

Having A Basic Understanding of Some Old Testament Truths

Part 41 – The Ark In The House Of Dagon Through The Reactions Toward Saul (I Samuel 5-10)

1. Where did the Philistines decide to place the ark of God?

- “And the Philistines took the ark of God, and brought it from Ebenezer unto Ashdod. When the Philistines took the ark of God, they brought it into the house of Dagon, and set it by Dagon” (I Samuel 5:1-2).

2. What caused the Philistines to decide to remove the ark of God from their presence?

- “And when they of Ashdod arose early on the morrow, behold, **Dagon was fallen upon his face to the earth before the ark of the LORD.** And they took Dagon, and set him in his place again. And when they arose early on the morrow morning, behold, **Dagon was fallen upon his face to the ground before the ark of the LORD; and the head of Dagon and both the palms of his hands were cut off upon the threshold; only the stump of Dagon was left to him.** Therefore neither the priests of Dagon, nor any that come into Dagon's house, tread on the threshold of Dagon in Ashdod unto this day. But **the hand of the LORD was heavy upon them of Ashdod, and he destroyed them, and smote them with emerods,** even Ashdod and the coasts thereof. And when the men of Ashdod saw that it was so, they said, **The ark of the God of Israel shall not abide with us: for his hand is sore upon us, and upon Dagon our god**” (I Samuel 5:3-7).

3. What happened as the ark of God was carried into Gath and Ekron?

- “They sent therefore and gathered all the lords of the Philistines unto them, and said, What shall we do with the ark of the God of Israel? And they answered, Let the ark of the God of Israel be carried about unto Gath. And they carried the ark of the God of Israel about thither. And it was so, that, after they had carried it about, the hand of the LORD was against the city with a very great destruction: and he smote the men of the city, both small and great, and they had emerods in their secret parts. Therefore they sent the ark of God to Ekron. And it came to pass, as the ark of God came to Ekron, that the Ekronites cried out, saying, They have brought about the ark of the God of Israel to us, to slay us and our people. So they sent and gathered together all the lords of the Philistines, and said, Send away the ark of the God of Israel, and let it go again to his own place, that it slay us not, and our people: for there was a deadly destruction throughout all the city; the hand of God was very heavy there. And the men that died not were smitten with the emerods: and the cry of the city went up to heaven” (I Samuel 5:8-12).

4. What did the priest and diviners advise the Philistines to do with the ark of God?

- “And the Philistines called for the priests and the diviners, saying, What shall we do to the ark of the LORD? tell us wherewith we shall send it to his place. And they said, If ye send away the ark of the God of Israel, send it not empty; but in any wise return him a trespass offering: then ye shall be healed, and it shall be known to you why his hand is not removed from you. Then said they, What shall be the trespass offering which we shall return to him? They answered, Five golden emerods, and five golden mice, according to the number of the lords of the Philistines: for one plague was on you all, and on your lords. Wherefore ye shall make images of your emerods, and images of your mice that

mar the land; and ye shall give glory unto the God of Israel: peradventure he will lighten his hand from off you, and from off your gods, and from off your land. Wherefore then do ye harden your hearts, as the Egyptians and Pharaoh hardened their hearts? when he had wrought wonderfully among them, did they not let the people go, and they departed? Now therefore make a new cart, and take two milch kine, on which there hath come no yoke, and tie the kine to the cart, and bring their calves home from them: And take the ark of the LORD, and lay it upon the cart; and put the jewels of gold, which ye return him for a trespass offering, in a coffer by the side thereof; and send it away, that it may go. And see, if it goeth up by the way of his own coast to Bethshemesh, then he hath done us this great evil: but if not, then we shall know that it is not his hand that smote us: it was a chance that happened to us” (I Samuel 6:2-9).

5. Did the Philistines send the ark of God back to the Israelites?

- Yes, (I Samuel 6:10-16; 20-21).

6. Why did the Lord smite the men of Bethshemite?

- “*And he smote the men of Bethshemesh, **because they had looked into the ark of the LORD**, even he smote of the people fifty thousand and threescore and ten men: and the people lamented, because the LORD had smitten many of the people with a great slaughter” (I Samuel 6:19).*

7. What was required of Israel for the Lord to deliver them out of the hands of the Philistines?

- “*And the men of Kirjathjearim came, and fetched up the ark of the LORD, and brought it into the house of Abinadab in the hill, and sanctified Eleazar his son to keep the ark of the LORD. And it came to pass, while the ark abode in Kirjathjearim, that the time was long; for it was twenty years: and all the house of Israel lamented after the LORD. And Samuel spake unto all the house of Israel, saying, If ye do return unto the LORD with all your hearts, then put away the strange gods and Ashtaroth from among you, and prepare your hearts unto the LORD, and serve him only: and he will deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines. Then the children of Israel did put away Baalim and Ashtaroth, and served the LORD only” (I Samuel 7:1-4).*

