

3/29/09

Eli The Unfaithful
1Sam. 2:12-36

Eli is a person in the Bible that you and I should never forget, for he a sever warning to all who would dishonor God, as a spiritual leader and also a reminder to Christian parents who do not take time to raise their children in the Lord faithfully.

The text before us presents the judgment to come over the house of Eli, evident by three things.

1Sam. 2:12-36

- I. The evil at Shiloh. vs. 12-21
- II. The permissiveness at Shiloh. vs. 22-26
- III. The judgment proclaimed at Shiloh. vs. 27-36

I. The evil at Shiloh. vs. 12-21

A. The sons of Eli were wicked. vs. 12

- 1. The sons of Eli are identified as corrupt. vs. 12a
 - a. The word corrupt “beliya’al” means worthless, good for nothing and unprofitable, sons of Belial, Satan.
 - b. The word describes their character, associated with the sensual idolatry of the day, Eli called Hannah this. 1:16

- 2. The explanation given is to their character. vs. 12b
 - a. They were unbelievers, “They did not know the LORD.”
 - b. They were doing the work of God religiously rather than relationally.
 - c. The term LORD is “Yahweh”.
 - 1) The LORD Y@havah”, is what is called the Tatragramaton, the four consonants YHWH, no vowels were written, believed to be pronounced Yahweh.
 - 2) The word is based on the same verb “to be”, an ongoing active presence, the Eternal and existing One, “I AM Who I AM”, who appeared to Moses. Ex, 3:14
- 3. The sons of Eli were two.
 - a. The names were Hophni and Phinehas.
 - 1) Hophni “Chophnity” means pugilist, indicating a fighter, prizefighter or informal bruiser.
 - 2) Phinehas “Piyn@chac” means mouth of brass, symbolic of judgment, brass.
 - b. Their name appear 5 times and always together. 1Sam. 1:3, 2:34, 4:4, 11, 17
 - 1) Perhaps Phinehas was the one making the judgment.
 - 2) While Hophni was the enforcer.

B. The sons of Eli were abusing their office and authority as priests. vs. 13-17

1. The location was at Shiloh.

a. Shiloh means a “place of rest”.

- 1) It depicted the place God had chosen to be in the midst of them.
- 2) It depicted the very rest God had promised to Israel in the land.

b. Shiloh identified a city in Ephraim and temporary home of the Ark of the Covenant and the Tabernacle, the place where Samuel grew up.

1) Shiloh was a city of Ephraim, 9 miles north of Beth-el, and on the highway from Beth-el to Shechem. Josh. 18:1-10, Jud. 18:31; 21:19, 1Sam. 1:3, 9, 21, 24; 2:14, Ps. 78:60; Jer. 7:12

2) The location was the seat of government during Joshua. Josh. 21:1, 2

c. The name is also a prophetic name for Jesus.

1) The scepter shall not depart from Judah, Nor a lawgiver from between his feet, Until Shiloh comes; And to Him shall be the obedience of the people. Gen. 49:10

2) The scepter symbolized the authority to govern oneself, Rome took away this power from Israel at the time of the birth of Jesus, even as they told Pilate that they had no power to put a man to death. Jn. 18:31

2. The situation described was under the prescribed system of sacrifice God had set up through Moses. vs. 13

a. The event described the day by day activities of the priest. vs. 13

1) According to the custom the people offered sacrifice. vs. 13a

2) Then the priest’s servant with a three-pronged fleshhook would approach the sacrifice while the meat was boiling. vs. 13b

b. The sin of the priest was one of theft. vs. 14

a. The sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas were greedy individuals, the servant of the priest would thrust it into the pan, or kettle, or caldron, or pot; and the priest would take for himself all that the fleshhook brought up. vs. 14a-e

1) God had prescribed the manner and method to offer the sacrifices, with certain laws. Lev. 1-7

