

The Duties of The Priest

Part 12

“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)

The outcome of the life of the family and especially the children had a great impact in the life and the future of the church. After priest Eli, Samuel took the leadership of the people of God, ***“¹⁹ The LORD was with Samuel as he grew up, and he let none of his words fall to the ground. ²⁰ And all Israel from Dan to Beersheba recognized that Samuel was attested as a prophet of the LORD. ²¹ The LORD continued to appear at Shiloh, and there he revealed himself to Samuel through his word.” (1Samuel 3:19-21)***

Truly Samuel led the Israelites in victory toward their enemies the philistines as we can read here, ***“² It was a long time, twenty years in all, that the ark remained at Kiriath Jearim, and all the people of Israel mourned and sought after the LORD. ³ And Samuel said to the whole house of Israel, “If you are returning to the LORD with all your hearts, then rid yourselves of the foreign gods and the Ashtoreths and commit yourselves to the LORD and serve him only, and he will deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines.” ⁴ So the Israelites put away their Baals and Ashtoreths, and served the LORD only. ⁵ Then Samuel said, “Assemble all Israel at Mizpah and I will intercede with the LORD for you.” ⁶ When they had assembled at Mizpah, they drew water and poured it out before the LORD. On that day they fasted and there they confessed, “We have sinned against the LORD.” And Samuel was leader of Israel at Mizpah. ⁷ When the Philistines heard that Israel had assembled at Mizpah, the rulers of the Philistines came up to attack them. And when the Israelites heard of it, they were afraid because of the Philistines. ⁸ They said to Samuel, “Do not stop crying out to the LORD our God for us, that he may rescue us from the hand of the Philistines.” ⁹ Then Samuel took a suckling lamb and offered it up as a whole burnt offering to the LORD. He cried out to the LORD on Israel’s behalf, and the LORD answered him. ¹⁰ While Samuel was sacrificing the burnt offering, the Philistines drew near to engage Israel in battle. But that day the LORD thundered with loud thunder against the Philistines and threw them into such a panic that they were routed before the Israelites. ¹¹ The men of Israel rushed out of Mizpah and pursued the Philistines, slaughtering them along the way to a point below Beth Car. ¹² Then Samuel took a stone and set it up between Mizpah and Shen. He named it Ebenezer, saying, “Thus far has the LORD helped us.” ¹³ So the Philistines were subdued and did not invade Israelite territory again. Throughout Samuel’s lifetime, the hand of the LORD was against the Philistines. ¹⁴ The towns from Ekron to Gath that the Philistines had captured from Israel were restored to her, and Israel delivered the neighboring territory from the power of the Philistines. And there was peace between Israel and the Amorites. ¹⁵ Samuel continued as judge over Israel all the days of his life. ¹⁶ From year to year he went on a circuit from Bethel to Gilgal to Mizpah, judging Israel in all those places. ¹⁷ But he always went back to Ramah, where his home was, and there he also judged Israel. And he built an altar there to the LORD.” (1Samuel 7:2-17)*** Samuel was able to discipline the Israelites and leading them in the way that they need to go and live for God. He directed them to throw away their idols, to start to serve God and fully surrender their will to Him. And truly when they comply with Samuel’s teaching they got delivered and God restored back to them what is due for them from their enemies’ hand.

But, ***“^d When Samuel grew old, he appointed his sons as judges for Israel. ² The name of his firstborn was Joel and the name of his second was Abijah, and they served at Beersheba. ³ But his sons did not walk in his ways. They turned aside after dishonest gain and accepted bribes and perverted justice.” (1Samuel 1-3)*** Now here when Samuel was old then there must be someone instead of him should be there to lead the people of God. It supposed that his children should walk in the ways of the LORD and to continue in the way of their father to work as judges for the people of God and lead them in victories as their father did. But unfortunately they turned aside after dishonest gain and started to accept bribes and perverted justice contradicting in these actions the ways of the LORD who says, ***“Do not pervert justice; do not show partiality to the poor or favoritism to the great, but judge your neighbor fairly.” (Leviticus 19:15)*** ***“¹⁸ Appoint judges and officials for each of your tribes in every town the LORD your God is giving you, and they shall judge the people fairly. ¹⁹ Do not pervert justice or show partiality. Do not accept a bribe, for a bribe blinds the eyes of the wise and twists the words of the righteous. ²⁰ Follow justice and justice alone, so that you may live and possess the land the LORD your God is giving you.” (Deuteronomy 16:18-20)***

When the sons of Samuel did not do well with the LORD and did not walk in His ways as their father did, ***“⁴ So all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah. ⁵ They said to him, “You are old, and your sons do not walk in your ways; now appoint a king to lead us, such as all the other nations have.” (1Samuel 8:4-5)*** Now the request of the Israelites to Samuel to appoint king over them was not because his sons are not doing well. But they used that as an excuse to introduce their own unwillingness to abide with God’s law and teaching that Samuel had taught them to follow. And they insisted on Samuel and on God to grant them their own personal ambition, choice and request. And finally Saul was introduced as king over Israel. And we know very well how Saul disobeyed God and led the whole Israel into rebellion against God and finally Israel was destroyed by the Philistines in the mount of Gilboa (Read ***1Samuel chapter 31*** in your own bible).

What we can conclude here that bad leadership was introduced over all Israel and caused havoc because Samuel sons did not follow God’s ways. In the same way, Bad future await our children that we nurture if they are not disciplined and taught properly the ways of the LORD.

My Dear and Beloved: Let us consider the thought of the message carefully. Now the future is in our hands in the way we nurture and in the way that we discipline our children. If we do that well then good future will await our children and the church that God had entrusted to us. But if we fail to do that then people like Saul will be introduced over our children and will bring on them and on the church calamities and God’s wrath as consequences of our disobedience in failing to do God’s will in obeying His word and commands. Read again the message and meditate carefully on the thought; that the future of your children and the church that you are in now is in your hand; it depend on what you are going to decide and to do in regard of nurturing your children as you agree to 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 thank you for your word that is clear to me. LORD I repent of my sins and my complacency of not doing my part in raising up my children in the way that you wants me to do it. LORD I commit myself today to do that, help me, strengthen me and provide for me to do your will, this is my prayer in Jesus name Amen.*