

1 Samuel 2:12-36 Israel's 13th Judge Eli - ENCORE

- 1)** Eli was Israel's 13th Judge. Eli and his sons Phinehas and Hophni were priests of the Lord at Shiloh (where the tabernacle was located 1 Samuel 1:3). In 1 Samuel 2:12 Eli's sons are described as "corrupt." What do you think of when you hear the word corrupt?

- 2)** What kind of problems might arise from having corrupt priests?

- 3)** Read 1 Samuel 2:27; why did God send a "man of God" to speak to Eli instead of talking to Eli Himself?

- 4)** Read 1 Samuel 3:1b; how does this verse relate to 1 Samuel 2:27?

- 5)** According to 1 Samuel 2:29 what seems to have been Eli's focus as a priest?

- 6)** Read Philippians 3:18-19; who is Paul describing and what is the problem in their thinking?

- 7)** What is the answer to their problem (Philippians 3:20-21)?

- 8)** Perhaps you have heard the saying "like father like son" this saying seems to have proven true for Eli and his sons. Was Eli to blame for the corrupt character of his sons?

- 9)** Can you think of any parenting principals from 1 Samuel 2:12-36?

- 10)** What message is your life teaching to those closest to you?

1 Samuel 7:1-17 The Last Judge in Israel?

Monday (v.1-2) The people made a foolish decision; either they thought they could manipulate God by taking the Ark of the Covenant into battle with them or they thought that it was the Ark which would bring them victory over their enemies (like a magic charm). Neither was the case and the precious Ark fell into enemy hands (you can read all about the circumstances in 1 Samuel 5-7). Notice how long the Ark was gone “a long time” & “Twenty years.” Think about how fearful the people might have been during those twenty years.

Tuesday (v.2-3) Samuel (being a good judge) plainly told the people the answer to their problem; turn to the Lord. This makes me think about Samson who served himself, never drove the Philistines out and never delivered anyone (but himself & even that was temporary). Samson failed to point the people to God as Deliverer and really failed to deal with the Philistines at all. Notice Samuel’s statement in verse 3 – we’ve heard those words before haven’t we? That statement has, basically, been God’s message to His people all along; serve God only and He will deliver you.

Wednesday (v.3-6) As we have seen with many of the Judges, the people listened to (heeded) the word of the Lord. After their initial obedience (getting rid of their idols) Samuel gathered all the people together for a time of confession, fasting and sacrifice. How did this differ from the “spiritual” leadership of Samson, Eli, Phinehas and Hophni? Interesting that Phinehas and Hophni had turned the sacrifice into an object of indulgence yet Samuel led the people to a time of fasting, confession and prayer helping them to follow the Lord.

Thursday (v.7-8) The Children of Israel had gathered together to seek the Lord; I imagine it was a great time of individual as well as national revival (national revival doesn’t happen without individuals turning to the Lord). The Philistines didn’t see it that way; all they saw was a gathering army. As you may remember the Philistines were a brutal and war-like people, they had the latest military technology and were skilled fighters. They saw the Israelite “army” gathering and decided to respond by sending their own force to quell this uprising. When the Israelites heard that the Philistine army was approaching they became very fearful (and who wouldn’t). How did they respond? They asked Samuel to continue to cry out to God for them but more than that what were they doing? They were trusting God to deliver them! What a beautiful picture we have in this chapter; the people turn from idols and to the Living God, they confess, repent, fast and pray to Him, then they entrust their very lives into His loving care.

Friday (v.9-12) The people had entrusted their safety and well-being (their lives) into the hands of the Lord. Samuel “cried out to the Lord for Israel” as the mighty Philistine army approached; do you think anyone was nervous? God answered Samuel’s prayers (interesting that verse 9 says the Lord answered *him*). Just as we have seen throughout the book of Judges; God brought the victory. Do you think God wants us to learn a lesson from this repeated theme?

Saturday (v.13-17) The Philistines were “subdued” (Hebrew - *kana* it means “to bend the knee” has to do with humility) all the days of Samuel. Israel was even able to recover some of the territory they had lost to the Philistines. There was peace between Israel and the Amorites; you might say the land had rest. Whenever the Lord raised up a judge (and the people listened to that Judge) their enemies would be driven out and they would have peace. This is a recurring theme throughout the time of the judges. Sadly there is another theme; the peace only lasts as long as the people follow the Lord, and they always eventually fall away.