

A TOO-EASY DAD, ELI

1 Samuel 3:13

Ordinary People Used By God Series

Introduction: This text and study is about a coming judgment and doom upon a man and his family. What could have happened to have caused God to pronounce such a judgment upon a man AND his family?

I. WHO WAS THIS MAN SO SENTENCED?

1. It would be natural to suspect that he was one of the great outstanding sinners, but:
 - He was a quiet old priest who had led Israel for over 40 years.
 - No man could point to a single wrong thing he had ever done.
 - He was a man of genuine virtues.
2. He had a youthful heart in spite of his years.
 - He had raised a young lad by the name of Samuel.
 - An old man and a young boy together with much love between them.
 - The old priest still had a heart that was kind and youthful.
3. He was generous.
 - For years he had been God's priest.
 - He sees himself as being set aside for a younger person to take his place - Samuel.
 - Knowing he must decrease and Samuel increase, he did not rebel.
 - He possessed a beautiful generosity.
4. He had great spiritual insight.
 - Young Samuel did not know how to interpret the voices he heard, but the priest knew.
 - He was accurate in what he told Samuel to do the next time Samuel heard voices.
5. He was wonderfully submissive to the will of God.
 - Whenever he received this message of doom from God, there was not a single word of bitterness or rebellion. *"...Let the Lord do as it seemeth good..."* he said.

II. SO, WHAT WAS WRONG WITH ELI?

1. Eli was guilty of no crime, nor was he a drunkard or a thief.
 - Nobody ever knew Eli to be guilty of doing a single, wicked or ugly deed.
2. What was wrong with Eli?
 - His sons were wicked and evil and they did their wickedness in the temple, itself.
 - Eli **knew** what his sons were doing and yet he did nothing.
 - He thus became a partner in their sins and a sharer in their guilt and doom.
3. Why didn't Eli correct his sons?
 - Was he too busy with temple duties?
 - Did he have no time for his family?

- Eli was too soft, too easy on his sons.
- He did not correct his sons when they were young nor when they were older.

III. ONE CANNOT BE SOFT ON SIN

1. Softness on sin falls short of being like Jesus Christ.
 - Most think being "Christian" is to be good natured and courteous in all things.
 - Many think being like Christ is to never step on toes, never hurt feelings, to always be agreeable and NEVER take sides.
 - Even artists' concepts of Christ reflect only tenderness and meekness.
2. Jesus was hardest on sin and wickedness of any person on earth.
 - He had an encounter with religionists who looked down on the sick and crippled.
 - He chased money changers out of the Temple.
 - He was a fighter of evil and sin in any form or fashion and Jesus expects us to do the same.
3. Weakness and wickedness sometimes go hand in hand.
 - Refusing to stand firm in the presence of sin and wickedness leads to sin going unchallenged.
 - Joining a friend in a thing God does not like is weakness and contributes to sin.
4. Softness to sin and wickedness endangers others as well as the guilty person.
 - It wrecked Eli's home. His sons were killed in battle because of their sinfulness.
 - Eli showed no parental authority or correction in his sons' lives.
 - He allowed his sons to minister in the Temple when he knew they were utterly corrupt. Thus it hurt the ministry of the Temple and people talked about what his sons were doing.

SUMMARY:

1. The Christian's task is not to simply avoid wrong but to **overcome** it.
2. The Christian is not to stand still when sin is around but to **attack** it.
3. The task of the Christian demands all his/her strength and courage, plus the help of God.
4. The Christian is to **start at home** fighting sin.
5. *"...Therefore, put on the complete armor of God so that you may be able to stand your ground on the day of battle, and having fought to the end, to remain victors on the field..."*
6. Parents will answer to God as to the up-bringing of their children. Eli did!