

# Eli

**Eli judged Israel for forty years, [1 Samuel 4:18] a testimony to the service he rendered as high priest to Israel.**

**Eli brought up and trained Samuel, the greatest judge of Israel, [1 Samuel 3:1-10].**

**Eli was an Old Testament person with a very modern problem. The recognition and respect he earned in public did not extend to his handling of his family.**

**Eli may have been an excellent priest, but he was a poor parent.**

Eli's sons brought him grief and eventual ruin, [1 Samuel 2:12-17].

**1 Samuel 2:22-25** [New King James] *“Now Eli was very old; and he heard everything his sons did to all Israel, and how they lay with the women who assembled at the door of the tabernacle of meeting. So he said to them, ‘Why do you do such things? For I hear of your evil dealings from all the people. No, my sons! For it is not a good report that I hear. You make the LORD’s people transgress. If one man sins against another, God will judge him. But if a man sins against the LORD, who will intercede for him?’ Nevertheless they did not heed the voice of their father, because the LORD desired to kill them.”*

Eli's sons knew better, but they continued to disobey God deliberately by cheating, seducing and robbing the people.

Eli responded weakly to this situation rather than solving it.

**God pointed out his son's errors but Eli did very little to correct them, [1 Samuel 2:27-29].**

Remember, Eli was not just a father trying to handle his rebellious sons, he was the high priest who should be an example in all things to the nation he was high priest, God's representative to that nation.

As a result, God took the necessary disciplinary action that Eli would not, [1 Samuel 2:30-36], which included the rejection of all the future family as priests.

The final fulfilment of this prediction was when Solomon removed Abiathar from his position, thus ending Eli's line as priests, [1 Kings 2:26-27].

**Eli had another problem, he was more concerned with the symbols of his religion than with the God that they represented.**

For Eli, the ark of the covenant had become a relic to be protected rather than a reminder of the Protector, the Creator God; his faith shifted from the Creator to the created, [1 Samuel 4:12-22].

**It may be easier to worship things we can see, whether buildings, people or icons, but such tangible things have no power in themselves.**

Even the Christian Bible can be seen as a respectable religious relic, or it is a sharp and effective Word of God, [Hebrews 4:12; 2 Timothy 3:14-17].

**Our attitude towards these physical symbols of religion is largely shaped by our personal relationship with the Creator God.**

**God's Word, the Christian Bible, has to be used and obeyed, not a relic that is carefully stored away.**