

1 Samuel 5:3

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And when they of Ashdod arose early on the morrow, behold, Dagon was fallen upon his face to the earth before the ark of the LORD. And they took Dagon, and set him in his place again.

Analysis

Morning reveals Dagon's humiliation: 'fallen upon his face to the earth before the ark of the LORD.' The idol that should have been victorious lies prostrate in worship position before the Ark. The Philistines' response - setting Dagon back up - shows persistent blindness. They restore their idol rather than acknowledging what the fall signifies. Human beings persistently prop up failing ideologies and idols rather than acknowledging the true God's supremacy.

Historical Context

Cult statues were believed to be inhabited by the deity's presence. Dagon's fall would be deeply alarming to his worshippers, though they apparently attributed it to accident. The prostrate position specifically before the Ark suggests involuntary obeisance.

Related Passages

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. What does Dagon's fall before the Ark demonstrate about the relative power of Yahweh and pagan gods?
2. How do people today 'set up' fallen idols rather than acknowledging God's supremacy?

Interlinear Text

וַיִּשָׁכַח מוֹ	אֲשֶׁדּוּדִים	מָמָחָר ת	וְהָיָה ה	דָּג וִן	לִי		
arose early	And when they of Ashdod	on the morrow	H2009	Dagon	was fallen		
H7925	H796	H4283		H1712	H5307		
לִפְנֵי י	אֶרֶץ הָאָרֶץ	לִפְנֵי י	אֶרֶץ וִן	יְהוָה ה	וַיִּקְחוּ	אֶת	דָּג וִן
before	to the earth	before	the ark	of the LORD	And they took	H853	Dagon
H6440	H776	H6440	H727	H3068	H3947		H1712
וַיִּשָּׁב בּוֹ	אֶת וֹ	לְמִקְוֹמוֹ:					
again	H853	him in his place					
H7725		H4725					

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 19:1 (References Lord): The burden of Egypt. Behold, the LORD rideth upon a swift cloud, and shall come into Egypt: and the idols of Egypt shall be moved at his presence, and the heart of Egypt shall melt in the midst of it.

Isaiah 46:7 (Parallel theme): They bear him upon the shoulder, they carry him, and set him in his place, and he standeth; from his place shall he not remove: yea, one shall cry unto him, yet can he not answer, nor save him out of his trouble.

Zephaniah 2:11 (References Lord): The LORD will be terrible unto them: for he will famish all the gods of the earth; and men shall worship him, every one from his place, even all the isles of the heathen.

