

The Duties of The Priest

Part 11

“But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.” (1Peter 2:9)

God is loving and gracious to us; even when we sin he still gives us another chance and remind us to repent. In the previous issue we discuss about priest Eli how he was not good example as priest in raising up his children. When he heard what his children were doing wrong he did not do the real action to execute on them the discipline of God and what their sinful acts deserve.

The Lord was still gracious to Him; He sent him warnings as we can read down:-

1- ²⁷ Now a man of God came to Eli and said to him, “This is what the LORD says: ‘Did I not clearly reveal myself to your ancestor’s family when they were in Egypt under Pharaoh?’ ²⁸ I chose your ancestor out of all the tribes of Israel to be my priest, to go up to my altar, to burn incense, and to wear an ephod in my presence. I also gave your ancestor’s family all the food offerings presented by the Israelites. ²⁹ Why do you scorn my sacrifice and offering that I prescribed for my dwelling? Why do you honor your sons more than me by fattening yourselves on the choice parts of every offering made by my people Israel?’ ³⁰ “Therefore the LORD, the God of Israel, declares: ‘I promised that members of your family would minister before me forever.’ But now the LORD declares: ‘Far be it from me! Those who honor me I will honor, but those who despise me will be disdained. ³¹ The time is coming when I will cut short your strength and the strength of your priestly house, so that no one in it will reach old age, ³² and you will see distress in my dwelling. Although good will be done to Israel, no one in your family line will ever reach old age. ³³ Every one of you that I do not cut off from serving at my altar I will spare only to destroy your sight and sap your strength, and all your descendants will die in the prime of life. ³⁴ “And what happens to your two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, will be a sign to you—they will both die on the same day. ³⁵ I will raise up for myself a faithful priest, who will do according to what is in my heart and mind. I will firmly establish his priestly house, and they will minister before my anointed one always. ³⁶ Then everyone left in your family line will come and bow down before him for a piece of silver and a loaf of bread and plead, “Appoint me to some priestly office so I can have food to eat.” (1Samuel 2:27-36) God sent to Eli the priest a man of God to explain to him all his sins in regard to his

complacency and compromises with his own children. His sin was clearly defined; he scorned the sacrifices and the offerings of God and was honouring his children more than God. The Lord also explain to him the consequences of his sinful acts, that he will lose his strength and will lose the priestly office and will not have descendants who do things that pleases him. In addition to that his two sons Hophni and Phinehas will die in one day.

The same will happen to the parents who do not act as royal priests in nurturing their children and raising them in the fear of the LORD. They will be rejected by the LORD and they will not have the strength needed to do God’s work. In addition to that, their children and descendant will be bad testimony and wayward in life and conduct. These are all the curses that will be falling on those who do not raise up their children in the fear of the LORD and disciplining them in the ways of God.

When God warned Eli the priest, he did not take the opportunity to repent and correct his stand and take disciplinary actions toward his wayward children. In spite of God’s warning he kept complacent about it. Many parents they fail in such aspect and are not willing to take disciplinary actions against their children or their workers in the ministry who live in sin. But loving their children more than God the outcome of it will be rejection and lose of strength and grieving in their spirit and disgrace with the outcome of their children.

Many who are involve in ministering before the LORD they fail in such aspects and are not willing to take disciplinary actions against their workers in the ministry who live in sin against God. But the outcome of their ministry is rejection by the LORD and bad testimony to others.

2- ¹⁰ The LORD came and stood there, calling as at the other times, “Samuel! Samuel!” Then Samuel said, “Speak, for your servant is listening.” ¹¹ And the LORD said to Samuel: “See, I am about to do something in Israel that will make the ears of everyone who hears about it tingle. ¹² At that time I will carry out against Eli everything I spoke against his family—from beginning to end. ¹³ For I told him that I would judge his family forever because of the sin he knew about; his sons blasphemed God, and he failed to restrain them. ¹⁴ Therefore I swore to the house of Eli, ‘The guilt of Eli’s house will never be atoned for by sacrifice or offering. ¹⁵ Samuel lay down until morning and then opened the doors of the house of the LORD. He was afraid to tell Eli the vision,

¹⁶ but Eli called him and said, “Samuel, my son.” Samuel answered, “Here I am.” ¹⁷ “What was it he said to you?” Eli asked. “Do not hide it from me. May God deal with you, be it ever so severely, if you hide from me anything he told you.” ¹⁸ So Samuel told him everything, hiding nothing from him. Then Eli said, “He is the LORD; let him do what is good in his eyes.” (1Samuel 3:10-18) The LORD sent here another warning to priest Eli to repent from his sins and to discipline his children and keep holiness in the family and among the people of God. The warning came here as final warning that God will carry out His judgment against Eli and his family.

