

Lesson 2

Eli Dies and the Ark of God Is Removed (1 Samuel 4:1 – 7:2)

Questions

1. What happened when Israel fought with the Philistines and what solution did the elders of Israel suggest (4:1-4)?
2. What happened when Israel fought again with the Philistines with the ark of the covenant now present with the Israelites (4:5-11)?
3. What happened when a messenger of Benjamin told the news of the battle to the citizens of Shiloh and to Eli (4:12-18)?
4. What happened to the wife of Phinehas when she heard the news and what does the name "Ichabod" mean (4:19-22)?
5. What happened when the ark of the covenant was placed in the house of Dagon by the Philistines (5:1-5)?
6. What did the Lord do to the Philistines in Ashdod, Gath, and Ekron, and why (5:6-12)?
7. How long was the ark of the covenant among the Philistines and what did they decide to do with it (6:1-9)?
8. What did the men of Beth-shemesh do when the ark of God came into the field of Joshua the Beth-shemite (6:10-16)?

9. What are the five cities of the Philistines mentioned in this account (6:17-18)?
10. What happened to the men of Beth-shemesh and why (6:19-21)?
11. Where was the ark of the covenant moved to and how long was it there (7:1-2)?

Digging Deeper

1. Locate the following on a map: Eben-ezer and Aphek (4:1; 5:1), Shiloh (4:3-4, 12), Benjamin (4:12), Ashdod (5:1, 3), Gath (5:8), Ekron (5:10), Beth-shemesh (6:9, 12), Gaza and Ashkelon (6:17), and Kiriath-jearim (6:21 – 7:2).
2. Who were the Philistines (4:1)?
3. What was the ark of the covenant (4:3-11) and how did the Lord sit above the cherubim (4:4)?
4. What reference is made to this Israelite defeat later in the Bible (4:5-11; see Psa. 78:60-61; Jer. 7:12-15; 26:6).
5. How do the deaths of Hophni, Phinehas, and Eli relate to the previous lesson (4:11, 18)?
6. Who was Dagon (5:2-5)?
7. When would the ark be transported again a second time on a “new cart” (6:8; see 2 Sam. 6:3)?

8. Was Joshua the Beth-shemite the same Joshua who led the Israelites into the land of Canaan (6:14, 18)?
9. What law of Moses was violated by the men of Beth-shemesh (6:19)?
10. How is the twenty year period of 7:2 to be reckoned? Is it a reference to the total amount of time the ark was in Kiriath-jearim before being removed to Jerusalem by David (2 Samuel 6), or a reference to something else?

Applications for Today

1. Even God's enemies understand the importance of being strong and acting like men when a battle is taking place (4:9; 1 Cor. 16:13).
2. Just because God's people have a tangible object of importance with them does not mean that they are in a right relationship with God (4:5-22; Mt. 23:37-39; Lk. 19:41-46).
3. It is good to remember how God has dealt with people in the past so that we can know how to act properly in his sight in the present (4:8; 6:6; Rom. 15:4).
4. When the Lord threatens judgment upon someone, he keeps his word (4:11; 2 Pet. 3:3-13).
5. National calamity that comes from abandoning God should bring personal heartache (4:19-22; Mt. 23:37-39; Lk. 19:41-46).
6. False gods and idols are powerless, but God alone is the one true God (5:1-5; Isa. 44:6-20; 1 Cor. 8:4-6).
7. You cannot escape the Lord. He rules over all people. The "hand of the Lord" can be against foreign nations just as much as against his own people (5:6-12; Ex. 9:3).
8. God's providential hand can be seen in the affairs of mankind and in the animal and plant kingdom as well (6:1-16; Mt. 6:26-30).
9. The Lord takes the violation of his law very seriously and so should we (6:19; 1 Jn. 3:4).

10. We should have reverence for the holy things of God. He is holy and to stand before him we must be holy as well (6:20; 1 Pet. 1:16).

11. It is important to seek the Lord and turn to him after a period of apostasy (7:2; Lk. 1:16).