

Lords Supper Text

Mark 14:22-25

As they were eating, he took bread, blessed and broke it, gave it to them, and said, "Take it; this is my body." 23 Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks, he gave it to them, and they all drank from it. 24 He said to them, "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many. 25 Truly I tell you, I will no longer drink of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God."

Series Slide

Thanks to Mickey Mouse...most of you know an 18th century German poem.

If you've seen the movie *Fantasia*, you know the plotline of *the Sorcerer's Apprentice*.

Here's the first lines of Johann Wolfgang von (Goo-Tah) Goethe's poem by that name.

**Good! The sorcerer, my old master
Left me here alone today!
Now his spirits, for a change,
My own wishes shall obey!**

**Having memorized what to say and do,
With my powers of will I can
Do some witching too!
-Johann Wolfgang von Goethe**

Disney version is actually pretty accurate to the original poem.

The Sorcerer leaves the castle and the Apprentice decides its his time to do magic.

So he makes a broom grow arms and walk so it can carry buckets of water downstairs to make a bath for him. And at first, things are going great.

But then the broom doesn't stop when the tub is filled. He keeps dumping water in the tub until he's filling up the whole basement of the Sorcerer's castle.

But the Apprentice isn't strong enough with his magic to stop the broom. Remember... he only memorized what to say and do...he didn't really know HOW to do magic...only how to mimic it.

So, he grabs an axe...and chops up the broom. And for a minute...he thinks he's solved his problem by destroying the broom.

He says ...

Well, a perfect hit!

See how he is split!

Now there's hope for me,

and my breathing again is free!

But things get out of hand, as now the pieces of the broom get up and act as independent new brooms...each bringing more water.

After hacking the broom with an axe, the apprentice has only made the situation worse.

Finally, just before he drowns he calls out to his master...

Lord and master, hear my call!

Ah, here comes the master!

I have need of Thee!

from the spirits that I called

.... Sir, deliver me!

At the end, the master Sorcerer returns and sends the broom back to the closet as the waters recede.

[Pause] In so many ways, this poem represents the way we often handle life.

We start out learning from someone...then, usually before we're ready...we get a god complex and think because we've memorized a few life maxims like "YOLO"...or "Let go and let God"...or "Vegas Baby!" that magically let us live without consequences.

...we think we can do life on our own...with just our wisdom and power.

Then suddenly, we're panicking. We realize the choices we've made have the potential to wreck our lives...things are way out of hand...so we try to fix it.

We pick up the axe and start chopping the broom up. After all, "I'm a strong independent person"...I can handle this..and I'm too ashamed to ask for help.

Typically, whatever solution we cook up on our own...actually ends up making things worse....and...just like the Sorcerer's Apprentice...we wait for the very last minute... when we are about to drown...when we are out of options to say "Lord, hear my call! I need you. DELIVER ME from these spirits I've conjured."

Title Slide- "Conjuring God: How Quick-Fixes Resist Real Salvation"- 1 Samuel 4

You know, That's a pretty crummy relationship with God...

- You pretend to be god.
- You get yourself in trouble

- You try to fix it.
- At the last minute...you cry out for him to help you.
- He bails you out...
-and then you do it all over again.

I just want to tell you...that's not a relationship with God...it's a recipe for insanity.

God wants so much more for you.

Today, we're going to look at 1 Samuel 4. It's another Sorcerer's Apprentice. Except in this one, the Sorcerer doesn't come back. The water rises...and the apprentice dies.

So, it's gonna be a bummer for sure. But, in the sadness- in the larger context of both 1 Samuel and the Bible...we're going to see a great hope...one that I hope will connect with you today.

1 Samuel 4:1-22

Israel went out to meet the Philistines in battle and camped at Ebenezer while the Philistines camped at Aphek.

2 The Philistines lined up in battle formation against Israel, and as the battle intensified, Israel was defeated by the Philistines, who struck down about four thousand men on the battlefield.

3 When the troops returned to the camp, the elders of Israel asked, "Why did the Lord defeat us today before the Philistines? Let's bring the ark of the Lord's covenant from Shiloh. Then it will go with us and save us from our enemies." 4 So the people sent men to Shiloh to bring back the ark of the covenant of the Lord of Armies, who is enthroned between the cherubim. Eli's two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, were there with the ark of the covenant of God. 5 When the ark of the covenant of the Lord entered the camp, all the Israelites raised such a loud shout that the ground shook.

