

This week we will study about the Ark's interesting journey through the land of the Philistines.



Torchlight

"All Israel had been taught to regard the ark with awe and reverence. When required to remove it from place to place the Levites were not so much as to look upon it. Only once a year was the high priest permitted to behold the ark of God. Even the heathen Philistines had not dared to remove its coverings. Angels of heaven, unseen, ever attended it in all its journeyings. The irreverent daring of the people at Beth-shemesh was speedily punished. Many were smitten with sudden death." – Patriarchs & Prophets p. 589



The Stolen Ark



SUNDAY

LET'S PRAY Dear God, please open my eyes and help me to see the things You are trying to show me. I want to understand the wonderful things You have done for me in the past so I can learn how to live a Christlike life. I surrender my heart to You. Please use me to tell others about Jesus. In Jesus' name, Amen.

MEMORY VERSE - PHILIPPIANS 4:7

“And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus”.

THERE'S **POWER** IN THE WORD!

LET'S READ:

1 Samuel 4:1-11



LET'S THINK ABOUT THIS

From our reading today, we find out that the Israelites went to war against the Philistines without consulting God or the High Priest, Eli. Because of the Israelites' unwise decision, four thousand of their men died in the battle. The Israelites decided they needed the Ark of the Covenant in the camp, so a group of them went back to the Sanctuary in Shiloh to get it. Hophni and Phinehas went into the Most Holy Place and took the Ark without permission from their father Eli. We know, from previous studies, that only the High Priest was allowed in the Most Holy Place. When the Ark arrived in the encampment, about thirty kilometres away from Shiloh, there was a huge cheer from the Israelites as they thought now that



the Ark was with them God would win the battle for them. But the Philistines won the battle and a further thirty thousand Israelites died, including Hophni and Phinehas. God's mighty power and presence, which resided with the Ark of the Covenant, did not allow the Israelites to win the war with the Philistines because they were not keeping the Ten Commandments. They showed no reverence for God's law and were not sorry for their sins. Hophni and Phinehas were the chief offenders as they were stealing offerings and committing adultery (1 Samuel 2:12-17, 22). We cannot keep the Ten Commandments on our own; it is Jesus who helps us by sending His Holy Spirit to give us the strength to keep them. We need to pray to the Lord everyday and ask for His help.

FIND AND FINISH THIS VERSE - 1 SAMUEL 4:_____

“And when the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD came _____
_____, _____
_____.”

WHAT DID YOU LEARN TODAY WITH THE KING?





MONDAY

LET'S PRAY Dear Lord, please send me Your Holy Spirit to give me the strength to keep Your commandments. Thank You for being patient with me and loving me so much. Help me to understand what I read in the Bible today and apply it to my life. In Jesus' name, Amen.

MEMORY VERSE - PHILIPPIANS 4:7

“And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus”.

THERE'S **POWER** IN THE WORD!

LET'S READ:

1 Samuel 4:12-22



LET'S THINK ABOUT THIS

We are told in our reading today that an Israelite from the tribe of Benjamin ran all the way from the battlefield to Shiloh to report the awful news. Priest Eli, who was worried about the Ark being taken from the Sanctuary by his sons, was sitting by the gate waiting for any news. When he heard that his sons had died and the Philistines had stolen the Ark of the Covenant, he fell off his chair in shock and died. Priest Eli was ninety-eight years old. The wife of Phinehas, who was a godly woman despite the evil behaviour of her husband, went into shock when she heard the news. This brought on her labour and she died in childbirth naming her son Ichabod, which meant, “the glory had departed” from Israel, because the Ark of the Covenant was gone.

The Ark had resided in the Sanctuary at Shiloh for around three hundred years. Even though the Sanctuary service had become corrupted under the leadership of Eli's family, the shock of it no longer being in the presence of the Israelites was deeply felt. The Israelites had taken it for granted that the Ark would always be with them. Is there anything or anyone special in your life whom you take for granted? That's something to think about.




FIND AND FINISH THIS VERSE - 1 SAMUEL 4:_____

“Then she named the child Ichabod, saying, ‘The glory has departed from Israel!’ because the ark of God _____.”

WHAT DID YOU LEARN TODAY WITH THE KING?





