

COMMUNITY BIBLE CHURCH
FIRST AND SECOND SAMUEL
LESSON 4
GOD'S GLORY DEPARTS – SAMUEL CALLS NATION TO REPENT
1 SAMUEL 4:1b – 1 SAMUEL 7:17
WEEK OF OCTOBER 4 – OCTOBER 9

Recall that first Samuel begins at the time that the book of Judges closes with the haunting statement, *"In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes."* When Samuel came on the scene, Israel had turned away from following God, their divine king, and turned away from His word. In this next section of Scripture, **1 Samuel 4:1b-7:2**, Israel suffers for a period of more than 20 years. This was the result of their refusal of the true and living God and following after lifeless idols, gods of their own making.

Samuel, who was recognized by all of Israel as God's prophet (**1 Samuel 4:1a**), calls the nation to repentance in **1 Samuel 7:3**. Israel now responds to Samuel's call to repentance. When the Israelites turned to God and cried out to Him; rather than trusting in their own strength and worldly ideas and devices, God delivers them from the wicked Philistines.

As you study and meditate on these chapters seek to grow in trusting in God's Word and obeying His Word. Our challenge is to daily *"Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding, but in all your ways acknowledge Him and He will direct your paths"*. **Prov. 3:5-6**

Read 1 Samuel 4:1b-22 God's Glory Departs – Defeat of Israel and Loss of the Ark

The focus of **chapters 4, 5 and 6** turns the attention from Samuel to the ark of the covenant. The ark of the covenant was the gold-plated chest constructed during Moses' time in which he placed the 2 stone tablets containing the 10 commandments, a gold jar containing manna and Aaron's budded staff. The ark of the covenant could only be carried by the Levitical priests using gold plated poles inserted through golden rings in corners of the chest. No one was to touch or look into the ark. The ark of the covenant was a symbol and a constant reminder of the presence and power of God.

1. What should the Israelites have done before they determined to engage the Philistines in battle in **verses 1 and 2**? Consider also **Prov.14:12**.
2. In **verses 2-5** how did the Israelites wrongly use the ark of the covenant?
3. How did God use the defeat of Israel and capture of the ark to accomplish His purposes which were revealed in **1 Samuel 2:31-34** and to Samuel in **1 Samuel 3:11-14**?
4. Is there any area of your life where you need to stop and seek God's direction rather than pressing forward with your own way?

Read 1 Samuel 5:1-12 God Accepts No Rivals – God Needs No Help

5. Why do you think the Philistines placed the Ark in the temple of Dagon? How did God display His glory, authority and power in these verses?
6. What did the Philistines do with the ark in this chapter?

Read 1 Samuel 6:1-7:2 God Displays His Sovereign Control and Holiness In The Return of the Ark.

7. From **1 Samuel 6:1-18** describe the plans of the Philistines to rid themselves of the ark and to determine if God was inflicting judgement against them?

8. In **verse 15** who moved the ark and why is that significant? **See Duet. 10:8**

9. When God directed the ark to Beth-shemesh what happened to the men that looked into the ark? What did the men of Beth-shemesh conclude about God's character and holiness? What did they do in response?

"God's people today no longer have the ark of the covenant, but we can fall into the same Beth-shemesh mode of thinking. We can forget that Yahweh is holy, in a word, different, and that He does not conform to our expectation of an easygoing God...Our culture does not help us to smash our graven image of the casual God. Our culture proclaims that God must be the essence of tolerance; he is chummy rather than holy... As Jonathan Edwards noted, "it is the absence of godly fear that signifies a lack of the knowledge of God."

1 Samuel Commentary, Dale Ralph Davis, page 67

Read 1 Samuel 7:3-17 Israel Responds to Samuel's Call to Repent

10. When Israel lamented after Yahweh in **1 Samuel 7:2**, what did Samuel instruct the people of Israel about repentance in **verse 3**?

11. How did the people respond in **verses 4-6**?

12. The Philistines again threatened to strike Israel at Mizpah in **verse 7**. How did the Israelites respond to this threat compared to their action in **1 Samuel 4:2**? How does that show their recognition of their dependence on God and their trust in His protection?

13. What does Samuel do in response to the request of the people in **verses 8 and 9**? How does God answer in **verse 10**?

14. What does Christ do for His redeemed in **Romans 8:34** and **Hebrews 7:25**? How does that affect your love for and worship of Christ?

Concluding Applications:

Just as Samuel called on Israel in **1 Samuel 7:3**, how are you challenged daily to turn to Christ with all your heart, put away the idols you hold in your heart, set your affections on Christ and serve Him wholeheartedly?

How is it that you daily "*Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding, but in all your ways acknowledge Him and He will direct your paths*"? **Prov. 3:5-6**