

EPISODE NO. 122

1 Sam. 4:1,3,4,10,11,17,18; 5:1-12

The Israelites Lost the Battle

4:1 The Israelites fought the Philistines. 3 The Israelite army went back to their camp. The elders of Israel asked, “Why did Yahweh allow the Philistines to beat us so badly today!? Let us bring here to us the Holy Chest of the Covenant of Yahweh from Shiloh, so that it may go with us and save us from the hand of our enemies!”

4 So, the army sent some men to Shiloh. They got the Holy Chest of the Covenant of Yahweh of the armies of heaven, who is enthroned between the cherubim! Eli’s two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, were there with the Holy Chest of the Covenant of the one true God.

10 But, the Philistines fought hard and beat the Israelites. Every Israelite soldier ran away to his own home. It was a huge defeat for Israel, because 30,000 Israelite foot-soldiers were killed. 11 And, the Holy Chest of God was CAPTURED by the Philistines! And, Eli’s two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, were killed.

17 A messenger brought the news answered, “Israel has run away from the Philistines! The Israelite army has suffered heavy losses! Your two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, are both dead! And, the Philistines have captured the Holy Chest of the one true God!”

18 When the man mentioned the Holy Chest of the one true God, Eli fell off his chair backward. He fell down beside the gate and broke his neck, because he was old and fat. Eli died. He had been the leader of Israel for 40 years.

What Happened to God's Holy Chest?

1 After the Philistines had captured the Holy Chest of the one true God, they took it from Ebenezer to Ashdod. 2 They took it and brought it into Dagon’s temple and put it next to Dagon. 3 The people of Ashdod got up early the next morning, and, look, they found that the statue of Dagon had fallen down to the ground on its face! It was lying in front of the Holy Chest of Yahweh. Then the people of Ashdod picked up Dagon and put it back in its place. 4 Early the next morning, the people of Ashdod got up. And again, look, they found the statue of Dagon face-down on the ground! It had fallen down in front of the Holy Chest of Yahweh. Its head and its two hands were broken off,

and they were on the doorway. Only the torso of Dagon was still in one piece. 5 So, even today, the priests of Dagon and all others who enter its temple at Ashdod refuse to step on the doorsill.

6 The Always-Present One punished the people of Ashdod and their neighbors, and their territory swarmed with rats. The Always-Present One gave them a lot of trouble. He caused them to have terrible hemorrhoids. 7 The people of Ashdod saw what was happening. They said, “The Holy Chest of the God of Israel must NOT stay with us! God is punishing us and Dagon, our god!” 8 So, the people of Ashdod called all five Philistine lords together. They asked them, “What should we do with the Holy Chest of the God of Israel!?”

The rulers answered, “Move the Holy Chest of the God of Israel over to Gath.” So, the Philistines moved the Holy Chest of the God of Israel.

9 However, after they had moved it to Gath, Yahweh punished that city, too. He caused a tremendous panic there. He afflicted the people of the city — the unimportant ones and the important ones. They all started having terrible hemorrhoids.

10 Then the Philistines sent the Holy Chest of the one true God over to Ekron.

But when it arrived at Ekron, the people of Ekron yelled out: “Why are you bringing that thing to our city!? Do you want to kill us and our people!?” 11 Then the people of Ekron called all the lords of the Philistines together. They said to those rulers: “Send the Holy Chest of the God of Israel back to its original place. Otherwise, it’s going to kill us all!”

There was mass destruction throughout the entire city. God’s punishment was so severe there. 12 And, the people who did not die were plagued with terrible hemorrhoids. So, the people of Ekron cried loudly to heaven.