

Theme: Our God reigns over all things, and this calls for a response of repentance, worship, and remembrance of God's work in our behalf.

I. Gettysburg

- A. Many trips to Gettysburg - a moving place
- B. A memorial to the place where men suffered and died
- C. A memorial the place where the tides of war shifted
- D. Humans have long done this - today we see Ebenezer
- E. What happened at this stage in the Game of Thrones?

II. The LORD Reigns

- A. The LORD reigns over the gods of the world
 - 1 After the Philistines had captured the ark of God, they took it from Ebenezer to Ashdod. 2 Then they carried the ark into Dagon's temple and set it beside Dagon. 3 When the people of Ashdod rose early the next day, there was Dagon, fallen on his face on the ground before the ark of the Lord! They took Dagon and put him back in his place. 4 But the following morning when they rose, there was Dagon, fallen on his face on the ground before the ark of the Lord! His head and hands had been broken off and were lying on the threshold; only his body remained. 1 Samuel 5:1-4
 - 1. Ark taken in tribute to Dagon, god of Philistines
 - 2. Placed in subservience to Dagon - Dagon Lord over Yahweh
 - 3. But Yahweh tips Dagon over - twice!!
 - 4. Yahweh breaks off head and hands - done to prisoners of war!

- 5. A powerful statement that Yahweh rules over the gods of this world

B. The LORD reigns over the people of this world

The LORD's hand was heavy upon the people of Ashdod and its vicinity; he brought devastation upon them and afflicted them with tumors. ⁷ When the men of Ashdod saw what was happening, they said, "The ark of the god of Israel must not stay here with us, because his hand is heavy upon us and upon Dagon our god." ¹ Samuel 5:6-7

- 1. The Philistines thought they controlled Yahweh - they were wrong
- 2. They recognized Yahweh ruled over them and their god
- 3. They send the ark on its way to another city
 - So they called together all the rulers of the Philistines and asked them, "What shall we do with the ark of the god of Israel?" They answered, "Have the ark of the god of Israel moved to Gath." So they moved the ark of the God of Israel. ⁹ But after they had moved it, the LORD's hand was against that city, throwing it into a great panic. He afflicted the people of the city, both young and old, with an outbreak of tumors. ¹ Samuel 5:8-9
 - 1. New city - same old results
 - 2. Yahweh was not to be trifled with
 - 3. After 7 months they give up and send ark away
 - 4. God rules over all humans - even those who do not know or recognize Him
 - 5. He rules the people and their gods

C. The LORD reigns over nature (1 Samuel 6)

1. The Philistines plan to return the ark
2. Cows never yoked, weaning calves - the cows will return to calves - unless Yahweh intervenes
3. Yahweh intervenes and they do not return but go to Israel
4. This shows Yahweh is in control of nature - not Dagon and Baal as the people thought
5. Seen even more in the battle story in chapter 7

While Samuel was sacrificing the burnt offering, the Philistines drew near to engage Israel in battle. But that day the Lord thundered with loud thunder against the Philistines and threw them into such a panic that they were routed before the Israelites. ¹¹ The men of Israel rushed out of Mizpah and pursued the Philistines, slaughtering them along the way to a point below Beth Car. 1 Samuel 7:10–11

- a. God routs the Philistines by sending powerful thunderstorm
- b. Dagon, Baal and Ashtoreth gods of fertility - crops
- c. Meant they controlled the weather - or did they?
- d. Yahweh shows He controls the weather - He is the God of Thunder!
- e. This is why later Elijah says no rain, and then a thunderstorm - Yahweh rules over nature - not Baal
- f. This is celebrated in Psalm 29

Ascribe to the Lord, O mighty ones, ascribe to the Lord glory and strength. ² Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name; worship the Lord in the splendor of his holiness. ³ The voice of the Lord is

over the waters; the God of glory thunders, the Lord thunders over the mighty waters. ⁴ The voice of the Lord is powerful; the voice of the Lord is majestic. ⁵ The voice of the Lord breaks the cedars; the Lord breaks in pieces the cedars of Lebanon. ⁶ He makes Lebanon skip like a calf, Sirion like a young wild ox. ⁷ The voice of the Lord strikes with flashes of lightning. ⁸ The voice of the Lord shakes the desert; the Lord shakes the Desert of Kadesh. ⁹ The voice of the Lord twists the oaks and strips the forests bare. And in his temple all cry, "Glory!" ¹⁰ The Lord sits enthroned over the flood; the Lord is enthroned as King forever. ¹¹ The Lord gives strength to his people; the Lord blesses his people with peace. Psalms 29:0–11

