

Day 270 - WEDNESDAY: October 25th

1 Samuel 5

1 Samuel 5:1-12 NKJV

Then the Philistines took the ark of God and brought it from Ebenezer to Ashdod. When the Philistines took the ark of God, they brought it into the house of Dagon and set it by Dagon. And when the people of Ashdod arose early in the morning, there was Dagon, fallen on its face to the earth before the ark of the LORD. So they took Dagon and set it in its place again. And when they arose early the next morning, there was Dagon, fallen on its face to the ground before the ark of the LORD. The head of Dagon and both the palms of its hands were broken off on the threshold; only Dagon's torso was left of it. Therefore neither the priests of Dagon nor any who come into Dagon's house tread on the threshold of Dagon in Ashdod to this day. But the hand of the LORD was heavy on the people of Ashdod, and He ravaged them and struck them with tumors, both Ashdod and its territory. And when the men of Ashdod saw how it was, they said, "The ark of the God of Israel must not remain with us, for His hand is harsh toward us and Dagon our god." Therefore they sent and gathered to themselves

all the lords of the Philistines, and said, "What shall we do with the ark of the God of Israel?" And they answered, "Let the ark of the God of Israel be carried away to Gath." So they carried the ark of the God of Israel away. So it was, after they had carried it away, that the hand of the LORD was against the city with a very great destruction; and He struck the men of the city, both small and great, and tumors broke out on them. Therefore they sent the ark of God to Ekron. So it was, as the ark of God came to Ekron, that the Ekronites cried out, saying, "They have brought the ark of the God of Israel to us, to kill us and our people!" So they sent and gathered together all the lords of the Philistines, and said, "Send away the ark of the God of Israel, and let it go back to its own place, so that it does not kill us and our people." For there was a deadly destruction throughout all the city; the hand of God was very heavy there. And the men who did not die were stricken with the tumors, and the cry of the city went up to heaven.

**Daily Deep Dive:**

The UCG reading program states: "The plague many of the Philistines suffer and die from produces "tumors," the Hebrew word for which "literally means 'swellings' and may

refer to any kind of tumor, swelling, or boil” (Nelson, note on 5:6). When the ark is sent back, the people include an “offering” consisting of five golden sculptures of these “tumors.” But they also for some unstated reason include five golden rats. It would appear that rats had some sort of involvement with whatever the plague was. It is interesting to note that bubonic plague, the black death of the Middle Ages, is characterized by the formation of buboes, i.e. inflammatory swellings of the lymph glands, especially in the groin area—and that the plague was spread by the fleas of rodents, particularly rats. This, then, may have been what the Philistines were suffering from.” [END]

Verse 1 – Ashdod means “powerful”. It’s interesting to me that God would reveal that He was the truly powerful One.

Verse 2 – Regarding the Philistine god Dagon, the JFB commentary states: “Stately temples were erected in honor of this idol, which was the principal deity of the Philistines, but whose worship extended over all Syria, as well as Mesopotamia and Chaldea; its name being found among the Assyrian gods on the cuneiform inscriptions [Rawlinson]. It was represented under a monstrous combination of a human head, breast, and arms, joined to

the belly and tail of a fish. The captured ark was placed in the temple of Dagon, right before this image of the idol.”

[END]

Adam Clarke’s commentary adds: “Some think that this idol was the same with Dirceto, Attergatis, the Venus of Askelon, and the Moon.” [END]

Verse 3 – This is one of my absolute favorite moments in the Bible! The false god statue bowing down before the True God!

Verse 4 – John Gill’s commentary states: “of the temple, upon which he fell with such force, that the threshold cut off his head, and both his hands; which signified he had neither wisdom to contrive for his own safety, nor strength and power to defend himself; and therefore of what advantage could he be to his votaries?” [END]

Verse 9 – The Adam Clarke’s commentary states: “As it was at Ashdod, so it was at Gath. The Vulgate says, *Et computrescebant prominenter extales eorum*; which conveys the idea of a bloody flux, dysentery, and ulcerated anus; and it adds, what is not to be found in the Hebrew text, nor many of the versions, except some traces in the

Septuagint, *Et fecerunt sibi sedes pelliceas*, “And they made unto themselves seats of skins;” for the purpose of sitting more easy, on account of the malady already mentioned.”  
[END]

What a clear and powerful sign to all the Philistines. No matter where they took the ark, disease and destruction followed.