8. Did the children of Israel repent and have the Lord as their defense once again?

- Yes: “*And Samuel said, Gather all Israel to Mizpeh, and I will pray for you unto the LORD. And they gathered together to Mizpeh, and drew water, and poured it out before the LORD, and **fasted on that day, and said there, We have sinned against the LORD.** And Samuel judged the children of Israel in Mizpeh. And when the Philistines heard that the children of Israel were gathered together to Mizpeh, the lords of the Philistines went up against Israel. And when the children of Israel heard it, they were afraid of the Philistines. And **the children of Israel said to Samuel, Cease not to cry unto the LORD our God for us, that he will save us out of the hand of the Philistines.** And Samuel took a sucking lamb, and offered it for a burnt offering wholly unto the LORD: and Samuel cried unto the LORD for Israel; and the LORD heard him. And as Samuel was offering up the burnt offering, **the Philistines drew near to battle against Israel: but the LORD thundered with a great thunder on that day upon the Philistines, and discomfited them; and they were smitten before Israel.** And the men of Israel went out of Mizpeh, and*

pursued the Philistines, and smote them, until they came under Bethcar” (I Samuel 7:5-11).

9. What does the term “Ebenezer” mean in this context?

- *“Then Samuel took a stone, and set it between Mizpeh and Shen, and called the name of it Ebenezer, saying, Hitherto hath the LORD helped us” (I Samuel 7:12).*

10. What happens to the Philistines during the time Samuel was a judge in Israel?

- *“So the Philistines were subdued, and they came no more into the coast of Israel: and the hand of the LORD was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel. And the cities which the Philistines had taken from Israel were restored to Israel, from Ekron even unto Gath; and the coasts thereof did Israel deliver out of the hands of the Philistines. And there was peace between Israel and the Amorites. And Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life” (I Samuel 7:13-15).*

11. Did Samuel’s sons follow in the footsteps of their father?

- While they became judges, they most certainly did not serve the Lord (I Samuel 8:1-4).

12. What did the elders of Israel desire of Samuel as he was old in age?

- *“Then all the elders of Israel gathered themselves together, and came to Samuel unto Ramah, And said unto him, Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways: now make us a king to judge us like all the nations” (I Samuel 8:4-5).*

13. Are the elders of Israel going to receive what they requested of Samuel?

- Yes: *“But the thing displeased Samuel, when they said, Give us a king to judge us. And Samuel prayed unto the LORD. And the LORD said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them. According to all the works which they have done since the day that I brought them up out of Egypt even unto this day, wherewith they have forsaken me, and served other gods, so do they also unto thee. Now therefore hearken unto their voice: howbeit yet protest solemnly unto them, and shew them the manner of the king that shall reign over them. And Samuel told all the words of the LORD unto the people that asked of him a king. And he said, This will be the manner of the king that shall reign over you: He will take your sons, and appoint them for himself, for his chariots, and to be his horsemen; and some shall run before his chariots. And he will appoint him captains over thousands, and captains over fifties; and will set them to ear his ground, and to reap his harvest, and to make his instruments of war, and instruments of his chariots. And he will take your daughters to be confectionaries, and to be cooks, and to be bakers. And he will take your fields, and your vineyards, and your oliveyards, even the best of them, and give them to his servants. And he will take the tenth of your seed, and of your vineyards, and give to his officers, and to his servants. And he will take your menservants, and your maidservants, and your goodliest young men, and your asses, and put them to his work. He will take the tenth of your sheep: and ye shall be his servants. And ye shall cry out in that day because of your king which ye shall have chosen you; and the LORD will not hear you in that day. Nevertheless the people refused to obey the voice of Samuel; and they said, Nay; but we will have a king*

*over us; That we also may be like all the nations; and that our king may judge us, and go out before us, and fight our battles. And Samuel heard all the words of the people, and he rehearsed them in the ears of the LORD. And the LORD said to Samuel, **Hearken unto their voice, and make them a king. And Samuel said unto the men of Israel, Go ye every man unto his city***” (I Samuel 8:6-22).

14. Was Saul a small, ugly, weak man?

- No: “Now there was a man of Benjamin, whose name was Kish, the son of Abiel, the son of Zeror, the son of Bechorath, the son of Aphiah, a Benjamite, a mighty man of power. And he had a son, whose name was Saul, **a choice young man, and a goodly [handsome]: and there was not among the children of Israel a goodlier person than he: from his shoulders and upward he was higher than any of the people**” (I Samuel 9:1-2).

15. What was a “Seer”?

- A prophet (I Samuel 9:9).

