

Is God In The Camp?
May 21, 2017



Scripture Lesson is I Samuel 4:2 – 18. **This is an excerpt from the message. 1**
Samuel 4:2 And the Philistines put themselves in array against Israel: and when they joined battle, Israel was smitten before the Philistines: and they slew of the army in the field about four thousand men.

We find that the Philistines and Israel had entered into war. At last the hour of judgment struck. Israel was defeated with a loss of 4,000 men, but instead of humbling themselves before God, they assumed as a covenant nation God would help them whether they fulfilled their part of the covenant and obeyed His commandments or not. They had lost the presence of God and did not recognize it.

The Israelites would have succeeded better if they had first repented and reformed, and began their work aright. The Bible stated that the Eli the high priest judged for forty years, and the Philistines had dominion over Israel since the death of Samson and Eli's administration. Eli had permitted his vile sons, Hophni and Phinehas, to remain in the priesthood. Sin the accursed thing, was in the camp and gave their enemies all the advantages.

Ver. 3 And when the people were come into the camp, the elders of Israel said, Wherefore hath the LORD smitten us to day before the Philistines? Let us fetch the ark of the covenant of the LORD out of Shiloh unto us, that, when it cometh among us, it may save us out of the hand of our enemies. A council of war was called, and, instead of resolving to fast and pray and amend their lives, they were ill advised by the priest. They quarreled with God for appearing against them. **Wherefore hath the LORD smitten us.** Sin blinds us and makes us unwilling to see it and own it. "Wherefore shall we, that are Israelites, be smitten before the Philistines"? How absurd and unjust was it! They seem unaware of any provocation they had given God. They assume they own the hand of him.

Note: **Prov. 19:3 The foolishness of man perverts his way, and then his heart frets against the Lord** men bring trouble into their live owing to their iniquity. Yet, they lay the blame on God and finds fault with him. The Israelites imagined that they could oblige God to appear for them the next time by bringing the ark into the camp.