

# 1 Samuel 5:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And when they arose early on the morrow morning, behold, Dagon was fallen upon his face to the ground before the ark of the LORD; and the head of Dagon and both the palms of his hands were cut off upon the threshold; only the stump of Dagon was left to him.

## Analysis

The second morning brings intensified humiliation: Dagon falls again, now with 'head...and both the palms of his hands cut off upon the threshold.' Only 'the stump of Dagon' (literally 'only Dagon') remains - the fish-body portion if Dagon was fish-shaped, or simply a mutilated torso. The severing of head and hands represents complete incapacitation: no wisdom (head) and no power (hands). Dagon cannot think or act. The threshold - the temple's entrance point - becomes a place of permanent shame.

## Historical Context

The specific mutilation of head and hands echoes ancient Near Eastern practices of humiliating conquered enemies. Warriors' heads and hands were often severed and displayed. Applying this treatment to Dagon demonstrates his complete defeat by Yahweh.

## Related Passages

**John 15:13** — Greatest form of love

## 1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

### Study Questions

1. What is the significance of Dagon losing his head and hands specifically?
2. How does this scene reverse Philistine expectations about who conquered whom?

### Interlinear Text

וְשָׁבָכְ מִזְמָרָת	בְּבֹקֶר	מִמְּמֹרָת	וְיָהִי הָיָה	בְּגָזִיל
And when they arose early	morning	on the morrow	H2009	behold Dagon
H7925	H1242	H4283		H1712
נִפְלָא	לִפְנֵי	אַרְבָּה	יְהִי הָיָה	וְיָהִי הָיָה
was fallen	before	to the ground	before	the ark
H5307	H6440	H776	H6440	H727
וְיָהִי הָיָה	אַרְבָּה	לִפְנֵי	יְהִי הָיָה	וְיָהִי הָיָה
and both	the palms	of his hands	of the LORD	and the head
H8147	H3709	H3027	H3068	H7218
וְיָהִי הָיָה	בְּגָזִיל	כְּרִתּוֹת	אַל	
behold Dagon	and both	the palms	of his hands	were cut off
H1712	H8147	H3709	H3027	H413
בְּגָזִיל	בְּגָזִיל	בְּגָזִיל	בְּגָזִיל	
upon the threshold	behold Dagon	was left	עַל:	
H4670	H1712	H7604	H5921	

### Additional Cross-References

**Micah 1:7** (Parallel theme): And all the graven images thereof shall be beaten to pieces, and all the hires thereof shall be burned with the fire, and all the idols thereof will I lay desolate: for she gathered it of the hire of an harlot, and they shall return to the hire of an harlot.

**Jeremiah 10:11** (Parallel theme): Thus shall ye say unto them, The gods that have not made the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens.

**Jeremiah 50:2** (Parallel theme): Declare ye among the nations, and publish, and set up a standard; publish, and conceal not: say, Babylon is taken, Bel is confounded, Merodach is broken in pieces; her idols are confounded, her images are broken in pieces.

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