

Scary Words 1 – Ichabod: The Glory has Departed

Scary Words Bumper Video

Welcome to Redemption Church in Plano Tx. I am happy to see everyone here. I am also happy for everyone tuning into our podcasts, livestream, and youtube videos. God bless you all.

You know it is October in Plano Tx when...
The Texas Rangers baseball season ends...
and

The temperature drops below 100
degrees and everyone says wow...

The Dallas Cowboys have a quarterback
controversy...

And it must be October when
Redemption Church starts a spooky

sermon series.

Welcome to our brand-new Spooky
Sermon Series – Scary Words

Scary Words

We have a great tradition of spooky series. We have talked about monsters like the blob, vampires, and zombies, as well as Biblical horror stories, costumes, fear, and darkness.

I am excited to present to you the scariest words in your Bible.

There are scary stories in your Bible.

There are scary themes in Scripture.

This month we are going to go cover to cover to bring you the scariest words from God's Word.

I want you to join us for every installment of this interesting and challenging series.

Before we jump into today's word, I want to know what you think.

What is the scariest word in the Bible? Text us – 214-856-0550

This is our anonymous text line, and you can ask us anything about life, Jesus, or Redemption Church. Please text me what you think is the scariest word in your Bible.

Today we are going to be looking at an often-overlooked story in 1 Samuel 4.

Some context to the story...

Israel – the people of God

Philistines – enemies of Israel

Eli – The High Priest of Israel

**Ark of the Covenant – the
manifest presence of God**

1 Samuel 4:1-17 (NIV) 1 Now the Israelites went out to fight against the Philistines. The Israelites camped at Ebenezer, and the Philistines at Aphek. 2 The Philistines deployed their forces to meet Israel, and as the battle spread, Israel was defeated by the Philistines, who killed about four thousand of them on the battlefield. 3 When the soldiers returned to camp, the elders of Israel asked, “Why did the Lord bring defeat on us today

before the Philistines? Let us bring the ark of the Lord's covenant from Shiloh, so that he may go with us and save us from the hand of our enemies."

4 So the people sent men to Shiloh, and they brought back the ark of the covenant of the Lord Almighty, who is enthroned between the cherubim. And Eli's two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, were there with the ark of the covenant of God.

5 When the ark of the Lord's covenant came into the camp, all Israel raised such a great shout that the ground shook. 6 Hearing the uproar, the Philistines asked, "What's

all this shouting in the Hebrew camp?”

When they learned that the ark of the Lord had come into the camp, 7 the Philistines were afraid. “A god has[a] come into the camp,” they said. “Oh no! Nothing like this has happened before. 8 We’re doomed! Who will deliver us from the hand of these mighty gods? They are the gods who struck the Egyptians with all kinds of plagues in the wilderness. 9 Be strong, Philistines! Be men, or you will be subject to the Hebrews, as they have been to you. Be men, and fight!”

10 So the Philistines fought, and the Israelites were defeated and every

man fled to his tent. The slaughter was very great; Israel lost thirty thousand foot soldiers. 11 The ark of God was captured, and Eli's two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, died.

12 That same day a Benjamite ran from the battle line and went to Shiloh with his clothes torn and dust on his head. 13 When he arrived, there was Eli sitting on his chair by the side of the road, watching, because his heart feared for the ark of God. When the man entered the town and told what had happened, the whole town sent up a cry.

14 Eli heard the outcry and asked, "What is the meaning of this uproar?"

The man hurried over to Eli, 15 who was ninety-eight years old and whose eyes had failed so that he could not see. 16 He told Eli, “I have just come from the battle line; I fled from it this very day.”

Eli asked, “What happened, my son?”

17 The man who brought the news replied, “Israel fled before the Philistines, and the army has suffered heavy losses. Also your two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, are dead, and the ark of God has been captured.”

Scary Words

We have not yet revealed the scary word for today... but we will soon.

Israel was at war and instead of seeking the will of God, worshipping God, or praying to God, the Israelites decided to march God out like a religious figurehead.

They decided to take the Ark of the Covenant into battle, but God refused to be their lucky rabbits foot that day. We dare not place our hope in religious traditions and relics of the past. We must remember to place our full hope in the Living God.

Bad things happened, and we fast forward to a lone Benjamite surviving the battle and running to see the high priest Eli and give him the bad news.

1 Samuel 4:17 The man who brought the news replied, "Israel fled before the Philistines, and the army has

suffered heavy losses. Also your two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, are dead, and the ark of God has been captured.”

Eli... “the army has suffered heavy losses”
In verse 2 Israel lost 4 thousand soldiers in battle.

In verse 10 Israel loses 30 thousand soldiers in battle.

That is some bad news...

Eli... “Also your 2 sons, the priests Hophni and Phinehas are dead.

Eli your own sons who represent your future lineage and the future of Israel’s priesthood, they are dead.

That is some bad news...

And Eli... “the Ark of God has been captured.”

1 Samuel 4:18 When he mentioned the ark of God, Eli fell backward off his chair by the side of the gate. His neck was broken and he died, for he was an old man, and he was heavy. He had led Israel forty years.

WHEN HE MENTIONED THE ARK...

The news of military defeat and the death of soldiers was really bad news...

The word that his sons had perished was really bad news...

But “WHEN HE MENTIONED THE ARK OF GOD, Eli fell backward off his chair” and died.

While this was happening, something else was occurring...

