

1st Samuel Chapter 6

V: 1 In 7 short months the Philistines learned a proper fear of the ark, and the God of Israel. It's taken others much longer than that.

- The ark makes it back to the Hebrews during the wheat harvest which is in June / July – which when you back it up 7 months means the ark was taken in December / January.

V: 2 Philistine priests, not Hebrew = diviners, magicians, sorcerers.

- Discerning that there is a need to appease the God of the Israelites, trying to determine basically how they get rid of this thing.

V: 3 It must not go back empty, or empty handed. It must be accompanied by a trespass offering.

V: 4 5 golden hemorrhoids; the previous chapter helps us to understand how they “ended” up there, but we also have the 5 golden mice without much being said in the way of explanation.

V: 5 They are instructed to give glory to the God of Israel, humbling themselves before Him, acknowledging His mighty power over them, admitting that they've trespassed, and seeking His forgiveness.

Psalm 96:3-4 ³Declare His glory among the heathen, His wonders among all people. ⁴For the Lord is great, and greatly to be praised: He is to be feared above all gods.”

- We're seeing the miracle of “un-belief” – the mystery of iniquity at work...

V: 6 Reminder: Don't make the same mistake as Pharaoh / Egyptians.

Psalm 24:8 “Who is this King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle.”

V: 7-9 Make a new cart, get 2 milk cows that have never been yoked, separate them from their calves, and see what happens.

1. Milk cows as opposed to oxen, that have never been yoked, untrained, won't naturally just pull the cart.
2. Being separated from their calves their natural instinct is to find their calves, to go back to their stalls.
3. The fact that they will go against their natural instincts going away from their calves, pulling a cart, and going in the right direction towards Beth Shemesh is all proof that God is guiding not only these two cows, but all the events surrounding their sad circumstances.

V: 10-12 The Philistines placed their trespass offering along side the ark in the new cart and send it off to see what would happen.

- The two cows take off right away and made their own way to Beth Shemesh.
- “lowing as they went” – meaning the cows weren’t too happy, they were going against their will, they wanted their calves – yet they were compelled or driven.

Isaiah 1:3 “The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master’s crib...”

- Beth-Shemesh: beth = house, Beth-Shemesh means “house of the sun.”
- Beth-Shemesh was one of the Levitical cities of Judah (**Joshua 21:16**).
- Beth-Shemesh was the nearest place where the ark could be handled appropriately.

V: 13 They were in the midst of the wheat harvest, June / July.

- Upon seeing the ark, they rejoiced to see it.
- Philistines had slain 34,000 men in a great defeat for the Israelites – they had no real expectation of recovering the ark on their own.

V: 14 The ark, the place where God’s presence dwelt on the “mercy seat” of God.

- The ark containing the “Law” – represented by the stone tablets with the 10 commandments upon them.
- The ark – containing the bowl of manna, representing God’s faithful provision in the wilderness years – and the rod of Aaron which represents the power and sovereignty of God.
- Who did it come to? To Joshua / Latin – Yeshua / Hebrew – Jesus / Greek: God is salvation.
- Where did it go to? To Beth-Shemesh, “the house of the sun / Son”
- Specifically it went to a great stone, to a big rock of sacrifice.

Psalm 62:6-7 “⁶He only is my Rock and my salvation: He is my defense; I shall not be moved. ⁷In God is my salvation and my glory: the rock of my strength, and my refuge, is in God.”

- The cart is cut up and used for fire wood, the cows are given as a sacrifice – a burnt offering or an offering of consecration.

V: 16-18 The five lords of the Philistines follow the ark and see not only that the cows take it right back to the Hebrews – being directed by God, they see it received of the Hebrews with no ill effect – all of which adds up to it was God's hand against them who has now seemingly been appeased.

- The Philistines had increase the number of golden mice to reflect the number of Philistine cities they hoped would be delivered from the plague.

V: 19-20 God smote the men of Beth-Shemesh because they looked in the ark.

- 50, 070 men are killed.
- Why would they want to look into the ark? Possibly to see if the Philistines had taken the contents? (Speculation)
- Understanding that in order to look inside, one has to remove the “mercy” seat – when you separate God's mercy from the law, all we have left is the judgment begotten of the law.

Romans 6:23 “For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord.”

- The Levites should have known better!

V: 21 After their transgression and subsequent slaughter they call for the inhabitants of Kir-jath-jearim (City of forests) to come and get the ark.

- God is not a respecter of persons, He is Holy and awesome in power beyond our ability to comprehend. We don't decide or determine how things are done or what is acceptable in His sight – He does.

1st Samuel Chapter 7

V: 1-2 The men of Kir-jath-jearim came and got the ark, they either already knew or learned from Beth-Shemeshites not to remove the Mercy Seat.

- While the ark was to be in Kir-jath-jearim they assigned a man to take care of it, they sanctified him – he was set apart for this specific purpose.
- The ark stayed there for 20 years, and the people lamented or mourned over the situation.
- The meaning of the word “lament” is pretty straight forward, to mourn or grieve, to lament – but why? They got the ark of the Lord back, you would think they would rejoice.

- They lamented because it wasn't in the right place, the Tabernacle had been destroyed and probably the other furnishings along with it – the candle stick, the altar of incense, the table of show bread, the brazen laver and the altar of sacrifice are not mentioned again until they are re-made for the Temple.

