

# 1 Samuel 5:1

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And the Philistines took the ark of God, and brought it from Eben-ezer unto Ashdod.

## Analysis

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The Ark's journey into Philistine territory moves from Ebenezer (stone of help) to Ashdod - from the place that should have marked divine aid to the center of Dagon worship. The geographical movement traces the Ark's captivity but also sets the stage for God's self-vindication. What appears to be Yahweh's defeat will become His triumph. The Philistines think they have captured Israel's God; they will discover they have brought judgment into their own land.

## Historical Context

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Ashdod was one of the five major Philistine cities (pentapolis), located on the coastal plain. It housed a significant temple to Dagon, the Philistines' chief deity. Bringing captured religious objects to one's own temple was standard ancient Near Eastern practice to demonstrate divine superiority.

## Related Passages

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**1 John 4:8** — God is love

**1 Corinthians 13:4** — Characteristics of love

## Study Questions

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1. What did the Philistines think they had accomplished by capturing the Ark?

2. How does God use apparent defeat to demonstrate His power?

## Interlinear Text

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מִן־בְּנֵי־יִשְׂרָאֵל וּפְלִשְׁתִּים  
And the Philistines took the ark of God and brought it from Ebenezer unto Ashdod.

וְאֶת־לְקֹחַ וְבָאֵלֶת יְמֵן אֶרְזָן  
H853 H727 H430 H935 H0

בְּעֵזֶר אֲשֶׁר־  
H72 H795

## Additional Cross-References

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**1 Samuel 7:12** (Parallel theme): Then Samuel took a stone, and set it between Mizpeh and Shen, and called the name of it Eben-ezer, saying, Hitherto hath the LORD helped us.

**1 Samuel 4:1** (Parallel theme): And the word of Samuel came to all Israel. Now Israel went out against the Philistines to battle, and pitched beside Eben-ezer: and the Philistines pitched in Aphek.

**Joshua 13:3** (Parallel theme): From Sihor, which is before Egypt, even unto the borders of Ekron northward, which is counted to the Canaanite: five lords of the Philistines; the Gazathites, and the Ashdothites, the Eshkalonites, the Gittites, and the Ekronites; also the Avites: