

HABITATIONS OF PRAISE

“Arise, O Lord!”

Num 10:35-36 NIV

35 Whenever the ark set out, Moses said, "Rise up, O LORD! May your enemies be scattered; may your foes flee before you."

36 Whenever it came to rest, he said, "Return, O LORD, to the countless thousands of Israel."

As we discussed in the last message, the ark of the covenant was synonymous with the presence of God in the mindset of Israel. This identification of the Presence with the ark was instituted by God, who said he would meet with His people, “above the mercy seat, between the two cherubim.” (Ex. 25:21) This identification was not lost by Israel. The same language is used by King Solomon when he moved the ark into the Temple.

2 Chron 6:41

41 "Now arise, O LORD God, and come to your resting place, you and the ark of your might. May your priests, O LORD God, be clothed with salvation, may your saints rejoice in your goodness. NIV

But as we saw in our last study, the ark of God went into captivity. What happened to the ark and those around it as the Lord moved to a new dwelling place? Before we examine that, we need to understand that the physical ark was just a representation of the actual ark, the Lord Jesus Christ.

John 1:14

14 The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth. NIV

Rev 11:19

19 Then God's temple in heaven was opened, and within his temple was seen the ark of his covenant. And there came flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder, an earthquake and a great hailstorm. NIV

Even as the ark went into captivity and the glory left Israel, so the Lord Jesus was arrested when Israel rejected the glory of God in their midst. The history of the ark was prophetic of the Lord Jesus. As with the ark of the covenant, so with the Lord Jesus. People everywhere must decide what they will do with Him.

1) Ashdod – Stronghold (from the passive sense of the name)

1 Sam 5:1-4

1 After the Philistines had captured the ark of God, they took it from Ebenezer to Ashdod.

2 Then they carried the ark into Dagon's temple and set it beside Dagon.

3 When the people of Ashdod rose early the next day, there was Dagon, fallen on his face on the ground before the ark of the LORD! They took Dagon and put him back in his place.

4 But the following morning when they rose, there was Dagon, fallen on his face on the ground before the ark of the LORD! His head and hands had been broken off and were lying on the threshold; only his body remained. NIV [*the fish part was separated from the human part*]

John 18:3-6

3 So Judas came to the grove, guiding a detachment of soldiers and some officials from the chief priests and Pharisees. They were carrying torches, lanterns and weapons.

4 Jesus, knowing all that was going to happen to him, went out and asked them, "Who is it you want?"

5 "Jesus of Nazareth," they replied. "I am he," Jesus said. (And Judas the traitor was standing there with them.)

6 When Jesus said, "I am he," they drew back and fell to the ground. NIV

All principalities and authorities and peoples must bow down before the Lord, either willingly or by force!

Phil 2:9-11

9 Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name,

10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

11 and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. NIV

2 Cor 10:3-5

3 For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does.

4 The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds.

5 We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ. NIV

1 Sam 5:6-8

6 The LORD's hand was heavy upon the people of Ashdod and its vicinity; he brought devastation upon them and afflicted them with tumors.

7 When the men of Ashdod saw what was happening, they said, "The ark of the god of Israel must not stay here with us, because his hand is heavy upon us and upon Dagon our god."

8 So they called together all the rulers of the Philistines and asked them, "What shall we do with the ark of the god of Israel?" NIV

Matt 27:22

22 "What shall I do, then, with Jesus who is called Christ?" Pilate asked. They all answered, "Crucify him!" NIV

ASHDOD

In New Testament times, Ashdod was renamed AZOTUS. Philip the evangelist preached in all the cities from Azotus to Caesarea (Acts 8:40). (from Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary, Copyright (c)1986, Thomas Nelson Publishers)

Acts 8:40

40 Philip, however, appeared at Azotus and traveled about, preaching the gospel in all the towns until he reached Caesarea. NIV

2) Gath - Winepress

1 Sam 5:8-9 NIV

8 So they called together all the rulers of the Philistines and asked them, "What shall we do with the ark of the god of Israel?" They answered, "Have the ark of the god of Israel moved to Gath." So they moved the ark of the God of Israel.

