

1 Samuel 5:7

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And when the men of Ashdod saw that it was so, they said,
The ark of the God of Israel shall not abide with us: for his
hand is sore upon us, and upon Dagon our god.

Analysis

The men of Ashdod draw the correct conclusion: 'The ark of the God of Israel shall not abide with us: for his hand is sore upon us, and upon Dagon our god.' They recognize both personal suffering and their deity's defeat. The phrase 'his hand is sore' acknowledges Yahweh's aggressive action. Remarkably, these pagans discern what Israel's leaders failed to see: the Ark represents a God who acts according to His own purposes, not one who can be manipulated. They know they cannot keep this Ark.

Historical Context

Philistine acknowledgment of Yahweh's power over both people and their god represents significant theological recognition. Their conclusion that the Ark 'shall not abide' indicates they understood this was not merely incidental suffering but directed divine action.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. What theological insight do the Philistines show that Israel's elders lacked?
2. How does the Ark's presence affect both Dagon and his worshippers?

Interlinear Text

וַיֵּרָא וְ	אֲנָשֵׁי	אֲשֶׁדּוּד	כִּי	כִּי	וַאֲמָרוּ	לֵא
saw	And when the men	of Ashdod			that it was so they said	
H7200	H582	H795	H3588	H3651	H559	H3808
יֵשׁ בְּ	אֶרֶץ	אֱלֹהֵינוּ:	יִשְׂרָאֵל	עַמּוֹ	כִּי	קָשָׁה הִיא
shall not abide	The ark	of the God	of Israel			is sore
H3427	H727	H430	H3478	H5973	H3588	H7185
יְדוֹ	עַל יְדוֹ	עַל לְ	דָגוֹן		אֱלֹהֵינוּ:	
with us for his hand			upon us and upon Dagon		of the God	
H3027	H5921	H5921	H1712		H430	

Additional Cross-References

Exodus 12:33 (Parallel theme): And the Egyptians were urgent upon the people, that they might send them out of the land in haste; for they said, We be all dead men.