

BIBLE DISCUSSION GROUP STUDY QUESTIONS

In preparation for Sunday, February 21, 2010

Passage: 1 Samuel 4:12-22

Memory Passage: 1 Corinthians 10:31

TODAY: *From your study this past week, what is one thing that impressed you that can be of help in your life?*

DAY 1 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

(a) **Read 1 Samuel 4:12-13.** Reviewing from last week, we learned that God allowed the Philistines to defeat the nation of Israel in battle after attempting to use the Ark of the Covenant as a secret weapon to insure their victory. This resulted in their defeat and the capture of the Ark and the death of Eli's son's Hophni and Phineas. The story continues in this section with a messenger coming to let Eli and the people of Shiloh know what has happened.

(b) Research project: (Try using a good study bible or the internet to find the answers.) The text says that this man ran from being in a battle at Aphek to Shiloh. How far away is Aphek from Shiloh? On top of that, what is the difference in elevation between Aphek and Shiloh? How determined must this man have been to get news back to Shiloh in the same day?

(c) What kind of picture is painted for us about Eli in this passage? From what you have read before about Eli does anything in these two verses surprise you? Read Psalm 26:8-12. Eli definitely did not live his entire life caring about the Lord, but do you think that he has finally begun to have his priorities straightened out?

(d) Read Psalm 26:1-7. Unlike Eli, what had this man done with his life? How had he been faithful to God? How is his example one that we should practice?

(e) *Family:* Read 1 Samuel 4:12-13. Why would someone run so far to deliver a message? Would someone do the same for a good message? Eli wanted a word on what had happened to the Ark. Did Eli have his heart in the right place? Why should our concern always be for the glory of God (1 Corinthians 10:31)?

DAY 2 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

(a) **Read 1 Samuel 4:14-17.** How do Eli's physical ailments mirror Israel's troubles? What might this teach us about the effect that leaders have upon their people?

(b) Read Hebrews 13:17. What is the great responsibility that is given to leadership? How are we to respond to leadership? Why does this become difficult at times? Why is it easier other times?

(c) What are the four things that are communicated to Eli? What kind of message do you think God sent Eli through this unlikely messenger? What are the ramifications for years of Eli's sinful parenting?

(d) How could parents today be like Eli? What kind of warning does this give us? What happens when we place our children's wants and desires before the honor and name of God?

DAY 3 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

(a) **Read 1 Samuel 4:18 and Psalm 78:58-66.** Here we get the response of Eli to the news that the Ark of the Covenant had been taken. The term "seat" which is used in this passage represents a seat of honor or throne. How does the nature of Eli's death sum up his story? The number forty represents completion. The fact that Eli judged for forty years represents that his time of judging was complete.

(b) As you read through Psalm 78:58-66, take some time to reflect upon the imagery that the psalmist uses. What images stick out to you the most? What would it have been like to live during this time?

(c) If we were an ancient Israelite reading this, we would end reading this passage with a sense of justice and a sense of foreboding and despair. We would see that Eli has gotten what he deserved but at a great cost to the community of God. We often think that our actions exist in a vacuum, but they really do affect the community of God as well. Why is it so important for us to remember that what we do and how we do it affects more than us and our family (Hebrews 10:24-25; 1 Thessalonians 5:11)?

DAY 4 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

(a) **Read 1 Samuel 4:19-22.** In this passage, we have related a very sad story of the wife of Phineas dying in a pre-mature childbirth upon hearing the news of her husband and father-in-law's death. What should have been a moment of happiness was marred by the despair of losing the Ark of God. How would you have responded if the glory of God left The Bible Church of Cabot? What would it mean for us to lose the glory of God (2 Corinthians 4:6; Hebrews 1:3)?

(b) What is our role in being Christians in displaying the glory of God (1 Corinthians 10:31; 2 Corinthians 4:15; Romans 15:7)? Do you often think of yourself as someone who seeks to display God's glory?

(c) How might your life look differently if you did everything for the glory of God? What are subtle ways in which we begin to do things for our own glory and not for the glory of God?

(d) *Family*: Read 1 Samuel 4:19-22. This is a sad end to the sad story of Eli and his family. Have you ever thought about losing the glory of God? In whom do we see the glory of God (Hebrews 1:3)? Read 1 Corinthians 10:31. What do you think it means that we are to do everything for the glory of God? Does this change your attitude in how you do things? Pray that God would give you this to be in the fore front of your heart and mind.

DAY 5 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

(a) **Read John 11.** This is the story of Lazarus rising from the grave. It is a truly sad story for Mary and Martha. They are not aware of what Jesus was planning to do. Why does Jesus say that He has allowed Lazarus to die?

(b) Do we always understand why God allows us to go through such trials? Is it always going to be so that He can perform some miracle? What is God’s motivation in everything that He does (Isaiah 42:8)?

(c) Read Proverbs 25:2. How does God’s concealment of things bring Him glory? How did it in the story of Lazarus? Do you think that the same will happen in the story of Samuel and Eli?

DAY 6 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

READ THE PASSAGE

Think back through what you have learned each day this week. What do you picture when you think of the Glory of God? Thinking through this week, how can the glory of God be displayed? What are you doing to display the glory of God in your life?

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The Weight of Glory
“The glory of God is gone...”