

Ichabod: The Glory Is Gone: Ichabod in Israel: the Lord's Critique of Eli, 1 Sam 2:27-31,34; Its Application to the Failed Pastors of America

- 19- If Levitical priests and Christian pastors fail to communicate the principles of the plan of God in their respective dispensations, including those that restrain the sinful nature, then ultimately the people will degenerate into evil.¹ Such is now the case in America and such was the case in Israel in the time of Eli and his “sons of Belial.”
- 20- The Lord placed a curse on the house of Ithamar, decreeing that it would not forever hold the office of high priest and the priesthood in Israel. Eli gets dressed down by the Lord in:

1 Samuel 2:27 - Then a man of God [an unnamed prophet] came to Eli and said to him, “Thus says the Lord, ‘Did I not indeed reveal Myself to the house of your father [Aaron] when they were in Egypt in bondage to Pharaoh’s house?’

v. 28 - ‘And did I not choose them from all the tribes of Israel to be My priests, to go up to My altar, to burn incense, to carry an ephod before Me; and did I not give to the house of your father all the fire offerings of the sons of Israel?’

v. 29 - ‘Why do you kick [כָּעַס / *baat* /: **negative volition toward divine mandates**] at My sacrifice and at My offering which I have commanded in My dwelling, and honor your sons above Me, by making yourselves fat with the choicest of every offering of My people Israel?’

v. 30 - “Therefore the Lord God of Israel declares, ‘I did indeed say that your house [Eli] and the house of your father [Ithamar] should walk before Me forever’; but now the Lord declares, ‘Far be it from Me—for those who honor Me I will honor, and those who despise Me will be lightly esteemed.’”

- 21- Hophni and Phinehas, and by his failure in leadership, Eli, had failed to honor the Lord in their assignments at the Tabernacle, reviewed by the prophet in verses 28 and 29. The word “honor” is the Piel participle followed by the Piel imperfect of the verb:

כָּבֵד / *kaveth* / -honor; glory.

- 22- *Kaveth* is the root word of its derivative, *kavoth*: glory. Those who glorify God will be glorified by Him. Eli, Hophni, and Phinehas could only glorify God by faithfully, consistently, and precisely performing the duties associated with their office of priest. To deviate from their assignment for personal gain was considered by the Lord to not only be a failure to glorify Him but a manifestation of a mental attitude of contempt. The English translation is “despise” and is the Qal active participle of the verb:

בָּזָא / *baza* / - to despise; disdain; hold in contempt.

¹ Joe Griffin, “Power Struggle for the Soul” (.pdf file) (St. Charles: Joe Griffin Media Ministries, 2001), <http://www.joegriffin.org/visuals/powerstruggleforthesoul.pdf>.

- 23- The basic meaning is “to accord little worth to something.” Such an attitude undervalues something, e.g., the duties of the priesthood, or someone, e.g., the Lord who commissioned them to the honorable position of priest and assigned them the responsibilities of teaching doctrine through the ritual system instituted by Him.
- 24- The verb reveals an attitude of disobedience to divine will that resulted in an outward display of contempt. The exact opposite of this concept is *kaveth*, to honor.
- 25- These three men have “kicked” against the mandates of their office and instead submitted to the desire and will of the sinful nature. The result of such thoughts, decisions, and actions by those who shepherd God’s people is demotion. The English translation is “lightly esteemed” and is the Qal imperfect of the verb:

לָלַץ / *qalal* / -

to be lowered in position of importance; to be cursed.

- 26- This word implies that the person cursed has been stripped of his function and as a result suffers a loss of prestige. It implies the condition that results from breaking a covenant, the details of which are clearly reviewed by the prophet in verses 28 and 29.
- 27- The curse is imposed upon Eli, his sons, and the line of Ithamar:
 - 1 Samuel 2:31** - ‘Behold, the days are coming when I will break your strength and the strength of your father’s house so that there will not be an old man in your house.’
 - 1 Samuel 2:34** - ‘And this will be the sign to you which shall come concerning your two sons, Hophni and Phinehas: on the same day both of them shall die.’
- 28- Pastors who do not properly shepherd the flock assigned to them by God will come under severe punishment from their senior-ranking Authority, the Lord Jesus Christ.
- 29- The pastors of America have chosen to ignore their calling which is to study and teach the flock assigned to them. The end result is a population that is ignorant of the Word of God and therefore has no inventory to consult in time of crisis.
- 30- The response to such a crisis can be a restorative revival which is the divine intent, or it can be a reaction that intensifies the two categories of negative volition, (1) increased asceticism or (2) intensified licentiousness.
- 31- Guilt motivates increased asceticism. This includes those who are already involved in “good works” motivated by energy of the flesh. They calculate that they have not done enough and thus increase their human-good activities.
- 32- Fear motivates intensified licentiousness. This includes those who are already involved in an immoral lifestyle. They calculate that they are going to die and determine to “eat, drink, and be merry” in case tomorrow they do die.
- 33- The absence of divine thought creates a vacuum into which is sucked the cosmic lie and after this spreads abroad, the nation drifts into spiritual decline. The challenge and incentive for recovery is provided by national discipline.