

YOU CAN'T CARRY GOD IN A BOX

1 Samuel 4:1b–22

Imagine carrying a golden box, believing it alone could guarantee your victory. Silly, right? Yet in 1 Samuel 4, Israel treated the ark of the covenant like a divine good-luck charm, hoping to force God's hand and wield his power—and the cost was catastrophic. Thousands died, the priesthood collapsed, and the glory of God departed from their midst. This story isn't just ancient history—it's a warning to us. We can be quick to use God's name, pray the right prayers, check the right boxes, or follow the right rituals, assuming his blessing will automatically follow. Today, we'll see the danger of presumption, the heartbreak of God stepping back, and the hope of his invitation: to pursue him with humility, obedience, and wholehearted trust. The question is urgent: will we seek intimacy with God—or merely use him for utility?

Presumption

4:1–11

Disassociation

4:12–22

Invitation: *Pursue, don't presume!*

- Seek Him First
- Obey Him Fully
- Serve Him Freely