

## HONORING GOD IN OUR WORSHIP

(1 Samuel 6:13-7:1)

- I. Flouted SCRIPTURE (1 Sam. 6:13-18)
  - A. The SETTING (6:13a)
    1. Time—Wheat harvest in JUNE
    2. Place—Levitical city assigned to KOHATH (Josh. 21:13-16)
    3. People—PRIESTLY clan responsible for CARING for the ARK (Num. 4:4, 15)
      - a. Knew regulations for SACRIFICE
      - b. Knew regulations for SERVICE
  - B. The SURPRISE (6:13b-14a)
    1. Two COWS walked in pulling a CART with the ARK
    2. People saw it and REJOICED
    3. Cows STOPPED beside a great STONE at the border
  - C. The SACRILEGE (6:14b-18)
    1. They SACRIFICED the two COWS, but God said only MALE animals could be used for burnt offerings (Lev. 1:3ff)
    2. They DISPLAYED the Ark on the stone, but God said NO ONE outside the Aaronic priesthood could LOOK AT even the OUTSIDE of the Ark (Num. 4:5-6; cf. Hen. 9:23)
    3. They displayed the golden RATS and TUMORS/HEMORRHOIDS with the Ark, but God said they were to have no “graven IMAGES” (Ex. 20:4)
    4. They LOOKED INSIDE the Ark, but God said no one was to TOUCH it (Num. 4:15)
- II. Furious SOVEREIGN (1 Sam. 6:19)
  - A. God judged them for DESECRATING the Ark

- B. God killed 50,070 of the MEN of Beth-shemesh
  - 1. Huge number, attested by EVERY ancient Hebrew text and TRANSLATION (LXX, Syriac *Peshitta*, Aramaic *Targums*, Coptic)
  - 2. Some modern translations DROP the 50,000, saying only 70 died
    - a. Cite Josephus, a First-century Jewish historian
    - b. Assume there were never so MANY men in Beth-shemesh
  - 3. Better to TRUST the BIBLICAL text
    - a. If 30,000 dead (4:10) was a “GREAT SLAUGHTER” (4:17), 70 dead would hardly qualify as the SAME (6:19)
    - b. If the PHILISTINES killed 30,000 and GOD killed 70, Israel would be likely to fear the ENEMY more than GOD

### III. Foolish SERVANTS (1 Sam. 6:20-7:1)

- A. Cried out for DELIVERANCE from GOD
  - 1. Blamed GOD for the deaths, not themselves
  - 2. Wanted God to LEAVE THEM
- B. Convinced the GIBEONITES of Kirjath-Jearim to take the Ark (cf. Josh. 9-10)
  - 1. Put it in a HOUSE, rather than on public display
  - 2. Posted a GUARD: Eleazar

### IV. Lessons

- A. We must not ignore SCRIPTURE when circumstances seem to warrant, but interpret CIRCUMSTANCES in the light of God’s Word
- B. God is more to be FEARED than our ENEMIES
- C. God expects GREATER OBEDIENCE from His own people than from others