



THE SACRED ARK OF THE COVENANT

[PART 2]

Reading: *Joshua 3:1 - 6 & 14 - 17*

- **Introduction**
- During their year stay at the base of Mount Sinai God gives Moses the blueprint for '*the tabernacle*' in the wilderness.
- This tabernacle was a portable worship centre.
- Included were the plans for 6 pieces of furniture, one of which was '*the ark of the covenant*'
- It was on the lid/covering where Jehovah said He would meet with His people and be in their midst.
- The Ark is a type of the Lord Jesus.
- NB. Everything the Ark was to the Israelites in the OT the Lord Jesus is to His people today.
- The chest proper and its contents speak of Christ's unique PERSON.
- The mercy seat speaks of His unique WORK.

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Whitewell Metropolitan Tabernacle 837-869 Shore Road Belfast BT15 4HS
Tel: 028 9077 7074 Email: info@whitewell.church
www.whitewell.church

1 The Mercy Seat

- The mercy seat with its cherubim was made of pure gold.
- The measurements of its length and width were given but not the measurement of its height. Why?
- On the day of Atonement, [Leviticus 16] the high priest poured sacrificial blood on the mercy seat for sin.
- NB. Mercy could not flow out to man until blood was offered at the mercy seat.
- Christ's blood shed makes mercy and pardon available to the sinner.
- The blood appeases the wrath of God directed to us for our sin.
- The Greek word for '*mercy seat*' is '*hilasterion*.'
- The tax collector in the parable prays, '*God be (hilasterion) 'mercy seated' to me.*'
- '*God be merciful to me on account of the blood on the mercy seat.*'

2 The Ark At The River Jordan

- Israel arrive on the eastern side of the swollen river Jordan.
- Jericho is some 5 miles away.
- How are Israel with their livestock to cross this swollen river?
- NB. Note the call to '*sanctify*' themselves first.
- The Ark was to go ahead of them by a distance of 2000 cubits. Interesting?
- Once the soles of the feet of the priests bearing the ark touched the water it was miraculously held back as though by an invisible dam.
- They cross over and the water flowed again once the Ark was on the opposite bank. [Joshua 4:18].

3 The Ark At The Fall Of Jericho

- As Israel approached Jericho, the city went into '*lockdown*.'
- How would they conquer such a formidable city?
- The people would walk in silence around Jericho for 7 days.
- The ark carried by the priests and a 7 further priests blowing rams horns.
- On day 7 they would make 7 circuits and then shout and the walls collapsed. (See Joshua 6).
- It is not the ark that is powerful but the God who sits on the ark as His throne who is powerful.

4 The Ark In The Wrong Hands

- When the curtain lifts to open [1 Samuel] the Ark is located at Shiloh and Eli is high priest along with his wicked sons.
- Those who bear the vessels of the Lord must themselves be clean. [Isaiah 52:11].
- Wicked men carried the Ark into battle and were killed and the Ark captured by the Philistines. [See 1 Samuel 4:10 - 11].
- The God of the Ark took out Eli and his family that day.
- His daughter-in-law gave birth and prophetically called the child '*Ichabod*.'
- The glory has gone!
- The glory has gone from today's church for its sinfulness.
- Man's laws cannot make '*moral*' what God has declared immoral.
- The Philistines put the Ark as a trophy in the temple of their god '*Dagon*.'
- Dagon fell before the Ark and the Philistines were struck with tumours. [See 1 Samuel 5].
- NB. It's not the Ark of the covenant that's important; it's the God of the Ark.
- How great and holy is our God.