

The Cult of Eli



The Bible calls us to be good fathers to our children, and we cannot imagine a better example than our Heavenly Father, who makes us, cares for us, disciplines us and delivers us from death itself. Scripture instructs us to raise up our children in the way they should go, and to teach them the word of God diligently. It tells us not to incite them. It tells us to punish them. It instructs us in our marriage, our life as a husband and our life as a father.

Scripture also gives us examples of how to lead. Although he is not as honored as Miriam, Yeshua's father Yosef is a prime human example. So are the patriarchs, though each of these great men had his flaws. Scripture also gives us examples of how NOT to lead, and some failed examples of fatherhood are there. Problem fathers may not be as common as problem brothers in the Torah, but they are there if we care to look for them. The most famous must be Yaakov (Jacob) who treated his son Yosef somewhat too favorably. The history of Yosef displays an incredibly rich illustration of the Messiah, but it's also an example of parenting gone bad. Don't play favorites with your kids. Don't give them positions to lord over the others. And don't, no matter how much you'd like to, buy them incredibly illustrious clothes, which put everyone else to shame.



Yaakov may be the most famous example of a father who slipped up, but I don't see him as the worst example. What strikes me as the most shocking one is that of Eli the priest, who is written of in 1 Samuel. Eli must have been a very righteous man, who led his life with great dedication to the things of God. He made the sacrifices to God, and tutored the great prophet Samuel. But what of his own children? How did he raise them? Scripture tells us both of his children "were corrupt; they did not know the LORD." (1 Sam 2:12) The examples it gives of his children's sins are truly terrible and must have been well known; firstly, his children would not do the priestly sacrifices correctly, and would demand the fat for themselves. If anyone demand they burn up the fat as the Torah instructs instead of taking it for themselves, they would threaten to take it by force anyway. They would threaten violence. Their other act of wickedness recorded in scripture is that they "lay with the women who assembled at the door of the tabernacle of meeting." (1 Sam 2:22) It tells us that Eli heard everything his sons did, so they must have made a terrible reputation for themselves.

We don't get a detailed picture of how events unfolded this way; it doesn't tell us how such a righteous man as Eli raised up children of such immense wickedness, who did not even know the LORD. The one definite clue comes when we are told "his sons made themselves vile, and he did not restrain them." (1 Sam 3:13). Lack of discipline then? Lack of involvement? We still have to guess a little, but we have some grounds to go on. We know he must have rebuked them at least sometimes, because we are given an example of just this in 1 Samuel 2:23-25. Eli rebukes them sharply. It's hardly a weak or a vague complaint. But whatever Eli did in restraining them, it was clearly not enough in the eyes of God, who judged Eli harshly for it. Perhaps this comes down to the fact that fathers in that day carried more real authority than we see today in the modern west. As a father he didn't just have mere influence. He didn't just have a mere teaching position. No, fathers in that day had significant authority and frequently wielded it with their family. Perhaps this explains God's harsh judgment upon Eli, who must otherwise have been very righteous. He refused to step in, to take a stand, to do more than complain when his entire offspring did great and public wickedness time and time again. This must have been a great family shame, if not a national embarrassment. Yet as an authority Eli would not restrain them. Therefore he bore a great deal of the guilt.

How did God respond to his guilt of not restraining his children? More harshly than many would imagine. More harshly than He dealt with King David's sin, certainly. More harshly than even simple destruction. In fact, because of Eli's guilt, and remember Eli was a righteous man, the Lord prophesied "I will cut off your arm and the arm of your father's house, so that there will not be an old man in your house." (1



Samuel 2:31) The Lord even repeats this immediately, saying "and you will see an enemy in My dwelling place, despite all the good which God does for Israel. And there shall not be an old man in your house forever." (1 Sam 2:32) He more boldly declares, "all the descendants of your house shall die in the flower of their age." (1 Sam 2:33) Elohim goes on to declare even more plainly that Eli's two wicked sons Hophni and Phinehas shall die in the same day. In the next chapter the Lord takes the judgment

even further than mere death, saying "In that day I will perform against Eli all that I have spoken concerning his house...and therefore I have sworn to the house of Eli that the iniquity of Eli's house shall not be atoned for by sacrifice or offering forever." (1 Sam 3:12,13) Did you get that? "The iniquity of Eli's house shall not be atoned for forever." So look what would happen to his family -- his children would die in the flower of their youth, and his whole house would receive no atonement. No covering for sin. They would be fully under the wrath of God.

