

December 10, 2000
January 14, 2000

1 Samuel 6

Vv. 1-9

God gave the Philistines the victory over His people. He also delivered the **ark** into the hands of the Philistines as a reproach to the sins of His people.

The ark remained in the hands of the Philistines for seven months, and while it was there, the God of the ark smote the Philistines with physical illnesses they could not deal with. The Philistines knew their problems were caused by the God of Israel, represented by the ark. They put up with the problems as long as they could before finally admitting that they had to get rid of the ark. They called their wise men together to see how they should deal with the situation.

I cannot explain to you why the Lord chose to leave the Philistines in blindness though He was right among them. I can tell you that the Lord chose to open the eyes of Rahab and Ruth, both Canaanite ladies. I can also tell you that the Lord chose to open the eyes of the pagan Gibeonites in Joshua 9. All I can tell you is that the Lord reveals Himself to whomsoever who chooses, and remains hidden from whomsoever He chooses.

One of the most discussed passages of Scripture is Romans 9:14-24. The natural man cannot understand how God can chose to leave anyone in his sins, leaving him to reap the just reward of his sins. I cannot explain it either, but it is what the Scriptures say.

In His Sovereignty, God chose to open the eyes of the Gibeonites; in His Sovereignty, God chose to leave the Philistines blind and in their sins. And the day was coming when God would justly destroy the Philistines.

V. 1, though the Lord seemed to have forsaken His people, He was still working. He was still God, and they were still His people. And He was accomplishing His sovereign and divine purpose.

Though we cannot see the Lord s hand working in our midst doing what we would like to see Him do, does not mean that He is not at work in the hearts of the pagans.

V. 2, the Philistines concern was not how to please the Lord God, so His hand would not be against them. Rather, they wanted to know how they could get the ark away from them, so they could continue to worship Dagon in peace.

Illustration:

I cannot count the number of people I have met who want to know just enough about the Lord, so they can lead a reasonably peaceful life. They do not want to serve God with all of their hearts, souls, minds and MONEY. Rather, they want to be able to continue serving their own gods in peace.

2 Kings 17:24ff, gives an interesting account. After Solomon, Israel was divided into two nations: the ten tribes who followed Jeroboam were called Israel, and the two tribes who continued following David s line were called Judah.

Israel went to the devil first, and after many warnings from God, Israel was carried away captive by ASSYRIA, v. 7, some years before Judah was carried away.

The king of Assyria brought some of his own people, Assyrians, to live in the area from where he had removed the Israelites. (Much like the Soviet Union did in areas she occupied after WWII.) These Assyrians were settled in the section of Israel called Samaria. (The Lord in Jn ch 4 walked through Samaria.)

V. 25. The transplanted Assyrians did not fear the Lord, so the Lord sent lions among them. The people asked the king of Assyria to send a priest back to them who knew about the Lord God to teach them how to serve the Lord.

Vv. 26-33. The priests taught them how to serve the Lord. But the problem is that the priests themselves were

corrupted, for Israel had been carried away for not serving the Lord properly.

So the priests taught them just enough about the Lord to keep the lions away. But the priests did not teach them enough to bring about a revival.

MOST PEOPLE SERVE GOD VERY CORRUPTLY THEY SERVE HIM JUST ENOUGH TO KEEP THE LIONS AT BAY, BUT not enough to turn a nation around. Many Christians are not really concerned enough about serving the Lord in a manner that will bring about a real revival. They are only concerned enough to keep the lions away from them and their families.

It seems that the vast majority of Christians are inclined to serve the Lord enough to appease our conscience, so He will leave them alone. But when it comes to serving and worshiping Him and Him alone with all the heart, soul, mind and money, they don't really have time nor the inclination for that kind of service.

The natural man wants to be able to serve the gods of this world, and serve **THE LORD GOD**.

1 Samuel 6, the Philistines kept the ark for seven months. Maybe they thought that if they would put off doing what they knew they should do, the plagues would stop.