TUESDAY

LET'S PRAY Dear God, thank You for my Mum and Dad. They do so much for me and sometimes I don't always appreciate them like I should. Please help me to be more thankful and grateful. Help me to understand what I read in the Bible today. In Jesus' name, Amen.

MEMORY VERSE - PHILIPPIANS 4:7

“And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus”.

THERE'S **POWER** IN THE WORD!

LET'S READ:

1 Samuel 5:1-12



LET'S THINK ABOUT THIS

Our reading today tells us that the Philistines stole the Ark of the Covenant from the battlefield at Ebenezer and carried it down to Ashdod, which would have been a journey of around fifty kilometres. The Philistines put the Ark of the Covenant in the temple that housed their idol god, Dagon. The Philistines thought they could join the power that went with the Ark with the so-called power of Dagon and become a super power! But verse 3 tells us that the next morning their statue Dagon was lying face down before the Ark. They set Dagon upright again and the following morning the statue was lying on its face again, but this time it was broken into pieces. God also sent a plague of tumors on the people. The Philistines decided to send



the Ark to the city of Gath, approximately twenty kms away. The people of Gath also received the plague of tumors and they sent the Ark to the city of Ekron some distance away. Here the Ekronites received the Ark of the Covenant with terror. They had heard what had happened in the other cities and did not want the Ark at all. The destruction was very heavy at Ekron as they not only received the tumors but 1 Samuel 6:5 tells us a plague of rats or mice ate up their crops and food.

God was trying to show the Philistines that He was their God and King. Their so-called gods were worthless stone statues that could break into pieces. You can't break God into pieces! He is a living, breathing God. He is Your King. Look at these verses in *Isaiah 43:15* and *1 Timothy 6:15*.

FIND AND FINISH THIS VERSE - 1 SAMUEL 5:_____

“When the Philistines took the ark of God, they brought it _____
_____.”

WHAT DID YOU LEARN TODAY WITH THE KING?





WEDNESDAY

LET'S PRAY Dear Father, thank You for sending Your Son, Jesus, to live a life on this earth so I have an example to follow. Thank You that I can have my sins forgiven because of what Jesus did on the cross for me. I love you Lord. In Jesus' name, Amen.

MEMORY VERSE - PHILIPPIANS 4:7

“And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus”.

THERE'S **POWER** IN THE WORD!

LET'S READ:

1 Samuel 6:1-12



LET'S THINK ABOUT THIS

Today we read that the Ark of the Covenant spent a total of seven months with the Philistines. When they first took the ark they were jubilant but now their feelings were very different and they couldn't wait to get rid of it. The Philistines were not sure as to how to remove it from their country and they consulted with their priests and wise men. They told the people to put the Ark of the Covenant on a cart pulled by cows and send it off with offerings of models of golden tumors and rats to try and appease the God they had offended. This was a custom in their country, which they did to appease their gods.



God gave the Philistines the opportunity to repent from their idolatrous worship and turn to Him. The leaders of the Philistines acknowledged the Israelites' God and the judgments that He had sent them. They also knew the events about God delivering His people from Egypt. But the Philistines did not want to turn their hearts to God and truly repent. Check out *2 Peter 3:9*.

FIND AND FINISH THIS VERSE - 1 SAMUEL 6:_____

“Then take the ark of the LORD and set it on the cart; and put the articles of gold which you are returning to Him as a _____

_____.”

WHAT DID YOU LEARN TODAY WITH THE KING?





THURSDAY

LET'S PRAY Dear Lord, thank You for Your continued patience and guidance over my life. Please forgive me for my sins. Help me to learn and grow in my Christian walk with You. Thank You for my Bible.
In Jesus' name, Amen.

MEMORY VERSE - PHILIPPIANS 4:7

“And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus”.

THERE'S **POWER** IN THE WORD!

LET'S READ:

1 Samuel 6:13-21



LET'S THINK ABOUT THIS

In our Bible reading today we learned that five Philistine lords followed the Ark of the Covenant to make sure it safely left their country. The people of Beth Shemesh were reaping wheat in their fields when they saw the Ark return. They offered the cows that pulled the cart as an offering to the LORD. The people of Beth Shemesh and the surrounding area were joyful that the Ark had returned, but they had no sense of reverence towards the Ark. They did not immediately find a suitable resting place for it but left it in the field. After a while they became curious and lifted the blue cloth that covered the Ark of the Covenant and looked inside. Our torchlight explains that even the Philistines dared not remove the coverings. The Israelites knew that it was only the High Priest that could look upon the Ark and cover it before it went on its travels. The priests who carried the Ark were not even allowed to touch it but had to carry it with poles that were attached to the Ark by rings. The Bible tells us that God struck fifty thousand and seventy men dead for not heeding the instructions of God. The people of Beth Shemesh sent a message to the people of Kirjath Jearim to come and get the Ark.