To be fully under the wrath of God is truly terrible to think about. Yet this is what came down on the life and family of an otherwise righteous man. A priest. An elder. The only reason given in the word of Elohim is that he did not restrain his children. And it is this same place, this place of seeking to serve God but finding ourselves under the deepest level of guilt, that we have all come to as well. You see I believe we as the Body of Mashiach, we as the Kahol, have arrived in the same situation as Eli. We have arrived long ago even, and are lingering in it. We have sinned. We have allowed our offspring to do the greatest wickedness even under our own eyes. We watched it. We heard it. We did not restrain. We have become the modern day Eli. The Church of Eli. The Cult of Eli. And we are being judged.

Before I go on, I want to say I realize this is a very painful subject. I realize no one likes to think about their own guilt, and more so, no one likes to think about their children who have rejected the Lord, who walk in wickedness, just as Eli's sons did. By pointing out our guilty state I'm not suggesting that every parent, here every father, is responsible for every moral decision made by their children. Of course not. Children are still responsible for the moral choices they make, especially beyond a certain age. Yet it

appears in God's eyes that their responsibility does not entirely free the parents of guilt. It obviously does not free the parents from punishment due to guilt either. So yes children are responsible, but we cannot just wash our hands either! We should consider our own responsibility. We should be introspective. I furthermore must point out that I am not suggesting that the modern Kahol is somehow terribly wicked as parents or that they don't love their children at all, or that they haven't tried to be good parents. Of course not. But that's why I am comparing the modern Kahol to Eli in the first place. Because I believe Eli WAS a righteous man. Because I believe Eli DID try to be a good parent. But he still let this wickedness happen with his children. And he still fell under the worst kind of judgment because of it. His whole household was destroyed as well. May God help us all.

Where we differ from Eli is that our sin goes well beyond not restraining our children (although his may have also, we are not told) and goes far into the territory of simply not practicing the same religion we preach. Or as some prefer to call it, the faith we preach. We can try to herd the children back into the Church (often failingly) we can try to get them into meetings, fellowship, Bible studies or at least pop concerts but we can't do the one thing every good father, every good teacher ought to be able to do. We cannot teach by example. We just cannot do it.

In fact the mortal collapse of the family and the culture have a lot to do with this Cult of Eli I am writing about today. For example, the Cult of Eli is horribly opposed to the modern culture of homosexual marriage, and even has the audacity to claim to stand for the "traditional" kind of marriage, when in fact the Kahol has not stood for traditional marriage for long ages. You see traditional marriages are a covenant until death. Traditional marriages do not allow for remarriage while the spouse is still living. This is based on the word of God itself, and was practiced for centuries until anyone started making official exceptions. How can we complain of the mockery of marriage made by a godless culture, when a mockery of marriage is being made by a godless Church. The Savior says remarriage is adultery. We say the Savior is wrong.



Not only that, but how about the Cult of Eli which watched horrified as its children embraced, or at least passively soaked in a transgendered society. A society in which men and women can shamelessly have a sex-change operation, where children are taught that gender does not matter. Where small children are permitted to identify as the opposite gender and use the opposite gender's bathroom. If we do not wish to see our children engulfed in such a culture as this, why have we ourselves ignored gender? Why do we continue to do so? For it is the Kahol which nodded its head at women wearing men's apparel. It was the Kahol which came to thoroughly embrace its women regularly seeking careers outside of the home. It is the Kahol which is currently in the midst of spreading women household heads, women preachers and women pastors as far and wide through the ministry as it possibly can. When we turn to our children and ask where we went wrong, don't you think that question has an answer? We ought to know where we went wrong.



