

Join us for Storytime



The ark of God was an important symbol in the lives of God's people. Not only was the ark the original container for the Ten Commandments, it symbolized God's presence with His people.

God gave Moses instructions for creating the ark. It was made of acacia wood and overlaid with pure gold. God forbade anyone from touching the ark, so it was carried by two poles. God would speak to Moses from between two golden cherubim on top of the ark, which was called the mercy seat.

During the time of the judges, the Philistines were a near-constant threat to Israel. Under Samuel's leadership, the Israelites went out to fight the Philistines. But Israel was defeated because of their sin.

The elders of Israel realized that God had allowed their defeat. He hadn't fought for them against the Philistines. So they did what seemed logical to them; they took the ark—the symbol of God's presence—and carried it to the battlefield. But the ark was not a good luck charm. Not only was Israel defeated, the Philistines captured the ark and killed Eli's sons. When Eli heard the news, he fell over and died.

Having won the victory, the Philistines concluded that their god, Dagon, was better than the God of Israel. They moved the ark to Dagon's temple, where God showed His power over Dagon. As the ark moved between Philistine cities, God afflicted the people and made them sick. The message was clear: No one is like the LORD. God is greater than everything and everyone.

The Philistines returned the ark, which was a great encouragement to God's people. The ark of God reminded the Israelites that God was with them. Years later, God gave His people something greater than a sign that He was with them; God gave them His Son Jesus—God in the flesh. One of Jesus' names is Immanuel, which means "God with us."

