

**Cole Community Church Growth Groups  
Leader's Guide for 1 Samuel 4  
Week of October 2-8, 2011**

**A REALLY BAD DAY FOR ISRAEL AND ELI'S FAMILY**

**Share examples where you might have had a bad day!**

**Israel and Eli are having a really bad day. Read Chapter 4.**

**List all the examples of Israel and Eli having a very bad day.**

1. Lose 4,000 men in the first battle.
2. The elder of Israel put the blame on the Lord for the defeat. They make a serious error in understanding why Israel lost the battle.
3. Their solution, bring the ark of the Lord to the battle.
4. The two most egregious violators of the covenant, the sons of Eli bring the Ark to the battle front.
5. People have a 10 level of confidence that the Lord would give them victory; however, the army is routed.
6. Israel loses 30,000 men in this second battle, a devastating defeat.
7. Two most powerful active priests, the sons of Eli died at the hands of Philistines.
8. First time ever, the ark of the Lord is captured and taken from Israel.
9. Eli gets the bad news about his sons
10. Eli get the bad news about the ark being captured
11. Eli dies by falling backward over his own chair and breaking his neck.
12. When Eli's daughter-in-law hears of her husband and Eli's death, she goes into labor and dies.
13. Before her death, names her son, Ichabod, meaning "no glory", "the glory of the Lord has left Israel".
14. Philistines take over and rule over Israel.
15. Later the sanctuary at Shiloh was destroyed and the ark of the Lord never returns to Shiloh.

**What might be the significance of certain events:**

Blaming the Lord for the loss of life and battle?

The shouts of confidence when the ark arrives at the battle?

The sons of Eli leading the ark into battle?

Israel loosing 34,000 men in two battles?

The ark of the Lord is captured?

Eli, his two sons, the daughter-in-law, 30,000 men die on the same day?

Naming the son, Ichabod?

The destruction of Israel is taking place. Anything that had, and anyone who had created any sense of confidence was being destroyed. God was breaking down the nation.

Blaming the Lord was easy Vs. facing their sins.

Had the glory of the Lord left Israel or had Israel left the Lord?

The ark was the last point of confidence.

With the deaths and the capture of the ark, Israel was totally destroyed, totally broken.

**Why is the writer of this book wanting us to hear the interaction between Eli and the Benjamite?**

The fact that Eli was not surprised by the deaths of his two sons.

The deadly reaction to the capture of the ark.

The final piece of the destruction of Israel is now complete.

**Where is Samuel during this chapter? How would he have reacted to the death of his high priest? Why is he not mentioned until Chapter 7:3? (20 years later, 7:2)**

The Lord is continuing to build into the spiritual life of Samuel. All that the Lord had promised was coming true.

We would assume that Samuel was maturing before the Lord and the people of Israel.

**What is this scripture teaching us about how God worked then and how God works in our lives now?**

## Steps in the relationship between God and His people throughout the Old Testament

1. The Covenant Relationship is established.  
“I will walk among you and be your God, and you will be my people.”  
Leviticus 26:12-13
2. The people begin to abandon the commitment they made to God.  
“But if you will not listen to me and carry out all these commands  
And violate my covenant” Leviticus 26:14-15
3. The covenant relationship is broken with God.  
“In those days Israel had no king; everyone did as he saw fit”. Judges 21:25
4. God raises a person or/and a group of people (remnant) who remain faithful. The remnant warns the people of the consequences of the broken covenant.  
“I will raise up for myself a faithful priest, who will do according to what is in my heart and mind.” 1 Samuel 2:35  
“Hear this, you priests! Pay attention, you Israelites! Listen, O royal house! This judgment is against you” Hosea 5:1
5. Destruction takes place upon the people because of their actions.  
“I will bring upon you sudden terror...” Leviticus 26:16  
“I will set my face against you....” Leviticus 26:17
6. The remnant suffers with the people.
7. The people call to the Lord for forgiveness and restoration of the covenant.  
“But if they will confess their sins and the sins of their fathers... I will remember the covenant with their ancestors... to be their God.” Leviticus 26:40-45
8. The remnant leads on behalf of the people in the call for forgiveness and restoration to the Lord.
9. In His time, God forgives and restores the covenant relationship with the people (step 1).