9 But after they had moved it, the LORD's hand was against that city, throwing it into a great panic. He afflicted the people of the city, both young and old, with an outbreak of tumors.

This is only the second mention in Scripture of Gath. The first is in Joshua 11:22.

Josh 11:22

No Anakites were left in Israelite territory; only in Gaza, Gath and Ashdod did any survive. NIV

We are all aware of the Anakite champion that came out of Gath, a giant by the name of Goliath who was slain by David. Gath means wine press. As the ark went to the wine press, so the Lord went to the olive press.

Matt 26:36-39

36 Then Jesus went with his disciples to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to them, "Sit here while I go over there and pray."

37 He took Peter and the two sons of Zebedee along with him, and he began to be sorrowful and troubled.

38 Then he said to them, "My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with me."

39 Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, "My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will." NIV

Luke 22:44

44 And being in anguish, he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground. NIV

Isa 53:10

10 Yet it was the LORD's will to crush him and cause him to suffer, and though the LORD makes his life a guilt offering, he will see his offspring and prolong his days, and the will of the LORD will prosper in his hand. NIV

As He was crushed for our cleansing and anointing, so he will crush all those who oppose God in open rebellion.

Rev 19:13-16

13 He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God.

14 The armies of heaven were following him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean.

15 Out of his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. "He will rule them with an iron scepter." He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty.
16 On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS. NIV

3) Ekron – firm rooted, uprooted, and barren

1 Sam 5:10-12

10 So they sent the ark of God to Ekron. As the ark of God was entering Ekron, the people of Ekron cried out, "They have brought the ark of the god of Israel around to us to kill us and our people."

11 So they called together all the rulers of the Philistines and said, "Send the ark of the god of Israel away; let it go back to its own place, or it will kill us and our people." For death had filled the city with panic; God's hand was very heavy upon it.

12 Those who did not die were afflicted with tumors, and the outcry of the city went up to heaven. NIV

Definitions of Ekron-

Ekron = "emigration" or "torn up by the roots" [Brown Driver & Briggs]

Ekron = "barren place" [Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary]

EKRON

Zeph 2:4 plays on her name, 'Ekron tee'akeer," the firm-rooted one shall be rooted up."
(from Fausset's Bible Dictionary, Electronic Database Copyright (c)1998 by Biblesoft)

Zeph 2:4

"Ekron, deep-rooting"(NOTE: It seems to me most probable that the origin of the meanings is preserved in the Chaldee "root," (which itself is the source of other metaphor meanings as, "the root of a thing;" "the root" that is, the foundation "of faith," its fundamental doctrines; "the root," in Lexicography, see Buxtorf), and that the Chaldee, pluck up remove," and here and Eccl 3:2, is a denominative. The proper name is older probably than even Moses), shall "Teaker, be uprooted;" the "Cherethites" (cutters off) shall become (Chereth) "diggings;"
(from Barnes' Notes, Electronic Database. Copyright (c) 1997 by Biblesoft)

Zeph 2:4

Ekron shall be rooted up-Ekron teeakeer. "Ekron," probably meaning the firm rooting, "shall be rooted up." (from Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown Commentary, Electronic Database. Copyright (c) 1997 by Biblesoft)

All these meanings, "firmly rooted", "uprooted", and "barren" are prophetic of Jesus.

Root-

Isa 11:10

10 In that day the Root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the peoples; the nations will rally to him, and his place of rest will be glorious. NIV

Uprooted-

Isa 53:1-6

- 1 Who has believed our message and to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?
- 2 He grew up before him like a tender shoot, and like a root out of dry ground. He had no beauty or majesty to attract us to him, nothing in his appearance that we should desire him.
- 3 He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering. Like one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not.
- 4 Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted.
- 5 But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed.
- 6 We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all. NIV

Barren-

Isa 53:8 NIV

- 8 By oppression and judgment he was taken away. And who can speak of his descendants? For he was cut off from the land of the living; for the transgression of my people he was stricken.