Now I have personally prayed with many parents over their children who have left the Lord to follow the homosexual lifestyle. I can empathize deeply with their pain. I do not take lightly the horror of it or the suffering of the parents. Yet at the same time, it never fails to strike me that it was the Church itself, the holy Bride of Messiah, which began to treat sex as a purely selfish pleasure far apart from the natural usage. It was the Kahol which started something just as absurdly unnatural as homosexuality, and did it officially within its own ranks. What I speak of began in 1930, and that was when the first large Christian body officially accepted contraception for any purposes. That was the Anglican Church at the Lambeth Conference in England, when it found that the two thousand year old prohibition on contraception



could in fact have exceptions. They found exceptions, later they found more. Other Protestant and then Eastern Orthodox bodies found exceptions. Today the only large body rejecting contraception is the Roman Catholic Church. That's it. They stand behind two thousand years of tradition. Everyone else has thrown that off.

And you know, in throwing that prohibition off, doesn't it sound remarkably like an acceptance of unnatural behavior? Can't you see a direct line of thought down to our current sodomy culture? I think if you look at it closely you'll see the obvious connection. You see in embracing contraception, we also drew the hard line between sex's procreative purpose and its bonding (or pleasure) purpose. Once we've said that sex can be separated from the procreative, we justify nearly any perversion in the book, In fact, if we're fine with our sisters, wives, daughters all being on contraception so as to have intercourse with none of the God-give natural results, where do we come off telling anyone else what to do sexually? I mean how can we be teaching anyone, pardon me, where they can put their willie? They might as well put their willie in a watermelon. If sex can be only about pleasure, then this makes just about as much sense as anything. But it does NOT make sense...because sex is not just about pleasure. This society has gone off the deep end with sex and gender. But the Cult of Eli went off the deep end first.



Now while I could go on and on reminding us of our negligence and hypocrisy before our children, let me get back to the main subject Eli himself was castigated for – for not restraining his children. Do we match up in this arena as well? I believe so. We have done much like the defunct priest. That doesn't mean we have never chastened our children. No. And it doesn't mean we have always failed to punish



them. What it DOES mean, is that we have sat and done very little when our children lived lives of immense wickedness year after year after year. And do I speak wrongly? What part of the Kahol taught its children that the dating culture is a depraved, unnatural immoral lie? What part of the Kahol restrained its children from getting together unchaperoned to drink to excess with the opposite sex? What part of the Kahol restrained its children from living in the same housing literally feet from unmarried women where even a five year-old could figure out what was going to happen next? What part of the Kahol restrained its children from organizing sports events where the daughters of Christians, little Christs, pranced around mostly

naked for entertainment? What part of the Kahol protested its women abandoning the home to take on the lifestyle of men? What part of the Kahol restrained its children from dressing like the opposite sex? What part of the Kahol refused to send its children to a school system which legally prohibited biblical teaching and indoctrinated its students in so-called sex education? What part of the Kahol refused to send its children to schools staffed and administered by people ideologically trained to in their own eyes murder God? What part of the Kahol restrained their children from using contraception, which they knew very well their children would use for selfish pleasure shamelessly for years on end? What part of the Kahol restrained its children from absorbing the lewd, carnal, immoral ideologically bankrupt media and set an example of serving God instead? What part of the Church was that? If it existed it must have been an exceedingly small part. The rest of the Kahol has sat passively while its children did the greatest of wickedness, heard of their evil, was told of their evil, and did nothing meaningful to stop it. In this too we are like Eli. We should look around at our just rewards.



