The God of David

The Glory Departs from Israel
1 Samuel 4-6
Lesson 2

Trinity Bible Church Sunday School
September 9, 2012
You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me.”

John 5:39

- Moral stories?
- An angry God?
- Two versions of God – Old and New Testament
A revelation of Jesus

- The lesson on the road to Emmaus
- A difference in clarity
- Genesis 3:15
- A curious and magnificent story
- The importance of history
1 and 2 Samuel

- The Exodus and conquest of the Promised Land
- Anarchy in the era of the judges – 325 years
- The power of evil
- The “Hound of Heaven” (Francis Thompson, 1859-1907)
- The conscious end point: Christ
Historical Context

▶ Eli
  • Age 98 at death after battle at Aphek (4:15)
  • Judged Israel 40 years (4:18)
  • Typical of the average Israelite – religious structure but no life

▶ Samuel
  • Born 1100 – (8:1-3) adult sons before selection of King Saul
  • Godly mother, Hannah – looking for King Messiah.
  • Began to lead at death of Eli after battle of Aphek (ca. 25 years)
  • Led battle of Mizpah after 20 years (7:1-2)
Philistines

- Appear in Genesis; altered the course of the exodus
- 5 strongholds: Ashkelon, Ashdod, Ekron, Gaza, Gath
- Monopoly on smelting iron (1 Sam. 13:19-22)
- Dominant power in the days of Eli and Samuel
- Neutralized by Samson
The Glory Departs from Israel
1 Samuel 4-6

- The capture of the Ark and death of Eli and his sons (4)
- The Ark among the Philistines (5)
- The return of the Ark to Israel (6)
The Philistines capture the Ark (4)

- The muted word of Samuel – 20 years (3:19-4:1 & 7:2)!
- Defeat at Aphek – 4,000 men
- “Why has the LORD defeated us today before the Philistines?”
- Psalm 44 – lament of the righteous in an evil age
A way that seems right . . .

- Bring the ark!
- Ark of Covenant of LORD of Hosts Who is enthroned on the cherubim
- Historical precedent?
- Philistine – fear without faith
- The way of death
- Ichabod – “no glory”
Shiloh destroyed

- Not mentioned in 1 and 2 Samuel as worship center
- Ark not returned to Shiloh after its return
- Samuel moved to his hometown, Ramah (7:17)
- Shiloh destroyed – Jeremiah 7:12-14; 26:6, 9
- Archeology shows destruction around 1050 BC
The Purpose of God

» Forward progress – not a setback

» Psalm 78
  • Recurring rebellion and recurring grace
  • He rejected Shiloh and Ephraim
  • He chose Judah and David
    – A new “Sanctuary”
    – A true Shepherd
The Ark among the Philistines (5)

- The temple of Dagon
  - Father of Baal
  - Credited with victory over Samson (Judges 16:23)
  - YHWH must serve Dagon
  - Dagon falls and is picked up
  - Dagon – head and hands cut off
  - “His hand is hard against us and Dagon our god” (5:7)
The Ark among the Philistines (5)

- The Plague
- Three consecutive cities of Philistia
- Tumors and mice – Bubonic plague
- His hand is hard against us and Dagon our god (5:7)
  - Great panic (5:9) and deathly panic (5:11)
  - The saw clearly the wrath of God but did not repent
  - Sought a way of their own doing to turn the wrath of God away
  - No clear message from Israel how to avert the wrath of God
- A severe mercy
The Ark returns to Israel (6)

- Priests and diviners provide council
  - Guilt offering – sense of sin before God
  - Human offering – gold
  - Give glory to God of Israel
  - Leviticus 11:29 rats are unclean

- The test:
  - Milk cows – unyoked; recent calves
  - Ark on cart with golden gift in box beside it
  - The Ark returns – despite the protests of the cows

- Sad sequel – lords return without comment (6:16)
The Ark at Beth-shemesh

- Levitical city for Kohathites who cared for the ark (Numbers 4:4, 15)
- Reception in Beth-shemesh
  - Joy
  - Burnt offering – Leviticus 1:3 – should be male animal
  - Levites handled the Ark
- Wrath in Beth-shemesh
  - Looked upon/in the Ark – not touch or see
  - 70 men
- Send the Ark away!
How to re-write history!

- The necessity of the Word of God
- A knowledge of God – sovereign/holy/good
- The hope of Christ