

## **1 Sam 2:27-36 [5]-JUDGEMENT on the HOUSE of GOD**

PRELIMS. Samuel has been given to the Lord in fulfilment of Hannah's **vow** and she sings a song of praise. The Priesthood is **corrupt** but God is raising up a Samuel!

### **OUT of the BLUE**

In the midst of this sad reading about Eli's sons, all of a sudden we read "*And there came a man of God to Eli...*"[27]. Who was he? Where did he come from? Who sent him? We are not told. Who would **dare** approach the 'godly' old Eli and speak to him about his sons behaviour and seek to correct him?

Whoever this man was, we do not know, but he **was** a messenger from God. **APP** The whole history of the church testifies to its indebtedness to **anonymous** believers whom God raise up to do a **mighty** work! Where the great leaders fail, the humble, unknown godly rank and file produce true men of God for **very important** roles in the history of the Church! The Bible is full of **unknown** and **unsung heroes!**

Just like Elijah, coming out of the blue, who suddenly and unexpectedly, walked up to King Ahab in the palace and made that awful statement **after 6-months of drought** "*There shall be neither dew nor rain these years, except by my word*" [1K17:1] and then walked away. Who did he think he was? But the voice had **authority!** And it came to pass! So here, this unknown prophet announces a judgment on godly Eli!

God **reserves** some of His greatest and significant declarations (ie, prophetic announcements) for His **humble** and 'apparently' insignificant believers. There **are** godly people today, who can 'discern the times' and who make humble predictions in **private** about national events and what the future holds - and they are so **accurate!** Because they have the mind of the Lord. "*The secret of the Lord is with them who fear Him and He will show them His covenant*"[Psa 25:14 AV] "*For the Lord GOD*

*does nothing without **revealing** his **secret** to His servants the **prophets***”[Amos 3:7] The wisdom of the wise!

This “*man of God*” was a prophet sent from God. The message first **confirms** what Eli would affirm that God **did** reveal Himself to his father’s house when they were in Egypt. Eli would also affirm that his father’s tribe was chosen out of all the tribes of Israel to be priest to God’s people and that God gave them **specific instructions** regarding the sacrifices and offerings. With godly authority, this man of God would say ‘You will agree, Eli, that all these things were **great privileges** and that you and your family line were **favoured** above all to wear the linen ephod and burn the holy incense?’ “*Why then do you **scorn** my **sacrifices** and my **offerings** that I commanded*”? [29] Scorn=kick! The **sin** is set in the background of **privilege**.

Again, as we saw last week, we would think that the **immorality** at the church door was a far **worse sin** than what was done at the sacrifices to dead animals – but it was because the sacrifices **represented** the Lord Jesus Christ’s **atonement!**

**APP** It applies to each of us today! Do **you despise** the great **privilege** you have in God setting you in a ‘community’ where you have been **singled out** to **hear** the **gospel** and **urged** to receive the offered grace? **That** is a privilege which a **large proportion** of this city do not have. To whom “*to whom much was given, of him **much** will be **required***”[L14:48] Many people ‘out there’ do not have much of the gospel.

Notice how God describes what He did to Israel. He **revealed Himself** to them “*Did I indeed **reveal Myself** to the house of your father*”[27] Israel, like all of God’s people, were **chosen**. They did not seek Him (until He first ‘worked’ on them “*You did **not** choose Me, but I chose you*” + “*I have been found by those who did **not** seek Me. I have **shown Myself** to those who did **not** ask for Me*”[John 15:16 + Rom 10:20] “*I thank You Father...that You **revealed*** (these things about the Kingdom of

God) *to little children*”[Mat 11:25] Abraham the father of all who believe, was worshipping idols when God met/called him!

But of course there was something else the “*man of God*” said to Eli. You “*honour your sons above Me...*”[29]! There was a **conflict** in Eli’s heart – as there is in **every Xns’s** heart! “*the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit and the desires of the Spirit against the flesh: for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing what you want to do*”[Gal 5:17]

While Eli **had** the courage to **verbally rebuke** them in **private**, he did **not** have the courage to **discipline** them **publicly**. As Ralph Davis says, He may not have been able to restrain them from committing immorality, but he **could** have restrained them from committing immorality **as priests!** They were not excommunicated! Eli’s sin, like so many Xns today, was his willingness to **tolerate sin** – even **in the church!**

We are reminded by this that we do not need to **participate** in a sin, to be guilty of it. If we **tolerate** it when we could have stopped it, we too are in condemnation. Every time we are silent when we ought to speak out, we sin! **Complicity!** (How much we need **Christ’s forgiveness** – for we sin so often!)

He could rebuke Hannah **publicly** but not his sons! God’s **honour** came **second** to his sons’ misbehaviour. God said ‘you *“honour your sons above Me”*’[29] They get away with awful sins, they can commit immorality and **fatten** themselves “*on the choicest parts of every offering*” by **forcing** the worshippers to give them the raw meat before it was cooked [16] but still keep their jobs in the Church! But you would punish Hannah for her private mutterings which turned out to be earnest prayers! Sounds very much like the BBC’s double standard this week re JonRoss/CarolThatcher/JeremyClarkson!

Today, there is very little public discipline in the state/media or even in the church. Today it is much **more important** to be

seen to be **'nice'** and **not to offend** people and just to 'relegate' **God's law to oblivion!** Breaking God's commandments is no great sin these days. You can **swear** and be **rude** and break the **7<sup>th</sup> commandment** as much as you like, and little happens. 'Just a **quick rebuke** for our friends will keep the public quiet! But we reserve the right to **dismiss** those whom we may want to get rid of'! The **church** seems little different from the world!

### **JUDGEMENT & MERCY PRONOUNCED**

Whatever man may feel about God's law being broken, God will ultimately deal with sinners. Judgment will come! It might not always be announced as here, but it will come "**Therefore the Lord the God of Israel declares...**"[30a]

God, through the prophet, first **reminds** Eli of the **original promise**, which of course, as all promises have, **obligations** and **conditions** "*I promised that your house and the house of your father should go in and out before Me forever*"[30]. Sadly he must now add "*but now the Lord declares...*"[30b]

Although not specifically stated, have **obligations/conditions!** There's a proverb of a Hebrew principle with has just 4 words, "*those who honour Me, I will honour, those who despise Me shall be lightly esteemed*"[30c] So 'the man of God' **applies** this proverb to **Eli**, "**For** *those who honour Me...*"[30c] **Eric Liddell's** little 'note' before he ran at the Olympic Games!

The awful judgment was: (1) All Eli's family was **die young!** [31]! (2) You will be **envious** at your neighbour's prosperity! [32] (3) The **only** one who will not be killed by the sword will **weep** his eyes out! (4) A **sign** to **prove** it is **all** going to be fulfilled (both sons killed on same day) [34]! Ie, worse to come!

**God's great plan/purpose!** Yes "*judgment begins at the house of God*"[1P4:17] but I **will** have good leadership in My house "*I will raise up for Myself a faithful priest, who shall do... what is in My heart*"[35]! **Zadok** (not Samuel who was a **prophet!**)