

- I) V12-17 INTRO: Now the sons of Eli *were corrupt* they did not know the LORD
God established the priesthood under Moses, the first High Priest being Aaron
Aaron was of the tribe of Levi, and all priests were to be from the tribe of Levi
- II) As High Priest, Eli had sons who also were priests, *but they were unsaved*
Corrupt: Literally, sons of Belial (worthless, evil, ungodly, and evil)
2 Co 6:15 uses the word **Belial** for Satan
- III) These were evil men who did not have a relationship with the Lord
In spite of this, they were working in the tabernacle
- IV) This was around 60 or so years before Solomon built the Temple
- V) They were priests serving in the tabernacle, but they had one problem
God had no influence upon their lives in the least
They did not know, worship, love, serve or fear God in the least
- VI) Having no fear of God allowed them to sin without concern for consequences
As far as they were concerned, they could do whatever they desired
- VII) This lack of fear of God is a chief earmark of someone who does not know God
Ro 3:18 There is **no fear of God** before their eyes
- VIII) The book of Job is thought to have been written during the time of Abraham
Abraham lived 1000 years before Samuel
Job 28:28 (Job said) to man (God) said, '**Behold, the fear of the Lord**, that is
wisdom, and to depart from evil is understanding
- IX) These false priests had no fear of God
This lack of fear of God allowed them to do sinful things without remorse
- X) They did not have any concern for the consequences of their actions
They didn't honor their duties and didn't value their service to God
- XI) They thought they could do what they wanted without paying any penalty
God isn't even aware of what they are doing
Ps 94:7 **The Lord isn't looking**, they say, and besides, the God of Israel doesn't care

- I) This lack of reverence for what is holy and purity in service is not uncommon
It continues to exist throughout history, including our own day
- II) There are instances when pastors steal from the church or seduce members
- III) A friend of mine mentors people who desire to become worship leaders
He told me that the majority he meets with are not looking to lead worship
They are looking to cut an album so they can get a recording contract
- IV) He said over 90% are looking for a career in music, **not in the worship of God**
One young man, **an unbeliever**, said it would be easier to break in as a gospel artist
- V) When you do not fear God even **ministry itself** seems like an easy job to have
These men didn't know God, and because of this they sinned with no guilt
WHAT DID THEY DO?
- VI) V13-14 And the priests' custom with the people was that when any man offered
FIRST
- VII) They **stole from God** and **His people** by taking what was not theirs
FACT
- VIII) The Law of Moses made provision for priests through the offerings
Lev 7:31 The priest shall burn the fat on the altar, but the breast belongs to Aaron and his sons
Lev 7:34 From the fellowship offerings of the Israelites, I have taken the breast that is waved and the thigh that is presented and have given them to Aaron the priest and his sons as their perpetual share from the Israelites.
- IX) The priests didn't inherit any of the land and didn't raise their own food
instead, they were given cities to reside in (Josh 21)
There were 48 cities among the tribes, 13 specifically for the Aaronic priests
- X) This provided the communities to live in and regions to serve the people in
They were centers of religious instruction where they taught the Law
- XI) It also ensured that the faith of Israel would be pervasive in every portion
Instead of caring for their own practical needs the people gave offerings
- XII) This provided for them so they could be free to minister

- I) This makes what they are doing even more sinful
IN WHAT WAY
- II) Shiloh was a priestly city and was where the Tabernacle had been built
Instead of being a city dedicated to the holiness of God, it was being desecrated
HOW
- III) By using the fleshhook, they took what belonged to the **one making the offering**
They had a designated portion of the offering that belonged to them
That would have been the right shoulder and the wave breast
THEIR SIN
- IV) They took what they wanted, demanding for themselves what belonged to others
For them, ministry was a way to eat and live well, at the expense of others
2 Pe 2:3 (False believers) by covetousness...**will make merchandise of you** with
deceptive words
SECOND
- V) V15 Also **before they burned the fat** the priest's servant would come
They took the meat **before the fat** had been burned
WHY IS THIS WRONG
- VI) The burning of the fat was an **offering to the Lord**, and was **to take place first**
Lev 3:16 The priest shall burn them on the altar as a food offering, a pleasing
aroma. All the fat is the Lord's
- VII) The fat belonged to God, because it represented the best part of the sacrifice
Fatness can represent God's provision and spiritual abundance
Ps 63:5 My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and **fatness**, and my mouth
shall praise You with joyful lips
- VIII) Offering the fat was offering to God what was recognized as the best
The best was to be offered, **first**
Lev 3:16 The priest shall offer them up in smoke on the altar as food, an offering
by fire for a soothing aroma; **all fat is the Lord's**
- IX) **Sadly**: With no fear of God, it was easy for them to steal from the Lord
- X) The burning of the fat represents a **complete consecration** of the offering to God
This would be a picture of Jesus, being the best offering
Eph 5:2 Walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and **given Himself for us**, an
offering and a sacrifice to God for a **sweet-smelling aroma**.

