## I Samuel 6-7

## Review...

- Chapter 4 The capture of the Ark of God...
  - o Israel was at war with the Philistines their arch rival...
    - They were defeated in Battle lost 4000 men and did not know why...
    - They came up with the idea lets take the Ark into battle with us!
  - o When it arrived in the camp the men of Israel cheered so load the ground shook...
    - When they Philistines found out there were terrified fought for their lives...
    - 40,000 Israelis were killed Hophni and Phinehas were killed the Ark captured!
  - o Eli was waiting at the Tabernacle worried for the Ark...
    - When the news came the Ark had been captured he fell backwards and died...
    - The wife of Phinehas went into labor died giving birth to Ichabod (*no more glory*)
- Chapter 5 Only one God…
  - o The Philistines took the Ark and placed in the temple of their god Dagon...
  - o In the morning Dagon was face down before the Ark of God so they set it back up...
  - o The next morning Dagon was face down with its head and hands cut off!
  - o God also sent a plague (hemorrhoids) on the city of Ashdod because of the Ark...
  - o The sent the Ark to Ekron but the people cried out 'they are trying to kill us too!'

## SENDING THE ARK BACK TO ISRAEL... (4 THINGS)

- 1<sup>st</sup> Testing the Plague... vs. 1-9 Read: I Samuel 6:1-9
  - o 1st The Philistines were stubborn they did not want to submit to God... vs. 1-6
    - God ruined their land with rats (ate their crops) / and their people with disease...
      - Even their god Dagon had been decapitated by the God of Israel...
      - Yet the Ark remained in Philistine for a total of seven months!
    - Finally the Philistines asked their priests how to send the Ark back to Israel...
      - The priests told the people to send the Ark back with a 'peace offering'...
      - They were to make 5 golden tumors (hemorrhoids) and 5 golden rats...
      - Representing the plague that was decimating their cities!
      - There were 5 of them because of the 5 rulers / cities of the Philistines...
      - It was not enough for them to just sent the Ark back they had to show repentance!
      - When we sin we can say sorry but if we go on sinning was their real repentance...
      - True repentance means admitting what we did was wrong sin against God...
      - True repentance needs to come with a 'peace offering' a changed heart!
    - Do not be stubborn like Pharaoh of Egypt (350 years later they still remembered)...
      - The Egyptians did not let Israel go until their land was completely ruined...
      - Better to send the Ark back now before it was too late...
      - Too often rather than repent we stubbornly hold on to our sin...
      - The only question is how much trouble do we need to get into before we give up...
      - It is always wiser to turn back to God sooner than later before its too late!

- o 2<sup>nd</sup> Instructions for the offering... vs. 7-9
  - The priest told the people to put the Ark on a new cart pulled by two milk cows...
    - The cows were to have never pulled a cart and they were to have young calves...
    - The young calves were to be kept pent up the cows hitched to the cart...
    - They would then place the Ark along with the offerings on the cart...
    - If the cows did not leave stayed with their young the plague was not from God...
    - But if the cows headed straight for Israel then God was behind the devastation...
  - It was a test to see if the plague was a coincidence or the hand of God...
    - We often wonder why we are going through tough times sin or just coincidence...
    - There are no coincidences with God He uses all thing in our live Romans 8:28
    - Our hardships might be a consequence / result of some sin in our life...
    - Or our hardships might be a trial God has allowed into our life I Peter 4:12
    - But it does not matter the reason for the hardship the important thing is why...
    - We try to label things in life we call them either Good or Bad...
    - We might think that not being punished is good but then we might never learn...
    - We might think going through a trial is bad but in truth is shows our hearts...
    - The truth is it is all about drawing us closer and closer to Jesus!
- o 3<sup>rd</sup> Do not follow the example of the world...
  - King David wanted to move the Ark into Jerusalem...
    - His desire was good he wanted bring God closer to the people...
    - But to do it he looked to the example of the world rather than to the Lord...
  - In II Samuel 6:1-7 King David brought the Ark on a cart drawn by two cows...
    - He was following the example given here by the Philistines pagan sinners!
    - At one point on the road a cow stumbled the Ark tipped and almost fell...
    - A man named Uzzah reached out to steady the Ark God struck him dead!
    - Because according to the Word the Ark was only to be carried by poles priests...
    - Because King David followed the example of the world it brought death...
    - Unfortunately today many people look to the World rather than the Word...
    - They think in order to be used by God you need a college degree...
    - In order for a church to grow in size you need to entertain the people...
    - To get money hold fundraisers to raise money for the church...
    - All ideas that come from the world nowhere to be found in God's Word...
    - As a result many churches are not looking to the Lord/Bible spiritual death!
- 2<sup>ND</sup> The return of the Ark... vs. 10-21 Read: I Samuel 6:10-21
  - o The moment the cows were set free they headed straight for Israel... vs. 10-16
    - The cows were lowing crying out for their calves but they did not stop!
      - The leaders of the Philistines followed the Ark to the border of Beth-Shemesh...
      - They were looking for an answer they wanted the plague to stop...
      - People will go to extreme lengths to try and find peace / forgiveness from God...
      - Hindus who pull heavy carts with hooks attached to your back...
      - 'Christian' who practice flagellation and crucifixion (usually during Lent)
      - But all of men's ideas all their rules and religion lead to destruction / hell!
    - Beth Shemesh (house of the sun) was a city of the Levites in southern Israel…

