

Readings from the Word of God

2 May 2021

Joshua 6:15-16, 20 (Kempton Project Translation)

¹⁵ And it was, on the seventh day, that they got up early as the dawn came up, and went around the city according to this manner seven times; only on that day they went around the city seven times. ¹⁶ And it was, at the seventh time, the priests sounded with the shophars, and Joshua said to the people, “Shout, for Jehovah has given to you the city.”

²⁰ And the people shouted, and they sounded with the shophars; and it was, as the people heard the voice of the shophar, and the people shouted with a great shout, that the wall fell under itself, and the people went up into the city, each man to the front of him, and they captured the city.

1 Samuel 4:1-11 (Kempton Project Translation, modified)

¹ And Israel went out to meet the Philistines in battle, and encamped by Eben-ezer; and the Philistines encamped in Aphek. ² And the Philistines set themselves in array to meet Israel; and the battle extended; and Israel was stricken by the Philistines; and they smote in the battle array in the field about four thousand men. ³ And the people came to the camp, and the elders of Israel said, “Why has Jehovah stricken us today before the Philistines? Let us take to us from Shiloh the ark of the covenant of Jehovah, and let it come into our midst, and it shall save us from the palm of the hand of our enemies.” ⁴ And the people sent to Shiloh, and carried from there the ark of the covenant of Jehovah of Armies, who sits upon the cherubim; and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were there with the ark of the covenant of God.

⁵ And it was, when the ark of the covenant of Jehovah came into the camp, that all Israel shouted with a great shout, and the earth made a noise. ⁶ And the Philistines heard the voice of the shout, and they said, "What is the voice of this great shout, in the camp of the Hebrews?" And they knew that the ark of Jehovah was come into the camp. ⁷ And the Philistines feared; for they said, "God is come into the camp." And they said, "Woe unto us! for there has not been such a thing yesterday and the day before. ⁸ Woe unto us! Who shall rescue us from the hand of these magnificent gods? These are they, the gods who smote the Egyptians with every smiting in the wilderness. ⁹ Strengthen yourselves, and be men, O ye Philistines, lest you serve the Hebrews, as they have served you; and be men, and fight."

¹⁰ And the Philistines fought, and Israel was struck down, and they fled, a man to his tent; and there was a very great smiting; and there fell of Israel thirty thousand footmen. ¹¹ And the ark of God was taken; and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, died.

Apocalypse Explained §817:6

All the wars that the sons of Israel waged against the Philistines represented the combats of the spiritual man with the natural man [or our spiritual self with our natural self], and from this they also represented the combats of truth conjoined with good against truth separated from good....

Divine Providence §326:12

The Philistines symbolised people caught up in faith separated from charity.

Doctrine of Faith §50

Because this religion, which is one of faith divorced from charity, continually tries to invade the church, therefore the Philistines remained in the land of Canaan and harassed the children of Israel again and again.

Divine Providence §245

[T]he church depends on its body of teaching and its body of teaching is based on the Word. Nevertheless, it is not the body of teaching itself but its integrity and purity, and therefore an understanding of the Word, that forms the church. The church in miniature that is in us as individuals is also formed and established not by a body of teaching but by our faith and by our living our faith. Likewise, what forms and establishes the church in miniature in any of us is not the Word; it is the faith based on truths and the life based on goods that we individually draw from the Word and apply to ourselves.

The Word is like a mine that has gold and silver deep down in great abundance; it is like a mine where the farther in we go, the more precious are the types of stone we find. Our understanding of the Word is what gives us access to these “mines.” If we did not understand the Word’s true nature as it is at its heart and in its depth, the Word would no more form the church in us than mines like these in the Middle East would make some person in Europe rich.

People who own the Word but do not receive from it any understanding of genuine truth or any willingness to do genuine good are like people who think they are rich because they have borrowed money from others or who think themselves well off because they include in their reckoning other people’s properties,

houses, and possessions, which as anyone can see is not their wealth.

1 Samuel 7:3-7, 10-13 (Kempton Project Translation, modified)

³ And Samuel said to all the house of Israel, saying, “If with all your heart you return to Jehovah, remove the foreign gods from your midst, and the Ashtaroth, and prepare your heart for Jehovah, and serve Him alone; then He will rescue you from the hand of the Philistines.” ⁴ And the sons of Israel removed the Baals and the Ashtaroth, and served Jehovah alone.

⁵ And Samuel said, Bring together all Israel to Mizpah, and I will pray for you unto Jehovah. ⁶ And they came together toward Mizpah, and drew water, and spilled it before Jehovah, and fasted in that day, and said there, “We have sinned against Jehovah.” And Samuel judged the sons of Israel in Mizpah.

⁷ And the Philistines heard that the sons of Israel had come together to Mizpah, and the satraps of the Philistines went up against Israel. And the sons of Israel heard it, and they feared before the Philistines.

¹⁰ And it was, as Samuel was offering up the burnt offering, and the Philistines approached to battle with Israel, that Jehovah thundered with a great voice on that day against the Philistines, and routed them; and they were stricken before Israel. ¹¹ And the men of Israel went out from Mizpah and they pursued the Philistines, and they smote them until under Beth-car.

¹³ And the Philistines were humbled, and they did not come again into the border of Israel; and the hand of Jehovah was upon the Philistines all the days of Samuel.