- I) V16-17 And if the man said to him They should really burn the fat first
The priest's servant actually *corrected them* by appealing to **God's Word**
Lev 3:3-5 He shall offer from the sacrifice of the peace offering an offering made by fire to the LORD. *The fat* that covers the entrails and all the fat that *is* on the entrails, the two kidneys and the fat that *is* on them by the flanks, and the fatty lobe *attached* to the liver above the kidneys, he shall remove; *and Aaron's sons shall burn it on the altar upon the burnt sacrifice*, which *is* on the wood that *is* on the fire, as an offering made by fire, a sweet aroma to the LORD.
- II) Instead of yielding to godly correction, they got angry and threatened them
Who are you to judge me?
THE RESULT OF THIS
- III) Their ungodly lives caused people to *turn away from God*
When Christians disregard the things of God, people are stumbled
Beliefs are always evidenced by consistent behavior
ON ONE HAND
- IV) Some lives are so attractive that people desire to know God because of them
Jn 15:8 When you produce much fruit, you are My true disciples. This brings great glory to My Father
- V) Sometimes our lives provoke people to want to come to know the Lord
They can be attractive to those in search of meaning and purpose in life
Titus 2:14 (Jesus) gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself *His own special people, zealous for good works*.
SADLY, WE CAN ALSO DRIVE PEOPLE AWAY
- VI) V17 The sin was *very great* and *men abhorred* the offering of the LORD
Their sin stumbled people and caused them to turn away from the Lord
- VII) This is a sin that God does not take lightly
Christians are to be aware of how we impact other people
- VIII) Today, many people are not aware of what the bible teaches
In some ways **we become** the only bible that they ever will read
- IX) This should encourage us to live sincerely before God and man
1 Co 10:32 Do not cause anyone to stumble, whether Jews, Gentiles, or the church of God

- I) None of us can live a completely perfect life, but it is our desire to do so
People need the Lord, and eternity hangs in the balance
With this in mind, we do the best we can in the Lord to be examples
- II) As a minister of the gospel, Paul was well aware of this
2 Co 6:3 We put no stumbling block in anyone's path, so that our ministry will not be discredited.
- III) V18-21 Samuel ministered before the LORD even as a child wearing a linen ephod
The ephod is clothing of a priest, and identifies him as one in service to God
CONTRAST
- IV) The evil sons bring dishonor to God, but Samuel is protected from their influence
Samuel is in the **same environment**, but he innocently goes about his duties
- V) His mother and father visited him, continuing their paternal relationship with him
This is a touching reminder of her love for her son, and her devotion to the Lord
- VI) V20-21 God received the son she dedicated and now He gave her children to keep
- VII) V21 Meanwhile the child Samuel grew before the Lord
In spite of the corrupt environment, Samuel matured and grew
He did not become cynical or reject God, but remained innocent of evil
- VIII) V22-26 Now *Eli was very old* and he heard everything his sons did to all Israel
According to 1 Sa 4:15, Eli died when he was 98: at this time, he was around 80
- IX) Interestingly, he did not ignore their sins, but they ignored him
He was aware of what his sons were doing
- X) Added to their other sins, they were having sexual relationships with the women
These were more than likely women who were serving the Lord
Ex 38:8 speaks of *serving women* who assembled at the door of the tabernacle
WHAT WERE THEIR DUTIES
- XI) Their duties are not clear
Perhaps they kept watch there during the night
One commentator said they more than likely were holy women who prayed

- I) They took advantage of the women who assembled at the door to serve the Lord
They used their religious position to seduce the women for their own pleasure
- II) Taking advantage of a woman and using them in this fashion is a great sin
It is a sin against God, the woman, and the man she will eventually marry
- III) V23-24 *So he said to them Why do you do such things? For I hear of your evil*
These kinds of sins are not hidden for long:
The people coming to Shiloh began to speak of them, and Eli had heard
- IV) They were stumbled, and began to take God's law lightly
This is what happens when those claiming to be Christian live in an ungodly way
Ro 2:24 the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you, as it
is written.
- V) V25 If one man sins against another God will judge him. But if a man sins against
As their father, he loves them and is gentle in his rebuke
- VI) As their father, he loved them and confronted their sin
He contented himself with a verbal rebuke, but did not restrain them
You are stumbling God's people!
- VII) V25 If one man sins against another God will judge him
Literally, if there is an argument between two people justice can be exacted
A mediator can settle the problem fairly
THOUGHT
- VIII) God is the righteous Judge guiding the decision
Your problem *is with God*, and He sees all thing
This means that you have no chance of being declared innocent
- IX) V25 *They did not heed* the voice of their father because the Lord desired to kill
His rebuke made no difference because they *were already given up*
This was because of the unrepentant hardness of heart
- X) Nothing said to them would change them: God had already judged them
There seems to be a time when God stops pleading and He gives them up
Ps 81:12 I gave them up to their stubborn hearts to follow their own devices

- I) **V26 The child Samuel grew in stature and in favor both with the LORD and men
In the same environment, under the same conditions, influenced by the same man
The two sons are corrupt, but the little boy grows to serve the LORD**
- II) **Which kind of child are we?**