Isa 56:3b-5

- 3 And let not any eunuch complain, "I am only a dry tree."
- 4 For this is what the LORD says: "To the eunuchs who keep my Sabbaths, who choose what pleases me and hold fast to my covenant--
- 5 to them I will give within my temple and its walls a memorial and a name better than sons and daughters; I will give them an everlasting name that will not be cut off. NIV

Heb 2:13

- 13 And again, "I will put my trust in him." And again he says, "Here am I, and the children God has given me." NIV

Firmly rooted-

Rev 5:5

- 5 Then one of the elders said to me, "Do not weep! See, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has triumphed. He is able to open the scroll and its seven seals." NIV

The Ark's Return to Israel-

4)Beth-Shemesh – house of the Sun

Explain the following in narrative form:

1 Sam 6:1-11

- 1 When the ark of the LORD had been in Philistine territory seven months,
- 2 the Philistines called for the priests and the diviners and said, "What shall we do with the ark of the LORD? Tell us how we should send it back to its place."
- 3 They answered, "If you return the ark of the god of Israel, do not send it away empty, but by all means send a guilt offering to him. Then you will be healed, and you will know why his hand has not been lifted from you."

- 4 The Philistines asked, "What guilt offering should we send to him?" They replied, "Five gold tumors and five gold rats, according to the number of the Philistine rulers, because the same plague has struck both you and your rulers.
- 5 Make models of the tumors and of the rats that are destroying the country, and pay honor to Israel's god. Perhaps he will lift his hand from you and your gods and your land.
- 6 Why do you harden your hearts as the Egyptians and Pharaoh did? When he treated them harshly, did they not send the Israelites out so they could go on their way?
- 7 "Now then, get a new cart ready, with two cows that have calved and have never been yoked. Hitch the cows to the cart, but take their calves away and pen them up.
- 8 Take the ark of the LORD and put it on the cart, and in a chest beside it put the gold objects you are sending back to him as a guilt offering. Send it on its way,
- 9 but keep watching it. If it goes up to its own territory, toward Beth Shemesh, then the LORD has brought this great disaster on us. But if it does not, then we will know that it was not his hand that struck us and that it happened to us by chance."
- 10 So they did this. They took two such cows and hitched them to the cart and penned up their calves.
- 11 They placed the ark of the LORD on the cart and along with it the chest containing the gold rats and the models of the tumors. NIV

1 Sam 6:12-15

- 12 Then the cows went straight up toward Beth Shemesh, keeping on the road and lowing all the way; they did not turn to the right or to the left. The rulers of the Philistines followed them as far as the border of Beth Shemesh.
- 13 Now the people of Beth Shemesh were harvesting their wheat in the valley, and when they looked up and saw the ark, they rejoiced at the sight.
- 14 The cart came to the field of Joshua of Beth Shemesh, and there it stopped beside a large rock. The people chopped up the wood of the cart and sacrificed the cows as a burnt offering to the LORD.
- 15 The Levites took down the ark of the LORD, together with the chest containing the gold objects, and placed them on the large rock. On that day the people of Beth Shemesh offered burnt offerings and made sacrifices to the LORD. NIV

Note in verse 13 that they saw the ark and rejoiced at the sight. This causes me to believe that the ark was uncovered for it was easily recognizable. The cart stops in the field of Joshua (Hebrew of Jesus, "the Lord is salvation"). The people appropriately make a sacrifice to the Lord and the Levites handle the ark.

Beth-Shemesh is house of the sun. The Lord Jesus is connected to the sun in Scripture (he is the light of the world) and Israel is his house. This was the ark's return to the land of Israel.