6 The Philistines heard the sound of the war cry and asked, "What's this loud shout in the Hebrews' camp?" When the Philistines discovered that the ark of the Lord had entered the camp, 7 they panicked. "A god has entered their camp!" they said. "Woe to us! Nothing like this has happened before. 8 Woe to us! Who will rescue us from these magnificent gods? These are the gods that slaughtered the Egyptians with all kinds of plagues in the wilderness. 9 Show some courage and be men, Philistines! Otherwise, you'll serve the Hebrews just as they served you. Now be men and fight!"

10 So the Philistines fought, and Israel was defeated, and each man fled to his tent. The slaughter was severe — thirty thousand of the Israelite foot soldiers fell. 11 The ark of God was captured, and Eli's two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, died.

12 That same day, a Benjaminite man ran from the battle and came to Shiloh. His clothes were torn, and there was dirt on his head. 13 When he arrived, there was Eli sitting on his chair beside the road waiting, because he was anxious about the ark of God. When the man entered the city to give a report, the entire city cried out.

14 Eli heard the outcry and asked, "Why this commotion? " The man quickly came and reported to Eli. 15 At that time Eli was ninety-eight years old, and his eyes didn't move because he couldn't see.

16 The man said to Eli, "I'm the one who came from the battle. I fled from there today."

"What happened, my son? " Eli asked.

17 The messenger answered, "Israel has fled from the Philistines, and also there was a great slaughter among the people. Your two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, are both dead, and the ark of God has been captured." 18 When he mentioned the ark of God, Eli fell backward off the chair by the city gate, and since he was old and heavy, his neck broke and he died. Eli had judged Israel forty years.

19 Eli's daughter-in-law, the wife of Phinehas, was pregnant and about to give birth. When she heard the news about the capture of God's ark and the deaths of her father-in-law and her husband, she collapsed and gave birth because her labor pains came on her. 20 As she was dying, the women taking care of her said, "Don't be afraid. You've given birth to a son! " But she did not respond or pay attention. 21 She named the boy Ichabod, saying, "The glory has departed from Israel," referring to the capture of the ark of God and to the deaths of her father-in-law and her husband. 22 "The glory has departed from Israel," she said, "because the ark of God has been captured."

Transition:

Today- I want show you what happens when you try to conjure up God's solution... without God. And if you're in the middle of the difficult...or the mess you've already made by providing your own quick fix...I hope you see that its not too late today to call out to God...and let him save you authentically.

1) God's presence is always the point. Don't settle for quick-fixes that work around Him.

One of the main inhibitors to Spiritual Renewal- to God doing something in your life is a Quick Fix.

Here's what I mean- God often breaks up the status quo in your life in order to have you pay attention to him...to a change he wants you to make. And often, because that

breaking of the status quo is uncomfortable...instead of stopping to look and listen for God...we just try to get our life back on track as quickly as possible.

v 2

When the Israelites lose a battle to the Philistines- its breaking up the status quo. Israel had gotten used to winning battles. God had led them out of Egypt and into Canaan- as the underdog vs nations that typically had them outmanned and out armed...but battle after battle, God miraculously brought them victory.

Suddenly, the victory isn't automatic. And it shakes them up.

v 3

Then there is a pivotal moment. One that I really want you to pay attention to.

The Elders of Israel ask the RIGHT question.

"Why did the LORD defeat us today before the Philistines?"

This is such a great question. They recognize that this is no ordinary loss. It was different. YHWH was behind this. The Philistines didn't defeat us. YHWH was intentionally keeping us from winning this battle.

They ask the sort of reflective question that we all should ask when the status quo is broken.

"Lord, what are you up to?"

When you suddenly lose your job.

When the person you thought you'd be with for the rest of your life disappears overnight.

When the parties that used to energize you fall flat...and you notice how out of control your life is.

When the car accident or health emergency shows you how little control you actually have.

"Lord, what are you up to?" is a really good question.

The thing is...when you ask that question...you need to wait for an answer. And that answer doesn't always...or usually come quickly. It takes days, weeks, months, sometimes of asking. Talking with people that know the LORD. Reading the Bible.

But you have to remain patient and open to listen.

Its that gray zone I talked about last week. The in between. Sometimes it is the waiting that reveals what God is up to and where he is taking you.

