



KINGDOM SPIRIT

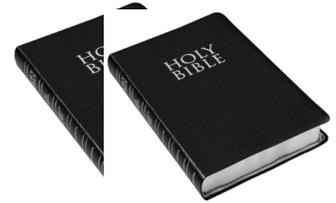
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“SEEK YE FIRST THE KINGDOM OF GOD”

Matthew 6:33



Issue 709

JUDGES—II SAMUEL

This month we will begin a new type of government for Israel, now that they have occupied the land of Canaan, known as the time of the Judges. During this time the “nation” of Israel really did not function as a nation, per se. Rather each tribe and many of the cities were autonomous. There was never a national leader during this time, but as different cities or tribes got into trouble (usually for worshipping other gods) and were taken captive by other nations and then cried out to God, He would raise up a “judge” out of that city or tribe to lead them out of their troubles. The exploits of these judges provide very interesting reading throughout the book of Judges and on into I Samuel. Even women, such as Deborah (Judges 4:4), became judges when the men failed their responsibility. We find such significant events as Gideon victoriously going against 135,000 troops with only 300 unarmed men (Judges 7) and Samson taking the jawbone of an ass and killing 1000 Philistines singlehandedly (Judges 15) as we read these books.

Some of these judges were very devout men like Jephthah, who kept a vow he made to God even though doing so was to his own extreme hurt (Judges 11). Some, like Samson, were of a more worldly nature with his extreme weakness for women (Judges 14-16).

There was considerable fighting between

tribes with probably more Israelites being killed by each other than by the enemies outside of Israel. At one point, as recorded in Judges 20, the tribe of Benjamin was reduced to a point that all that were left were about 1700 men. The other tribes had to find them some wives so they could start over.

Sometimes we find a story that bears significant importance that is easily passed over because it’s significance is not recognizable at this point in Scripture. An example is found in Judges 5, after Deborah and Barak had led Israel to victory over Sisera and a large group of Canaanites, they sang a song praising God and proclaiming their victory. A question was asked in verse 17 by Deborah in this song, **“why did Dan remain in ships?”** At this point the question has little significance, but it becomes very significant when attempting to understand Rev. 7.

Another example is found in Judges 18:29, **“and they called the name of the city Dan after the name of Dan their father.”** This clue of a very important character trait of the tribe of Dan helps us locate this tribe later in history. Everywhere they went, they named such things as river, mountains and even the lands themselves, after their father Dan.

Up through Judges 16, the writings of Scripture have pretty much been in chronological order. This will not necessarily be so through the rest of the Bible as it has been put together in the King James version and many other translations. For our purpose, we will attempt to stay in chronological order as much as possible, but it will

mean possibly skipping some books until later or covering two or more books at the same time. We will leave out some books such as Psalms and Proverbs. We do not intend to infer that any of these books are unimportant. The opposite is true, but since our intent is to outline the Bible story, these books do not add as much to the chronological story of the Bible as they do to doctrine, comfort, guidance, etc.

Some of the judges listed in the book of Judges, since they often were only judging or ruling their own city or tribe, were often contemporary with each other. Such is the case with Samson and Samuel, with Samuel being the older of the two. However, Samuel is the link to David, who was to later become King of Israel, so our emphasis shifts to Samuel, as we continue.

A very touching story (I Samuel 1) of a Levite man living in Ephraim who had two wives, one who had children and one who did not, leads us to an introduction of Samuel. Samuel's mother, Hannah, the wife having no children, prayed for a son, promising God she would return the son to Him if He answered her prayer. God answered her prayer and Hannah kept her promise by taking Samuel to Eli, the high priest, as soon as he was weaned. (This probably meant that he was a young teenager.) As Samuel grew, God made it known to Eli that he was a prophet and then He established Samuel as a prophet throughout all Israel. During a battle between Israel and the Philistines, both of Eli's sons were killed and the Ark of the Covenant was captured. Eli was a very large man and when he heard of all this, he fell grief stricken from his chair and at least partially because of his size, he broke his neck and died. As a result, Samuel then fell heir to both the job of priest and the job of judge.

The Ark proved to be a real curse to the Philistines as it had to the Israelites for wrongfully bringing it into the battle. To assure that if it went back to the Israelites, it would be the will of God, the Philistines sent it back on a new cart pulled by two milk cows who had just given birth to calves. The cows disregarded their calves and pulled the cart straight to Bethshemesh. This

very interesting story is found in I Sam. 6.

