23 Ark (*Archa*)

The ark of the covenant[[1]](#endnote-1) of God which Moses made, Exod. 25[:12], can designate the just man whom God dwells in, or the church militant.

Concerning the first, just as the ark was made from the woods of Setim[[2]](#endnote-2) which are not liable to decay, light, and incombustible, thus the just man ought to be unable to decay against the festering of lustful matters, light against the weight of sins, incombustible against the ardor of the stinking ones, namely, of wrath and envy.

¶ In this ark, according to the Apostle to the Heb. [9:4], were “the rod of Aaron, the tables of the testament, and the manna.” Thus, in person of one well-arranged there ought to be the rod of correction, the rod of your rule.

¶ The tables of edification as far as the intellectual part, Prov. 3[:3]: “Write them in the tables of your heart.” “To him that shall overcome, I will give,” [Apoc.3:21], the hidden manna.

¶ Again, Num. 4[:5]: the ark was commanded to be wrapped in a veil. On the ark was a vein of gold, in an urn was the manna. Through the veil is understood the species of the sacramental body of the Lord, through the ark the body of Christ, through the urn the soul of Christ, through the manna divinity itself. The Philistines feared this ark [1 Kings 4:7, that is, the devils. Wherefore Chrysostom,[[3]](#endnote-3) wherever they saw the blood of the Lord, the demons fled, the angels rushed in.

¶ Second, it is to be understood through this ark the church on account of the aforesaid conditions. Just as the ark was in danger during the time of Eli the priest, because it was captured by the hands of the Philistines, 1 Kings 3[:15]: “For iniquity” of the priests, thus it is concerning the Church, the ones of Azotus [1 Kings 5:7] signify those unjustly occupying the churches which do not send them away, on account of some remorse of conscience until they were gravely punished just as were the Philistines before they sent back the ark. They believed he could escape affliction by carrying around the ark from place to place, but always the affliction remained. Thus some carry around the churches from person to person, from nephew to nephew, Psal. [82:13]: “Let us possess the sanctuary of God for an inheritance,” but finally it went back to the first as if to the safer, according to the name but not the possessor of the fruits according to the thing itself.

Wherefore Valerius Maximus narrates, *De gestis memorabilium,* book 8,[[4]](#endnote-4) that Gaius Livius when he was made consul established a law and among the reasons lest anyone would have more than five hundred acres of land, however he himself would have a thousand. Therefore he provided for himself but by pretending it was a gift he gave the half part to his son Amarchus. However after he was accused by Poplio he was judged guilty. Thus, it is concerning many in the churches who under the name of protection withhold the fruits of the Church.

1. Cf. *Chiose de Dante le quli fece el figliuolo co le sue mani*  Purgatorio (Firenze: G. Carnesecchi, n.d.) Capituloum 10 (2:41):

   lu carro e i boi traendo l’archa sancta,   
   per che si teme officio non comesso.

   Hic dicit autor, quod ista arca sancta fuit archa testamenti federis, quam fecit Moises in significacionem templi, in qua erant precepta legis. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Cf. Albert the Great, *De laudibus B. Mariae* 10.1.2 (p. 248a): Ligna Sethim sunt parua, pulchra, leuis, fortia, imputribilia, incrfemabilia albae spinae similias. https://books.google.com/books?id=sV2-8bSUwbwC&pg=RA1-PA248&lpg=RA1-PA248&dq=imputribilia,+leuia,+et+incremabilia&source=bl&ots=krRn9GfsNn&sig=ACfU3U2PqEs3H7qqccsGYgHezNPJKKDz5w&hl=la&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwi37I7LobTqAhUOW60KHSfvCR8Q6AEwA3oECAYQAQ#v=onepage&q=imputribilia%2C%20leuia%2C%20et%20incremabilia&f=false [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. Cf. (Pseudo-)Chrysostom, *Opus imperfectum in Mattheum* Homilia 19 cap. 7 (PG 56:742): Daemonia enim ejiciunt in nomine Christi, habentes spiritum inimici: magis autem non ejiciunt, sed ejicere videntur, colludentibus sibi daemonibus ipsis; et ideo semper ejiciunt, et numquam sanant. Semper ante illos daemones quasi castigati clamant, et numquam quasi timentes recedunt. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. Valerius Maximus, *Facta et dicta memorabilia* 8.6.3 (LCL 493:220-221): C. uero Licinius Stolo, cuius beneficio plebi petendi consulatus potestas facta est, cum lege sanxisset ne quis amplius quingenta agri iugera possideret, ipse mille conparauit <dis>simulandique criminis gratia dimidiam partem filio emancipauit. quam ob causam a. M. Popilio Laenate accusatus primus sua lege cecidit ac docuit nihil aliud praecipi debere, nisi quod prius quisque sibi imperau<er>it.

   C. Licinius Stolo, thanks to whom plebians were given the right to stand for the Consulship, had put through a law providing that no one should occupy more than five hundred *iugera* of land. He himself acquired a thousand, and to disguise the offence transferred half of it to his son. On that account he was prosecuted by M. Popillius Laenas and became the first to go down under his own law; a lesson that nothing should be prescribed to others which the prescriber has not previously imposed upon himself. [↑](#endnote-ref-4)