

Discovering the Power of the Presence of God



GOD'S PRESENCE AND SIN

A person is shown from the chest up, kneeling in prayer with their hands clasped. A bright, ethereal light emanates from behind their head, creating a halo effect. The background is a soft-focus landscape of rolling hills or mountains under a hazy sky. The overall tone is spiritual and contemplative.

Discovering the Power
Introduction:
of the Presence of God

Where sin *is* welcome,
God's presence *isn't*.

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Text: Joshua 6:2

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Then the LORD said to Joshua, "See, I have delivered Jericho into your hands, along with its king and its fighting men.

Discovering the Power

Text: Joshua 7:1

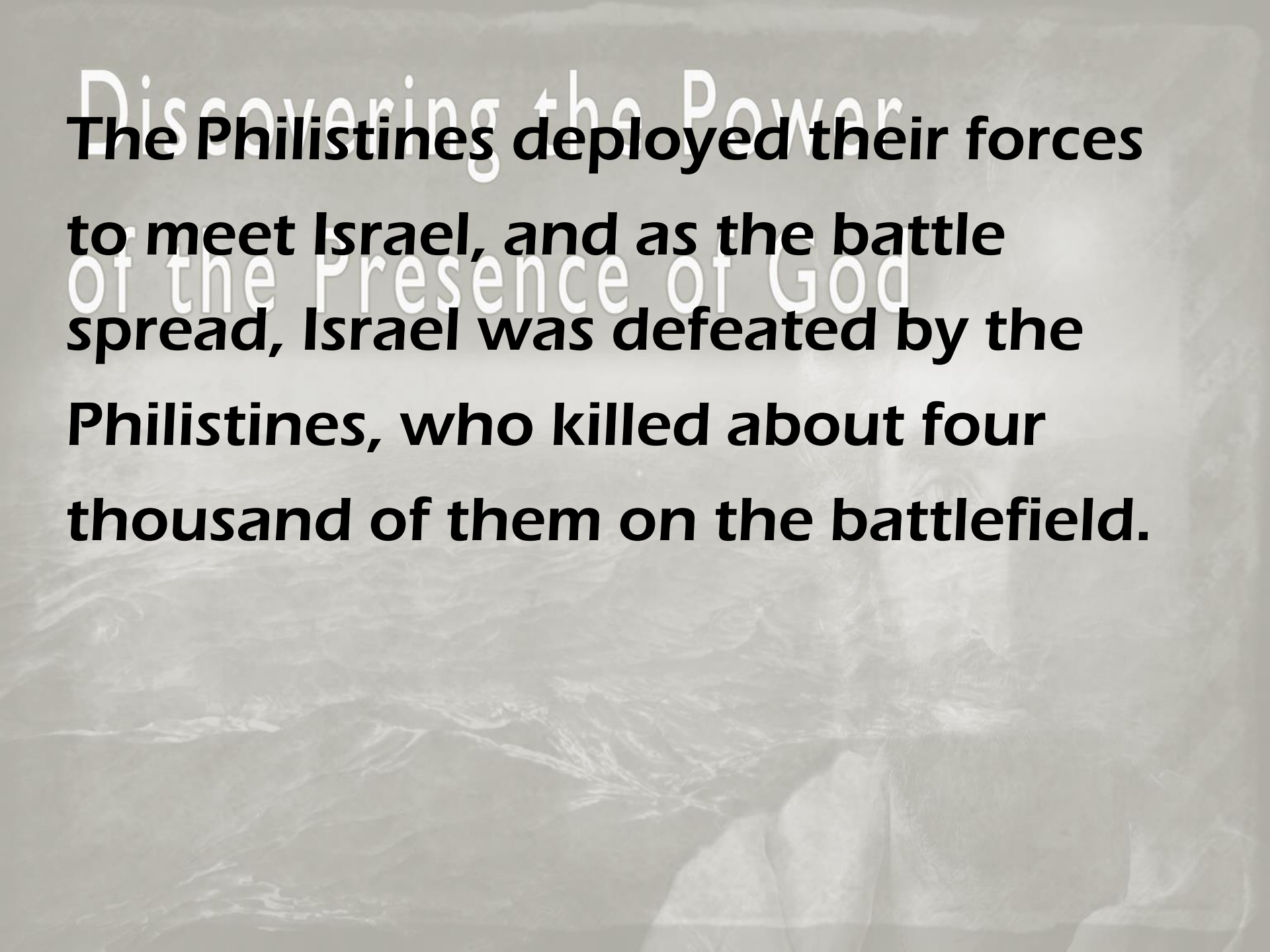
of the Presence of God
But the Israelites acted unfaithfully in regard to the devoted things; Achan son of Carmi, the son of Zimri, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, took some of them. So the LORD'S anger burned against Israel.

