

Journal Page



- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does this story teach me about myself?
- Are there any commands in this story to obey? How are they for God's glory and my good?
- Are there any promises in this story to remember? How do they help me trust and love God?
- How does this story help me to live on mission better?

FAMILY DISCUSSION STARTERS

- Why was the ark of God important? (*The ark reminded the Israelites of God's promise to be with His people.*)
- Do you always consult God when something doesn't work out the way you think it should? Why or why not?
- How can you remember that God is always with you?

The Ark Was Captured

1 Samuel 4–6

STORY POINT: GOD SHOWED THE PHILISTINES THAT HE IS THE ONE TRUE GOD.

One day the Philistines defeated Israel. The leaders of Israel said, "Why did God let us lose to the Philistines?" The Israelites decided to take the ark of the covenant to the battlefield. Maybe the ark would help them win. When the army of Israelites saw the ark, they shouted with joy. Surely they would win the battle now!

The Philistines came out to fight against the Israelites, and the Philistines won again! They even captured the ark of God! The Philistines took the ark of God to a temple where they worshiped a false god named Dagon. They put the ark next to a statue of Dagon. The next morning, the Philistines entered the temple and saw that Dagon's statue was facedown in front of the ark. They set the statue back up where it belonged. The next day, the statue was facedown again. This time, its head and hands were broken off.

God punished the people living in the city where the Philistines kept the ark. The people got sick, and they wanted to get rid of the ark. They decided to return the ark along with gifts of gold to show they were sorry for taking it. They hitched two cows to a cart and put the ark on the cart. The cows moved the ark down the road until the ark of God was back with the Israelites, where it belonged.

Christ Connection: The ark of God reminded the Israelites that God was with them. Years later, God gave His people something greater than a sign that He was with them; God gave them His Son, Jesus—God in the flesh. One of Jesus' names is Immanuel, which means "God with us."

