

How Not to Handle God

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1 Samuel 6:1-7:2

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Well that didn't work out as planned:

- Philistines took joy in capturing ark and adding it to their pantheon
- 7 months of trouble...
- God's hand was heavy on those who didn't honor Him!

Looking for Solutions to Escape God's Wrath:

- Initially they sought a government (lords) solution...
- Now they seek a religious (diviners) solution
- Their solution was not well informed (from God's Word)

God is Holy and His Wrath is brought on by our Sin:

- Man was created to obey God^{Gen2:16-17; chp3}
- WSCQ14: *Sin is any want of conformity unto, or transgression of the law of God.*
- Philistines sinned^{Exo20:3,4-6} against God
- Israel brought into land to expel those who rejected God^{Deut7}

A Holy God Responds to Sin with Wrath and Judgment:

- Sinners are without excuse^{Rom1:18-20}
- God is Good and Gracious, but also Holy^{Hab1:13}
- Creation is under bondage due to sin^{Rom8:20-21}
- All this to call us to turn to the Holy God in repentance

All Sin needs a suitable Sacrifice to satisfy God's Anger

- Even the Philistines understood this^{1S6:3-4}
- They kinda understood^{1S6:4-5}: costly & corresponding
- Costly: gold; but mice ritually unclean^{Lev11:29}, tumors^{Dt28:27}
- Should have seen need for blood sacrifice^{Lev5:15} & faith
- It is always faith in God's provision^{Rm4:3,6-8; Ps32:1-2}
- After Fall, God shed blood of animals to cover^{Gen3:21}
- Christ is the ultimate covering^{Rom3:21-26}

The Sacrifice God Accepts

- Our sin is infinite offense so sacrifice must be costly^{1Pt1:18-19}
- Or sacrifice must correspond^{Rom8:3-4; 2Cor5:21}
- Philistines came on own terms – Go to God's Word^{Mt4:4}

The Ark Returns to Israel

- Philistines sent with 'impossible test' - nursing cows
- Cows & cart went right to Bethshemesh^{Josh21:16}
- Israelites rejoice^{1S6:13}; Levites should have known what to do
- Israelites made the ark a spectacle - God judges harshly
- Hebrew 'seventy men, fifty thousand men' 70 here, 50K previous?

An Improper Fear of God

- Israelites didn't know God by Word... asked *who can stand?*
- Responded to harsh providence by seeking to be rid of God
- Instead look in faith HARDER to the Gracious Gospel!

Not the Way to Handle God

- Levites of Bethshemesh, like Philistines send God away
- Ask Kirath-jearim^{Josh9:17}, Non-Israelite Gideonites
- The 'outsiders' are faithful in handling the ark

Trust in God's Word & the Atonement God Provides

- This all points to propitiation (mercy seat) of Jesus^{Rom3:21-25}