

1 Sam 6:10ff, p 1

February 4, 2001

I Sam 6

Vv. 10-18

The Philistines return the ark to Israel in an unusual way — they place it on an undriven cart, pulled by two milk cows. The cows took it home despite their calves being tied at home.

They Philistines were confident the cows would not go away from their calves, unless supernaturally directed. So they wanted that supernatural sign. However, even when they saw the supernatural sign that it was the hand of God, they still had no heart to turn to Israel's God. The Lord had not given them the needed desire. The Lord's of the Philistines did not trust second-hand reports, so they went themselves to see what would happen.

Note: SHOW US A SIGN, AND WE WILL BELIEVE, was what the religious leaders continually demanded of Christ. (Mat. 12:38, 16:1, Jn. 6:30, &c.) However, though Christ offered abundant proof of his claims, they still could not see the truth — the Father had to allow the onlookers to see the truth:

Matthew 11:25 ¶ *At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. 26 Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight. 27 All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him. 28 Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.*

Note the command here is to come to Christ, but one cannot come to Christ unless the Father draws Him.

John 6:44 *No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.*

The sign Christ offered to those who challenged him was the sign of Jonah:

Luke 11:29 *And when the people were gathered thick together, he began to say, This is an evil generation: they seek a sign; and there shall no sign be given it, but the sign of Jonas the prophet. 30 For as Jonas was a sign unto the Ninevites, so shall also the Son of man be to this generation. 31 The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation, and condemn them: for she came from the utmost parts of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here. 32 The men of Nineve shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here.*

And it reads to me like Christ's death and resurrection was a sign of his judgment against their sins. If the leaders had seen the truth, they would not have crucified the Lord:

1 Corinthians 2:8 *Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.*

So, obviously, they had to be blinded by the hand of God, so they would crucify him. (See Rom. 11:8, &c.)

And our responsibility is to pray:

Ephesians 1:15 ¶ *Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints, 16 Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; 17 That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: 18 The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, 19 And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, 20 Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the*

heavenly places, 21 Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: 22 And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, 23 Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.

As I looked the thought up praying that the Lord would open the eyes of the unsaved to Himself I could find no passage that said such a thing. Every passage I could find spoke of prayer for other believers, and prayer that the Lord would open their eyes so they would know and understand and thus do the will of God.

But I do not believe it is stretching the Scripture into something it does not say when we seriously ask the Lord to open the eyes of the unsaved, so they will see the truth of their sins and of the Lord.

1 Samuel 6:12, *lowing as they went*. Their crying was evident of their longing for their young still at home. It also showed the supernatural control of their movements away from home. The cows went contrary to natural instinct. Not knowing their Master, Israel made no attempt to bring the ark home; knowing their Master, the cows brought it home. In other words, dumb animals have more sense than do God's people at times:

Isaiah 1:3 *The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider.*

V. 13, *The men of Bethshemesh:*

A) *were reaping their wheat harvest* as though nothing were wrong. The ark was gone, and these people had no concern as long as they had a harvest. Their concern was not that God's presence was gone, but that they made a good living:

Haggai 1:4 *Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your cieled houses, and this house lie waste?*

B) God brought the ark to men who were **hard at work** in the field, rather than to those idling their time away. Hard work has its reward.

Let me say here, GOD REVEALS **HIMSELF AND HIS TRUTHS TO THOSE WHO WORK AT FINDING THEM**. Scriptures say, ***Study to show thyself approved***, and what we are to study is the Word of God.

C) rejoiced to see the ark, took the cows, and offered the cows as a sacrifice to God. Note that here Israel knew enough to only let the Levites move the ark. It would be interesting to know what happened to the offerings the Philistines sent with the cart. We have no further mention of them after this account.

Note the cows who knew their Master are offered up as a sacrifice to Him, as are those who know the Master are to be offered up as a living sacrifice to Him, Romans 12.

D) did not let their work interfere with their rejoicing in the Lord. They stopped everything to honor the Lord. It is an **ungrateful people** who will not stop at least once a week and honour the Lord God.

It is sad when professed Christians get so involved in their work and in their personal lives that they cannot serve the Lord as they are required to do, or maybe as they promised to do.

Romans 1:19 ¶ *Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. 20 For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: 21 Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, **neither were thankful**; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.*

The first step away from the Lord God, the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ, is failure to be thankful for who He is and what He has provided for us.

Vv. 15, 18 *the great stone*. No doubt the ark was brought here because of the *great stone*. The Lord commonly used *stones* to remind the people of his marvelous works, e.g., Joshua 4.

