

I. Israel and Philistia at Aphek

- A. Away to battle the Philistines
- B. A defeat and a brilliant plan (see Joshua 6)
- C. Courage and fear (see Joshua 6; Judges 7:18)
- D. Who will help when God is gone?
- E. "Ichabod"

II. The pattern of decline and renewal

- A. In Israel, in the church (not getting into this), in our hearts.
- B. Trouble comes; usually defeat in battle or longer term oppression.
- C. God leads Israel in repentance and victory.
- D. Israel forgets the God who redeemed them and blesses them.
- E. Israel begins to worship the gods of the nations around them.
- F. Disaster comes; usually defeat in battle or longer term oppression
- G. What will we do?

III. Exile: punishment for sin

- A. The covenant: blessings for obedience and curses for disobedience.
- B. The great punishment: exile from the promised land. (Deuteronomy 28:36ff.)
- C. Who has been exiled?
- D. In our place (see Luke 9:31)

IV. The victory of God over the gods

- A. The humiliation of the Philistines – hemorrhoids and pests (and death).
- B. The humiliation of the Philistine god – bowing and broken before the Ark of God.
- C. God must do the fighting in order for us to have victory. (Joshua 10:42; see also 23:3; Zechariah 4:6; Isaiah 57:15; 66:2)
- D. God is victorious through Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 15:55-57; see also Isaiah 62:7; 41:10; Romans 8:31)