

VEF April 26th, 2020

Call to Worship	Psalm 115:9-13
Worship in Song	You Are Holy (Prince of Peace) Great Is Thy Faithfulness
Scripture Reading	Luke 17:20-30
Worship in the Word	“The Kingdom of God” - 1 Samuel 7:2-17 Peter Park
Response Song	The Lord Is My Salvation
Benediction	Pastor John Olson

Questions for Understanding

Have you ever experienced being in a big thunderstorm? Do you remember what it was like?

What does it mean to “return to the Lord with all your heart”?

How do the Israelites express sincere repentance?

Why did the Philistines decide to attack the Israelites during their assembly?

How did God save the Israelites?

Baal was the Philistine storm god. What statement is God making by using thunder to defeat the Philistines?

After the Philistines were defeated a memorial (v. 12) was set up so the Israelites would remember the help that God had given them. What kind of “memorials” have you set up to remind you of when God has helped or blessed you?

Announcements

These are unusual times that we are living in. As we all have been adapting and adjusting our daily habits and practices so too has the church been changing and adapting. Currently Victory has decided to continue the online services through May 31st. All cell groups and fellowships will also continue to meet online until further notice. At this point only essential personnel will be allowed to enter the church building (staff and coworkers who are involved in recording the services). Also know that during this time we will not be serving communion until we meet in person again. If you would like to talk with me about this privately I would be happy to do so. All steps being taken to prevent the spread of the coronavirus are being done in prayer and in consultation with an epidemic response team.

Even though we are not meeting in person right now the costs of Victory are largely the same. The church is asking you to please give your tithes and offerings now online. The offerings can be transferred to Victory's Postal account, the bank code is 700, followed by the account number - 0061021 0478485. When you make the first transfer in order to make sure that the offering goes to VEF please make sure to fill out this online form - <https://forms.gle/kyaFUoo9P3Pt8hUx6>.

Question: "Why were the Philistines and the Israelites always at war?"

<https://www.gotquestions.org/Israel-Philistines.html>

Answer:

It seems that, no matter where you turn in the Old Testament, Israel is fighting the [Philistines](#). While that's a slight exaggeration—there were fights with other nations, too—it is true that Israel and the Philistines had their share of run-ins. The Philistines were an ancient people, listed in the records of those who descended from Noah's son Ham after the time of the flood ([Genesis 10:14](#)). Abraham and Isaac interacted with the Philistines in Canaan ([Genesis 21:33–34](#)). But it was during the time of the Exodus that the Lord promised that the land of Israel would include the territory of the Philistines ([Exodus 23:31](#)); this promise meant that some kind of conflict would have to take place for Israel to displace the Philistines.

When [Joshua](#) was old, he mentioned the land of the Philistines as one of the areas that still remained to be defeated by Israel ([Joshua 13:1–3](#)). Because the Philistines were not completely removed, Israel faced them as perennial enemies.

During the time of [the judges](#) in Israel, the Philistines were often a thorn in Israel's side. Jephthah, Shamgar, and Samson all fought against Philistia. The battles between Israel and the Philistines continued in the days of Eli and later erupted in the conflict between [David and Goliath](#), a battle fought within a larger Israel-Philistine conflict ([1 Samuel 17](#)). David defeated Goliath, initiating a great victory for Israel, yet the history of Israel and the Philistines was not done.

During Solomon's reign in Israel, the Philistines were subdued, yet the later prophets note that the Philistines continued to war against Israel. The Philistines were devastated by the same [Assyrian Kingdom](#) that overtook Israel ([2 Kings 18:33–35](#)). Philistia was not completely destroyed until the time of the [Babylonian](#) and [Persian](#) Empires.

From the first Hebrew, Abraham, until the deportation of Judah to Babylon, the Philistines were a constant enemy of Israel. The conflict was over more than land; it involved divergent worldviews. Unlike the Israelites, the Philistines served human-made deities and were known as a violent, warlike people.

Seven major battles between Israel and the Philistines are recorded in the Old Testament. They include the Battle of Shephelah ([2 Chronicles 28](#)), the Battle of Aphek ([1 Samuel 4](#)), the Battle of Eben-Ezez ([1 Samuel 7:13–14](#)), the battles at Michmash ([1 Samuel 14](#)), the battle involving David and Goliath ([1 Samuel 17](#)), the battle at Mount Gilboa ([1 Samuel 31](#)), and Hezekiah's defeat of the Philistines ([2 Kings 18:5–8](#)).

The Philistines' eventual defeat was not due to Israel's strength or military prowess. As [Psalm 44:3](#) says, "It was not by their sword that they won the land, nor did their arm bring them victory; it was your right hand, your arm, and the light of your face, for you loved them."