

1 Samuel 6:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

Analysis

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.

The Ark narrative reveals that God's presence cannot be manipulated through religious symbols or ritualistic practices. Israel's superstitious use of the Ark as a magical talisman demonstrated fundamental misunderstanding of covenant relationship. The Ark's capture and Israel's defeat prove that external religious forms without heart transformation provide no protection from judgment. Yet even in captivity, the Ark demonstrates Yahweh's supremacy—Dagon falls, plagues strike, and the Philistines recognize a power they cannot control or domesticate.

Historical Context

The Philistines, part of the 'Sea Peoples' who settled the coastal plain around 1200 BCE, possessed superior iron technology and organized military forces. Their pentapolis (five major cities: Gaza, Ashkelon, Ashdod, Ekron, Gath) controlled coastal trade routes and threatened Israelite settlements in the hill country. The Philistine threat created the political pressure that would eventually lead to Israel's demand for centralized monarchy.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. How does this passage deepen our understanding of God's character, purposes, and ways of working in human history?
2. What specific heart attitudes, thought patterns, or life practices does this passage call you to examine or change?
3. How does this passage connect to the larger biblical narrative of redemption and point toward Christ and the gospel?

Interlinear Text

וְלָקַחְתָּם	אֶת	אֲרוֹן	יְהוָה	וַנִּתֵּן	אֹתוֹ	אֶל	הָעֲגֹלָה
And take	H853	the ark	of the LORD	and lay	H853	H413	it upon the cart
H3947		H727	H3068	H5414			H5699
וְיָאֵתָן	כָּל־יְ	הַזֶּה־בְּ	אֲשֶׁר־	הַשְּׁבִיטִים	לוֹ		
H853	the jewels	of gold	H834	which ye return	H0		
	H3627	H2091		H7725			
אֵשׁ	מִצַּד־וְ	בְּאֲרוֹן־זֶ	תָּשִׁימוּ	אֵשׁ			
him for a trespass offering	and put	in a coffer	by the side				
H817	H7760	H712	H6654				
וְשִׁלַּחְתָּם	אֵת־וְ	וְהָלַךְ:					
thereof and send it away	H853	that it may go					
H7971		H1980					