

## **Do Not Go Back To Ekron<sup>1</sup>**

(Dr. Baines, Jr. 11/2019)

Read I Samuel 6:4-6, 16 --- **4 The Philistines asked, “What guilt offering should we send to him?” They replied, “Five gold tumors and five gold rats, according to the number of the Philistine rulers, because the same plague has struck both you and your rulers. 5 Make models of the tumors and of the rats that are destroying the country, and give glory to Israel’s god. Perhaps he will lift his hand from you and your gods and your land. --- 16 The five rulers of the Philistines saw all this and then returned that same day to Ekron.**

**Introduction:** Many know that trouble can make you draw closer to God. When the trouble is over, we should stay close to God, but too many go back to where they came from. This was the case in our text. This discussion centers around how, **“We should work on knowing, giving, and staying close to God.”**

### **Key Points:**

**1. We know some things about God.** As the Philistines knew somethings about God, in our text (I Sam. 6:4-6, 16), as believers, we know somethings about God as well. We know that God is real. We see this in nature, the complexities of our bodies, and in our life experiences. We know that God is a loving God (see I Jn. 4:8). We see this in Jesus and God’s grace. And we know that God is powerful. We see this in how He has delivered us and given us power to endure. *Let’s live like we already know somethings about God.* This should include obedience and confidence.

**2. Thank God for the Bible.** The Philistines did not respect God’s word of the Old Testament. But as believers, we should be known for prayerfully studying God’s word as the best way to know Him and His will for our lives (see II Tim 3:16). Thank God for His word and His Pastors/Teachers who are sent to feed the people of God (see Jer 3:15). But are you taking

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<sup>1</sup> Prepare to discuss the following: What is the point, what scripture supports the point, what is the application sentence, and what is an example of living by the material? After the material is covered, be prepared to answer the following: Which point do you want to spend extra time on, why do you think this point is so important, and what tips do you have for living by this material, in spite of the challenges? **What is one thing you will take from this session and work on, in regard to your discipleship goals?**

advantage of them? *Let's work on prayerfully studying and obeying God's word, the Bible.*

**3. Believers should give.** As the Philistines gave, in our text, believers should be known for giving today. Too many "church goers" do not give of their time, talent, or treasure like they really know God. Think about the application of scriptures like Malachi 3:8-10. *Let's work on being giving disciples of Christ.*

**4. Check your motive.** In our text, the Philistines gave as a type of atonement for their sins. First, believers don't give as atonement for sin. Jesus paid for our sins. Second, it is true that God blesses obedient giving and punishes the sin of not giving (Mal. 3:8-10). Third, our greatest motive for giving should be thanksgiving. Think about how you fit into passages like Luke 7:41-47. The more God has done for you, the more you should want to demonstrate your thankfulness to Him. *Let's work on giving out of a thankful heart.*

**5. Stay close to God.** In our text, the Philistines went right back to business as usual. First, too many of us look good in crisis, but when the storm blows over, too many go back to business as usual. Too many go back to cussing and fussing, sneaking and peaking, no time for God, no obedience to His will in our health, wealth, and relationships. Second, instead of going back to sinful ways, we should draw closer to God. Staying with God is so much better than going back to business as usual (see Eph. 3:20). As we stay with God, we will discover that God can help us with our personal stewardship (i.e., mindset, health, wealth, etc.). God can help us with our enemies. God can help us when death comes creeping into our rooms. *Let's work on staying close to God, instead of going back into sin, when the storm has blown over.*