V. 3, they did not want to relinquish their prize, *the ark of God*. So they sought every means to keep it, but in vain.

We prize a particular sin, so we seek every means possible to keep that sin. Some people are so determined to hang onto a particular sin that they are willing to die, even when they know the answer to their problems.

The Philistines knew the power of Israel's God, yet they did not seek to know more about this God of power. Rather than seek godly counsel, they seek worldly counselors who are wise in the ways of the world to deal with their problem. They wanted to get the Lord off their backs, so they could continue in their false ways.

How many even professing Christians flee to pagan counselors to find answers, and pay those counselors big bucks rather than seek out a good Bible church and pastor for answers. It is so much easier to seek worldly counsel, for the world's answers do not include confessing and forsaking sin.

DR LAURA is a very popular counselor. Though she is normally straight forward in calling wrong wrong, she **does not call** on people to repent to God for their evil ways, and turn to Christ as the final answer. She is a Jewish antiChrist.

A secular counselor has no moral authority to tell his client to repent and be converted. So he tells them how to have peace apart from repentance and faith.

The Philistines knew their problem was from the God of the ark, whom they had sinned against. They also knew that they needed a trespass offering for their sin. Of course, they could serve Dagon with no fear of retaliation if they did not serve Him properly. They understood that Israel's God was the King of kings and the Lord of lords, even over their own lords. And they saw that Israel's God was no respecter of persons, *for one plague was on you all, and on your lords*.

Mice. The land had been by mice. I have seen **films of the mice in Australia**, and they were like grey waves of the ocean as they rolled over everything, stripping all life from the land.

Man has no defense against God when God decides to subdue wicked men to Himself. **AND GOD DID NOT HAVE TO USE A SWORD**.

Rather than send back a **sin offering**, they sent back a **trespass offering**. They refused to see their sin of meddling with the ark of God as it was a very great sin. Rather, they saw it as just a small error in their ways.

WE LIKE TO downplay the seriousness of our sins. We want to believe that they are not really as bad as they are made out to be in God's word. Our sins put Christ on the cross, and they are serious.

GOLD rather than fall on their faces before the God of the ark, as their god DAGON had done, they gave Him gold. They sought to buy off the Lord's heavy hand that was against them.

I OFTEN READ OF THE AMOUNT OF large charitable giving that is done by big name people, like Bill Gates. But we do not read of these people repenting and turning to God, nor do we read of them giving to good, sound gospel causes. Are they giving in an attempt to purchase peace with God?

Illustration:

There was a Scottish tradesman, a painter called Jock. Of course, he was very interested in making an extra pound where he could... so he often would thin down his paint to make it go just a little bit further.

As it happened, he got away with this for some time, but eventually the Church decided to do a restoration job on their largest sanctuary. Jock put in a bid, and because his price was so competitive with his thinned down paint, he got the job.

And so he set to, with a right good will, erecting the scaffolding and putting up the planks, buying the paint and ... yes, sorry to say, thinning it down with the turpentine. Well, Jock was up on the scaffolding, painting away, the job nearly done. Suddenly there was a horrendous clap of thunder, the sky opened and the rain poured down, washing the thinned paint from all over the church and knocking Jock fair off his perch to land on the lawn, among the gravestones.

There he lay, surrounded by telltale puddles of the thinned and useless paint. Jock was no fool. He knew this was a judgment from the Almighty, so he fell on his knees and cried: "Oh, God! Forgive me! What should I do?"

And from the thunder, a mighty Voice spoke: "Repaint! Repaint and thin no more!"

See m20010107 for continuation.

V. 5, and from off your land. In this situation, we also see that the pagans are just as accountable to the God of the ark as was Israel, His chosen people. We see that pagan lands are also under the Lord's sovereign control.

God only has one standard of Judgement. Every man will answer to God according to the same standard. God's standard of justice is always the ten commandments, whether saved or unsaved. And He will judge all men by Christ Jesus. Without Christ, no man stands a chance.