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Text: 1 Samuel 4:1b-11

of the Presence of God
Now the Israelites went out to fight
against the Philistines.

The Israelites camped at Ebenezer,
and the Philistines at Aphek.



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The Philistines deployed their forces to meet Israel, and as the battle spread, Israel was defeated by the Philistines, who killed about four thousand of them on the battlefield.

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**When the soldiers returned to camp,
the elders of Israel asked, “Why did
the LORD bring defeat upon us today
before the Philistines?**

**Let us bring the ark of the LORD’S
covenant from Shiloh, so that it may
go with us and save us from the hand
of our enemies.”**

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So the people sent men to Shiloh, and they brought back the ark of the covenant of the LORD Almighty, who is enthroned between the cherubim.

And Eli's two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, were there with the ark of the covenant of God.

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**When the ark of the LORD'S covenant
came into the camp, all Israel raised
such a great shout that the ground
shook.**

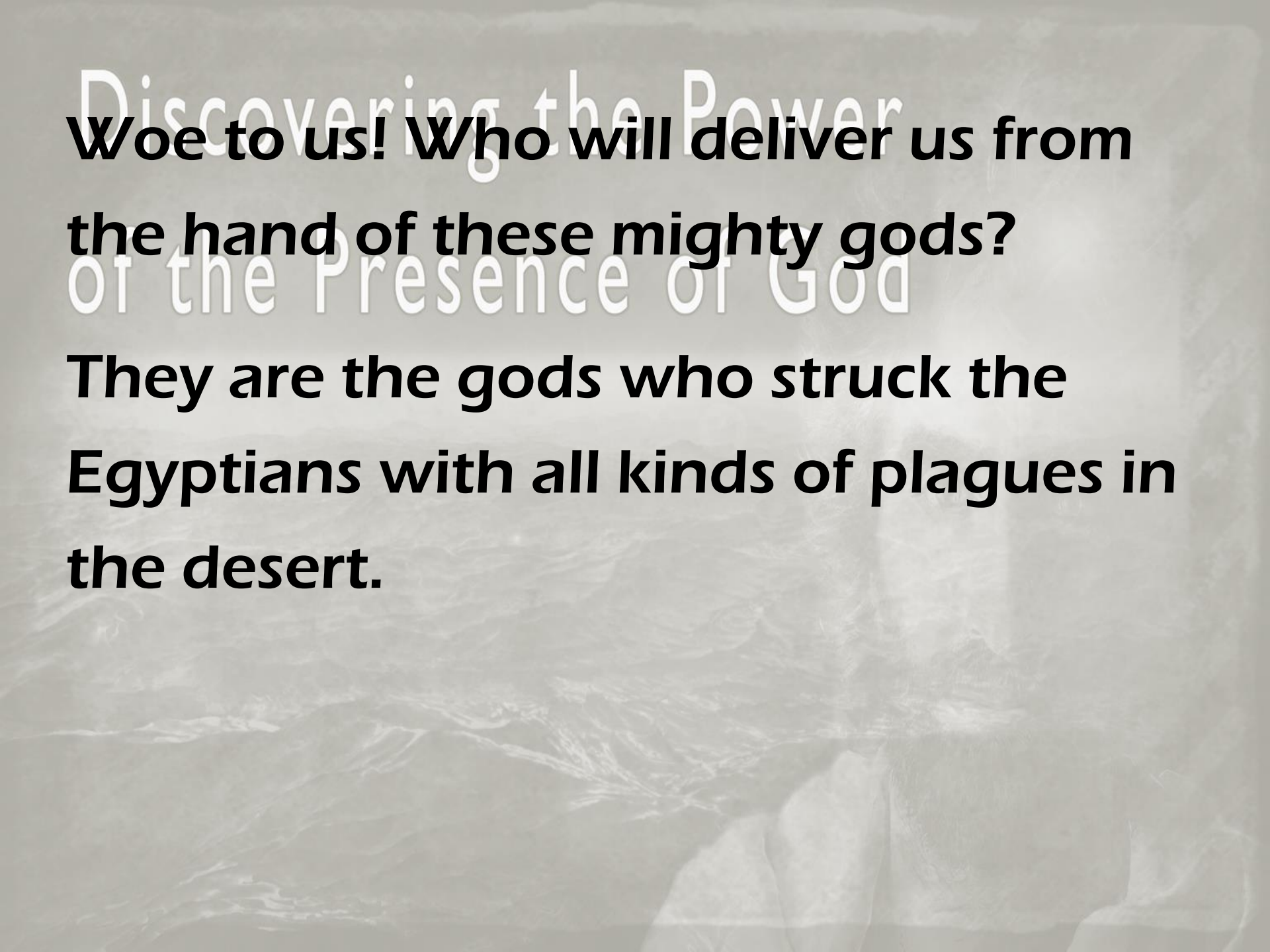
**Hearing the uproar, the Philistines
asked, "What's all this shouting in the
Hebrew camp?"**