A) These men of *Bethshemesh* were less reverent toward *the ark of God* than were the Philistines themselves. (JFB) I never cease to be amazed at how many times non-Christians act more like Christians than do Christians.

Illustration:

Phil Apple took the snow blower to his shop and fixed it. Dave Touser he gladly will do whatever I need him to do, if he can. These men make no profession of the Lord and talk like it, but they show more respect for the church and pastors than do many Christians.

B) The men of *Bethshemesh* were **curious**, so they looked into *the ark of God*. How many Christians **only look into the word of God out of curiosity** rather than out of a sincere desire to know God and to follow his word. There is death in such an attitude. God did not give His word to satisfy curiosity about what is going on in the **spirit** realm, nor about what the future holds; He gave his word to tell man how to please Him.

Note the danger of trying to **gratify a sinful curiosity** into the secret things of the Lord, including prying into the future.

The sin of the men of Beth-shemesh: *They looked into the ark of the Lord*, # 1Sa 6:19. Every Israelite had heard great talk of the ark, and had been possessed with a profound veneration for it; but they had been told that it was lodged within a veil, and even the high priest himself might not look upon it but once a year, and then through a cloud of incense. Perhaps this made many say (as we are apt to covet that which is forbidden) what a great deal they would give for a sight of it. Some of these Beth-shemites, we may suppose, for that reason, rejoiced to see the ark (#1Sa 6:13) more than for the sake of the public. Yet this did not content them; they might see it, but they would go further, they would take off the covering, which it is likely was nailed or screwed on, and look into it, under pretence of seeing whether the Philistines had not taken the two tables out of it or some way damaged them, but really to gratify a sinful curiosity of their own, which intruded into those things that God had thought fit to conceal from them. Note, It is a great affront to God for vain men to pry into and meddle with the secret things which belong not to them, #De 29:29; Col 2:18. We were all ruined by an ambition of forbidden knowledge. (MH)

Deuteronomy 29:29 *The secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law.*

The New Testament law is found in,

Colossians 2:18 *Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind,*

Indianapolis Star, Jan. 33, 2001, Man asserts God visited him while he was in a coma. Growing numbers claim they've had a divine encounter right after a near-death experience. The story tells of a man named Cliff Chapman, who awoke from a week long coma. He spoke of seeing a hooded figure, who sounded like a friend who had died two years previous. The hooded figure was accompanied by another man dressed in a pure white robe, trimmed in gold. The man in white also had a calf with him. The hooded figure told him to go back to his wife and friends. The man in white placed Cliff's hands on the calf, and then spoke in Cliff's mind, "Pass it on. I am real. Then they all three disappeared. It was 21 days before Cliff could tell of the vision. Cliff had not been a religious man, but now he says, "We are getting back to church and hearing the Word. They go to a Zionsville United Methodist Church. Now They have made it their mission to **share their religious experience**.

The article said that about **13 million adults** living in the United States have reported experiencing this type of near-death phenomenon.

Draw your own conclusions. The only place I know of in Scripture where the Lord appeared in a vision is to Saul, and it was the vision clearly presented to him the gospel of Christ, and Paul reentered the world preaching Christ with so much power that many people tried to kill him. The devil appears as an angel of light.

On the same page was this headline: **Psychic fair is fun, foretelling for curious customers.** It was held by Pyramid of Enlightenment Corporation. It has been in business nine years. Services include astrology, numerology, palm, tarot, psychic and clairvoyant readings, a **weekly Bible** study and classes in Reiki, a Japanese stress reduction and relaxation technique. Folks paid a \$5 admission charge, plus \$10 for a 15 minute reading. **"We like to reach out into the community and give people a light at the end of the tunnel, to inspire them and bring encouragement in to their lives,"** said Lee Ann Cornell, Indianapolis, president of **Pyramid of Enlightenment.**

A self-proclaimed clairvoyant of 30 years' practice, Cornell, a retired case manager with Marion County Division of Family and Children, contends psychic services are rooted in a belief in God.

Carol Allen, 49, believes the psychics are authentic. They have VIP customers that have been coming here for nine years, said Allen. They believe in God, and there is no bullcrap here. It s not like the numbers on TV. She said the reading provide stress relief and spiritual healing. When I m hurting or I m stressed, I come or I call here and I feel good, Allen said. I come out of here and I feel more in tune with God. I feel more spirituality.

Note the hunger for supernatural guidance in people, yet the resistance to seeking that guidance from Godly man and the world of God.

START, February 9, 2001 see m20010211