- 2) They had ignored the allotted portion, unsatisfied they abused their position to benefit self. Lev. 7:31-34, Deut. 18:3
- b. The sons of Eli Hophni and Phinehas had become shameless, this was their ongoing practice, “So they did in Shiloh to all the Israelites who came there.” vs. 14f
 - 1) The sons of Eli has seared their hearts and conscience, the dishonest deeds did not bother them, a sin with a high hand.
 - 2) They had forgotten, this was Shiloh, the center of Yahweh’s worship and government.
- 3. The environment of offering up sacrifices was oppressive. vs. 15-16
 - a. The sons of Eli intimidated the people. vs. 15
 - * The servant of the priest would demand the best cuts of meat, “Before they burned the fat, the servant of the priest would come and say to the man who sacrificed, “Give meat for roasting to the priest, for he will not take boiled meat from you, but raw.”
 - b. The sons of Eli did violence to the people. vs. 16

- * The servant would threaten those offering sacrifice with violence, “And if the man said to him, “They should really burn the fat first; then you may take as much as your heart desires,” he would then answer him, “No, but you must give it now; and if not, I will take it by force.”
- 4. The sinful activities of the sons of Eli were misrepresenting God. vs. 17
 - a. This is the commentary on their sinful activities.
 - b. The conclusion is an indictment against the sons of Eli by the word “Therefore”. vs. 17a
 - c. The offence was against God Himself, “The sin of the young men was very great before the LORD.” vs. 17a
 - d. The consequences of their sin was that men abhorred the offering of the LORD. vs. 17b
 - 1) The word abhorred “na’ats” means to despise, to spurn or contempt, turning from the things of God.
 - 2) This, again depicting the immoral and unethical period of the judges, even as Eli thought Hannah was drunk.

- C. The sons of Eli stood in sharp contrast to Samuel. vs. 18-21
1. The young child Samuel in the midst of this godless wicked environment thrives in his service to God. vs. 18
 - a. The word “But” marks the obvious sharp contrast between the sons of Eli and himself. vs. 18a
 - 1) They chose to do evil.
 - 2) Samuel chose to do good.
 - b. The child Samuel ministered before the LORD, even as a child. vs. 18b
 - 1) The emphasis is that Samuel was exposed to this vile atmosphere and yet chose not to be like the sons of Eli.
 - 2) This exposes Psychologist that who want to blame with absoluteness everything on environment, rather than on human responsibility and accountability. Ezk. 18
 - c. The child Samuel was wearing a linen ephod. vs. 18c
 - 1) This was the priestly garment, shoulder cape, kind of apron with over-all straps. Ex. 28:6-14
 - 2) The name of the 12 tribes would be over his heart and shoulders.
 2. The young child Samuel lived a life of contentment, having a godly influence over his life continuously. vs. 19

- a. He would receive presents from his parents, “His mother used to make him a little robe.” vs. 19a
- b. He would see his parents at the yearly feast, “And bring it to him year by year when she came up with her husband to offer the yearly sacrifice.” vs. 19b
3. The young child Samuel witnessed God’s blessing on the godly. vs. 20-21
 - a. Through the yearly fellowship, “And Eli would bless Elkanah and his wife, and say, “The LORD give you descendants from this woman for the loan that was given to the LORD.” Then they would go to their own home.” vs. 20
 - b. Through the hand of God upon his parents, “And the LORD visited Hannah, so that she conceived and bore three sons and two daughters. Meanwhile the child Samuel grew before the LORD.” vs. 21

Illustration

One day as a young man began to make his own way in the business world was taken aside by one of his father’s best and oldest friends and said to him, “Now you remember that the name you bear is your father’s, so make sure you live up to his character and not tarnish his honor!”

