

## QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Why did the Philistines put the Ark in the temple of their chief god?
2. What was God showing the Philistines when He caused Dagon to fall down and when He brought destruction and death to them?
3. Why did God punish the Philistines?
4. What were the Philistines afflicted with?
5. Why did the Philistines hesitate to return the Ark?
6. What type of spiritual attributes did the people of Bethshemesh display and what did they lack?
7. Why were people killed for looking into the Ark?
8. What lessons can we learn from this account?

### SUMMARY:

The Philistines—assuming their great victory over Israel was due to their god Dagon’s superiority over the God of Israel—took the Ark of God as a trophy to Dagon and set it beside Dagon.

God soon demonstrated His power over Dagon. He caused Dagon to fall on his face before the Ark. The people were plagued with boils and mice until many died.

The Philistines—still evidently thinking this was just a coincidence—moved the Ark from city to city, but plagues always followed. Finally in desperation they returned the Ark to Israel on an ox cart.

God again proved His superiority over a heathen god and heathen people.

### NOTES:

## APOSTOLIC CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Bible Lesson #5

April 30, 2023

Second Quarter

### THE RETURN OF THE ARK

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**LESSON TEXT:** *1 Samuel 5:1 through 6:21*

**LESSON SETTING:** The Philistines captured the Ark of God and carried it into their country.

**TIME:** About 1140 B.C.

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**I. THE ARK DESECRATED.** 1 Samuel 5:1-2

A. God’s Jealousy. Exodus 20:5; Nahum 1:2

**II. THE ARK VINDICATED.** 1 Samuel 5:3-12

A. God’s Vengeance. Ezekiel 25:17; Micah 5:15

B. God Not Mocked. Galatians 6:7

C. God to be Reverenced. Psalm 33:8; Habakkuk 2:20

D. God’s Superiority. 1 Chronicles 29:11; Exodus 15:11

E. God’s Judgment. 2 Chronicles 26:16-21; Acts 12:21-23

**III. THE ARK REINSTATED.** 1 Samuel 6:1-21

A. Received Joyfully. Matthew 13:20-21

B. Disobedience Punished. 1 Samuel 12:15; Leviticus 10:1-2

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**GOLDEN TEXT:** *HOW LONG HALT YE BETWEEN TWO OPINIONS? IF THE LORD BE GOD, FOLLOW HIM.* 1 Kings 18:21

**NEXT SUNDAY'S LESSON:** 1 Samuel 7:1-17  
**SUPPLEMENTAL REFERENCES:** 2 Chronicles 19:4-10

**QUARTERLY THEME:** Samuel and Saul - 1 Samuel

**TOPIC:** SAMUEL THE JUDGE

**INTRODUCTION:**

Samuel trusted in God and therefore made a worthy judge of Israel. The people returned from worshipping idols to worshipping the true God and God gave them peace during the time of Samuel's life.

At one time when the Philistines threatened the Israelites they implored Samuel to call upon God for help. Help was granted and Samuel erected a stone, calling it "Ebenezer (the stone of help)... hitherto hath the Lord helped us."

Always through trials, afflictions, and sorrows we too as God's children can say "Ebenezer". It would be impossible to go through our many, many hardships if we did not have the Lord to help us.

**CENTRAL TRUTH:** True repentance will bring true revival and victory.

**GOLDEN TEXT:** *HITHERTO HATH THE LORD HELPED US.*  
1 Samuel 7:12

Because of the idolatry of Israel the Philistines had won many victories over them. They had taken many cities and much land from the Israelites because God had permitted it as punishment for His wayward nation. Now Israel was in the penitent condition that God can accept, and in which He is always willing to bless and help. "The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit." (Psalm 34:18) Now God could give Israel victory. Now He could restore their cities and boundaries.

Today we must experience the same conditions in our lives. Apart from God even victories are defeat for us. But if we turn to God "and serve Him with all our heart" according to His plan, we too can live our lives to His honor, and also be able to say, each day, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped us."

"God with us!" We need not fear;  
Jesus comforts us from heaven.  
Unto death be faithful here;  
Soon the crown of life is given!  
Hear the trumpet's warning call;  
Rise, ye brave, be ready, all!  
Z.H. 100:1

**DAILY BIBLE READINGS FOR THE WEEK OF May 1 – 7**

Mon. \*Samuel Intercedes. 1 Samuel 7:1-8  
Tue. \*The Philistines Defeated. 1 Samuel 7:9-12  
Wed. \*Peace in Israel. 1 Samuel 7:13-17  
Thu. Judges Appointed. 2 Chronicles 19:4-10  
Fri. The Lord as Judge. Psalm 7:1-8  
Sat. Secrets Revealed. Romans 2:11-16  
Sun. A Charge to Keep. 2 Timothy 4:1-8

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