all the shouting about in the Hebrew camp?' When they were told it was because the Ark of the Lord had arrived, <sup>7</sup>they panicked. 'The gods have come into their camp!' they cried. 'This is a disaster! We have never had to face anything like this before! <sup>8</sup>Help! Who can save us from these mighty gods of Israel? They are the same gods who destroyed the Egyptians with plagues when Israel was in the wilderness. <sup>9</sup>Fight as never before, Philistines! If you don't, we will become the Hebrews' slaves just as they have been ours! Stand up like men and fight!'

<sup>10</sup>So the Philistines fought desperately, and Israel was defeated again. The slaughter was great; 30,000 Israelite soldiers died that day. The survivors turned and fled to their tents. <sup>11</sup>The Ark of God was captured, and Hophni and Phinehas, the two sons of Eli, were killed.

<sup>12</sup>A man from the tribe of Benjamin ran from the battlefield and arrived at Shiloh later that same day. He had torn his clothes and put dust on his head to show his grief. <sup>13</sup>Eli was waiting beside the road to hear the news of the battle, for his heart trembled for the safety of the Ark of God. When the messenger arrived and told what had happened, an outcry resounded throughout the town.

<sup>14</sup>'What is all the noise about?' Eli asked.

The messenger rushed over to Eli, <sup>15</sup>who was ninety-eight years old and blind. <sup>16</sup>He said to Eli, 'I have just come from the battlefield—I was there this very day.'

'What happened, my son?' Eli demanded.

<sup>17</sup>'Israel has been defeated by the Philistines,' the messenger replied. 'The people have been slaughtered, and your two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, were also killed. And the Ark of God has been captured.'

<sup>18</sup>When the messenger mentioned what had happened to the Ark of God, Eli fell backward from his seat beside the gate. He broke his neck and died, for he was old and overweight. He had been Israel's judge for forty years.

<sup>19</sup>Eli's daughter-in-law, the wife of Phinehas, was pregnant and near her time of delivery. When she heard that the Ark of God had been captured and that her father-in-law and husband were dead, she went into labor and gave birth.

<sup>20</sup>She died in childbirth, but before she passed away the midwives tried to

encourage her. 'Don't be afraid,' they said. 'You have a baby boy!' But she did not answer or pay attention to them.

<sup>21</sup>She named the child Ichabod (which means 'Where is the glory?'), for she said, 'Israel's glory is gone.' She named him this because the Ark of God had been captured and because her father-in-law and husband were dead.

<sup>22</sup>Then she said, 'The glory has departed from Israel, for the Ark of God has been captured.'" - 1 Samuel 4:1-22 (NLT)

**4** Read and discuss Uzzah being struck down by the Lord.

2 Samuel 6:1-8, 1 Chronicles 13 (NLT)

<sup>1</sup>Then David again gathered all the elite troops in Israel, 30,000 in all. <sup>2</sup>He led them to Baalah of Judah to bring back the Ark of God, which bears the name of the Lord of Heaven's Armies, who is enthroned between the cherubim. <sup>3</sup>They placed the Ark of God on a new cart and brought it from Abinadab's house, which was on a hill. Uzzah and Ahio, Abinadab's sons, were guiding the cart <sup>4</sup>that carried the Ark of God. Ahio walked in front of the Ark. <sup>5</sup>David and all the people of Israel were celebrating before the Lord, singing songs and playing all kinds of musical instruments—lyres, harps, tambourines, castanets, and cymbals.

<sup>6</sup>But when they arrived at the threshing floor of Nacon, the oxen stumbled, and Uzzah reached out his hand and steadied the Ark of God. <sup>7</sup>Then the Lord's anger was aroused against Uzzah, and God struck him dead because of this. So Uzzah died right there beside the Ark of God.

<sup>8</sup>David was angry because the Lord's anger had burst out against Uzzah. He named that place Perez-uzzah (which means 'to burst out against Uzzah'), as it is still called today." - 2 Samuel 6:1-8 (NLT)

<sup>1</sup>David consulted with all his officials, including the generals and captains of his army. <sup>2</sup>Then he addressed the entire assembly of Israel as follows: 'If you approve and if it is the will of the Lord our God, let us send messages to all the Israelites throughout the land, including the priests and Levites in their towns and pasturelands. Let us invite them to come and join us. <sup>3</sup>It is time to bring back the Ark of our God, for we neglected it during the reign of Saul.' <sup>4</sup>The whole assembly agreed to this, for the people could see it was the right thing to do. <sup>5</sup>So David summoned all Israel, from the Shihor Brook of Egypt in the south all the way to the town of Lebo-hamath in the north, to join in bringing the Ark of God from Kiriath-jearim. <sup>6</sup>Then David and all Israel went to Baalah of Judah (also called Kiriath-jearim) to bring back the Ark of God, which bears the name of the Lord who is enthroned between the cherubim.

*<sup>7</sup>They placed the Ark of God on a new cart and brought it from Abinadab's house. Uzzah and Ahio were guiding the cart. <sup>8</sup>David and all Israel were celebrating before God with all their might, singing songs and playing all kinds of musical instruments—lyres, harps, tambourines, cymbals, and trumpets. <sup>9</sup>But when they arrived at the threshing floor of Nacon, the oxen stumbled, and Uzzah reached out his hand to steady the Ark. <sup>10</sup>Then the Lord's anger was aroused against Uzzah, and he struck him dead because he had laid his hand on the Ark. So Uzzah died there in the presence of God. <sup>11</sup>David was angry because the Lord's anger had burst out against Uzzah. He named that place Perez-uzzah (which means 'to burst out against Uzzah'), as it is still called today. David was now afraid of God, and he asked, 'How can I ever bring the Ark of God back into my care?' <sup>13</sup>So David did not move the Ark into the City of David. Instead, he took it to the house of Obed-edom of Gath. <sup>14</sup>The Ark of God remained there in Obed-edom's house for three months, and the Lord blessed the household of Obed-edom and everything he owned." - 1 Chronicles 13 (NLT)*

**5** Read and discuss Hebrews 9:11-14 (NLT).

*<sup>11</sup>So Christ has now become the High Priest over all the good things that have come. He has entered that greater, more perfect Tabernacle in heaven, which was not made by human hands and is not part of this created world. <sup>12</sup>With his own blood—not the blood of goats and calves—he entered the Most Holy Place once for all time and secured our redemption forever. <sup>13</sup>Under the old system, the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer could cleanse people's bodies from ceremonial impurity. <sup>14</sup>Just think how much more the blood of Christ will purify our consciences from sinful deeds so that we can worship the living God. For by the power of the eternal Spirit, Christ offered himself to God as a perfect sacrifice for our sins." - Hebrews 9:11-14 (NLT)*

**We want to hear from you!**

We would love to hear your feedback on these lessons and how you use them in your own study or in discipling others. If you have any thoughts, stories, testimonies, comments, or questions we would love to hear them!

**[delessons.org/contact](http://delessons.org/contact)**

DKM  
10065 Sun Ridge Circle  
Rogers, AR 72756 U.S.A.  
[delessons.org](http://delessons.org)