- The Israelites were harvesting in the fields when the saw the Ark and rejoiced!
  - o The cows stopped by a large Rock in the field of a man named Joshua...
  - o The Levites in the city took the Ark down and put it on the stone...
  - o The people broke apart the cart for wood offered the cows as a burnt offering!
- Seeing this the leaders of the Philistines went back their cities...
  - o Ultimately forgiveness only comes when we come to THE Rock / Jesus...
  - o There is no other way to heaven it is only through grace by faith in Jesus!
  - o **I Timothy 2:5** "For there is only one God and one Mediator who can reconcile God and people. He is the man Christ Jesus."
  - o The cross is the power of God to save sinners the only way to be saved!
- o Some of the men of Beth-Shemesh looked inside the Ark so God killed them... vs. 19-21
  - There is some argument over just how many people died as a result...
    - The Hebrew text reads that God killed '70 men and 50,000 men'...
    - But it is unlikely that there were even 50,070 people in the small village!
    - Some suggest that it means God killed 50 out of every 1000 men (or 20%)...
    - If the village had 1,400 people it means God killed 70 men...
    - Whatever the number the point is simple a lot of people died...
  - It was forbidden for anyone but the priests to touch or look in the Ark...
    - **Numbers 4:20** "They must not approach the sanctuary and look at the sacred objects for even a moment, or they will die."
    - The people of Beth-Shemesh asked 'who can stand before this Holy God'...
    - God is unapproachable by sinful men we cannot look on a Holy God...
    - If we try to come to God on our own merit our own good deeds death...
    - **Galatians 2:21** "I do not set aside the grace of God; for if righteousness comes through the good works, then Christ died in vain."
    - If we think that we can 'see God' / go to heaven because of our 'Good' works...
    - What we are saying is that Jesus did not need to die...
    - We do not need his righteousness (white robes) we can provide our own...
    - There are only 2 options as to what we can 'wear' as we stand before a Holy God...
    - We can stand in our own clothes our own good deed our righteousness...
    - And we will be judged by our works standing speechless condemned to death...
    - Or stand in the robes of righteousness given freely to those who believe in Jesus!
- 3<sup>rd</sup> The repentance of a nation... vs. 1-6 Read: I Samuel 7:1-6
  - o The people of Kiriath Jearim (Forest) came and took the Ark... vs. 1-4
    - Kiriath Jearim was the closest city to Beth-Shemesh up on a forested hillside...
      - The Ark would remain there for over 40 years until it came to Jerusalem!
      - The Ark (and Tabernacle) had been in Shiloh since the days of Joshua Joshua 18:1
      - But it was not returned to Shiloh because Israel was not right with God...
      - The name Shiloh means peace and without God there was no peace in Israel...
      - As long as our relationship with the Lord is not right we will have no peace...
      - If we are experiencing turmoil in our lives it means we are far from God!
    - Israel mourned because they felt like God had abandoned them...
      - They had been constantly defeated by the Philistines in battle lost the Ark...

- And when the Ark finally came back it caused death and destruction in Israel...
- So Samuel told the people to put away their idols and only serve the Lord...
- God had not abandoned Israel it was Israel who had abandoned God!
- If we feel like God is not longer there God did not leave us / we left Him...
- The solution is to get rid of whatever is distracting us and turn back to God!
- o Samuel called all of Israel together at Mizpah... vs. 5-6
  - He called on the people to draw water and pour it out before the Lord...
    - A symbolic act meant to reflect how they were to 'pout out their hearts to God'...
    - Psalm 62:8 "Pour out your heart to him, for God is our refuge."
    - If someone is not willing to be helped there is not much you can do to help them...
    - But if someone is willing to open up and share their problems now there is hope...
    - In order for God to help us we have to be honest and open up our heart to God...
  - Samuel also called on the people to fast all day...
    - It was then that they admitted they had sinned before the Lord...
    - In order to be able to pour our heart out to God we have to make time to share...
    - Too often we get so busy we never have the time to sit down and talk to Jesus...
    - Fasting in one way in which we can remove distractions so we can hear the Lord...
    - Rather than rushing around to prepare a meal we skip it to spend with Jesus...
    - Rather than staying up late watching TV we get up early to talk to God!
- $4^{TH}$  Defeat of the Philistines... vs. 7-17 Read: I Samuel 7:7-17
  - o The Philistines heard all of Israel was camped at Mizpah... vs. 7-11
    - They marched out to battle against Israel and the people were terrified...
      - Israel asked Samuel to cry out to God for them save them from the Philistines...
      - So Samuel offered a Lamb to the Lord and God answered him...
    - While Samuel was still offering the Lamb the Philistines arrived...
      - God thundered from heaven with a loud voice sent the Philistines into disarray...
      - Giving Israel victory over their enemies chasing them back to Philistine!
  - o Samuel set up an Ebenezer (help) stone at Mizpah... vs. 12-17
    - It was to mark the place where God helped Israel defeat their enemy!
      - When God does something 'AMAZING' it is easy for us to be excited...
      - But how long does that last we tend to quickly forget about what God did...
      - When we have no money and cry out to the Lord to provide and He does...
      - The next time we have no money are we confident in the Lord or do we panic...
      - The next time a difficulty arises we need to remember what God has done for us...
      - Write it down take a picture pick up a stone anything to help you remember...
      - So the next time you are faced with a challenge a raging river in front of you...
      - You will have the confidence God parted it once before He can do it again!
    - Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life...
      - And for the rest of his life the Philistines were unable to come against Israel...
      - Because God was for Israel as long as Samuel was judging the nation!