As Samuel grew older, he made his own two sons judges, but they did not follow in their father's footsteps. Instead, they took bribes and perverted judgement. The people then became dissatisfied and came to Samuel and asked him to make them a king like everybody else had. This hurt Samuel deeply as he blamed himself for this change of attitude. When he prayed to God for guidance, God answered Samuel telling him to do as the people requested, but to warn them first what will happen when they get their king. He assured Samuel they were not rejecting Samuel, but rather were rejecting God as their King. Samuel did as God told him, gave a list of liberties that they would have to give up to have a king, and when they still insisted, he sent them home and set about the job of providing them a king.

He selected, with God's guidance, a young man named Saul, the son of Kish, of the tribe of Benjamin. Saul was literally head and shoulders above his brethren and was extremely handsome, a perfect human specimen, at least by our human standards. Samuel made sure the people held him guiltless of giving them a king and that they took full responsibility for rejecting God. He exhorted them to keep God's law and even though they had rejected God, he told them in I Sam. 12:22 **"For the LORD will not forsake his people for his great name's sake: because it hath pleased the LORD to make you his people."** A very great comfort.

Saul did a commendable job at first, but his true self began to surface in the events of I Sam. 13. He was a great warrior physically, but very insecure and impatient. Wanting to receive God's blessing before going into a battle against the Philistines, Saul became impatient waiting for Samuel to come to offer a sacrifice and took the sacrifice and offered it himself. This action according to Samuel, cost Saul his kingdom.

Saul's problems increased as his failure to follow God's Word increased, but he blamed others for his troubles. Samuel brought the problem into correct focus in I Sam. 15:22 when he said, **"Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to**

hearken than the fat of rams.”

God told Samuel He had a replacement for Saul selected and sent Samuel to the house of Jesse in Bethlehem. Upon instruction from God, Samuel anointed Jesse's youngest son, David, to be king. Though still just a lad, the Spirit of God was upon David from that day forward while departing from Saul. As the Spirit left him, Saul developed serious mental problems and a musician was sought to soothe and comfort him. David became that musician.

Later on, David had returned home to herding his father's sheep and Israel, under King Saul, was again facing a Philistine army. Jesse, David's father, sent David to the battle scene with some provisions for two of his older brothers who were serving in Saul's army. It was here that David killed the giant, Goliath. (Read I Sam. 17) The last part of the 26th verse shows us the true heart of David. He simply could not understand who would dare to defy the armies of the living God, no matter how big they were. To David, he was only a tool in God's hand, so using a sling-shot to kill the giant would be God's doing, not his, so he saw no problem.

From this point Saul used David in business and battle often. David became so popular, the people began to sing of David being a greater warrior than Saul. When Saul heard this, he began to fear David and sought a way to kill him. No matter what he tried, David kept coming out on top, though David refused to harm Saul in any way. This only added to Saul's frustration as he became aware God was with David.

Samuel died and David's trouble increased. David finally had to go to Gath where he, and the men who had joined him, even served in the Philistine army to stay away from Saul. However, the time came when Saul was again threatened by the Philistines. When he prayed for guidance as to what he should do, God would not answer him. Saul had previously commanded that all witches be killed, but he learned that there was one still practicing. He disguised himself and went to this witch and asked her to bring up Samuel from the grave. She did, much to her's and

Saul's surprise. But Samuel didn't have good news for Saul. Because of Saul's disobedience, he was told the kingdom would be taken from him and Israel would be given into the hands of the Philistines the next day and Saul and his two sons would be killed. All of this happened as Samuel prophesied, but the Philistines had kept David back and not allowed him to participate in the battle.

When David learned of the death of Saul and his sons, David mourned greatly as he still loved Saul, and especially Jonathan, Saul's son, with whom he had become very good friends, in spite of the problems Saul had inflicted upon him.

II Samuel 2:4 records that the men of Judah anointed David to be king over Judah following the death of Saul. However, Abner, Saul's captain over the host (chief of command over Saul's army), made Ishbosheth, another son of Saul's, king over the rest of Israel. Joab, David's captain over his host, and Abner and their respective armies, met in battle with Joab and his army being victorious. This did not settle things however, and more battles ensued with David's house growing stronger and Saul's house growing weaker. Finally, Abner and Ishbosheth became at odds with each over an accusation made against Abner by Ishbosheth in which he accused Abner of having an affair with one of Saul's concubines. As a result, Abner swore to help establish the whole kingdom of Israel under David.