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When they learned that the ark of the LORD had come into the camp, the Philistines were afraid.

“A god has come into the camp,” they said. “We’re in trouble!

Nothing like this has happened before.



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Woe to us! Who will deliver us from
the hand of these mighty gods?

of the Presence of God

They are the gods who struck the
Egyptians with all kinds of plagues in
the desert.



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Be strong, Philistines!

Of the Presence of God
Be men, or you will be subject to the
Hebrews, as they have been to you.

Be men, and fight!”

So the Philistines fought, and the
Israelites were defeated and every
man fled to his tent.

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The slaughter was very great; Israel
lost thirty thousand foot soldiers.
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The ark of God was captured, and Eli's
two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, died.

1 Samuel 4:1b-11

Israel experienced a succession of **SURPRISES**.

Jericho — Victory should have been **IMPOSSIBLE**, but was **EASY**.

(God knocked down the walls)

Ai — Victory should have been **EASY**, but **DEFEAT** was suffered instead.

(3,000 fled because of the death of 36)

Israel experienced a succession of **SURPRISES**.

Ebenezer — The challenge was **UNDERESTIMATED**, with a small defeat being followed by a great defeat.

The **ARK** was lost.

In each situation: **Discovering the Power**

The possibility for **SUCCESS** was present, even when it went unseen.

The possibility for **FAILURE** was present, even when it went unseen.



In each situation:

Discovering the Power

The presence of God was the common denominator in success, but sometimes

FORM was confused with
FUNCTION.

We can't:
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SUCCEED without God.
of the Presence of God

Expect God's help when we are
DISOBEDIENT.

Rely on properly conducted **RITUALS** to
take the place of a properly maintained
RELATIONSHIP with God.

Mistakes in obedience that *good* people often make include:

CLAIMING ownership of things that belong to God.

CONFUSING things that are meant to point to God, with God Himself.

Trying to do in the **FLESH** what only the **GOD'S SPIRIT** can do.



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Conclusion:
of the Presence of God

“Victory has a thousand fathers, while defeat is an orphan.” It takes character to accept responsibility for defeat.

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