Application

1. People that are placed in ministry simply because there are talented or have degrees, without ever being called or anointed is a great mistake.
 - a. They become hirelings and it becomes no more than a job.
 - b. They begin to demand things based on who they are and what they know, revealing there are not servants.
 - c. They create more problems at times and are not very honest.
 - * “Do not be hasty in the laying on of **hands**, and do not share in the sins of others. Keep yourself pure.” 1Tim. 5:22
2. At times Pastors or churches put their friends in the ministry also.
 - a. It becomes a good old boys club.
 - b. It often creates an atmosphere of familiarity and lack of respect.
 - c. It becomes much harder to confront the individuals with faults and problems.
 - d. It results in attempting to control the people.
 - * “I wrote to the church, but Diotrefes, who loves to be first, will have nothing to do with us. So if I come, I will call attention to what he is doing, gossiping maliciously about us. Not satisfied with that, he refuses to welcome the brothers. He also stops those who want to do so

and puts them out of the church.” 3Jn. 1:9-10

3. Nepotism is another horrible thing that takes place in the ministry, where pastors or churches place their sons and daughter into ministry positions simply by entitlement.
 - a. Some are not even born-again, like Hophni and Phinehas.
 - b. Others are given such special favor that it causes others on staff to stumble.
 - c. They don’t have to conform to the requirements and policies of ministry like all the others.
 - d. They can be late, sick, or simply ask for the day off and it is not a problem.
 - e. At times even their financial compensation is not justified, not in time, grade or proficiency.
 - f. The ministry is simply a good way to get very wealthy.
 - * “Now godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content. But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition.” 1Tim. 6:6-9

The evil at Shiloh was great!

II. The permissiveness at Shiloh. vs. 22-26

- A. The one responsible was Eli who was now elderly. vs. 22a-b
1. The name Eli “Eliy” is an abbreviation of “Jehovah is exalted or high, with the idea of “ascension”.
 - a. Eli in Hebrew also means “my God”.
 - 1) The exclamation was used by Christ on the cross. Matt. 27:46
 - 2) Mark gives the original Aramaic form of the word, Eloi. Mk. 15:34
 - b. The name was to remind him of God.
 - 1) He is exalted in the heavens and Eli was on earth.
 - 2) He is the One to rule Eli’s life.
 2. The position of Eli as priest was two-fold.
 - a. He was the High Priest of Israel.
 - 1) He was sitting on the seat by the door post of the Tabernacle of the Lord when Hannah poured her heart out to the Lord. 1Sam. 1:3, 9
 - 2) He was the mediator between God and man.
 - a) He represented the people to God as he offered sacrifices and offerings. 1Sam. 1:17, 27-28

b) He represented God to the people as he returned and spoke or blessed the people.

* Particularly in the Day of Atonement, when he offer the sins of the nation and the scapegoat carried the sins of the nation away into the wilderness!

- b. He was the one responsible for all that went on at Shiloh and the priesthood.
 - 1) He was fully aware of his accountability to God.
 - 2) He was the first of the line of Ithamar, Aaron’s fourth son who held that office. 2Sam. 8:17, 1Chron. 24:3
3. He was the judge of Israel.
 - a. He sat on the seat by the doorpost of the tabernacle. 1Sam. 1:9
 - 1) The word for seat “kicce” refers to a throne, a seat of honor or dignity or judgment.
 - 2) The word is used for the of the King of Israel, the royal chair or seat of dignity and for God. Deut 17:18, 2Sam. 7:13, Ps 45:6

* The word is used for an elevated seat with a canopy and hangings, to cover it, Solomon’s is described at length. 1Kings 10:18-20

- 3) The word denotes the seat of the high priest. 1Sam. 1:9 4:13
 - 4) The word is used for a provincial governor. Neh. 3:7, Ps. 122:
 - b. He is said to of judged Israel for forty years. 1Sam. 4:18f
 - 1) He is not counted as one of the 13 judges in the book of Judges.
 - 2) He is the 14 judge, as the child Samuel came to serve at Shiloh.
 - 3) He was very old, his vision was impaired and he could not see, at 98 years of age. 1Sam. 4:15
- B.** The rebuke Eli gave to his sons about their evil was very weak. vs. 22c-26
- 1. The evil report told to Eli about his sons that he knew nothing about. vs. 22c
 - a. Eli heard when he was very old heard the general accusation as he heard everything his sons did to all Israel.
 - 1) Where was Eli?
 - 2) Was Eli too busy in God's work at the expense of his family?
 - 3) God held Eli fully responsible, he failed to raise his sons in the Lord, restrain or remove them as priests. vs, 29, Deut. 6:9, 11:18-21
 - b. The specific accusation was that they laid with the women assembled at the door of the tabernacle of meeting.”