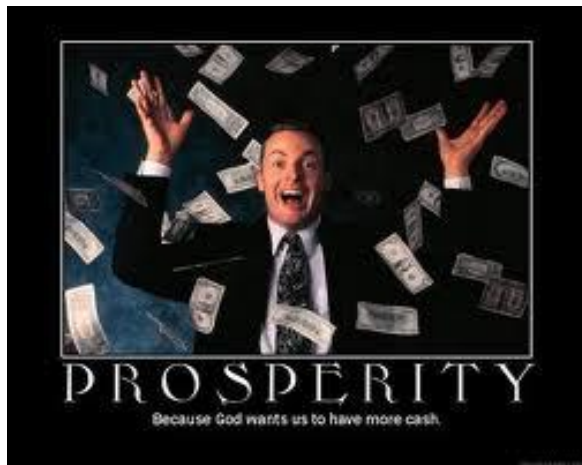


Do you remember Eli's just rewards beloved? I want to go over them a second time; the Lord God told Eli "any of your men whom I do not cut off from My altar shall consume your eyes and grieve your heart. And **all the descendants of your house shall die in the flower of their age.**" (1 Sam 2:33) Furthermore YHWH God tells us "I have sworn to the house of Eli that the iniquity of Eli's house **shall not be atoned for by sacrifice or offering forever.**" (1 Sam 3:14)

To me that sounds strangely familiar. What heart hearing them cannot think of the families ripped apart by immorality, or the children lost to the Lord? The children lost to this earthly life as well, who have gone to the grave in crime, drugs or immorality. Cut down dead in the prime of their youth. And those final words, those last words about being cut down dead from atonement itself, remind me of the New Covenant warning that God gives to believers in Hebrews. It sounds like a parallel warning to backsliders and apostates: "For if we sin willfully after we receive the knowledge of the truth, **there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins**, but a certain fiery expectation of judgment...Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace...**it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.**" (Heb 10:26-27, 29, 31)



We are under judgment, beloved, just like Eli. We are under judgment for not restraining our children and much much more. If you think that is a vain statement just take a look around and see how vain it really is. The number of professed Christians has declined now to loosely 75%. Regular church attendance is laughable at between 20 and 40% depending on whether you believe the headcounts or the polls. One quarter of young people in our nation do not even profess to a religion. Even those who belong to a church often have a belief system and way of life that is simply not recognizably Christian according to biblical or historical standards. To briefly consider what that means, a majority of American Christians do not believe Satan or the Holy Spirit are real living beings. More than one fifth do not



believe in the divinity or perfection of Yeshua. There are of course the many desperate attempts to woo the children back into the Body of Messiah, and here we are at least trying to play our role as Eli, to play our role as priest. Yet if we examine these attempts, we find little of the actual Gospel there. Even when we DO find the Gospel, we find it as mere Gospel reductionism, a faith with a handful of central tenets, but lacking all the other important teachings of scripture. The obedience. The holiness. Basically we find a kiddie faith.

If that's not enough, our children will be raised into a culture in which all manner of evil is normalized. They will then be forced to accept that evil, at least if they wish to avoid punishment in school. If they wish to avoid termination at work. If they wish to have a friend or two. They will be soaked in a culture which brazenly promotes godlessness and every brand of lewdness the human mind can imagine. Then we will see how they continue their faith. Then we will see how they continue their life. In fact the anti-Christ culture, were it possible to inject its godlessness, rebelliousness, vulgarity and self-obsession into the core of every atom of the cosmos and beam it into every human mind, would most certainly do so. You can count on that. This is the sea of shame we have left for our children. This is the sea of darkness, perhaps darker than any in the history of civilization, at least on a very grand scale. This is what we've left the future. This is our lack of restraint. This is our judgment. This is deserved. We are little but the Cult of Eli.



Now a lot of people hearing this are going to demand to hear it no more. A lot of people are going to get upset. A lot of people are going to start throwing around accusations at whomever the messenger is. It could be me today. It could be you tomorrow. A lot of believers think you have no right to speak plainly of the terrible problems, and point out their deadly results. It makes them feel angry. But getting angry is a futile and destructive response to have. Because what matters alone is whether the above message is true or false. NOT how it makes you feel. I mean if someone told you the ship was wrecked on the rocks and most of the

crew asleep, would you lash out at them? If someone told you the patient was dying and the doctors drunk, would you curse them? You know a lot of these bad reactions to news like I present are little more than simple whining. They really are. I mean let's not whine about the unpleasant message. Whining isn't productive. Whining isn't dignified. Small children whine. What men do in contrast, is to examine and see if this problem really is, and then step up to the plate to solve it. That's what men do. Children whine. Men respond. Men help in emergencies. Save lives. Take children out of burning buildings. Fight fires. Tear open cars to save the dying. This is what men do. Children whine.



