

## Drafted to Serve

**Text: I Samuel 6:1-12,14** And the ark of the LORD was in the country of the Philistines seven months. 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. And the men did so; and took two milch kine, and tied them to the cart, and shut up their calves at home: 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. 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. (verse 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.

**Introduction:** *To me, this is one of the most fascinating stories in the entire Bible. Fascinating for the following reasons:*

1. *Israel's Backslidden Army* tries to force God onto the battlefield. Religion without God's Presence is empty and powerless!
2. *The Philistines' capture of God in battle* - hard to grasp that God could be captured by an Evil Enemy! **WAS GOD REALLY CAPTURED OR WAS HE ONLY TOYING WITH THE ENEMIES OF ISRAEL?**
3. *God's response to the capture* - the story of trying to hold God captive for seven months
  - Dagon the false god vs the REAL GOD - In the presence of God, Dagon fell on his face and lost both of his hands!
  - The plague of the emerods or boils upon the enemy
  - The plague of the mice
  - When God got through with them, the enemy wished they had left God alone! It was much worse than "catching a tiger by the tail"!
4. *The Plan devised to return the Ark back to Israel:*
5. *The audacity of evil men in trying to test God:* even after all that had happened – **unbeliever's audacity**
  - Pharaoh hardened his heart against the plagues of Egypt
  - **II Timothy 3:8-9** Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith. But they shall proceed no further: for their folly shall be manifest unto all men, as theirs also was.
  - **There is NO record the Philistines repented or sought to replace Dagon with the God of Israel! I Samuel 6:16** And when the five lords of the Philistines had seen it, they returned to Ekron the same day. THE END OF THE STORY! THEY RETURNED TO THEIR PAGAN WORLD!
6. *Life Lessons taught by Dumb Animals:*

It's fascinating to see the animal's response to the plan of the Philistines – the drafting of the animals into service and how the dumb animals reacted to their assignment.

7. *Searching for God in the Wrong Way is Deadly:* taking God's commandments lightly is to Die!  
**I Samuel 6:19-20** 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. And the men of Bethshemesh said, Who is able to stand before this holy LORD God?
8. *The Sovereignty of God:* God is called THE ALMIGHTY GOD - He really doesn't need help or assistance from anybody!

**Since time is limited, I want to focus on Three Parts of this Story:** (1) *Searching for God in the Wrong Way is Deadly*; (2) *Life Lessons taught by Dumb Animals*; and, (3) *CLOSE with a short reminder of The Sovereignty of God*

**(1) *Searching for God in the Wrong Way is Deadly:***

**I Samuel 6:19-21** 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, **50,070 people died because they DID NOT Show Proper Respect to God – they sought God in the Wrong Manner!**

**Exodus 19:12-14** And thou shalt set bounds unto the people round about, saying, Take heed to yourselves, that ye go not up into the mount, or touch the border of it: whosoever toucheth the mount shall be surely put to death: There shall not an hand touch it, but he shall surely be stoned, or shot through; whether it be beast or man, it shall not live: when the trumpet soundeth long, they shall come up to the mount. And Moses went down from the mount unto the people, and sanctified the people; and they washed their clothes.

**\*\*\*THAT'S OLD TESTAMENT – SHOW ME NEW TESTAMENT SCRIPTURE\*\*\***

**Hebrews 12:28-29** Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, *whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: For our God is a consuming fire.*

**John 14:6** Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: **no man cometh unto the Father**, but by me.

**John 4:22-24** (Samaritan woman at the well) ***Ye worship ye know not what:*** we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. **God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.**

**Matthew 5:21-23** Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And *then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.*

**John 10:30** ***I and my Father are one.***

**John 14:9** *he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?*

**\*\*\*A word of WARNING to our modern church – WE MUST GIVE GOD OUR BEST! WE MUST SERVE HIM WITH GODLY FEAR AND PROPER REVERENCE!**

***Our approach to God is different under GRACE (through Christ not the LAW) - but - THE SAME GOD THAT'S IN THE OLD TESTAMENT IS THE SAME GOD OF THE NEW TESTAMENT!***

**(2) *Life Lessons taught by Dumb Animals:* THIS IS THE HEART OF MY SERMON!**

***MAY GOD HELP ME TO BRING THIS PART OF THE STORY OUT IN THE PROPER WAY!***

**I Samuel 6:7-12** 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. And the men did so; and took two milch kine, and tied them to the cart, and shut up their calves at home: 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. 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;

*WHY this plan – WHY these animals? --- THIS WAS A TEST! WOULD GOD BE ABLE TO USE THE MOST RIDICULOUS and UNLIKELY RESOURCES to RETURN to ISRAEL – or – were all the plagues upon them (Philistines) just by happenstance?*

LET'S LOOK AT THE TWO DUMB ANIMALS & LEARN THREE THINGS FROM THEIR STORY!