Look at the way David puts in in Psalm 27

Psalm 27:13-14

13 I am certain that I will see the Lord's goodness in the land of the living.

**14 Wait for the Lord;
be strong, and let your heart be courageous.
Wait for the Lord.**

Many of the Psalms are either about the agony of waiting on the LORD...or the joy of seeing him faithfully bring you out of the grey zone.

Exactly none of the psalms are about the sitting around in the status quo. None of the Psalms are about enjoying the rat race. The Psalms are about waiting for GOD...or enjoying God's presence.

In fact, in this Psalm- more than David wanting to be delivered from his enemies- he wants to experience God's presence.

Psalms 27:4

**I have asked one thing from the Lord;
it is what I desire:
to dwell in the house of the Lord
all the days of my life,
gazing on the beauty of the Lord
and seeking him in his temple.**

God's presence is the point. Not an easy life. Not keeping the wind and the waves at a minimum. Not winning battles or making money or being comfortable.

The point of life is knowing and being known by God. Is being with him now and forever.

1 Samuel 4:3

Unfortunately, the Elders of Israel miss their opportunity. Instead of waiting on the Lords answer to their question. Instead of pulling Israel back and spending days in prayer and fasting...so that the LORD could bring them to repentance...show them that everyone was just doing what was right in their own eyes...

They don't even pause after they ask the question. They move straight into a quick fix. A magic trick.

The Sorcerer's apprentice is in full effect.

They are used to seeing the Ark of the Covenant bring about their good fortune. They have memorized the magic trick. When the Ark of the Covenant is in the battle with us...they ALWAYS win. When they needed to cross the Jordan river- the Ark went ahead of them and made dry ground.

“Thats what we’ll do. We’ll bring in the Ark. Then we can’t lose!”

The Ark REPRESENTED the presence of the LORD.

But God cannot be manipulated. He doesn’t bow to acts of superstition that say “If I read my bible, or say this prayer, or if I’m really kind to others, or share the gospel...you have to give me what I want.”

No. The point is God’s presence. And when you take things associated with God to try to get things you want while you don’t really care whether or not you know God....well...you can see what happens.

You lose.

v 4

Notice, that this is the only time that Hophni and Phineas, the evil priests who have been serving in the temple and using their power to sleep with women and steal from worshippers at the temple...the only time they are mentioned, or seem to notice or care that the Ark of the Covenant- that represents the presence of the LORD is in their midst every day...is when they can use it for their own fame.

v 5

They bring the Ark from Shiloh into the camp...and its the quick fix everybody is looking for. Hophni and Phineas hear the roar of the crowd and they have got to feel like local heroes. The paparazzi cameras are snapping...they strike a pose on the red carpet leaned up against the Ark, and the ground shakes with the cheers and chants of Israel.

The Ark- which is supposed to remind Israel that the whole point of their existence is to know God and be known by him...

...has become nothing but a magic talisman to be used for their own fame.

Its a magical quick fix- that conjures up the good they want from God...without them having to be with God...and all the repentance and wrestling and changing that requires.

v 10-11

The result. Hophni and Phineas, just as the Lord told Samuel...die. And Israel, like the Sorcerers apprentice trying to save him self by hacking up the broom he conjured...just makes things worse.

Their quick fix...didn't save them.

And the Ark of God...that represented the presence of GOD...was taken from them.

Back to 1)

You might notice that Samuel...who was the way that Israel was hearing from God at all at this point...is conspicuously missing from this chapter.

Because no one is interested in knowing God..or caring about what he says. The Sorcerer is gone...but all we wanted was his magic anyway.

Listen- if you are at a point in your life, where you are hurting...you feel defeated... where you are looking yourself in the mirror wondering how you got here...ask the question 'Lord, what are you up to?' and then seek him. Read Scripture. Pray. Call out to him...like the Sorcerers Apprentice at the end of that poem. Talk to people that know God and live with him. Seek his presence.

Whatever you do...don't go for the quick fix. Don't just try to get out of the uncomfortable or the pain as quickly as possible. And certainly don't try to manipulate God. "I'm going to go to church a lot so GOD has to make my life better."

Those kinds of quick fixes are missing the point entirely. The point is that you know God and that you know how deeply he cares for you and wants a relationship with you.

That will take time. Wait on the LORD.

Don't get so close to repentance...so close to Spiritual Renewal...and then turn to a quick fix.

