

1 Samuel Lesson 6 Defeat and Departure

Key Themes in 1 Samuel :

- The connection between our obedience and our relationship to God
- God opposes the proud and exalts the humble
- Despite human evil, God is working out His purposes in history
- Kingship in Israel and God's plan to one day raise up an anointed divine king

Background:

The ark of the covenant: the ark of the covenant was to reside in the tabernacle in the "holy of holies". It contained the two tablets of stone on which the 10 commandments were written, a jar of manna, and Aaron's rod that budded. It was a simple chest of acacia wood covered with pure gold. The lid was "the mercy seat" where God met with His people through the High Priest.. The ark was the central focus of the Tabernacle and symbolic of God's divine presence.

The glory of the Lord : that weighty importance and shining majesty which accompanies God's presence. In Exodus 40:34-35 we read that when the Tabernacle was completed the "glory of the Lord" filled it.

Key Words:

came (as used in 4:1): Strong's H1961 "hayah" come to pass, became or had become.

ark: Strong's H727 "aron" a box, or chest, or coffer

glory: Strong's H727 "kabod" properly it means weight. but used in conjunction with God it refers to the weighty importance and shining majesty that accompanies God's presence.

Chapter 4 begins with a transition verse from Chapter 3. The words which the Lord spoke to Samuel in 3:11-14 are about to come to pass.

Read 1 Samuel 4:1-22

1. According to 4:1 and 4:2, the Israelites went out to battle against the Philistines. What does it say was the outcome of the battle? Read Deuteronomy 23:14 Who promises to defeat Israel's enemies and what was the criteria for that to happen?

2. Thinking back to past lessons what was the moral climate in the country of Israel and what was the priesthood like? How might this have contributed to Israel's defeat?

3. In 4:3 the elders were right to try to discern the reason for Israel's defeat? What erroneous conclusion did they come to? What should they have done?

4. According to 4:5 the Israelites shouted a great shout when the ark came into the camp, probably anticipating their victory.. What was their trust in and who should their trust have been in? What was the outcome of the battle this time? 4:10

Application: How is it possible for us to fall into the same error as the Israelites when faced with a battle or trial in our lives? Give some examples.

5. In 4:11, what happened to the 2 sons of Eli, Hophni and Phineas? This event had been predicted by God and told to Eli in Chapter 2. How can the fulfillment of God's words here be both an encouragement and a warning to us?

6. In 4:13 we see that Eli, who was old and blind, was sitting by the road waiting for news of the battle? what was "his heart trembling for"? What news caused him to fall over and die? What news caused Phineas' wife to go into labor prematurely and eventually die? 4:19

Application: Israel's sins and the corrupt priesthood brought about God's judgment on both. How can this serve as a warning for our churches and our own personal walk with the Lord?