When Abner went to David to tell him his intentions, Joab did not believe him and killed him. This act would ultimately cost Joab his life as well. The change had been affected however, and Ishbosheth was killed by his own men after reigning only two years. Ultimately, David was made king over all Israel after he had reigned seven and one half years over Judah. Though anointed by Samuel as a young lad, David was 30 years old when he actually began to reign over Judah and including this seven and one half years, he reigned a total of 40 years.

Because his reign was to play such an important part in the history of Israel, thus the rest of the Bible, we need to pause that we might clearly establish who this David is. If we briefly turn to

the first chapter of Matthew in the New Testament, the first verse starts, **“The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.”**

Then follows a very condensed genealogy of Jesus Christ. A much more complete genealogy, at least up through Salathiel, is given in the first eight chapters of I Chronicles. But back to Matt. 1, verse 17 tells us there were 14 generations from Abraham to David, 14 generations from David to the carrying away to Babylon, and 14 generations from the carrying away to Babylon to Jesus Christ. (Just a note—if you count all the people from David to the carrying away in the text of Kings and Chronicles, you will count more than 14 generations. If you count the people here in Matt. 1 from the captivity to Jesus Christ, you will count less than 14, but a thorough study that we will touch on later will prove that the figure 14 is correct in both cases.) The 14 generations from Abraham to David are listed in several places in the Bible, but let us zero in on the last five verses of the book of Ruth. Here the genealogy begins with Pharez, one of the twin sons of Judah, by his daughter-in-law, that we discussed in Gen. 38. So we see the scepter, or the rulership line promised to Judah, is to come through “the breach” or Pharez.

The book of Ruth is the story of how David’s great grandparents got together. Ruth was the daughter-in-law of a couple named Elemelech and Naomi, of the tribe of Judah, who were living in Moab when Ruth met and married their son. Apparently, a drought in the land of Judah had forced this couple and their two sons into Moab. (Remember that Moab was just across the Jordan River from Israel.) Presumably, the same applied to Ruth. Ruth’s husband, her husband’s brother and their father all died there in the land of Moab, thus widowing Ruth and Naomi and Ruth’s sister-in-law. Ruth elected to stay with Naomi and they decided to return to Judah. Following their return, we have a love story of Ruth and a wealthy young man, named Boaz, who was a near kinsman of Naomi’s husband. Boaz and Ruth were ultimately married and their first son

was Obed, the father of Jesse, the father of David.

We’ll continue with our story of David next month. If you are reading with us, please read II Samuel, I and II Kings and I and II Chronicles for next month. JRL

BAPTISM

We have been advised of some young people who are desiring to be baptized but who would like to study out the subject before they do, so we have decided to begin a series on this subject. This will take several months to cover adequately, so you may want to be sure to keep all of the next several issues until we complete the study so that you can then review it in its entirety when we are done. Though most all Christians subscribe to the doctrine of baptism, the subject is certainly not without controversy and has caused considerable dissension between denominations.

Because of this it is very important for us to question all that we know about baptism and thoroughly study this very important subject out as much as we can. First, let’s ask ourselves some basic questions. Maybe these and more have come to your mind already. There are the simple questions, what, when, why, where, who and how. What is baptism? What is its purpose in God’s mind? When did baptism, as at least John the Baptist seemed to know it, begin? What was its origin, where did it come from? Where is it to be practiced? How is it to be practiced? Who is supposed to practice it? Other questions that come to mind include, was the baptism of John the Baptist the same baptism for the same reason, the same ritual, etc. as the apostles practiced? Also, if Jesus Christ was perfect in the law, and He felt He had to be baptized, what does baptism have to do with the law of God? If it has anything to do with the law, where in the law does it come from? Is there any relation between baptism as we know it today and its origin? Finally, there are several different types of baptism discussed in the Bible. Are they related? Should they be? Hopefully, as we study, we will be able to answer these questions and any

others that you might want to ask. Let us know if you do have questions and we will do our best to incorporate them into this study.

