

## ARKEOLOGY (2) 1 SAMUEL 4-6

1 Samuel 4-6 is all about the Ark of God, the Glory of God, and God Himself → and various attempts to control / corner God!

The big question being addressed is: How **do** we relate to God?

### I. Using the ark!

**1 Samuel 4:1** And the word of Samuel came to all Israel. Now Israel went out against the Philistines to battle, and pitched beside Ebenezer: and the Philistines pitched in Aphek. **1 Samuel 4:2** And the Philistines put themselves in array against Israel: and when they joined battle, Israel was smitten before the Philistines: and they slew of the army in the field about four thousand men. **1 Samuel 4:3** And when the people were come into the camp, the elders of Israel said, **Wherefore hath the LORD smitten us to day before the Philistines? Let us fetch the ark of the covenant of the LORD out of Shiloh unto us, that, when it cometh among us, it may save us out of the hand of our enemies.** **1 Samuel 4:10** And the Philistines fought, and Israel was smitten, and they fled every man into his tent: and there was a very great slaughter; for there fell of Israel thirty thousand footmen.

**This is the center of the question! Yet the proper relationship of God (including His Ark, power, glory) and mankind continued to evade nearly everyone!**

The equation we prefer – until the outcome:

Me & my problems

God & His power

All here for me...!

= God seems arbitrary → especially so since I cannot control Him / get Him to do my bidding

Biblical equation:

God & His power

God & His will, character, nature & purposes

Me & my submission to God

= Thy will be done!

### II. Losing the ark &...!

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

**1 Samuel 4:18** And it came to pass, when he made mention of the ark of God, that he fell from off the seat backward by the side of the gate, and his neck brake, and he died: for he was an old man, **and heavy** (וְכָבֵד).

And he had judged Israel forty years. **1 Samuel 4:19** And his daughter in law, Phinehas' wife, was with child, near to be delivered: and when she heard the tidings that the ark of God was taken, and that her father in law and her husband were dead, she bowed herself and travailed; for her pains came upon her. **1 Samuel 4:20** And about the time of her death the women that stood by her said unto her, Fear not; for thou hast born a son. But she answered not, neither did she regard it.

**1 Samuel 4:21** And she named the child **Ichabod** (אִי-כָבוֹד), saying,

The **glory** (כְּבוֹד) is departed from Israel: because the ark of God was taken, and because of her father in law

and her husband. **1 Samuel 4:22** And she said, The **glory** (כְּבוֹד) is departed from Israel: for the ark of God is taken.

### III. Capturing the ark!

Amid one of the **most humorous** texts in Scripture we begin to learn some basic truths.

- Israel didn't really lose the Ark since they never really "possessed" it!
- The Philistines never really captured the Ark since the Ark really "captured" them!

#### **Ashdod:**

**1 Samuel 5:1** And the Philistines took the ark of God, and brought it from Ebenezer **unto Ashdod**. **1 Samuel 5:2** When the Philistines took the ark of God, they brought it into the house of Dagon, and set it by Dagon. **1 Samuel 5:3** 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. **1 Samuel 5:4** 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. **1 Samuel 5:5** 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. **1 Samuel 5:6** **But the hand of the LORD was heavy** (וַתִּכְבֵּד יְד־יְהוָה) upon them of Ashdod, and he destroyed them, and smote them with emerods, even Ashdod and the coasts thereof. **1 Samuel 5:7** 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.

#### **Gath:**

**1 Samuel 5:8** 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. **1 Samuel 5:9** 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**.

#### **Ekron:**

**1 Samuel 5:10** 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. **1 Samuel 5:11** 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** (כְּבִדָה מְאֹד יְד־) **there**. **1 Samuel 5:12** And the men that died not were smitten with the emerods: and the cry of the city went up to heaven.

### IV. Returning the ark!

**1 Samuel 6:1** And the ark of the LORD was in the country of the Philistines **seven months**. **1 Samuel 6:2** 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. **1 Samuel 6:3** 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. **1 Samuel 6:4** 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. **1 Samuel 6:5** Wherefore ye shall make images of your emerods, and images of your mice that mar the land; and ye shall give glory (כְּבוֹד) unto the God of Israel: **peradventure he will lighten his hand from off you, and from off your gods, and from off your land.** **1 Samuel 6:6** Wherefore then do ye harden (תְּכַבְּדוּ) your hearts, as the Egyptians and Pharaoh **hardened (יִכְבְּדוּ) their hearts?** when he had wrought wonderfully among them, did they not let the people go, and they departed?

**1 Samuel 6:7** 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: **1 Samuel 6:8** 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. **1 Samuel 6:9** 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. **1 Samuel 6:10** And the men did so; and took two milch kine, and tied them to the cart, and shut up their calves at home: **1 Samuel 6:11** And they laid the ark of the LORD upon the cart, and the coffer with the mice of gold and the images of their emerods. **1 Samuel 6:12** And the kine took the straight way to the way of Bethshemesh, and went along the highway, lowing as they went, and turned not aside to the right hand or to the left; and the lords of the Philistines went after them unto the border of Bethshemesh.

#### The test is wonderful & conclusive:

- A new cart
- 2 milk cows – cows giving milk to calves
- Cows never used to pulling
- Cows separated from their calves
- Cart loaded with Gold mice & hemorrhoids
- Cows went straight to Bethshemesh
- No deviation
- Lowing but still straightway
- Watched / observed until they got there

## V. Disrespecting the ark!

Everything started so well!

**1 Samuel 6:13** And they of Bethshemesh were reaping their wheat harvest in the valley: and they lifted up their eyes, and saw the ark, **and rejoiced to see it.** **1 Samuel 6:14** And the cart came into the field of Joshua, a Bethshemite, and stood there, where there was a great stone: **and they clave the wood of the cart, and offered the kine a burnt offering unto the LORD.** **1 Samuel 6:15** And the Levites took down the ark of the LORD, and the coffer that was with it, wherein the jewels of gold were, **and put them on the great stone:** and the men of Bethshemesh offered burnt offerings and sacrificed sacrifices the same day unto the LORD. **1 Samuel 6:16** And when the five lords of the Philistines had seen it, they returned to Ekron the same day. **1 Samuel 6:17** And these are the golden emerods which the Philistines returned for a trespass offering unto the LORD; for Ashdod one, for Gaza one, for Askelon one, for Gath one, for Ekron one; **1 Samuel 6:18** And the golden mice, according to the number of all the cities of the Philistines belonging to the five lords, both of fenced cities, and

of country villages, **even unto the great stone of Abel**, whereon they set down the ark of the LORD: **which stone remaineth unto this day in the field of Joshua, the Bethshemite.**

**All is so good:**

- **Rejoicing**
- **Offerings**
- **More offerings**
- **Collection of the gold**
- **Done by the Levites**

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**1 Samuel 6:19** 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. **1 Samuel 6:20** And the men of Bethshemesh said, Who is able to stand before this holy LORD God? and to whom shall he go up from us? **1 Samuel 6:21** And they sent messengers to the inhabitants of Kirjathjearim, saying, The Philistines have brought again the ark of the LORD; come ye down, and fetch it up to you.

**Thoughts:**

- **God can't be used**
- **God is holy**
- **God has a will & purposes**
- **God's will and purposes may / may not be our will**
- **It's our job to submit to His will and not His job to submit to my will**

**Matthew 6:9** After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.

**Matthew 6:10** Thy kingdom come. **Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.**

**Luke 22:42** Saying, Father, **if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.**

**Matthew 16:24** Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. **Matthew 16:25** For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. **Matthew 16:26** For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?