1 Samuel 4:19 His daughter-in-law, the wife of Phinehas, was pregnant and near the time of delivery. When she heard the news that the ark of God had been captured and that her father-in-law and her husband were dead, she went into labor and gave birth, but was overcome by her labor pains. 20 As she was dying, the women attending her said, "Don't despair; you have given birth to a son." But she did not respond or pay any attention.

21 She named the boy Ichabod, saying, "The Glory has departed from

Israel” —because of the capture of the ark of God and the deaths of her father-in-law and her husband. 22
She said, “The Glory has departed from Israel, for the ark of God has been captured.”

Today I want to teach you one of the scariest words in your Bible.

Ichabod – No Glory

Although Ichabod is used as a name, it has a simple meaning in words. Ichabod means “No Glory” or as the woman said “the Glory has departed from Israel.

The birth of a child is a joyous occasion. The pain of child birth quickly becomes a memory when that mother sees her child and holds that baby in her arms.

But in 1 Samuel 4 there is no joy at this birth. The mother lays dying in despair. The woman attending the birth tried to give her hope... “Don’t despair. You have given birth to a son.” Your family line will continue and you gave your late husband Phinehas an heir.

Verse 20 says that the mother did not respond or pay any attention.

Can you imagine not paying attention to your new born baby?

She named the boy Ichabod, and as she passed from life to death she said...

22 She said, “The Glory has departed from Israel, for the ark of God has been captured.”

Something Worse than Bad News

It was bad news about the loss on the battle field.

It was gut-wrenching news to hear about the loss of sons who were the future of the priesthood.

But there is something worse than bad news.

When Eli heard about the Ark his body gave out and fell to the ground breaking his neck.

The mother of a newborn baby lost her will to live when she heard about the glory of God departing.

I don't know what you think is bad news today, but let me scare you for a moment.

There is something worse than the election not turning out like you hoped.

There is something worse than the economy failing.

There is something worse than a hurricane wiping away all that you own.

There is something worse than losing your job or your marriage.

Whatever you have been facing I want to warn you that there is something worse.

If we lose a battle, we can always train new soldiers and try again... BUT IF GOD'S GLORY IS GONE THEN THERE IS NO NEED TO EVEN TRY ANYMORE.

If we lose some people in the ministry, surely God will send us some new people to do the work... BUT IF GOD'S PRESENCE IS GONE THERE IS NO POINT IN DOING ANYTHING MORE.

If we have to bury a loved one, after a time of mourning and heartache we will understand how our lost loved one wants us to have a happy life... BUT IF GOD IS NO LONGER TO BE FOUND THEN WE WILL ONLY END UP LIKE THE MOTHER WHO DIED IN HER PAIN AND DESPAIR.

Other things may seem more urgent, but God's presence is always more important.

The war with the philistines seemed more urgent...

The rushed hurry off to face the battle of the day seemed more urgent...

The things on your to-do list seem so much more urgent...

BUT NOTHING IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN GOD'S PRESENCE.

The scariest thought I can think is for God to leave me.

If I were to worship God and not feel His presence and love, that would be terrifying.

I don't know what you are in a hurry to rush off to today... but being in God's presence is more important.

God's Gradual Goodbye

Have you ever left a party gradually...?
Have you ever left because it seemed like no one wanted to hang out with you?
Have you taken a few last laps and a few last turn around glances before you left, only to see that no one even noticed you were leaving?

There is a place in scripture where God's glory slowly departs.

In Ezekiel 10:4, the Glory of God moved from the Ark of the Covenant to the thresh-hold of the temple.

God's Glory was resident in the Holy of Holies, but because no one honored His presence, his blessings, and His glory God's glory left the Holy of Holies.

Now God's Glory was standing in an outer room of the temple and there, God waited... God paused, but no one noticed God was leaving.

God moves out of the temple to the outer courtyard, and although there are a lot of people, no one seems to notice that the God of the universe is leaving.

God leaves that courtyard and goes all the way to the gate of the city... The city of Jerusalem... the city God has blessed more than any city on the face of the planet... and yet the people of that city had no idea that God's glory was departing.

God's glory walked out the gate of that city, and as God left the evil Babylonian army marched upon the city.

**It is sad and scary that the
armies arrival had the
attention of the people, but
God's departure went
completely un-noticed.**

Are we aware of God's presence,
blessing, and glory?

Is it possible that God has been saying his
gradual goodbye and you have not even
noticed?

This is a scary thought.

Ichabod – No Glory

She named the child Ichabod because the
Glory of God has departed.

When was the last time you know you were in the glorious presence of God?

As we prepare our hearts to talk to God, I want us to take time to love and honor His presence.

Ichabod is one of the scariest words in the Bible.

musician

The opposite of Ichabod

If Ichabod means God has departed, then whatever is the opposite of Ichabod is something we desperately need.

I won't keep you in suspense, I will tell you that Jesus is the opposite of Ichabod.

Jesus is the Glory of God come to us

The Ark of the Covenant represented the manifest presence of God.

Jesus is God manifest in the flesh. (1 Timothy 3:16)

That glorious shekinah presence of God that was resident behind the veil.

Jesus is the presence of that same Holy God, and His flesh is called the veil. (Hebrews 10:20)

Jesus was born in Bethlehem a few miles south of Jerusalem. When Jesus came into the world, God's glory came into the world.

When Jesus came, glorious hosts of angels came and sang in the night sky "GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST..."

Oh Jesus you are the glorious God.

We cry out for your presence today.