Hebrews 9:27 *And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:*

The pagans here understood that they were being punished justly. They knew they needed an offering to return to the Lord. They knew there was no forgiveness for their sins without an offering.

But KNOWING THESE THINGS DOES NOT SAVE. *The devils also believe, and tremble.* (James 2:19.)

The gifts of gold could not buy them peace with God and eternal life. Their problems stopped when they sent the ark back, but their actions did not secure for them life and peace.

Hebrews 9:22, FROM THE TIME OF the first man until the time of the last, without the shedding of blood, there is no remission of sin.

V. 5, ye shall give glory unto the God of Israel.

Here we see that even the pagans will glorify God. Though their trust in the gold to purchase peace with God was misplaced, God still received the glory from it.

V. 5, *From off your gods.* They admitted that Israel's God was more powerful than their own god, yet they wanted freedom **FROM THE LORD GOD** so they could continue to serve their own god.

Illustration:

Separation of Church and State means separation of Israel's God from the state so the state can be its own god.

The pagans may admit that there is only one God, and that one God controls all events in heaven and earth. But they will hotly discuss how to approach that one God. Of course, Christianity is very exclusive, allowing only one way to that one God, Christ. Though others may think they are worshiping the one true God, if they are not going through Christ, they are worshiping one of many gods:

John 8:54 *Jesus answered, If I honour myself, my honour is nothing: it is my Father that honoureth me; of whom e say, that he is your God: 55 Yet ye have not known him; but I know him: and if I should say, I know him not, I shall be a liar like unto you: but I know him, and keep his saying.*

V. 6, *Wherefore then do ye harden your hearts...?* This is a strange message coming from counselors who denied the authority of Israel's God from over them. But it was good advice. There seems to have been some agreement about giving back such a trophy of war as *the ark of God.*

Illustration: The number 2 radio talk show host after Rush Lumbaugh is Dr. Laura (January 18, 2000). She claims to be a Jew, meaning that she denies Israel's God, the Lord Jesus Christ. Yet more often than not, she gives good, sound advice to her callers, which primarily consists of just good common sense.

In other words, one does not have to be a follower of the Lord Jesus to give good advice. However, Psalms 2 tells us not to seek the *counsel of the ungodly*, and the *ungodly* must be defined as those who reject Christ as the final answer. Denial of Christ makes one a false prophet or false teacher. (Isa. 53:5, 2 Pet. 2:1.)

As the Egyptians... We should learn from the experiences of others, particularly against hardness of heart against the Lord's promptings. *These things are written for our admonition.*

Vv. 7, 8, *a new cart*, &c. The Philistines did not know how the ark was to be moved, so they did the best they could. Though unlawful, the ignorance of the Philistines made this sin excusable. Though ignorance will not suffice in the final judgment, ignorance now causes God to overlook many things. This warning is issued by the Lord:

Mark 4:24 *And he said unto them, Take heed what ye hear: with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you: and unto you that hear shall more be given.*

Luke 8:18 *Take heed therefore how ye hear: for whosoever hath, to him shall be given; and whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he seemeth to have.*

King David knew better, but he tried to move the ark like this, and it cost a man his life. On the other hand, the Philistines were able to move it. The heathen can do a lot of things that God's people cannot. The heathens escape the death penalty because they do not know the word of God. (See message, Stripes 1/2/2000, with Salvian's quote on the end.) A born again child of God will meet an early death in the Devil's slaughterhouse if he insists on serving Dagon, adultery, &c. (1 Cor. 5.) But that the ungodly are not under the death sentence as defined in 1 Corinthians 5.

Did David think he could move the ark on a cart because he saw the Philistines get away with it? How many things to Christians see the devils' crowd get away with, and then they think they can also?

The problem is there is such a large percentage of unsaved masquerading as God's people in the churches that as they seemingly are able to "move God" by their means, *e.g., new cart*, that true believers see this, and try it also. They then reap the wrath of God against sin.

