

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

John 15:13 — Greatest form 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

וַיַּשְׁכַּח כֵּן	וְאַשְׁדּוֹדִים	מִמְּחֹר תֶּהָ	נִפְלָא לְדָג וְלִיְהֹה הָ
arose early	And when they of Ashdod	on the morrow	Dagon was fallen
H7925	H796	H4283	H2009
לִפְנֵי אָרֶן אֶרְצָה לִפְנֵי	יְהֹה הָלְכָה אֶת תְּקַנְתָּה	לִפְנֵי אֶת	לִפְנֵי אֶת
before to the earth before the ark of the LORD And they took	H6440 H776 H6440 H727 H3068 H3947	H853	H1712 H5307
again him in his place	H7725 H4725		Dagon
לִמְקֹדְמוֹן אֶת וְלִשְׁבַּבּוֹ			H1712

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.