1. A powerful depiction of God ruling through the storm
2. A powerful statement for Yahweh - and against Baal, Ashtoreth and Dagon

6. God is here ruling over the people, their gods, & nature

III. A Proper Response to the Reign of God

- A. The people respond with confession and repentance and all the people of Israel mourned and sought after the Lord. ³ And Samuel said to the whole house of Israel, "If you are returning to the Lord with all your hearts, then rid yourselves of the foreign gods and the Ashtoreths and commit yourselves to the Lord and serve him only, and he will deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines." ⁴ So the Israelites put away their Baals and Ashtoreths, and served the Lord only. 1 Samuel 7:2–4
 1. The people don't just rejoice at return of ark
 2. They have seen their own sin - and seek God
 3. Also note they confess it in 1 Samuel 7:6
 4. They put away their idols - Baal and Ashtoreths

5. Note: Ashtoreth's spelling changed by Jews to make it sound similar to BOSHETH -- shame

6. True repentance - putting away our shameful idols

B. The people respond in worship - in face of enemies!

When the Philistines heard that Israel had assembled at Mizpah, the rulers of the Philistines came up to attack them. And when the Israelites heard of it, they were afraid because of the Philistines. ⁸ They said to Samuel, "Do not stop crying out to the Lord our God for us, that he may rescue us from the hand of the Philistines." ⁹ Then Samuel took a suckling lamb and offered it up as a whole burnt offering to the Lord. He cried out to the Lord on Israel's behalf, and the Lord answered him. 1 Samuel 7:7-9

1. The enemies of God's people do not sit for this!

2. But Israel does not face the Philistines until they worship corporately first

3. Our first fight is with our own sin, and then we worship corporately

4. Only then can we face our enemy (Satan)

5. Israel does this - and God routs the enemy

C. The remember God's work in their behalf

Then Samuel took a stone and set it up between Mizpah and Shen. He named it Ebenezer, saying, "Thus far has the Lord helped us." 1 Samuel 7:12

1. A big play on words here to help Israel remember

2. Ebenezer - where they had lost to the Philistines

3. Ebenezer - stone of help OR stone of My Helper

4. Ebenezer - the LORD has helped us thus far - geographic

5. The LORD has helped us thus far - time

6. This will remind them where their help comes from

7. This is the line in Come Thou Fount - we remember

IV. Applying the Word

A. Do we see and trust that the LORD reigns?

1. Our world tries to blind us - like it did Israel

2. They were tempted to idols of other religions/gods

3. What are the idols that tempt me?

a. Do I trust in scientism (a closed universe)?

b. Do I trust in technology?

c. Do I trust in market forces?

d. Do I trust in political power?

e. Do I trust in my own abilities?

4. Put our trust in Jesus today!

B. Do we respond in repentance, worship, & remembrance?

1. We all have idols - do we repent of them?

2. We all have idols - do we put them away?

3. Lets look to our gracious God through Jesus!

a. The law of God thundered against our sin - and He

bore the penalty

- b. Our enemy surrounded us - and He conquered in our behalf
 - c. His life lifted our head, death removed our shame, His resurrection pours out blessing on us
4. Come Thou Fount - worshipping our great God
 5. Come Thou Fount - a stone of remembrance for redemption

The LORD Reigns!

1 Samuel 5-7
April 6, 2014
Come Thou Fount
Psalm 20:1-5

1 May the Lord answer you when you are in distress; may the name of the God of Jacob protect you. 2 May he send you help from the sanctuary and grant you support from Zion. 3 May he remember all your sacrifices and accept your burnt offerings. Selah 4 May he give you the desire of your heart and make all your plans succeed. 5 We will shout for joy when you are victorious and will lift up our banners in the name of our God. May the Lord grant all your requests. Psalms 20:1–5