But in spite of that warning priest Eli was not willing to repent. Therefore the LORD brought his final judgment on priest Eli and on his family, his sons, and on the whole Israelites as we can read here: ¹ “Now the Israelites went out to fight against the Philistines. The Israelites camped at Ebenezer, and the Philistines at Aphek. ² The Philistines deployed their forces to meet Israel, and as the battle spread, Israel was defeated by the Philistines, who killed about four thousand of them on the battlefield. ³ When the soldiers returned to camp, the elders of Israel asked, “Why did the LORD bring defeat on us today before the Philistines? Let us bring the ark of the LORD’s covenant from Shiloh, so that he may go with us and save us from the hand of our enemies. ⁴ So the people sent men to Shiloh, and they brought back the ark of the covenant of the LORD Almighty, who is enthroned between the cherubim. And Eli’s two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, were there with the ark of the covenant of God. ⁵ When the ark of the LORD’s covenant came into the camp, all Israel raised such a great shout that the ground shook. ⁶ Hearing the uproar, the Philistines asked, “What’s all this shouting in the Hebrew camp?” When they learned that the ark of the LORD had come into the camp, ⁷ the Philistines were afraid. “A god has come into the camp,” they said. “Oh no! Nothing like this has happened before. ⁸ We’re doomed! Who will deliver us from the hand of these mighty gods? They are the gods who struck the Egyptians with all kinds of plagues in the wilderness. ⁹ Be strong, Philistines! Be men, or you will be subject to the Hebrews, as they have been to you. Be men, and fight!” ¹⁰ So the Philistines fought, and the Israelites were defeated and every man fled to his tent. The slaughter was very great; Israel lost thirty thousand foot soldiers. ¹¹ The ark of God was captured, and Eli’s two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, died. ¹² That same day a Benjamite ran from the battle line and went to Shiloh with his clothes torn and dust on his head. ¹³ When he arrived, there was Eli sitting on his chair by the side of the road, watching, because his heart feared for the ark of God. When the man entered the town and told what had happened, the whole town sent up a cry. ¹⁴ Eli heard the outcry and asked,

“What is the meaning of this uproar?” The man hurried over to Eli, ¹⁵ who was ninety-eight years old and whose eyes had failed so that he could not see. ¹⁶ He told Eli, “I have just come from the battle line; I fled from it this very day.” Eli asked, “What happened, my son?” ¹⁷ The man who brought the news replied, “Israel fled before the Philistines, and the army has suffered heavy losses. Also your two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, are dead, and the ark of God has been captured.” ¹⁸ When he mentioned the ark of God, Eli fell backward off his chair by the side of the gate. His neck was broken and he died, for he was an old man, and he was heavy. He had led Israel forty years. ¹⁹ His daughter-in-law, the wife of Phinehas, was pregnant and near the time of delivery. When she heard the news that the ark of God had been captured and that her father-in-law and her husband were dead, she went into labor and gave birth, but was overcome by her labor pains. ²⁰ As she was dying, the women attending her said, “Don’t despair; you have given birth to a son.” But she did not respond or pay any attention. ²¹ She named the boy Ichabod, saying, “The Glory has departed from Israel”—because of the capture of the ark of God and the deaths of her father-in-law and her husband. ²² She said, “The Glory has departed from Israel, for the ark of God has been captured.” (1Samuel 4:1-22)

My Dear and Beloved: Take heed of the message and apply that carefully in your life and the life of your family. This is a warning to you, so don’t take it lightly. If you will not repent God will bring judgment on you and on your children. Take heed of the message and apply the require discipline in the ministry and the people under your care. God is serious with you. If you obey Him, you will continue to receive the blessings of God and enjoy being His priest. If not then curses will come upon you and upon your descendents. Consider carefully the message as you agree to repent and pray.

My Prayer: Father God I come before you in the name of Jesus who died on the Cross for my sins and rose from the dead to give me eternal. Lord I commit myself to discipline my children and my family and do what is just and right in your eyes. LORD I thank you because you consider me a royal priest. LORD I will do my best to abide with your word and apply them in the life of my family. LORD I commit myself to discipline my coworker and to work with you to cleanse the ministry that you put me in and entrust me with. LORD enables me and equips me and gives me more of your grace to do that. This is my prayer in Jesus name Amen.