**Eli and His Sons**

*1 Samuel 2-4*

**Introduction**

1. Eli served as both a judge, and high priest. He was very influential in these positions.
2. He was not perfect, and his sons were far from perfect.
3. There are things we can learn from Eli and his sons. Some things about Eli were admirable and should be emulated.
4. Corrupt Priests (Eli’s Sons) (cf. 2:12-17, 22).
5. Hophni and Phinehas were priests (cf. 1:3).

* They were “corrupt.” (cf. 2:12)
  + Just because they were Priests did not mean they were exempt from the possibility of corruption.
  + Deuteronomy 10:8-9 – Priests were dedicated to service toward God. God was their whole devotion and focus. (This position was serious.)

1. They did not know God.

* (cf. 2:12) Know – used figuratively – they did not have a regard for God.
  + They did not reverence Him as they should.
  + (cf. 2:13-17, 22) – Priests were given portions of some of the sacrifices to eat themselves. This came with specific instructions on how they were to go about doing such, and how much they were to get.
    - (v. 13-14) – It was their custom to disobey God’s specifications.
      * There were specific portions they were to take. Their actions did not allow for such consideration.
      * (v. 14b) This was not a one-time thing that happened on accident. It was a continual and blatant rebellious act.
    - (v. 15-17) – Even when someone suggested they obey they did not listen.
      * They were willing to take from what was rightfully God’s to fulfill their own desires.
      * They **abhorred** what was to be given to the Lord.

1. We are Priests…

* 1 Peter 2:9-10; Romans 12:1-2 – We are God’s priesthood. Our sacrifices are our lives on earth. Every second of every day we live before God as His priests. Are we acting accordingly?

1. Guilty of Negligence (Eli) (cf. 2:23-31; 3:13).
2. Eli knew of his sons’ disobedience (cf. 2:22).

* (v. 23-25a) – Eli reacted by rebuking his sons.
  + The problem was not that he didn’t do anything, but that he neglected to do enough!
  + (v. 25b) – His sons did not repent. Their father’s words had no effect.
  + (cf. 3:13) – Even after they did not obey their father did not restrain them!
    - (2:29) – Because of this Eli was said to have taken part in his sons’ evil deeds. He also honored his sons above God.

1. Disobedience must be dealt with!

* Parents must discipline their children – Proverbs 13:24; Hebrews 12:7-8
* Christians must rebuke others when necessary – 2 Timothy 4:2; Titus 1:13 (*Those who were “insubordinate, idle talkers and deceivers*); 2:15 (Rebuking is for the sake of saving souls, and fulfilling personal responsibility.)

*We must consider these things seriously because 🡪*

1. God’s Promises are Conditional.

* (cf. 2:30-36) – God made a promise to Eli, but the promise was subject to another promise. (The promise about Eli’s house was conditional upon him honoring God.)
* We will only attain the promise if we obey God – 2 Timothy 4:7-8 (Paul had lived a faithful life and reached the promise. This is because of his faithfulness that God delivered on His promises.)

1. Eli’s Zeal and Submission
2. Eli was excited to hear God’s word (cf. 3:10-18).

* The Lord spoke to Samuel about all that He would perform against Eli as He said (3:10-15).
* Eli was excited to hear what God said (3:16-17).
* Despite the message, Eli submitted to the Lord’s will (3:18).

1. Eli was concerned over the loss of the ark (cf. 4:10-18).

* The Israelites engaged in battle against the Philistines and were defeated.
* Eli was trembling in concern for the things of God.
* This ultimately led to him falling and breaking his neck because of his reaction to hearing of the ark being captured.
  + The scripture is clear that the news of the ark affected him the most (cf. 4:18).

1. Interest in God’s word, and concern for spiritual things.

* We should yearn for the word of God! (cf. 1 Peter 2:1-3)
* We should have deep concern for things of God (Specific application to things pertaining to the church)! (cf. 2 Corinthians 11:28 – in the midst of all his trials, Paul’s greatest concern was for the things of God, and his brethren.)

**Conclusion**

1. Eli was a man we can learn from. He did things we should imitate, and avoid.
2. His sons are prime examples of how we shouldn’t act in our service to God.