Ps 19:4-6

- 4 Their voice goes out into all the earth, their words to the ends of the world. In the heavens he has pitched a tent for the sun,
- 5 which is like a bridegroom coming forth from his pavilion, like a champion rejoicing to run his course.
- 6 It rises at one end of the heavens and makes its circuit to the other; nothing is hidden from its heat. NIV

Ps 72:1, 5, 17

1 Endow the king with your justice, O God, the royal son with your righteousness.

5 He will endure as long as the sun, as long as the moon, through all generations.

17 May his name endure forever; may it continue as long as the sun. All nations will be blessed through him, and they will call him blessed. NIV

Ps 84:11

11 For the LORD God is a sun and shield; the LORD bestows favor and honor; no good thing does he withhold from those whose walk is blameless. NIV

Ps 89:35-37

35 Once for all, I have sworn by my holiness-- and I will not lie to David--

36 that his line will continue forever and his throne endure before me like the sun;

37 it will be established forever like the moon, the faithful witness in the sky." Selah NIV

Mal 4:2

2 But for you who revere my name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its wings.

And you will go out and leap like calves released from the stall. NIV

Matthew Henry Commentary-

Mal 4:1-3

But by the Sun of righteousness here we are certainly to understand Jesus Christ, who would undertake to secure the believing remnant, in the day of the general destruction of the Jews, from falling with the rest, and to comfort them in that day of distress and perplexity with his consolations; he directed those that were in Judea to flee to the mountains (Matt 24:16), and they did so, and were all safe and easy in Pella. But it is to be applied more generally,

(1.) To the coming of Christ in the flesh to seek and save those that were lost; then the Sun of righteousness arose upon this dark world. Christ is the light of the world, the true light, the great light that makes day and rules the day (John 8:12), as the sun. He is the light of men (John 1:4), is to men's souls as the sun is to the visible world, which without the sun would be a dungeon; so would mankind be darkness itself without the light of the glory of God shining in the face of Christ. Christ is the Sun that has light in himself, and is the fountain of light (Ps 19:4-6); he is the Sun of righteousness, for he is himself a righteous Saviour. Righteousness is both the light and the heat of this Sun; the word of his righteousness is so; it guides, instructs, and quickens; so is the everlasting righteousness he has brought in. He is made of God to us righteousness; he is the Lord our righteousness, and therefore is fitly called the Sun of righteousness. Through him we are justified and sanctified, and so are brought to see light. This Sun of righteousness, in the fulness of time, arose upon the world, and with him light came into the world (John 3:19), a great light, Matt 4:16. In him the day-spring from on high visited us, to give light to those that sit in darkness, Luke 1:78-79. Righteousness sometimes signifies mercy or benignity, and it was in Christ that the tender mercy of our God visited us. (from Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible: New Modern Edition, Electronic Database. Copyright (c) 1991 by Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.)

1 Sam 6:19-20

19 But God struck down some of the men of Beth Shemesh, putting seventy of them to death because they had looked into the ark of the LORD. The people mourned because of the heavy blow the LORD had dealt them,

20 and the men of Beth Shemesh asked, "Who can stand in the presence of the LORD, this holy God? To whom will the ark go up from here?" NIV

Note that the men of Beth Shemesh presumptuously removed the mercy seat to look into the ark of the covenant. Seventy of them died. (In Biblical manuscripts, some corruption of numbers have occurred, such as here. It is highly improbable that a small village could employ 50,070 men during their wheat harvest.) Jesus, the ark of God, was examined by the Sanhedrin who treated him with contempt and presumption.

When the people experienced the demands and power of a holy God, they sought to send him away.

Matt 8:32-34

32 He said to them, "Go!" So they came out and went into the pigs, and the whole herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and died in the water.

33 Those tending the pigs ran off, went into the town and reported all this, including what had happened to the demon-possessed men.

34 Then the whole town went out to meet Jesus. And when they saw him, they pleaded with him to leave their region. NIV

5) Kirjath-jearim – “city of forests”

1 Sam 6:21-7:1 NIV

21 Then they sent messengers to the people of Kiriath Jearim, saying, "The Philistines have returned the ark of the LORD. Come down and take it up to your place."