As we begin our study, if we look up the word “baptism” in our concordances, we find it to be a New Testament word. Yet, when Christ was baptized by John the Baptist, they were still under the Old Covenant or Testament. The only change in the law that I can find recorded in Scripture is in Heb. 7:12, but this change came after Christ’s death, burial and resurrection so I have to assume that the baptism of Christ, at least in principle, is part of the law. But since we do not find the word “baptism” in the Old Testament, we may find it by association of similarities. As a first step let us look at the ceremonial use of water in the law, specifically in the ordinances.

In God’s instructions to Moses for the construction of the tabernacle, we find in Ex. 30:18-21, **“Thou shalt also make a laver of brass, and his foot also of brass, to wash *withal*: and thou shalt put it between the tabernacle of the congregation and the altar, and thou shalt put water therein. For Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet thereat: When they go into the tabernacle of the congregation, they shall wash with water, that they die not; or when they come near to the altar to minister, to burn offerings made by fire unto the LORD: So they shall wash their hands and their feet, that they die not: and it shall be a statute for ever to them, even to him and to his seed throughout their generations.”**

A laver is a basin, or bowl, to wash in or to bathe in. In this case they were to wash their feet and their hands in it before they went into the tabernacle of the congregation or before they went to the altar. I believe it was to be a ceremonial washing, not a good scrubbing. The last sentence of I Kings 19:21 tells us Elisha ministered unto Elijah. If you read II Kings 3:11, I believe you will agree that part of this job of ministering was pouring water on the hands of Elijah. I believe this was a ceremonial washing—“pouring water on his hands.” The washing at the laver appears to me to be the same type of ceremonial

washing.

When Solomon built the temple, this laver was greatly expanded. A description of the brass molten sea that replaced the laver can be read in I Kings 7:23-39. If we figure a cubit to be 18 inches, this molten sea would be 15 feet in diameter and 7 1/2 feet deep and would sit on ten bases with each base having a laver, but it was all for the same purpose, the ceremonial washing of the priests, when they carried out their respective jobs.

Exodus 29:1-28 describes the ritual, or ceremony, that Moses was to go through with Aaron and his sons in preparation for them to assume the office of priests. As part of the ceremony, verse 4 tells us, **“And Aaron and his sons thou shalt bring unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, and shalt wash them with water.”** The record of it actually taking place for the first time is found in Lev. 8. Reading verse 6 we read, **“And Moses brought Aaron and his sons, and washed them with water.”**

Perhaps we need to pause and observe that in this preparation process there were three steps. We find these same three steps, at least in principle, repeated in both the Old and New Testaments and applying to our becoming and being Christians as well. The order they are carried out is not necessarily always the same. These steps are, 1) The sprinkling and/or pouring out of the blood of the sin offering; 2) the washing of the priests; and 3) the anointing of the priests with oil. We might also look at this as the three agents of anointing, water, blood and oil. We may find these steps in different orders, but these three steps are there. In this case, the washing came first, then the anointing with the oil (Lev. 8:12) and then the killing of the sacrifice (vs.14-15). In vs. 30, Moses took of the oil and the blood and sprinkled it upon Aaron and upon his sons and their garments to sanctify them. No one but he who had been through all three of these steps could go into the Holy of Holies in the tabernacle, i.e. the presence of God.

In the book of Hebrews, we’re told that Jesus Christ has become our High Priest after the order of Melchisedec. The law was changed for

the priesthood to change from the Aaronic to the higher Melchisedec order (Heb 7:12). However, if God is to remain consistent in His law, it would stand to reason that Jesus would have had to go through these same three steps, at least in principle, to attain to His position in the true Holy of Holies.

In Lev. 16, we find the procedure the high priest was to go through in preparation to enter the Holy of Holies on the Day of Atonement. Each year on the Day of Atonement, the high priest had to prepare a sacrifice for himself, to atone for (or cover) his sins, and then he had to prepare a sacrifice to atone for the sins of all the people. Verse 2 warns Aaron **“that he come not at all time into the holy place within the veil before the mercy seat,”** and then verse 3 begins to detail his preparations to appear. Verse 4 reads, **He shall put on the holy linen coat; and he shall have the linen breeches upon his flesh, and shall be girded with a linen girdle, and with the linen mitre shall he be attired: these are holy garments; therefore shall he wash his flesh in water, and so put them on.”** The point being here that he had to wash as he began his preparations.

