

“Why Has the LORD Defeated Us?”

1 Samuel 4:1-11

“And He humbled you and let you hunger and fed you with manna, which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that He might make you know that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD....Take care lest you forget the LORD your God by not keeping His commandments and His rules and His statutes, which I commanded you....Beware lest you say in your heart, “My power, and the might of my hand have gotten me this wealth”....so shall you perish, because you would not obey the voice of the LORD your God.” (Deuteronomy 8:1-20)

“But this is the one to whom I will look: he who is humble and contrite in spirit and trembles at My word....These have chosen their own ways, and their soul delights in their abominations; I will also choose harsh treatment for them and bring their fears upon them, because when I called, no one answered, when I spoke they did not listen; but they did what was evil in my eyes and chose that in which I did not delight.” (Isaiah 66:2-4)

“But He gives more grace. Therefore it says, God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble. Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you....Humble yourselves before the Lord, and He will exalt you.” (James 4:6-10)

- 1 Samuel 4:1-2: *“A humbling defeat”*
 - Israel went out to battle the Philistines, not according to the Word of God but according to their own desires. They had a missing heart condition (1 Samuel 2:1-2), they had a misplaced trust (1 Samuel 2:6-9), and they were too proud to submit to God (1 Samuel 2:29-30; 3:13-14; 7:3:17).
- 1 Samuel 4:3-4: *“They sought worldly counsel instead of godly counsel”*
 - It was established in all Israel that Samuel was a prophet of the LORD (1 Samuel 3:19-20). Instead of going to Samuel, and therefore the LORD, they trusted in the ark and the unsaved priests of God, Hophni and Phinehas. They wanted God’s blessings, strength, comfort, peace, and victory without submission to God’s Word (1 Samuel 15:22-26).
- 1 Samuel 4:5-9: *“God uses pain and suffering to show the weakness of the flesh & the foolishness of man”*
 - We are told not to rely on our own understanding (Proverbs 3:5) and not be wise in our own eyes (Proverbs 3:7). *“For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men” (1 Corinthians 2:25). “But He said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is made perfect in weakness.’ Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me” (2 Corinthians 12:9).*
- 1 Samuel 4:5-9: *“The power of fear”*
 - *“And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather fear Him who can destroy both soul and body in hell” (Matthew 10:28). “And now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require of you, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all His ways, to love Him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and all your soul, and to keep the commandments and statutes of the LORD, which I am commanding you today for your good?” (Deuteronomy 10:12-13).*
- 1 Samuel 4:10-11: *“The wages of sin is death”*
 - Because of Israel’s sin 34,000 men died. Because of Israel’s sin God took their privilege to come into His presence from them. Because of Hophni and Phinehas’ sin they both lost their lives. Because of our sin Christ died so that we might be saved and live humble, obedient lives. *“For our sake He made Him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God” (2 Corinthians 5:21). “For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 6:23).*