We are influenced by the methods they use, and because they look exactly, sound and seem just like we are, then we are intimidated by their success to try their means of "moving God." How many modern day Bible believing church methods are unlawfully using the cart to move *the ark of God*, but because the unsaved are doing it, they get away with those unlawful methods?

1) Churches promote a prayer for salvation. This results in people believing they are now God's people because they prayed the proper formula. And they start moving the ark in unscriptural ways, and build huge followings, yet they have not God's chastening hand because they are not God's people.

Then those watching believe because the professors sincerely act so much like God's people, that they are God's people. So those watching try to "move the ark" as do those they are watching, but it does not work for them.

2) Now, here's a hard lesson brought to my attention yesterday. (4/25/84. Jerry Owens - his wife being dealt with, but not him.)

We believe "whosoever will may come," which is Bible, but a problem:

It is God who gives the will to come. (Ph. 2:13.)

No man can come to the Son except the Father draw him. (Jn. 6:44.)

No man can come to him except it were given unto him by the Father. (Jn. 6:65.)

All through the book of St. John, plus many other places, it is clearly stated that only the drawing of the Holy Spirit can result in a person coming to Christ for genuine salvation.

I saw this in action yesterday with Jerry Owens. I went through the POS with him. He agreed with what I presented. He knew according to the word of God he was lost, but he really didn't feel like he was lost. I had him go ahead and take my hand by Faith to turn from all and to Christ. He did. But I really don't feel he got anything. All the time there are many others turning because God the Holy Spirit is "killing" them, and they have no choice: Lorri O., Linda O., Joe N., Kathy D., Cindy R., and many others, Mrs. Rice, &c., and the peace, joy and excitement is coming out all over them, wanting to do right. These are all still faithfully doing right today, 15 years latter, January 22, 2000, though Mrs. Rice and Linda are the only ones still here. Sherri and Dennis Devitt also made professions during that time, but both are now serving the devil. I had serious doubts about them at the time, for there was no brokenness, or conviction of sin.

Compare the two: 1) Jerry made a profession, but was not broken over his condition. I really believe he did not get anything. 2) Those who were broken over their sins got the whole thing.

I don't believe the young man is saved, but if a church or Christian would really press him, as I used to do, he would soon have all the fruits. A church can be built going door to door, and getting many professions like Jerry's. Being unsaved, they can *move the ark*, and seem to prosper. But if God's people try it, they will be chastened.

I think we are seeing the results of this kind of building churches in the social temper? Is this why God placed Clinton in leadership? A professor but sure not a possessor.

David's people saw the Philistines, and said, If they can grow a church with those types of professions, then it must be right.

If they can move the ark on a cart, then it must be right because they look, act and smell right, and they are sincere. But, we must line our methods with the word of God. See Mark 13:20.

Is this what the Lord means in Matthew 20:16, *Many are called, but few are chosen?*

Illustration:

I called Jerry. He was not chosen (at that time). He answered the call, but was not saved..

Now, I believe as he comes under the preaching of the gospel, I think God the Holy Spirit will deal with him, but what if he goes under the wrong type of preaching?

I need to learn and teach from this, John 15:16, plus many more passages. I must be very cautious of what I present. Be sure we let God give the increase. Let God do the choosing, and the calling. But I don't know who He has called, so I must take the gospel to everyone with my heart right and with much prayer.

I must learn for me not to do the choosing, but let the Lord do that job.

V. 9, *he hath done us this great evil..., or if it was chance...*

The wicked ascribe all things to chance; Biblical Christians must ascribe all things to the hand of God there is nothing done without God's providence and decree. (Geneva)

Daniel 4:35 *And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?* (See also Dan. 4:17, 25, 32, 5:21, 8:4, Rom. 11.)

Though we may not see God's hand at work in all events of history, His hand is working to accomplish His own good pleasure. (Eph. 1:5, 9, Phil. 2:13.)