Up to this point the word we have dealt with translated “wash” is the Hebrew word *“rachats.”* According to Young’s Analytical Concordance *“rachats”* means to wash or bathe.

We need to look at another Hebrew word, *“kabas”* which is also translated to and means “wash.” In Numbers 19, Eleazar (Aaron’s son) the priest, was to take a red heifer in which there was no blemish and take her without the camp and slay it. Eleazar was to take of her blood with his finger and sprinkle it before the tabernacle seven times. Then he was to burn her, skin, flesh, blood and dung with cedar wood, hyssop and scarlet. Then verse 9 tells us, **“And a man that is clean shall gather up the ashes of the heifer, and lay them up without the camp in a clean place, and it shall be kept for the congregation of the children of Israel for a water of separation: it is a purification for sin.”** Everyone handling this heifer or the water of separation

was to wash (*kabas*) his clothes.

Verses 11-16 tells us that anyone or anything touching a dead body was unclean. Verse 17 then tells us, **“And for an unclean person they shall take of the ashes of the burnt heifer of purification for sin, and running water shall be put thereto in a vessel: and a clean person shall take hyssop, and dip it in the water, and sprinkle it upon the tent, and upon all vessels, and upon the persons that were there, and upon him that touched a bone, or one slain, or one dead, or a grave.”** Failure to do this would cause one to be cut off from among the congregation. It had to be sprinkled on the 3rd day and then on the 7th day the one being purified had to also wash (*kabas*) himself and his clothes in water and then he would be clean at even.

The word “running” in verse 17 is rendered “living” in the margin of my Bible. The significance here is that the water needs to be moving and the reason for this is this is a natural purification for water.

While this is another ceremonial use of water, what is the separation from? It appears to me to be separation from death. Everybody and everything, including the house and furnishings in which the person died, had to be purified by using this water of separation.

One other place we find ceremonial washing is in Lev. 14 and here the word wash again comes from the Hebrew *“rachats.”* Here we are dealing with the cleansing of lepers. Starting in verse 4, the priest is to command that 2 live and clean birds plus cedar wood, scarlet and hyssop be taken for the one to be cleansed. Reading verse 5 from the Ferrar Fenton translation we read, **“and the priest shall prepare and slay the first bird into a vessel full of living water.”** I believe this is telling us the bird’s blood is to be mixed with the living or moving water in the vessel. We’re then told that the priest is to dip the cedar wood, scarlet and hyssop and the living bird into the blood and water mixture and sprinkle it upon he who is to be cleansed seven times and then let the living bird loose.

We often find leprosy used as a representa-

tion for sin, in that it had a reputation for being incurable. Sin is like leprosy in that once we sin, we can do nothing of ourselves to undo the sin. This cleansing ceremony was carried out on one who, through the healing of God, was healed.

These are the ceremonial uses of water that I am aware of in the Old Testament. There may be more. But keep all of these in mind as we continue our study. Admittedly, we have not found the words baptize or baptism in any of these examples. But to show how the word baptize might be applied here we need to look at another very interesting story. II Kings 5 tells us the story of Naaman, a captain of the army of the king of Syria. Though a very great man with his master and a mighty man of valor, Naaman was a leper. A small captive Israelite maid to Naaman's wife told her mistress that if Naaman would go to a certain prophet in Israel, he could heal him. So he received permission from the king to go to the king of Israel in search of this prophet. The king of Israel thought the king of Syria was trying to pick a fight with him by sending Naaman to him to be healed. However, when Elisha heard what had happened, he sent word to the king to send Naaman to him. When he came, Elisha would not see him himself, but sent a messenger to him saying, **“Go and wash in Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be clean.”** (vs. 10) This made Naaman very angry but his servants finally talked him into doing as the messenger said and vs. 14 tells us, **“Then went he down, and dipped himself seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God: and his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.”** The word “dipped” is translated from the Hebrew word *“tabal”* which, according to Young's Analytical Concordance means to moisten or to be sprinkled. The Septuagint is the original Greek translation of the Old Testament and would have been the Greek text in use by Jesus and His apostles. In this translation, the Hebrew word *“tabal”* is translated into the Greek word *“baptismo.”* So when read by the apostles in the

Greek of their day, they would have read that Naaman baptized himself seven times. While it may appear that I may be stretching things to associate the Greek terminology from which we translate our word “baptize” with some of the Old Testament terminology, I believe you can see a connection in this story.

