

SERMON-BASED STUDY: THE BOX WARS

1 Samuel 3:19-4:11, ESV – ¹⁹ And Samuel grew, and the LORD was with him and let none of his words fall to the ground. ²⁰ And all Israel from Dan to Beersheba knew that Samuel was established as a prophet of the LORD. ²¹ And the LORD appeared again at Shiloh, for the LORD revealed himself to Samuel at Shiloh by the word of the LORD.

4 ¹ And the word of Samuel came to all Israel.

Now Israel went out to battle against the Philistines. They encamped at Ebenezer, and the Philistines encamped at Aphek. ² The Philistines drew up in line against Israel, and when the battle spread, Israel was defeated before the Philistines, who killed about four thousand men on the field of battle. ³ And when the people came to the camp, the elders of Israel said, “Why has the LORD defeated us today before the Philistines? Let us bring the ark of the covenant of the LORD here from Shiloh, that it may come among us and save us from the power of our enemies.” ⁴ So the people sent to Shiloh and brought from there the ark of the covenant of the LORD of hosts, who is enthroned on the cherubim. And the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were there with the ark of the covenant of God.

⁵ As soon as the ark of the covenant of the LORD came into the camp, all Israel gave a mighty shout, so that the earth resounded. ⁶ And when the Philistines heard the noise of the shouting, they said, “What does this great shouting in the camp of the Hebrews mean?” And when they learned that the ark of the LORD had come to the camp, ⁷ the Philistines were afraid, for they said, “A god has come into the camp.” And they said, “Woe to us! For nothing like this has happened before. ⁸ Woe to us! Who can deliver us from the power of these mighty gods? These are the gods who struck the Egyptians with every sort of plague in the wilderness. ⁹ Take courage, and be men, O Philistines, lest you become slaves to the Hebrews as they have been to you; be men and fight.”

¹⁰ So the Philistines fought, and Israel was defeated, and they fled, every man to his home. And there was a very great slaughter, for thirty thousand foot soldiers of Israel fell. ¹¹ And the ark of God was captured, and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, died.

Notes:

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- 5.

QUICK REVIEW

Looking back at your notes from this week’s teaching, was there anything you heard for the first time or that caught your attention, challenged, or confused you?

ENGAGE WITH THE MESSAGE

- 1 This week we learned how the elders of Israel asked the right question but got the wrong answer. Why was their question right? Why did they get a wrong answer?
- 2 Share a time when you have seen correct theology being misused. How do people fall into this mistake?
- 3 How did the Israelites misunderstanding of God contribute to their misuse of theology? What was their real motivation for doing this?

DIGGING DEEPER

A **2 Corinthians 11:3-4, ESV** – ³ But I am afraid that as the serpent deceived Eve by his cunning, your thoughts will be led astray from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ. ⁴ For if someone comes and proclaims another Jesus than the one we proclaimed, or if you receive a different spirit from the one you received, or if you accept a different gospel from the one you accepted, you put up with it readily enough.

Galatians 6:7-8, ESV – ⁷ Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap. ⁸ For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.

- 4 Looking at 2 Corinthians 11:3-4, what does Paul mean by, “you put up with it readily enough”? What were the Corinthians putting up with? Why did they fall into this trap?
- 5 How do people deceive themselves into thinking they are “getting one over” on God? How do they deceive others?
- 6 How can followers of Christ avoid other Jesus’, different spirits, and different gospels?

B *Philippians 4:6-7, ESV* – ⁶ do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Psalms 73:13-17, ESV – ¹³ All in vain have I kept my heart clean and washed my hands in innocence. ¹⁴ For all the day long I have been stricken and rebuked every morning. ¹⁵ If I had said, “I will speak thus,” I would have betrayed the generation of your children. ¹⁶ But when I thought how to understand this, it seemed to me a wearisome task, ¹⁷ until I went into the sanctuary of God; then I discerned their end.

7 Looking at the passages above, what role should prayer play in a person’s life? What do we receive when we bring all our prayers and supplications to God?

8 How does the Psalmist contrast trusting in his works and trusting in God?

9 How do we enter the sanctuary of God? Why is it important to take our concerns to Him before acting on our own thinking?

TAKING IT HOME

The way we view God has great influence on how we interact with Him. What about you? Are you viewing God the wrong way? Is He merely your cheerleader, your waiter, or your lucky charm? Is your relationship with Him all about what He can give you or is it rooted in what you are surrendering to Him? Share with your group or accountability partner what God is speaking to you today. Pray for one another as you surrender your whole being to God.

PRAISES AND PRAYER REQUEST

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FOR FURTHER STUDY

Isaiah 26:3

Jeremiah 7:2-7

Matthew 6:25

John 14:27