

Sunday Night Message

April 28, 2019

Ichabod - The Glory is Departed

Topics – Philistines; the Ark; Ashdod; Gath; Ekron; Emerods

Series – *1 Samuel*

Text – 1 Samuel 5

Introduction

When we last looked into 1 Samuel, we saw that Israel lost a major battle to the Philistines. Hophni and Phineas were killed. Eli fell backwards from his seat when he heard the news, and he died. Phineas' wife gives birth to a child, but dies in childbirth. The child is named Ichabod, meaning "the glory is departed." They named the child Ichabod because the Ark of the Covenant – the glory of Israel - had been taken by the Philistines in the battle. 1 Samuel 4 is one of the lowest points in Israel's history. The only thing that compares is the fall of the northern kingdom to Assyria, or perhaps, the fall of Jerusalem to the Babylonians.

I. Emerods for Ashdod (vs. 1 – 7)

Dagon was the god of the Philistines:

"Then the lords of the Philistines gathered them together for to offer a great sacrifice unto Dagon their god, and to rejoice: for they said, Our god hath delivered Samson our enemy into our hand." (Judges 16:23)

Each city of the Philistine pentapolis had its temple for the worship of this god. The temple statuary portraying Dagon was characterized by an upper human torso, with the lower torso of a fish. The major cultic rite in Dagon's worship was human sacrifice.¹

Dagon—little fish; diminutive from dag = a fish, the fish-god; the national god of the Philistines (Judg. 16:23). This idol had the body of a fish with the head and hands of a man. It was an Assyrio-Babylonian deity, the worship of which was introduced among the Philistines through Chaldea. The most famous of the temples of Dagon were at Gaza (Judg. 16:23–30) and Ashdod (1 Sam. 5:1–7).²

According to Wiersbe: "In their mythology, Dagon was the principal god of the Philistines and the father of Baal, the storm god, whose worship brought so much trouble to Israel."³

God first knocks over Dagon, and then He destroys the idol.

He then smites the people of Ashdod with Emerods (hemorrhoids).

The citizens of Ashdod determine that it's time for God to go.

¹ Harvey E. Finley, "Gods and Goddesses, Pagan," *Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology*, Baker Reference Library (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1996), 303.

² M. G. Easton, *Easton's Bible Dictionary* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1893).

³ Warren W. Wiersbe, *Be Successful, "Be" Commentary Series* (Colorado Springs, CO: Victor/Cook Communications, 2001), 35.

II. God's Wrath for Gath (vs. 8 – 9)

They move the Ark to Gath and the same thing that happened in Ashdod, happens to them. It was not a coincidence.

III. Destruction for Ekron (vs. 10 – 12)

Here, the people are not just smitten with a disease – many die. The Philistines determine that it is time for the Ark to go back home to Israel.

Conclusion

A lot of people are attracted to God, but are really not serious about worshipping Him in Spirit and in truth. The Philistines brought back the Ark as a “good luck charm,” but they had no idea what they were messing with. If you are going to take God into your life, you had better be prepared to let Him have His way.

Don't dabble with Christianity – get in all of the way, or don't get in at all.

Learn how God wants to be worshipped, and do it.