7:1 So the men of Kiriath Jearim came and took up the ark of the LORD. They took it to Abinadab's house on the hill and consecrated Eleazar his son to guard the ark of the LORD.

Brown-Drivers-Briggs definitions-

Kirjath-jearim = "city of forests"

a city on the northern boundary of Judah and on the western and southern boundaries of Benjamin; see also `Kirjath-Baal' and `Baalah'

Baalah = "mistress"

1) another name for Kirjath-jearim or Kirjath-baal; modern Kuriet el Enab

1) a town in the south of Judah, also called Balah and Bilhah

1 Sam. 7:2 Amplified Bible

And the ark remained in Kiriath-jearim a very long time [nearly 100 years, through Samuel's entire judgeship, Saul's reign, and well into David's]. For it was twenty years before all the house of Israel lamented after the Lord.

[NOTE: The significance of this resting place in Judah could be the Solomon's Palace (the Palace of the Forest of Lebanon) or that the ark came out of the forest as a Branch comes from a tree. But we will stick with its association with Bethlehem.]

Ps 132:1-9

1 A song of ascents.

O LORD, remember David and all the hardships he endured.

2 He swore an oath to the LORD and made a vow to the Mighty One of Jacob:

3 "I will not enter my house or go to my bed--

4 I will allow no sleep to my eyes, no slumber to my eyelids,

5 till I find a place for the LORD, a dwelling for the Mighty One of Jacob."

6 We heard it in Ephrathah, we came upon it in the fields of Jaar:

7 "Let us go to his dwelling place; let us worship at his footstool--

8 arise, O LORD, and come to your resting place, you and the ark of your might.

9 May your priests be clothed with righteousness; may your saints sing for joy." NIV

Mic 5:2

2 "But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times." NIV

Luke 2:8-20

8 And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night.

9 An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified.

10 But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people.

11 Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord.

12 This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

13 Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,

14 "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests."

15 When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about."

16 So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger.

17 When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child,

18 and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them.

19 But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart.

20 The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told. NIV

6) Gibeah – "hill"

1 Sam 14:2-3, 19-20 – this is a parenthetical time, if you will. Saul was employing the ark as a superstitious religious object. Distracted by the senses while in battle with the Philistines, he

could not wait for the word of the Lord. The ark was at Kiriath-jeraim when David went to retrieve it.

After David had become king over all Israel and had captured Jerusalem, he led 30,000 chosen men to retrieve the ark from the house of Abinadab. We will examine his transfer of the ark to the tabernacle he pitched for it in our next study. For now, let us quickly review what we have learned.

- 1) Ashdod – “stronghold”, When the Lord comes in, all false gods must be cast down. Jesus is mighty to pull down the strongholds in our lives.
- 2) Gath – “winepress”, Jesus went to the oilpress and sweat blood. Because of His crushing, we can receive His anointing. In the end, he will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God.
- 3) Ekron – “firmly rooted, uprooted, barren” – The Lord Jesus is the Root of David. Though it appeared that he was uprooted and barren, he became firmly planted and we are the fruit of His vine. He causes both the barren woman and the eunuch to be fruitful.
- 4) Beth Shemesh – “house of the sun” - Jesus is the Sun of Righteousness who brings healing in His wings. Even so, we are not to approach him in presumption.
- 5) Kiriath-jeraim – “let us go to his dwelling place, let us worship at his footstool.” Ps. 132:7

Let us break down every stronghold, receive His anointing of the Holy Spirit, be fruitful and fully rooted as we reverently seek the Sun of Righteousness in His dwelling place and worship at his footstool!

Ps 132:8-9

8 Arise, O LORD, and come to your resting place, you and the ark of your might.

9 May your priests be clothed with righteousness; may your saints sing for joy." NIV

Amen!