Sunday School Live Lesson

November 8, 2026

The Ark Is Lost

1 Samuel 4:12-22

Instructor: Ralph Gordon

Question To Consider

November 8, 2026

How have you handled a severe loss in your life?

Sunday School Lesson Objective

November 8, 2026

To understand and internalize God's messages for us today through this passage of Scripture in the Book of 1 Samuel.

Let us learn and discern.

Sunday School Lesson Segments – 1

November 8, 2026

1. Bibliography

2. Points of Information:
   the Book of 1 Samuel;
   Eli

Sunday School Lesson Segments - 2

November 8, 2026

3. Lesson Context

4. Lesson Text

5. Remember This

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Bibliography – 3

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Points of Information – Samuel

First and Second Samuel were originally one book.

1 Samuel covers the periods from judges to a monarchy for the people of God.

Points of Information – Samuel

1 Samuel begins with the story of Hannah, the barren wife of Elkanah, who prayerfully petitioned the Lord for a son.

If the Lord would bless her with a son, Hannah pledged to give the offspring back to God for service.

Points of Information – Samuel

After the boy was born and weaned, Hannah kept her promise and took young Samuel to the temple to be raised and trained by the high priest, Eli.

Points of Information – Eli

Eli was the high priest and judge for the Israelites.

God was very displeased by the fact that Eli had failed to rebuke his two sons for their sinfulness and abuse of the office of a priest.

The Ark Is Lost

Lesson Context

The Israelites had been plagued by conflict with their enemies, the Philistines.

After losing battles to the Philistines, the Israelites hopefully thought that carrying the Ark of the Covenant onto the battlefield would enable them to beat their enemy.

The Ark Is Lost

Lesson Context

Contrary to their hope and belief, the Philistines again conquered the Israelites.

In addition to winning the battle, the Philistines captured the Ark of the Covenant.

The Ark Is Lost

Lesson Context

The priests who had taken the Ark of the Covenant to the battlefield were the two sinful sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas.

The two sons were slain in the battle.

1 Samuel 4:12 [NIV]

That same day a Benjamite ran from the battle line and went to Shiloh with his clothes torn and dust on his head.

1 Samuel 4:13 [NIV]

When he arrived, there was Eli sitting on his chair by the side of the road, watching, because his heart feared for the Ark of God. When the man entered the town and told what had happened, the whole town sent up a cry.

1 Samuel 4:14 [NIV]

Eli heard the outcry and asked, “What is the meaning of this uproar?”

The man hurried over to Eli,

1 Samuel 4:15 [NIV]

who was ninety-eight years old and whose eyes had failed so that he could not see.

1 Samuel 4:16 [NIV]

He told Eli, “I have just come from the battle line; I fled from it this very day.”

Eli asked, “What happened, my son?”

1 Samuel 4:17 [NIV]

The man who brought the news replied, “Israel fled before the Philistines, and the army has suffered heavy losses.

Also your two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, are dead, and the Ark of God has been captured.

1 Samuel 4:18 [NIV]

When he mentioned the Ark of God, Eli fell backward off his chair by the side of the gate. His neck was broken and he died, for he was an old man, and he was heavy.

He had led Israel forty years.

1 Samuel 4:19 [NIV]

His daughter-in-law, the wife of Phinehas, was pregnant and near the time of delivery.

When she heard the news that the Ark of God had been captured and that her father-in-law and her husband were dead, she went into labor and gave birth, but was overcome by her labor pains.

1 Samuel 4:20 [NIV]

As she was dying, the women attending her said, “Don’t despair; you have given birth to a son.”

But she did not respond or pay any attention.

1 Samuel 4:21 [NIV]

She named the boy Ichabod, saying,

“The Glory, has departed from Israel” – because of the capture of the Ark of God and the deaths of her father-in-law and her husband.

1 Samuel 4:22 [NIV]

She said,

“The Glory has departed from Israel,
for the Ark of God has been captured.”

Remember This:

Never forget, no matter how bad things may appear to be, that we can (and should) call on God in the Name of Jesus.

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