

II. The Attacks (4:1–22): The Israelites engage in war with the Philistines.

A. The defeats (4:1–11): The Israelites suffer two defeats by the Philistines.

1. First defeat (4:1–9)

a. The routing (4:1–2): The Philistines kill 4,000 Israelites in the first encounter.

b. The rallying (4:3–9): The Ark of the Covenant is carried to the battlefield to encourage Israel and frighten the Philistines. But the Philistines stage a rally!

2. Second defeat (4:10–11): The Philistines kill 30,000 Israelites, including Eli's sons, Hophni and Phinehas, and capture the Ark of the Covenant.

B. The despair (4:12–22)

1. Of Eli (4:12–18)

a. His anxiety (4:12–16): Eli sits near the gate of Shiloh, fearfully awaiting news of the battle and the Ark.

b. His accident (4:17–18): Hearing of Israel's defeat, the death of his sons, and the capture of the Ark, Eli falls from his seat, breaks his neck, and dies!

2. Of Eli's daughter-in-law (4:19–22)

a. The tragic news (4:19–20): When Phinehas's pregnant wife hears that her husband and father-in-law are dead and the Ark has been captured, she goes into labor and dies in childbirth.

b. The tragic name (4:21–22): Just before her death, Phinehas's wife names her infant son Ichabod, meaning "Where is the glory?"

III. The Ark (5:1–12)

A. In Ashdod (5:1–8)

1. The temple (5:1–5): The Lord causes the Philistine idol Dagon to fall down before the Ark.

2. The tumors (5:6–8): The people of Ashdod are afflicted with tumors because of the Ark's presence. So they send the Ark to the city of Gath.

B. In Gath (5:9): The citizens there also suffer from an outbreak of tumors.

C. In Ekron (5:10–12). When the people of Gath try to send the Ark to Ekron, tumors and great fear begin to sweep through Ekron.

The Philistines return the Ark to Israel with gifts. Samuel calls Israel to repentance, and Israel defeats the Philistines. Samuel continues his role as judge over Israel.

I. The Return of the Ark (6:1–21)

A. The treasure (6:1–6): After seven months of trouble over the Ark, the desperate Philistines are advised by their own priests to send the Ark back to Israel with a guilt offering of five gold tumors and five gold rats!

B. The test (6:7–12): To determine whether their troubles were caused by the Ark or by coincidence, the Philistines devise a test. Two cows that have just given birth to calves are tied to a cart holding the Ark. If the cows don't cross the border, it was chance that caused the tumors. But if they cross into Israel, the Lord caused the plagues. The cows carry the Ark to the Israelite town of Beth-shemesh.

C. The thanksgiving (6:13–18): The people of Beth-shemesh rejoice at the return of the Ark.

D. The tragedy (6:19–21): The Lord killed 70 men for looking inside the Ark, so the people of Beth-shemesh ask the people of Kiriath-jearim to come and take it away.

II. The Revival Brought About by the Ark (7:1–17)

A. The repentance (7:1–6): After 20 years of spiritual decline, Samuel leads the people to repentance. The Israelites destroy their idols and worship only the Lord. Samuel becomes Israel's judge.

B. The routing (7:7–11): The Philistines attack the Israelites, but the Lord's mighty voice thunders from heaven, throwing the Philistines into confusion and allowing the Israelites to defeat them.

C. The rock (7:12): Samuel sets up a huge stone to remind the people of God's help and calls it Ebenezer, meaning "the stone of help."

D. The respite (7:13–14): The Philistines are forced to return much of the land they captured from Israel and do not invade them again for a long time.

E. The routine (7:15–17): Samuel travels throughout Israel for many years, serving as judge over the people.

Willmington, H. L.: *The Outline Bible*. Wheaton, Ill. : Tyndale House Publishers, 1999, S. 1 Sa 3-7:17

Application:

1. God's people are supposed to know Him and make Him known to the cultures around them.
 - a. How do you lose sight of God?
 - b. What life practices help you stay close to God?
2. God will reveal the truth of who he is even when people fail to know and honor him.
 - a. Israel was God's community who was supposed to be God's witness to the world.
 - b. How has does the church (in general) fail to reveal the truth about God in our culture?
 - c. How can Mesa View Church better reveal Christ to our culture?
 - d. How can you reveal Christ to the people God places close to you?
3. God will rise up people who want to know Him and make Him known.
 - a. Even if you feel you have not known God or made Him known to those around you like you should or could have, you are the person God wants to raise up.
 - b. What will you do to get to know God more in the next three months?
 - c. Who can pray for that doesn't yet know God? Pray for their coming to know God through Christ and pray for God to show you how He might use you in the introduction.