The people were not obeying God's Ten Commandments and were not sorry for their sins. We need to pray to God each day for sight so we can see the things we are doing wrong – we need to ask God to take away our blindness. Check out *1 John 2:11* and *Acts 26:18*.



FIND AND FINISH THIS VERSE - 1 SAMUEL 6:_____

“ _____; and they lifted their eyes and saw the ark, and rejoiced to see it.”

WHAT DID YOU LEARN TODAY WITH THE KING?





FRIDAY

LET'S PRAY Dear God, thank You for the blessings You have given me this past week. Help me to be obedient and faithful to Your commandments. Please shine Your light through me today. In Jesus' name, Amen.

MEMORY VERSE - PHILIPPIANS 4:7

“And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus”.

THERE'S **POWER** IN THE WORD!

LET'S READ:

1 Samuel 7:1-6



LET'S THINK ABOUT THIS

Today we read that the men of Kirjath Jearim came to collect the Ark with gladness, but unlike the people of Beth Shemesh, they received it with reverence. They knew it was a divine favour from the LORD that it came to them because they had been obedient and faithful. They took the Ark of the Covenant to a house of a Levite named Abinadab. Abinadab appointed Eleazar his son to take care of it. The Bible tells us in verse 2 that it remained there a 'long time'. As our previous devotional told us in 1 Samuel 2:31-32, Eli and his household were to be cut off from the priesthood because of Eli's neglectful behaviour in not restraining his sons. When Eli and his sons died, the Tabernacle was



removed from Shiloh and moved to another location further south. The Ark and the original Tabernacle were never to coexist together again. We will cover this in future devotionals.

After many years had passed, the oppression of the Philistines and the work of Samuel in guiding and teaching the nation finally had an effect on the Israelites. The Israelites came as a group to Mizpah and confessed their sins, and fasted and prayed. God blessed Samuel's ministry in turning the peoples' hearts back to God. Samuel was faithful in his calling as a Nazarite. Read *Hebrews 11:32-33*.

FIND AND FINISH THIS VERSE - 1 SAMUEL 7:_____

“So the children of Israel put away _____,
_____.”

WHAT DID YOU LEARN TODAY WITH THE KING?





SABBATH

LET'S PRAY Dearest Heavenly Father, thank You for providing me with the Sabbath Day where I can rest from the busy world and spend time with You. Help me to learn more about You today so I can share Your character with others. In Jesus' name, Amen.

MEMORY VERSE - PHILIPPIANS 4:7

“And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus”.

THERE'S **POWER** IN THE WORD!

LET'S READ:

1 Samuel 7:7-17



THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK

Our Bible reading today tells us that while the Children of Israel were gathered at Mizpah with Samuel, in prayer and fasting, the Philistines became alarmed as they thought they were gathering to prepare for war against them. So the Philistines prepared to make war against the Israelites. The Israelites cried out to Samuel to intercede and pray for them as they had made no preparations for war. Samuel did this and God answered on behalf of the Israelites. He sent a fierce storm upon the Philistines and destroyed them. After this there was peace for many years in Israel. Samuel a prophet, priest and judge continued to minister to the Israelite nation.

We have studied about Moses in past studies, about his amazing intercession on behalf of the Israelites. Go to Psalm 99:6 where it tells us about Samuel's amazing ministry. We can also intercede, or pray, for others as well. Think about someone whom you could pray for over the next week.



SABBATH QUIZ

1. To what tribe did the man belong, who brought the bad news to Eli about his sons and the Ark? _____
2. What was the name of the Philistines god that bowed before the Ark of the Covenant? _____
3. To which three Philistine cities was the Ark taken?

4. What pulled the cart that carried the Ark back to Beth Shemesh?

5. What was the name of the town in which the Ark of the Covenant remained for a long time? _____