- 1) They abused their position regarding the sexual weakness of women who came to God.
 - 2) Who these women were, we are not told except that they assembled at the door of the tabernacle.
 - 3) The Targum tells us that they assembled to pray, which is more likely, and that they were devout women; who came there in large numbers, for the word used has the signification of armies; to perform religious exercises in fasting, and praying, and bringing sacrifices to be offered for them. Ex. 38:8
 - 4) The New Testament tells us of one Anna the prophetess, who made her abode in the tabernacle, and served God night and day with fastings and prayers. Lk. 2:37
 - 5) Josiah in the future would break down the houses of male prostitutes where women wove hangings for Asherah. 2Kings 23:7
- d. The sin of Eli's sons does not excuse or justify the women, for they also had a choice in the matter.
- 1) The text does not say that they forced or rapped the women.
 - 2) The text implies consent and participation and even if it was

- cohered, there was still a permissive part to allow the initiation, let alone the sexual act.
- 3) No woman is forced unless she is raped, yielding to temptation or pressure by a man is a willful participation!
2. Eli had become indifferent about his son's sins, not bringing forth discipline nor consequences and lacked any passion in his confrontation. 1Sam. 2:23-25
 - a. Eli confronted his sons, "So he said to them, "Why do you do such things? For I hear of your evil dealings from all the people." vs. 23
 - b. Eli accused his sons, "No, my sons! For it is not a good report that I hear. You make the LORD'S people transgress." vs. 24
 - c. Eli pointed out the foolishness of sinning against God, having no access, "If one man sins against another, God will judge him. But if a man sins against the LORD, who will intercede for him?" vs. 25a-d
 - 1) He allowed his sons to continue in the priests office after having knowledge of their sins!
 - 2) He did not restrained his sons in their vileness. 1Sam. 3:13

- 3) As High Priest he knew the abuse of and to the people. 1Sam. 2:25
 - 4) As High Priest he knew the severe judgment to his sons, as priests. Lev. 10
 - 5) As judge he failed to pronounce righteous judgment over them.
- d. Eli's word were ineffective, because the LORD desired to kill them. vs. 25d-e
 - 1) They had gone too far and caused too much damage to the people.
 - 2) A warning, God did not predestined them to do evil, otherwise He would be unjust to judge them for what God had predestined them to do.
 - 3) God certainly knew beforehand of their evil and only predetermines their judgment, for all people have free-will.
3. The sons of Eli again stood in sharp contrast to Samuel. vs. 26
 - a. Samuel the child grew up in this ongoing evil environment. "And the child Samuel grew in stature." vs. 26a
 - b. Samuel also grew, "In favor both with the LORD and men." vs. 26b
 - * This is stated of Jesus. Lk. 2:52
 - 1) He was able to live for God.
 - 2) He had to make choices every day.

- 3) He could not use the examples of Hophni and Phinehas as a justification or excuse.

Illustration

Today many Psychologist and marriage councilors are giving out advice that they themselves are not living out, they are divorce, have messed up marriages and corrupt children, due to the fact of not being there as fathers. How foolish, if I am going to get some advice or help from someone, I want to go to the one who has proved it by living it out in his own life and family not from books or degrees alone, a Pastor is no different!

* I am not talking about being legalistic or over critical with a Pastor but we better hold them to the biblical requirements!

Application

1. At times men in the ministry are at fault regarding their families.
 - a. They use the ministry to present themselves as faithful servants of God, while their family suffers, due to the fact that they are being irresponsible to be a scriptural husbands, fathers and heads of their home.
 - b. They think that God is pleased but He is not!
 - c. They teach what they willfully ignore to live out in their own lives, as the Pharisees.
 - d. They fail to realize that God is not the author of confusion and when He called

them, He also knew the needs of their families and the business of their ministries, they have just failed to live out the priorities.

