

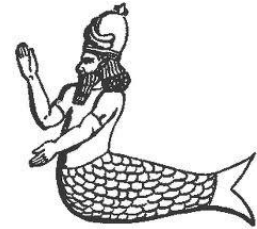
## GOD IS KING OF ALL JEHOVAH PROVES HIS POWER

Introduction:

1. The nation of Israel had rejected God as their King.
2. Instead, they viewed Him as the nations viewed their idols – a mere god of convenience.
3. As a result, the Ark of the Covenant was captured by the Philistines and Israel was soundly defeated in battle.
4. This section of Scripture tells how the Ark was returned to Israel – and the lessons learned about the true nature and power of Jehovah.

I. God Defeats Dagon (5:1-12)

- A. Dagon was the national god of the Philistines.
  1. He was represented as having the body of a fish with the head and hands of a man.
  2. Obviously, Dagon was the god of the sea.
    - a. The Philistines were a sea-faring people who had come to Palestine from the islands.
    - b. Dagon's son was Baal – who, among other things, was the god of storms.
  3. There were two famous temples to Dagon in Gaza and Ashdod.
- B. There were five key cities that belonged to the Philistines – Gaza, Ashdod, Ashkelon, Gath, and Ekron.
- C. Naturally, when they captured the Ark of the Covenant, the Philistines decided to place it in a chief city in the main temple of their mighty god.
  1. They believed the Dagon had defeated Jehovah.
  2. Thus, by placing the Ark of God in the house of Dagon, they were stating that Dagon was more powerful than Jehovah.
  3. However, unlike Dagon, God was able to take care of Himself!
- D. The next morning, the Philistines discovered that their image of Dagon was fallen on its face before the Ark – much like one would bow down in worship.
- E. Because Dagon was a powerless, helpless idol, the Philistines had to put him back in his place!
- F. But, the next morning, Dagon had fallen before the Ark again.
  1. This time, his head and his hands had been cut off.
  2. And, they lay upon the threshold of the door to the temple.
  3. This was a miracle wrought by God to prove the defeat of Dagon.
- G. It may have been that the priests of Dagon would try to hide this information from the people. However, God further proved his power in a way that no one could deny.
- H. He began to destroy the people by smiting them with emerods.
  1. Obviously, this was some kind of plague of sickness sent among the people.
  2. There seems to have been some connection to mice (6:4).
  3. The word literally means “swellings or mounds; thus, tumors.”
  4. Some have suggested this was the bubonic plague, spread by mice, and that the emerods were swelled lymph nodes.
  5. Others have suggested hemorrhoids (cf. Psalm 78:66).



1 Samuel 5:1 – 6:21

6. Whatever it was, it was a painful and humbling affliction upon the Philistines who were boasting of their victory over Jehovah.
  - I. Interestingly, Israel also deserved this punishment from the Lord (cf. Deuteronomy 28:27, 58-60).
  - J. As proof that this was no mere coincidence, everywhere the Philistines carried the Ark of God, the plague followed.
  - K. Thus, the Philistines decided to send the Ark back to Israel.
- II. God Proves Himself to the Philistines (6:1-12)
- A. After seven months of suffering, the Philistines began to devise a plan to return the Ark to the nation of Israel.
  - B. Yet, their plan also was to serve as a test of the power of Jehovah.
  - C. If Jehovah really was God, then they felt that they must appease Him by sending a gift with the Ark.
    1. So, they created golden mice and emerods.
    2. Notice that they viewed this as a trespass offering – something the Israelites needed to think about.
    3. They put their offering in a box beside the Ark of the Covenant.
  - D. If Jehovah really was God, then He could guide the Ark back to Israel.
  - E. But, He would have to prove Himself to the Philistines.
    1. They placed the Ark on a new cart that was to be pulled by two cows.
    2. They chose cows that had never been yoked – thus, they had never pulled anything and the odds were that they would balk.
    3. These cows were also new mothers who were separated from their calves – in fact, they were lowing for their calves.
    4. The natural tendency for the cows was to go to their calves.
  - F. When all was prepared, the cows were released and they traveled directly to the priestly city of Bethshemesh (cf. Joshua 21:13-16).
  - G. Isn't it amazing how much smarter two cows were than the Philistines and most of the Israelites (cf. Isaiah 1:3)!?
- III. God Proves Himself to Israel (6:13-21)
- A. The people of Bethshemesh rejoiced when they saw the Ark returning to them.
  - B. The cows stopped beside a great stone which then was used as an altar to God. (Keep in mind that the Ark will not return to Shiloh [Psa. 78:60-61].)
  - C. The Levites took charge and offered both the cows and the golden images to the Lord.
  - D. However, it is disappointing to learn that Israel had not changed their attitude very much toward God.
  - E. Some violated God's law by looking into the Ark of the Covenant.
  - F. Thus, God slew a great multitude of the Israelites.
  - G. Now, they understand that no one who rebels against His Word can stand before Jehovah.
  - H. So, much like the Philistines before them, they call for some other city to take the Ark of God away from them.