

I. Introduction and review: Something is rotten in Shiloh.

II. The LORD is preparing to remove and replace those who do not honor Him. 2:11-36

A. Eli's corrupt sons fail to honor the LORD. v. 12-17,22

1. They were worthless men (sons of Belial) who did not know the LORD. v. 12
10:27 25:17,25 II Co. 6:15
2. They failed to follow the regulations of God's law for worship. v. 13-14
Lev. 7:31-34 Deut. 18:3
3. They strong-armed faithful worshippers. v. 15-16 Ezek. 34:1-4
4. They were guilty of gross sexual immorality (pastoral abuse). v. 22b Gen. 38:21
Ex. 38:8 Deut. 23:17 Judges 19:22 20:13
5. Their wickedness impacts the entire community. v. 17 I Co. 5:6
6. They were hard-hearted. 2:25b
7. Their sin invites God's judgment. v. 17 3:13 Mal. 2:1-10 Ezek. 34:7ff James 3:1

B. Eli, in rebuking his sons, also fails to honor the LORD. 2:22-25

1. Eli was fully aware of his sons' abuse of their priestly office. v. 22
2. Eli verbally admonishes them, but words are not enough. v. 22-25a 3:13
3. What should Eli have done? Dt. 21:18-21
4. Eli failed because he honored his sons above God. 2:29 4:18
5. God is determined to carry out the judgment which Eli refused to enact. 2:25c
 - a. Like Pharaoh, they are hardened beyond recovery. Ex. 5:2 9:16 Ro. 9:17ff
1:22ff Heb. 10:26-31
 - b. Judgment begins with those who are most spiritually privileged. I Pe. 4:17

C. Samuel, in contrast, honors God. 2:11,18-21,26 3:1

1. Why does the author weave Samuel's story into that of Eli's sons? 2:30b
2. While Eli's sons grow in evil, earning the contempt of God and men, Samuel grows physically and spiritually earning the favor of the LORD and men. v. 26
3. Samuel's growth foreshadows that of Jesus. Luke 2:52
4. Eli, who failed so miserably with Hophni and Phinehas, enjoys great success in raising Samuel.

D. The LORD pronounces the downfall of Eli's dishonorable house. 2:27-36

1. Your house has enjoyed great privileges. v. 27-28
2. You have horribly abused your privileges. v. 29
3. The root of the problem is that you have failed to honor God. v. 29b,30b
4. The Lord has determined to judge the house of Eli. v. 30-34,36
5. This is a startling fulfillment of Hannah's song. 2:5a,6,4,9bc,10a

E. The LORD will replace Eli's house with a faithful Priest who will honor Him. v. 35

1. In the short term, Samuel will serve instead of Eli's sons.
2. In the mid-term, the priestly line of Eli's ancestor Ithimar will be displaced by those of the line of Aaron's son Elieazar, including Zadok. I Ki. 2:26-27
3. Ultimately Christ will serve as a faithful High Priest forever. He. 2:17 5:10 9:11ff

III. Application - Honor the LORD above all others in His church. v. 30b

A. Let us honor God in our worship.

1. Worship is regulated by Scripture. Acts 2:42 John 4:24
2. Worship is holy. Heb. 12:28 I Cor. 11:29-30 Acts 5:1-11
3. Many fail to honor God in worship. II Tim. 4:3 Mal. 2:7-9 1:6-16
4. Where will you choose to worship?

B. Let us honor God in our leadership.

1. Many spiritual leaders replace God's authority with their own. Mt. 15:3
2. Some spiritual leaders are greedy, abusive and immoral.
3. Some spiritual leaders refuse to honor God by practicing church discipline. v. 29b
4. God will judge unfaithful leaders who fail to honor Him. 2:25b I Pe. 4:17 Js. 3:1
5. Just because you may have suffered under abusive spiritual leadership doesn't mean that you should give up on Christ's church.
6. What kind of leadership do you seek? I Tim. 3:1-7
7. Thank God for Jesus, our perfect High Priest. Heb. 7:26 Mt. 16:18

IV. Application - Honor God above all others in our homes. 2:29b,30b

A. Why do kids turn out the way they do?

1. Parents are responsible to train their children well. 2:29b 3:13 Eph. 6:4
2. Children are responsible for the choices they make. v. 25 8:1-3 Col. 3:20 Pr. 15:5
20:11 30:17 Ezek. 18:5ff Luke 2:51-53 Isa. 1:2 Jer. 2:30
3. Ultimately, our children can only be saved by God's sovereign grace. Rom. 9:10ff
John 6:37,44 Eph. 2:1ff

B. Honor God in raising your children -- Don't be like Eli.

1. Instruct and discipline your children. Eph. 6:4
2. Verbal admonition becomes worthless nagging when it is not accompanied by strong disciplinary action. Pr. 19:18 22:15
3. Many parents turn a blind eye to the sins of their children. 2:22 3:13 Pr. 29:15
4. Many parents honor their children above God. Pr. 13:24 Mt. 10:37 Luke 14:26
5. There are particular warnings in this text about parenting our adult children.
 - a. Eli failed to stand up to the sins of his adult sons.
 - b. Your job is not over when your children attain legal adulthood.
 - c. If children are living under your roof or otherwise dependent upon you, you are responsible to establish and enforce standards.
 - d. Whining and nagging without taking action amounts to enabling sin.
 - e. Don't take halfway measures. Fools only understand action. Pr. 26:3
 - f. Don't put your children above God.
6. If you act like Eli, the curses which fell upon his house will fall upon you.

C. Children, honor God by heeding parental wisdom. Pr. 1:8 Eph. 6:1-3

1. You are greatly privileged, but privilege does not ensure lasting blessing.
2. Don't dishonor God by treating Him lightly or He may judge you by hardening your heart beyond recovery. v. 25c,30b Heb. 4:7 Pr. 29:1

V. Conclusion - Honor God above all else. 2:30b

Discussion questions

1. What is God doing in this chapter -- the big picture?
2. What was so wrong about what Eli's sons did with the sacrifices? v. 12-17
3. What does this passage teach us about worship?
4. What does this passage teach us about spiritual leadership?
5. What determines how our children turn out?
6. Whose fault was it that Eli's sons were so wicked?
7. What did Eli do wrong? What should he have done?
8. What was Eli's great sin? v. 29
9. Why did God determine to put Eli's sons to death?
10. What other consequences fell upon Eli's household?
11. What should parents learn from this passage?
12. What should children learn from this passage?
13. How does Samuel fit into this passage?
14. Who is the faithful priest spoken of in verse 35?
15. How does this portion of Scripture point to Christ?