Wait on the LORD.

2) God's glory comes through slow salvation- not quick-fixes.

At the end of the (Goo-Tah) Goethe's poem, the Sorcerer's apprentice is saved, because he finally realizes that he can't "quick fix" himself out of his mess with more memorized magic.

Look what he says

Lord and master, hear my call!

Ah, here comes the master!
I have need of Thee!
from the spirits that I called
.... Sir, deliver me!

In the poem, the salvation is immediate and easily seen.

Its not always that simple with God.

Because God is not just about bailing us out of tough situations.

Back to 2)

Remember- the whole point of Creation is that God wanted to share himself with us. He didn't need us. He wasn't lonely. He didn't need people to reinforce his ego with worship. None of that is the point.

He wants to share his love. His glory. His beauty...with us because it is in God's deepest nature to overflow. To share. So he created humans in his image...to be like him in that we are made to receive his love and then give it out to others. To overflow love just like he does.

This truth about God is described in Scripture as God's Glory. The thing that sets God apart from his creation. His deepest nature. Glory means "weight".

The Hebrew word for glory is Kabob.

There is another word very similar- kabed- that means heavy...but in a different way.

Kabob or glory...means you are important. Deep. Weighty.

Kabed...means you are heavy in the sense of oppressed, weighed down.

Very similar words..very different meanings.

They are both in this chapter.

The ideas are both in the Sorcerers apprentice poem.

The Sorcerer has Kabob. His presence brings a sense of "ahhh- finally someone who can really handle magic. Who really can deliver me from the mess I've made."

The Apprentice is Kabeb. Heavy, weighed down by the mess he's made from his quick fixes and conjuring.

And both those words show up in 1 Samuel 4. first...

v 12-13

Notice, Eli the priest is anxious. If anyone is like that last line of the Sorcerers Apprentice...its Eli. Eli realizes the mess he has made as the Priestly leader of Israel. He sees the consequences of his sin before his eyes (even though he is blind). And notice...his main concern is not his evil sons...its what happened to the Ark of God.

v 17-18

Then he gets the report that his sons have died and the Ark of God has been captured by the Phillistines- and Eli's reaction... his despair again is not about his sons death... this was a foregone conclusion. He's been told 2x in a prophecy that this would happen.

Instead, his moment of despair happens when he hears the Ark is gone. Because he knows that Gods presence has left Israel.

And look how he is described. Heavy. Weighed down. Kabed. In fact, it is his heavyness that kills him. He falls off his chair and plummets to his death.

v 20-21

Then we end chapter 4 the way the book started. With the birth of a baby boy.

Samuel- was the miraculous birth that brought God's word and his presence back to Israel.

Now- another birth- Phineas wife hears about her husband and father in laws deaths, and hears that the ark of God has been captured...it sends her into labor...where she also dies. (I know- this is a terrible mothers day sermon!)

And with her last breath she names her son I- Kabod. Which you can hear means- Un glory...or opposite of glory. Glory gone!

Think about the Samuel. His name means God has heard.

The last line of the Sorcer's apprentice- is a desperate cry for help. For salvation. "Lord and Master- hear my cry!"

When those who are heavy with their own sin...need the heaviness- the glory- of a savior...there are 2 things needed.

One- a GLORIOUS Lord and Master who hears. Two- The heavy person has to repent...has to realize their weakness and turn away from the sin that got them to that point.

Either Samuel. God hears us.
Or Ichabod- his glory is gone.

Now- look at a prophet that comes later for Israel.

Isaiah 59:1-2

Indeed, the Lord's arm is not too weak to save,
and his ear is not too deaf to hear.

2 But your iniquities are separating you
from your God,
and your sins have hidden his face from you
so that he does not listen.

Isaiah 59:20

20 "The Redeemer will come to Zion,
and to those in Jacob who turn from transgression."
This is the Lord's declaration.

Isaiah 60:1

Arise, shine, for your light has come,
and the glory of the Lord shines over you.

When Mary had a miracle birth in the NEW TESTAMENT- she was told to name the baby "Yeshua or Jesus"- which means "God Saves".

God Hears- Samuel

God Saves- Jesus.

Hebrews 1:1-3

Long ago God spoke to the ancestors by the prophets at different times and in different ways.

2 In these last days, he has spoken to us by his Son. God has appointed him heir of all things and made the universe through him. 3 The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact expression of his nature, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high