Look who's involved:

1. Abinadab: "Father of generosity" – "Noble Father".
2. Eleazar: "God has helped" - "Comforter" - "Helper"
3. The ark of the Lord: The throne of God, Representing the glory of God.

Hebrews 1:1-3 ¹"God who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, ²hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son, who He hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also He made the worlds; ³who being the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high."

1 John 5:7 "For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one."

V: 3 Samuel speaks to the nation – if you would repent and return to the Lord, and serve Him – then get rid of the foreign or pagan gods – like John the Baptist show forth the fruit of repentance and He will deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines.

"... return unto the Lord with all your hearts..."

Deuteronomy 6:4-6 ⁴Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord: ⁵And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. ⁶And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart."

- This is prophetic at this point because there has been no mention of the Philistines even being a threat – they're still smarting from their last encounter with the True and Living God of Israel.

2 Chronicles 7:14 "If My people, which are called by My name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land."

V: 4 Obedience! The children of Israel heeded the counsel of Samuel.

- Baal and Astureth were considered to be husband and wife; they represented the reproductive capacity of man and were worshipped in all kinds of lewd and perverse sexual practices.

- The elevation of the reproductive capacity of man, we don't call it Astureth today, it's no longer represented by a little multi-breasted statue – today we call it playboy, freedom of expression, sensuality, art, pornography, etc.
- Baal was the god of storms, controlling the rain and thus the harvest – today we call them environmentalists – save the owl, save the mice – but kill the babies.
- They were obedient they put away the other gods and "... served the Lord only."
- Why the Lord only? Why mono-theism as opposed to multiple gods or poly-theism?

Matthew 6:24 "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon."

V: 5-6 Samuel gathers the nation in Mizpeh (watch tower) – a time of national and personal prayer and fasting.

- Water is a valuable commodity in the very arid Middle East; this is very similar to a drink offering – and offering of consecration and thanksgiving.
- Fasting: a time of self-denial, a time of strengthening of the spirit, subordinating the flesh to the spirit.
- Confession – we have sinned against the Lord – giving glory to God; acknowledging that He is right - "you were right all along!"

1 John 1:8-9 "8If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 9If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

V: 7-8 The people are drawing near to the Lord, seeking His face – and the enemy takes note, and the warfare begins.

- The people cry out to God through Samuel who is acting in the capacity of a priest – they are looking to God for deliverance.

Psalms 18:2-3 "2The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower. 3I will call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised: so shall I be saved from mine enemies."

V: 9 Samuel is praying, he's making an offering to the Lord – he's not grabbing his sword or heading for the hills – he's trusting in the Lord.

- And the Lord hears him.

Psalm 34:15 “The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry.”

V: 10-11 As Samuel was making the offering the Philistines drew near to attack Israel.

“... *but the Lord thundered with a great thunder on that day upon the Philistines...*”

- Remember Hannah’s prayer at the birth of her son Samuel:

1 Samuel 2:10 “The adversaries of the Lord shall be broken to pieces; out of heaven shall He thunder upon them: the Lord shall judge the ends of the earth;...”

Psalm 29:3 “The voice of the Lord is upon the waters: the God of glory thundereth...”

- Symbolically in a way the Philistines were defeated by the voice of the Lord which thunders, the voice of the Lord which is the Word of God.

V: 12 Samuel set up a monument, a memorial – something to help the people remember what God had done for them – an Ebenezer stone or stone of remembrance.

- Very much like communion: “*Do this in remembrance of Me*”, commemorating Jesus’ sacrifice for our salvation.
- Ebenezer is where 20 years earlier the Philistines had had a great victory over the Israelites, killing 30,000. Now it is a place of victory.

“*Hitherto hath the Lord helped us.*”

- God has been our help in time of trouble, He has not left us or forsaken us; He’s not brought us this far just to drop us or leave us – this is a reminder and a great encouragement because there is still more work to do, the Philistines will still need to be subdued.

Philippians 1:6 “Being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.”

Jude 24 “Now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy.”

V: 13-14 The Philistines were subdued, no more invasions or battles all the days of Samuel.

- The Israelites took back the cities which the Philistines had taken from them.
- They even had peace with the Amorites; who were on the other side of the Jordan.

Proverbs 16:7 “When a man’s ways please the Lord, He maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him.”

V: 15-17 Just as Hannah had prayed, Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life – what a blessing to Israel.

- Samuel was like a circuit preacher: Bethel to Gilgal to Mizpeh, and back to Ramah.
- He had an altar at Ramah where he lived – because there wasn’t one anywhere else.
- Another way to look at it is that “ministry” begins at home.

-
- We’re seeing the relationship between “cause and effect” – it started with a commitment:

Deuteronomy 6:1-6 “¹Now these are the commandments, the statutes, and the judgments, which the Lord your God commanded to teach you, that ye might do them in the land whither ye go to possess it: ²That thou mightest fear the Lord thy God, to keep all His statutes and His commandments, which I command thee, thou, and thy son, and thy son’s son, all the days of thy life; and that thy days may be prolonged. ³Hear therefore, O Israel, and observe to do it; that it may be well with thee, and that ye may increase mightily, as the Lord God of thy fathers hath promised thee, in the land that floweth with milk and honey. ⁴Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord: ⁵And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. ⁶And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart.”