

The literary structure of 1 Samuel 6:12-7:2

A. The ark is sent to Beth-shemesh: 12 And the cows went straight in the direction of Beth-shemesh along one highway, lowing as they went. They turned neither to the right nor to the left, and the lords of the Philistines went after them as far as the border of Beth-shemesh.

B. People of Beth-shemesh/saw the ark/rejoiced: 13 Now the people of Beth-shemesh were reaping their wheat harvest in the valley. And when they lifted up their eyes and saw the ark, they rejoiced to see it.

C. Joshua/a great stone: 14 The cart came into the field of Joshua of Beth-shemesh and stopped there. A great stone was there.

D. Israel's offering to the Lord: And they split up the wood of the cart and offered the cows as a burnt offering to the Lord. 15 And the Levites took down the ark of the Lord and the box that was beside it, in which were the golden figures, and set them upon the great stone. And the men of Beth-shemesh offered burnt offerings and sacrificed sacrifices on that day to the Lord.

E. Philistines leave: 16 And when the five lords of the Philistines saw it, they returned that day to Ekron.

D1. Philistine offering to the Lord: 17 These are the golden tumors that the Philistines returned as a guilt offering to the Lord: one for Ashdod, one for Gaza, one for Ashkelon, one for Gath, one for Ekron, 18 and the golden mice, according to the number of all the cities of the Philistines belonging to the five lords, both fortified cities and unwalled villages.

C1. Joshua/a great stone: The great stone beside which they set down the ark of the Lord is a witness to this day in the field of Joshua of Beth-shemesh.

B1. People of Beth-shemesh/looked upon the ark/mourned: 19 And he struck some of the men of Beth-shemesh, because they looked upon the ark of the Lord. He struck seventy men of them, and the people mourned because the Lord had struck the people with a great blow. 20 Then the men of Beth-shemesh said, "Who is able to stand before the Lord, this holy God? And to whom shall he go up away from us?"

A1. The ark is sent to Kiriath-jearim: 21 So they sent messengers to the inhabitants of Kiriath-jearim, saying, "The Philistines have returned the ark of the Lord. Come down and take it up to you." 7:1 And the men of Kiriath-jearim came and took up the ark of the Lord and brought it to the house of Abinadab on the hill. And they consecrated his son Eleazar to have charge of the ark of the Lord. 2 From the day that the ark was lodged at Kiriath-jearim, a long time passed, some twenty years, and all the house of Israel lamented after the Lord.