16. Was God behind Saul’s trip to finally meet up with Samuel?

- While Saul was looking for his father’s lost asses (I Samuel 9:3-7), God WAS involved in getting Saul to Samuel (I Samuel 9:15-17).

17. What did Samuel first tell Saul?

- “Then Saul drew near to Samuel in the gate, and said, Tell me, I pray thee, where the seer’s house is. And Samuel answered Saul, and said, I am the seer: **go up before me unto the high place; for ye shall eat with me to day, and to morrow I will let thee go, and will tell thee all that is in thine heart. And as for thine asses that were lost three days ago, set not thy mind on them; for they are found. And on whom is all the desire of Israel? Is it not on thee, and on all thy father’s house**” (I Samuel 9:18-20)?

18. How did Saul respond to Samuel’s first words?

- “And Saul answered and said, Am not I a Benjamite, of the smallest of the tribes of Israel? and my family the least of all the families of the tribe of Benjamin? wherefore then speakest thou so to me” (I Samuel 9:21).

19. What did Samuel tell Saul would happen from the time he departs from Samuel and meets him again in Gilgal?

- “(9:27) And as they were going down to the end of the city, Samuel said to Saul, Bid the servant pass on before us, (and he passed on,) **but stand thou still a while, that I may shew thee the word of God.** (10:1) Then Samuel took a vial of oil, and poured it upon his head, and kissed him, and said, Is it not because **the LORD hath anointed thee to be captain over his inheritance?** (10:2) When thou art departed from me to day, then thou shalt find **two men by Rachel’s sepulchre** in the border of Benjamin at Zelzah; and they will say unto thee, The asses which thou wentest to seek are found: and, lo, thy father hath left the care of the asses, and sorroweth for you, saying, What shall I do for my son? (10:3) Then shalt thou go on forward from thence, and thou shalt come to the plain of Tabor, and **there shall meet thee three men going up to God to Bethel**, one carrying three kids, and another carrying three loaves of bread, and another carrying a bottle of wine:

(10:4) And they will salute thee, and give thee two loaves of bread; which thou shalt receive of their hands. **(10:5)** After that thou shalt come to the hill of God, where is the garrison of the Philistines: and it shall come to pass, when thou art come thither to the city, that thou shalt meet a company of prophets coming down from the high place with a psaltery, and a tabret, and a pipe, and a harp, before them; and they shall prophesy: **(10:6)** And the Spirit of the LORD will come upon thee, and thou shalt prophesy with them, and shalt be turned into another man. **(10:7)** And let it be, when these signs are come unto thee, that thou do as occasion serve thee; for God is with thee. **(10:8)** And thou shalt go down before me to Gilgal; and, behold, I will come down unto thee, to offer burnt offerings, and to sacrifice sacrifices of peace offerings: seven days shalt thou tarry, till I come to thee, and shew thee what thou shalt do” (I Samuel 9:27-10:8).

20. As all occurs as Samuel had said, Saul speaks with his uncle. What did he choose not to tell his uncle?

- “And Saul’s uncle said, Tell me, I pray thee, what Samuel said unto you. And Saul said unto his uncle, He told us plainly that the asses were found. But of the matter of the kingdom, whereof Samuel spake, he told him not” (I Samuel 10:15-16).

21. As Samuel called the people together unto the Lord to Mizpeh, did he commend them for fully serving the Lord?

- NO, the opposite occurs: “And Samuel called the people together unto the LORD to Mizpeh; And said unto the children of Israel, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, I brought up Israel out of Egypt, and delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians, and out of the hand of all kingdoms, and of them that oppressed you: And ye have this day rejected your God, who himself saved you out of all your adversities and your tribulations; and ye have said unto him, Nay, but set a king over us. Now therefore present yourselves before the LORD by your tribes, and by your thousands” (I Samuel 10:17-19).

22. Did Saul seem to be in a hurry to be presented to the people?

- NO: “And when Samuel had caused all the tribes of Israel to come near, the tribe of Benjamin was taken. When he had caused the tribe of Benjamin to come near by their families, the family of Matri was taken, and Saul the son of Kish was taken: and when they sought him, he could not be found. Therefore they enquired of the LORD further, if the man should yet come thither. And the LORD answered, Behold, he hath hid himself among the stuff” (I Samuel 10:20-22).

23. How did the majority of the people respond to Saul being their king?

- “And they ran and fetched him thence: and when he stood among the people, he was higher than any of the people from his shoulders and upward. And Samuel said to all the people, See ye him whom the LORD hath chosen, that there is none like him among all the people? And all the people shouted, and said, God save the king” (I Samuel 10:23-24).

24. Were there some who despised Saul as their king?

- Yes, the children of Belial [worthlessness] did (I Samuel 10:27; cf. II Corinthians 6:15).