

1 Samuel 6:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the Levites took down the ark of the LORD, and the coffer that was with it, wherein the jewels of gold were, and put them on the great stone: and the men of Beth-shemesh offered burnt offerings and sacrificed sacrifices the same day unto the LORD.

Analysis

And the Levites took down the ark of the LORD, and the coffer that was with it, wherein the jewels of gold were, and put them on the great stone: and the men of Beth-shemesh offered burnt offerings and sacrificed sacrifices the same day unto the LORD.

The Levites' involvement introduces proper order into the proceedings. Only Levites, specifically Kohathites, were authorized to handle the Ark (Numbers 4:15), suggesting at least some adherence to Mosaic regulations. The Ark and its accompanying coffer of golden offerings were placed on the great stone, creating an improvised sanctuary. The phrase 'burnt offerings and sacrificed sacrifices' indicates multiple offering types - 'olot' (burnt offerings) representing complete dedication and 'zevachim' (peace offerings) enabling communal celebration. The repeated offerings throughout 'the same day' suggest extended, joyful worship. Yet the narrator's careful distinction between Levites handling the Ark and 'men of Beth-shemesh' offering sacrifices hints at procedural irregularities that will soon bring tragic consequences.

Historical Context

The Kohathite Levites were specifically assigned to carry the Ark and most holy objects (Numbers 4:4-15). Their presence at Beth-shemesh, a Levitical city, explains how the Ark could be properly handled. The peace offerings allowed worshipers to eat portions of the sacrifice, making this a covenant meal celebrating the Ark's return.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. Why does Scripture carefully note the Levites' role in handling the Ark?
2. How does proper procedure in worship honor God's holiness while enabling genuine celebration?

Interlinear Text

וְהַלְוִיִּם	הוֹרִידוּ	אֶת	אֶרֶץ	לַיהוָה:	וְאֵת	קֶמֶר זָ
And the Levites	took down	H853	the ark	of the LORD	H853	and the coffer
H3881	H3381		H727	H3068		H712
אֲשֶׁר	אֵתוֹ	אֲשֶׁר	בּוֹ	כָּלִי	זָה	בַּ
H834	H854	H834	H0	that was with it wherein the jewels	of gold	
				H3627	H2091	
וַיֵּשׁ מִן־	אֶל	הָאֶבֶן	הַגְּדוֹלָה	וְאֶנֶשׁ י	בֵּית	שֵׁם מֶשֶׁה
were and put	H413	stone	them on the great	H376	H0	of Bethshemesh
H7760		H68	H1419			H1053
וְהֶעֱלָה	עַל זֹת	וַיִּזְבַּח	זִבְחֵי יָם	בַּיּוֹם	וְהָיָה	
offered	burnt offerings	and sacrificed	sacrifices	the same day		
H5927	H5930	H2076	H2077	H3117	H1931	
לַיהוָה:						
of the LORD						
H3068						