

THE ARK OF THE COVENANT

I recently came across a Gospel at mass, an Old Testament story about King David moving the Ark of the Covenant to a special place he'd had prepared. It answered something that had been puzzling me for some time, and I wondered how many people had given what I believed to be a puzzle a great answer.

My problem was related to what I had been taught by the Sisters of Charity at St. Joseph's primary school in West Melton, South Yorkshire, and at the Catholic grammar school De La Salle College in Sheffield. Sadly, both places no longer exist.

In straightforward terms, we'd been told that God had made us a great promise that if we wanted to get to Heaven when we die, then we must obey his Commandments.

I've always believed this without any proof, but the gospel I recently heard was superb proof, even though it seems to have nothing to do with God's great promise.

I've realised for some time that the universe we live in is extremely complex and started with a tremendous outpouring of energy, which scientists call the Big Bang. This resulted in the universe being made up of galaxies, which in turn are made up of Solar Systems and Suns with orbiting planets, moons, and debris. It's a very:

complex yet organised entity governed by universal laws.

When trying to decide how it all came about, logic repeatedly told me that it is such a complex entity that it could not have been created by an accident of cosmic nature or accidentally in any way. The only true answer is that it was created by an extreme intelligence, which I believe is our one true God.

This reasoning brought with it a real problem. I could not believe that such a being would create anything without a purpose, and I continually asked myself what purpose there was in creating the universe. I tried hard to find one but couldn't.

The only answer I could come up with is that maybe:

THE INTRODUCTION OF LIFE GAVE IT A PURPOSE, BUT HOW?

I racked my brain for some time but couldn't come up with a logical or scientific answer. It was only when I looked at the Bible that I found one.

This book was initially written by Moses, a prophet of God who, with guidance from God, made the Egyptian Pharaoh set free the Israelite

slaves. He also wrote about what had happened to the Israelites before this time, which were stories they passed down through time by word of mouth. After Moses, other prophets continued writing the history of the Israelites to the birth of Jesus Christ.

All these writings, even those handed down by word of mouth before Moses, had one important factor. This was God telling people how to conduct their lives if they wanted to be rewarded with a great eternal life after their death.

When Moses was leading the Israelites to the Promised Land, God gave him a list of rules that the people should obey during their daily lives. These were written on tablets of stone by God and are called the Ten Commandments. This was God's covenant with the Israelites. If they obeyed these commandments, they would live with him in Paradise for all eternity when they died.

To the Israelites at that time, these stone tablets were so sacred that God designed equipment for them to be carried in, which was called:

THE ARK OF THE COVENANT.

It was such a sacred container that if people touched it, they immediately died. Only a special sect of the Israelites called the LEVITES could carry the Ark using special poles. To me:

THIS COVENANT WITH GOD GIVES THE CREATION OF THE UNIVERSE A PURPOSE.

I say this because of all life on earth, both animal and plant, only human beings have the intelligence to accept such a covenant. No other life force can understand it.

I was now happy that **life gives existence a purpose**. The story of King David building a truly special place for the safe keeping of the Ark of the Covenant and its contents illustrated to me how these ancient Israelites realised their supreme importance as a covenant with God, made by God. Ask yourself: Do you try to live by this wonderful covenant created by God?