

# Excluding God

1 Samuel 4:1b-22

## 1. Failing Methods vs. 1-11

The Israelites chose to fight their battle against the Philistines without repenting and seeking God's will, but rather attempted to gain victory through trying to use the ark of the covenant to force God to give them the victory; their attempt brought failure.

Any method that excludes repentance and seeking God's will, will not bring God glory or be rewarding.

Questions:

- Why do you think the Israelites chose to go out to battle without first inquiring of the Lord and making sure their spiritual condition was in the proper state of preparation?
- Why do we choose to face life's difficulties without first inquiring of the Lord and making sure our spiritual condition was in a proper state of preparation?
- Is it possible to feel confident God is with us when He is not?

## 2. Fear & Despair vs. 12-22

Through Israel's disobedience to God, Eli became fearful that Israel may no longer experience God's presence (the ark of the covenant being captured), and his daughter in law became filled with despair when she realized that God's glory has departed from Israel.

When we exclude God from our plans, our disobedience will lead us through times of fear and despair because we are no longer experiencing God's presence the way we use to.

Questions:

- God's Word makes it clear that God's presence is continually in my life when I become a child of God (Matthew 28:18-20; Psalm 139:7-12), but experiencing God's presence is a whole different discussion. What are your thoughts about this statement?
- What should be our greatest concern?

Worrying about whether or not I sense the presence of God, or, focusing on whether God senses the presence of me; being intentional with my relationship with God.

## Conclusion:

Living life with God involves repentance and seeking His will. Otherwise, we are excluding God from our life decisions; no longer experiencing God's presence the way we use to.