- 1) It is not the anointing alone which is the enabling for ministry.
 - 2) It is not the gifts alone which are for the benefit of the body.
 - 3) It is not academic degrees alone, for they can not be a substitute for the calling or anointed.
 - 4) It is not the fact that God uses you, for that is just God's sovereignty, God used Balaam's jackass.
 - 5) It is not the fact that the crowds come to hear me, therefore deceiving myself thinking that God overlooks my disobedience and failure at home due to my effectiveness in the Kingdom.
 - 6) The call, the anointing, the gifts, the degrees and the measure in which God uses me is only valid to God and honored by God, if I am being the godly husband and father at home, that I can be in Him, if not I don't qualify, in fact my judgment will be greater in "that Day".

* The Scriptures are clear, as to the home being the qualification for their ministering. 1Tim. 3:1-7, Tit. 1:5-9
2. Failure to discipline those in ministry when there is a question of qualifications or involvement in sin, is a great mistake that will hinder ministry.

- a. It must be done as soon as the information is received and verified.
 - b. It is to be done according to Matthew 18 by the one making the accusation, then the elders, two or three.
 - c. It must be done with the hope of restoration and not mere castigation.
 - d. It must be done without respect of person and according to the Scriptures.
 - e. Sometimes restoration to their original position is impossible, depending on the sin, level of responsibility and the type of sin.
 - * The sin of Achan caused the enemy to defeat Israel. Josh. 7
3. There are men who are I believe too overly kind and gracious to those who have failed in ministry, doing a disservice to God and the people of God.
- a. Causing God's people to abhor the work of God.
 - b. Causing others in ministry to perhaps contemplate and rationalize their own ability to continue to minister if they fail in the ministry.
 - c. Causing the clear qualification of Timothy and Titus to be watered down and ignored.
 - d. Compassion and mercy should always be present, self-righteousness and legalism is not of God, but lets not confuse God's grace with permissiveness, kindness that contradicts the Scriptures and insults the Grace of God!

* "Those who are sinning rebuke in the presence of all, that the rest also may fear. I charge you before God and the Lord Jesus Christ and the elect angels that you observe these things without prejudice, doing nothing with partiality." 1Tim. 5:20-21

The permissiveness at Shiloh could not be ignored!

III. The judgment proclaimed at Shiloh. vs. 27-36

- A. God sent a prophet to Eli reminding him of his past high privilege. vs. 27-28
 - 1. He is identified as God's messenger. vs. 27a
 - a. The phrase "a man of God", refers to a prophet of God.
 - b. The mouth piece of God to call people to repentance, declare judgment or reveal his will.
 - 2. He came to Eli in the authority of God. vs. 27b
 - a. The man of God prefaced his proclamation to Eli with, "Thus says the LORD."
 - b. This was God words not the man sent by God.

3. He reminded Eli of his privilege by the Exodus in history, “Did I not clearly reveal Myself to the house of your father when they were in Egypt in Pharaoh’s house?” vs. 27c
 - a. The tribe of Levi. Ex. 4:14-16, 29:9
 - b. The family of Moses and Aaron.
 4. He reminded Eli of God’s graciousness to choose his family to be the intercessors for the nation. vs. 28
 - a. Yahweh made them priests, “Did I not choose him out of all the tribes of Israel to be My priest, to offer upon My altar, to burn incense, and to wear an ephod before Me?” vs. 28a-c
 - b. Yahweh made provisions for them from the sacrifices, “And did I not give to the house of your father all the offerings of the children of Israel made by fire?” vs. 28d
- B.** God sent the prophet to Eli to rebuke him for his present offence to God. vs. 29-33
1. He made specific accusations. vs. 29
 - a. God accused Eli of dissatisfaction and dishonoring His sacrifices, “Why do you kick at My sacrifice and My offering which I have commanded in My dwelling place.” vs. 29a-