Something else that might help is Heb. 9:8-10. The author is comparing the laws or ordinances of the tabernacle with what Jesus Christ actually did. Speaking of the high priest having to go into the Holy of Holies each year, he tells us, **“The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation.”** The word “washings” as used here is translated from the Greek word *“baptismo;”* i.e. **“which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers baptizings.”** I think it safe to say that the author is referring to the washing of the priests during their consecration; the washing at the laver in preparation for offering sacrifices and the going into the Holy of Holies, the use of the water of separation and the cleansing of the lepers all as “divers baptizing” in the original Greek.

We will continue looking at the New Testament in our study next month. JRL

PHILISTIA

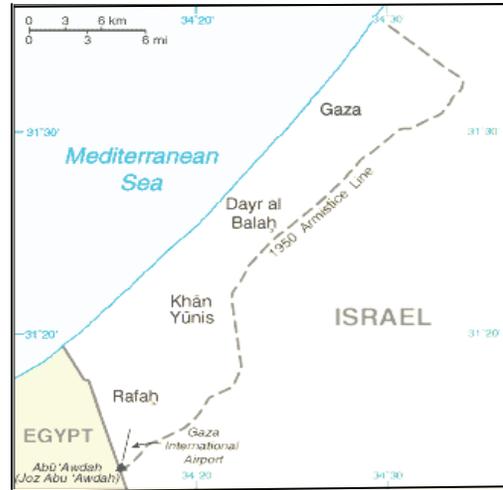
Philistia played a very prominent role in Bible history, especially during the reigns of Kings Saul and David, though they were a very small nation. Philistia was located on the eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea southwest of Canaan bordering with Egypt on the south. Today,

the land they occupied is known as the Gaza Strip. No trace of the Philistines as a people or ethnic group exists today. The Gaza Strip is only 25 miles long and ranges from 4 to 7.5 miles wide, roughly the same as when it was known as Philistia. Today it is occupied by 1.48 million people, roughly 10,585 people/sq. mile. Most are refugees having been forced out of Israeli since 1948. Nominally, the government today is the Palestinian Authority. The economy is a shambles due to the take over of the government by the anti-Israeli Hamas party this spring causing them to be ignored by most other nations. About 1/3 of the land can be irrigated with citrus and cut flowers being about the only significant exports. They have to import much of their food, consumer goods and construction materials.

In Bible times there were five main cities; Gaza, Ashkelon, Ashdod, Ekron, and Gath with each of these cities being ruled by a “lord.” There was not a strong national government. Gaza remains the primary city today, while the name has been changed on some of the other cities while others have been lost.

The name “Palestine” is derived from the name “Philistine” and was first applied to the territory of the Philistines. Palestinians today are primarily Arabs. The Philistines appear to have been a part of the great naval confederacy known as the “Sea People” who, at the beginning of the 12th century B.C., had wandered from their homeland in Crete and the Aegean Islands. They repeatedly attacked Egypt during the 19th Dynasty. They were eventually repulsed by Ramses III and the theory is that he resettled them in what we call Philistia to rebuild the coastal towns of Canaan. According to Gen. 10, the Philistines descended from Ham, one of Noah’s sons, through his son

Mizraim being of his son Casluhim. (Gen. 10:14 & I Chron. 1:12) We’re told in Amos 9:7 that they came from Caphtor which is another name for Crete and Cyprus.



Abraham and Isaac encountered the Philistines on a friendly basis in Gen 20, 21, & 26. In Judges 3:31 we’re told Shamgar slew 600 Philistines with an ox goad to deliver Israel from the Philistines. In Judges 13-16 we find the story of God delivering Israel into the hands of the Philistines for 40 years and then raising up Samson to deliver them. I Sam. 4-6 relates a story of Israel being defeated by the Philistines with the Philistines capturing the ark of the covenant; the Philistine god, Dagon’s encounter with the ark; and then the return of the ark. This incident helped stir the Israelites to demand a king from Samuel. King Saul then had numerous encounters with the Philistines. It is during one of these encounters that David killed Goliath who was probably a Canaanite residing in Philistia. King David finally defeated the Philistines who were later subjugated by Assyria, followed by Babylon and finally disappeared from history. **JRL**