

## Embracing True Trust Over False Security

In 1<sup>st</sup> Samuel 5, we read how the Philistines, after capturing the Ark of the Covenant, brought it into the temple of their god Dagon in Ashdod. They thought that by placing the Ark—God’s holy symbol—next to their idol, they could secure victory and protection. But the results were startling. In the morning, as the Philistines gathered to worship Dagon, they discovered that the idol had fallen face down on the floor. They reset Dagon on his pedestal, only to find the next day that not only was he again on the ground, but his hands had been broken off and his head was separated from his body. Soon after, a terrible plague of boils afflicted the people of Ashdod.

This dramatic display of divine power wasn’t a mere coincidence. It was God’s unmistakable message: He cannot be manipulated or controlled by human symbols or rituals. The Philistines had treated the Ark like a lucky charm, expecting it to bring them success. Instead, its presence brought disaster and suffering.

Reading this passage challenges me personally to examine where I place my trust. Like the Philistines, I might sometimes be tempted to lean on external things—rituals, traditions, or even my own efforts—to secure a sense of safety or success. Yet, God’s power isn’t something to be tamed or used as an amulet; it’s a holy force that demands true reverence and a genuine, personal relationship.

The Bible reminds us in 1<sup>st</sup> Samuel 5:1, ***“Now the Philistines took the ark of the covenant of God...”*** This isn’t just a historical account; it’s a lesson for today. It tells me that real security comes from knowing and trusting God, not from relying on symbols or practices that have lost their meaning. When I try to substitute genuine faith with superficial measures, I risk inviting the very troubles I seek to avoid.

This story encourages me to pursue a relationship with God that is rooted in respect, honesty, and dependence on His sovereign power. Rather than treating God’s promises as tokens to be displayed, I’m reminded to live out my faith authentically, understanding that His power is both transformative and far beyond any human manipulation.

May this account inspire you, as it does me, to place your trust fully in the living God rather than in empty symbols. In every situation, let your heart seek the true source of strength and hope—a relationship with the One who is mighty and holy.