- b. God accused Eli of confusing his priorities, “And honor your sons more than Me.” vs. 29b
 - 1) One commentator pointed out that Eli and Job stand in sharp contrast, for Job offered sacrifices for his children in case they had sinned and cursed God in their hearts, this he did regularly but Eli did not. Job 1:5
 - 2) Eli was exercising false and mistaken kindness which was not Scriptural but contrary to the Scriptures.
 - c. God accused Eli of the sin of greed and gluttony, “To make yourselves fat with the best of all the offerings of Israel My people?” vs. 29c
 - * His death was directly related to his overweight form the gluttony! 1Sam. 4:18
2. He made it clear God was not responsible for Eli’s disqualification but Eli. vs. 30
 - a. Yahweh planned on using his family continually, “Therefore the LORD God of Israel says: ‘I said indeed that your house and the house of your father would walk before Me forever.’” vs. 30a-b
 - b. Yahweh could not ignore Eli’s sin, “But now the LORD says: ‘Far be it

from Me; for those who honor Me I will honor, and those who despise Me shall be lightly esteemed.” vs. 30c-e

* They would be abased and despised!

3. He made it clear he and his house would be judged. vs. 31-33
 - a. The consequences would affect all his house, “Behold, the days are coming that I will cut off your arm and the arm of your father’s house, so that there will not be an old man in your house.” vs. 31
 - b. The judgment of Shiloh would be remembered as God’s doing, “And you will see an enemy in My dwelling place, despite all the good which God does for Israel. And there shall not be an old man in your house forever.” vs. 32
 - c. The judgment over his family would be most grievous, “But any of your men whom I do not cut off from My altar shall consume your eyes and grieve your heart. And all the descendants of your house shall die in the flower of their age.” vs. 33

C. God sent the prophet to confirm his prophetic judgment with a sign. vs. 34-36

1. The first sign was the judgment of Eli’s two sons, “Now this shall be a sign to you that will come upon your two sons, on Hophni and Phinehas: in one day they shall die, both of them.” vs. 34
2. The second sign would be a faithful priesthood to replace Eli’s, “Then I will raise up for Myself a faithful priest who shall do according to what is in My heart and in My mind. I will build him a sure house, and he shall walk before My anointed forever.” vs. 35
 - a. Samuel did replace Eli as judge, priest and prophet, as chapter three will indicate but the specific prophecy is short and long-term, for the word anointed “mashhiyach”, is Messiah, already indicated by Hannah. 1Sam. 2:10
 - b. This partially fulfilled was at the massacre of the priest at Nob, only Abiathar survived, the ultimately transfer to the family of Zadok was at the time of Solomon and the finally in the Millennium, under the reign of Jesus. 1Sam. 22:11-19, 1Kings 2:26-27, 35, 1Chron. 24:3, Ezk. 40:46, 43:19, 44:15
3. The third sign would be Eli’s descendents would be beggars, “And it shall come to pass that everyone who is left in

your house will come and bow down to him for a piece of silver and a morsel of bread, and say, "Please, put me in one of the priestly positions, that I may eat a piece of bread." vs. 36

* Jeremiah reminded the people of God of the coming judgment by God's judgment over Shiloh. Jer. 7:12, 14, 26:6, 9, 41:5

Illustration

The teaching of God to Jeremiah as He sent him down to the potter house is perfectly illustrated in the life of Eli, the vessel that won't yield to God is fighting against God and he will ultimately loose out. Jer. 18

* What a sad story but a true story, let's not miss the application to our own lives!

Application

1. Self-judgment is always the first the believer is to exercise to stay right and in fellowship with God. 1Jn. 1:9, 2:1

2. Fault judgment is when someone points out my failure or sin and I am to repent and ask forgiveness, after a godly manner. 2Cor. 7:10

3. Excommunicating judgment is when a person refuses to repent and often want their sin to be excepted, so they are cut off from the fellowship of the church, turning them over to Satan, in hope of their repentance and restoration. 1Cor. 5:1-5

4. Divine judgment is when God takes a persons life or gives them up to themselves. 1Cor. 11:30, 1Jn. 5:16

The judgment proclaimed at Shiloh was certain!

Conclusion

Our text has presented the judgment to come over the house of Eli, evident by three things:

- I. The evil at Shiloh was great!
- II. The permissiveness at Shiloh could not be ignored!
- III. The judgment proclaimed at Shiloh was certain!