**First, notice some TRUTHS about the Selected Animals:**

- ❖ *They were drafted to serve and did not volunteer for service.*
- ❖ *They were dumb animal – dumb animals are dumb animals and limited in brain capacity and intellectual ability. The assignment was beyond their limited capabilities – they couldn't read maps – they couldn't follow directions – they couldn't understand anything at all about the assigned mission.*
- ❖ *They were milch kine – milk cows (modern translation)– they weren't the right type of animal to pull a cart! This is like asking a shepherd dog to tree squirrels - OR a pigeon to hunt like a trained falcon – OR asking a TN Walking Horse to run like a Thoroughbred! NOT THE PROPER BREED FOR THE JOB*
- ❖ *They had no prior training on how to pull a cart. THERE HAD COME NO YOKE - clueless of the task!*
- ❖ *They locked up their new born calves – NOW, GOD MUST OVERRIDE ONE OF THE STRONGEST FORCES IN NATURE – AN ANIMAL SEEKING TO BE REUNITED WITH ITS NEW BORN BABY!*
- ❖ *Sadly, their lives were sacrificed at the end of the mission – they never returned to their new born calves*

**\*\*THREE AMAZING LESSONS TO LEARN FROM THE DUMB ANIMALS IN THIS STORY\*\***

**a) A Beautiful Object Lesson on HOW TO BE LED BY THE SPIRIT OF GOD**

**I Samuel 6:10-12** And the men did so; and took two milch kine, and tied them to the cart, and shut up their calves at home: 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. 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.

IF DUMB ANIMALS CAN BE LED AND CONTROLLED BY THE UNSEEN POWER OF GOD, WHAT'S OUR EXCUSE?

**Romans 8:11-14** But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, **he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.** Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but **if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live.**

**For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.**

**Galatians 5:16-18** This I say then, **Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.** For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.

**b) A Beautiful Object Lesson on A VICTORIOUS WALK OF FAITH**

**I 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.

IF DUMB ANIMALS WILL ALLOW GOD TO LEAD THEM ON A JOURNEY WITHOUT A CLUE OF WHERE THEY'RE GOING, WHAT'S OUR EXCUSE?

THE DUMB ANIMALS DIDN'T HAVE TO KNOW WHERE THEY WERE GOING BECAUSE GOD KNEW AND THEY COULD SIMPLY TRUST HIM TO LEAD THEM DOWN THE RIGHT PATH!

**Hebrews 11:8-10,15-16** By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and **he went out, not knowing whither he went.** By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. And truly, **if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better country,** that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city.

**II Corinthians 5:7** For we walk by faith, not by sight:

**c) A Beautiful Object Lesson on COMPLETING THE MISSION NO MATTER THE COST**

**I Samuel 6:12-14** 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. 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. 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.**

- **The animals took the straight way to the way (road) of Bethshemesh**
- **The animals turned not aside to the right hand or the left**
- **The animals were lowing as they went – crying for their new born calves**
- **The animals were offered as a SACRIFICE at the end.**

**Sacrificed to God - the Noblest of all animal deaths – maybe ??? the same honor for an animal as a HUMAN MARTYR??? maybe??? - Far more noble for an animal than a slaughter house!!!**

IF DUMB ANIMALS CAN BE TRUSTED & USED BY GOD TO COMPLETE HIS PURPOSE, WHAT'S OUR EXCUSE IF WE STOP SHORT OR BECOME SIDETRACKED & FAIL IN OUR JOURNEY?

**II Timothy 4:6-8** For **I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:** Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

**CLOSING: A SHORT REMINDER ABOUT “THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD”!**

**God really doesn't need help or assistance from anybody!** Its an honor when He chooses to use us!

- (a) Daniel 4:34-35** And at the end of the days I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven...and praised and honoured him that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion...And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?
- (b) Psalms 115:3** **But our God is in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased.**
- (c) Colossians 1:16-17** For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And **he is before all things, and by him all things consist.**
- (d) Matthew 10:28-30** And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered.
- (e) Romans 8:28** **And we know that all things work together** for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.