That being said, you can be sure the message of this essay is not based on a desire to inflict suffering upon the reader. In fact, it is just the opposite. Because apart from the cursed and dying path the Body of Messiah lies trampled on, there is a path of life, of blessing, one Mashiach walks with us. Moreover, despite the terrible sight of our burning heaping ruins, I have complete faith in the God I worship, the God of Avraham, of Yitzach of Yaakov to take His children out of death and unto life. To bring us from the burning rubble, To lead us to holiness. Obedience. Love for one another. That is the purpose of all the above and none other.

That path of life and blessing is NOT going to be found in more abandoning biblical teachings. It's not going to be found in more attempts to popularize Yeshua with the teens. It will be found rather in restoration of what has been lost, and we ought to commit ourselves to that restoration in a serious lifelong way. When I say commit, I mean saying – I will do A, B, C and D and my life is devoted to doing them. It is a consecration of our soul to serving God, a consecration which includes specific deeds and standards. That vow should be to live by the biblical teachings which have been destructively cast off by

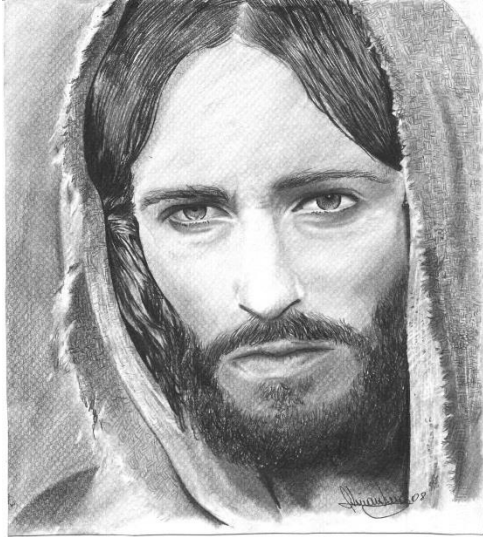
the modern Church and the common sense traditions which man has used to help maintain them. It is as simple as that. Restore. Obey. And of course beloved, pray.

Let me leave you with a few verses on holiness from scripture. And a few on the new life. Please consider them while you also consider the commitments you would be willing to make for the Bride:

“What fellowship has righteousness with lawlessness? What communion has light with darkness? And what accord has Mashiach with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever? And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: I will dwell in them, And walk among them. I will be their God, And they shall be my people...Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.” (2 Cor 6:14, 15, 16, 7:1)

“This I say... that you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind, having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart; who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lewdness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. But you have not so learned Mashiach... that you put off... the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.” (Eph 4:17-20)

Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world. (James 1:27)



These are truly incredible instructions and the New Covenant includes truly incredible promises. Elohim really brings us to this **new life**. Yeshua really makes us into **new men** -- as individuals and as a community. In fact, we could read many more scriptures like these. For God makes us holy fathers as He is a holy Father, perfect as He is perfect. So despite the dire situation we are in I believe in complete faith that our Beloved can restore His holy Bride, and that we must humble ourselves before Him in repentance. We can witness the Body of Messiah behaving as a sacred community. Being a city on a hill. We can see it being a blessing to all of the nations of the earth. Living as an example of what it means to be a son of God. People can look to us and see with hope and joy a love

and decency which stands out from the corrupt society. People can witness our homes, our families and be drawn to them by their faith, peace and abundance of life, all there in the name of the Savior. But if we do not wish to humble ourselves, if we only wish to continue our rebellion, being a priest of God will not save us from what is to come. For we will see the same as another failing father from the Holy Scripture. The same as Eli the priest. And we will have no children left.

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