

# 1 Samuel 4:21

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And she named the child I-chabod, saying, The glory is departed from Israel: because the ark of God was taken, and because of her father in law and her husband.

## Analysis

The dying woman names her son Ichabod (I-kabod), meaning 'no glory' or 'where is the glory?' Her interpretive statement explains: 'The glory is departed from Israel.' The Hebrew kabod (glory) refers to God's weighty, manifest presence. Her declaration - naming that redefines the disaster - shows remarkable theological insight. She understands that the Ark's capture means more than military defeat or personal loss; it signals the departure of divine presence. Her dying words become prophetic pronouncement.

## Historical Context

Names in ancient Israel often commemorated circumstances of birth or carried prophetic significance. Ichabod's name would perpetually remind Israel of this dark day. The naming function belonged typically to mothers, making this woman's action culturally appropriate.

## Related Passages

**John 15:13** — Greatest form of love

**1 Corinthians 13:4** — Characteristics of love

## Study Questions

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1. What does naming her son 'Ichabod' accomplish theologically?
2. How does this dying woman's theological insight compare to the elders who brought the Ark to battle?

## Interlinear Text

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כְּבָדְלָה אֵלֶּה לְאָמֵר קָבֹד אֵלֶּה וַתַּקְרַב אֵלֶּה  
And she named the child <sup>H7121</sup> <sup>H5288</sup> <sup>H0</sup> Ichabod <sup>H350</sup> saying <sup>H559</sup> is departed <sup>H1540</sup> The glory <sup>H3519</sup>

מִשְׁבָּא לְאֵלֶּה וְאֵלֶּה מִלְקָח אֵר וּמִבְּאֵלה יְמִין אֵלֶּה וְאֵלֶּה  
from Israel <sup>H3478</sup> because <sup>H413</sup> was taken <sup>H3947</sup> the ark <sup>H727</sup> of God <sup>H430</sup> because <sup>H413</sup>

בְּמִימְנָה אִישָׁה  
and because of her father in law <sup>H2524</sup> and her husband <sup>H376</sup>

## Additional Cross-References

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**Psalms 26:8** (Parallel theme): LORD, I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place where thine honour dwelleth.

**Psalms 78:61** (Glory): And delivered his strength into captivity, and his glory into the enemy's hand.

**Jeremiah 2:11** (Glory): Hath a nation changed their gods, which are yet no gods? but my people have changed their glory for that which doth not profit.

**Psalms 78:64** (Word): Their priests fell by the sword; and their widows made no lamentation.

**Hosea 9:12** (Parallel theme): Though they bring up their children, yet will I bereave them, that there shall not be a man left: yea, woe also to them when I depart from them!

**1 Samuel 4:11** (References God): And the ark of God was taken; and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were slain.

**Psalms 106:20** (Glory): Thus they changed their glory into the similitude of an ox that eateth grass.

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