

DELEGATED AUTHORITY

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1 Samuel 2:12-17

1. The Bible has a lot to say about authority and how it is to be exercised.
 2. Without delegated authority every person is a law unto themselves.
 3. Mankind was created with the expectation that God's authority would be recognized and accepted.
 4. It was God's intention that the family would be comprised of a man, a woman, and children, and that the father would have oversight of the family, the parents would have authority over their children, and that children would recognize and yield to that authority.
 5. As the earth was populated various governing authorities were created and empowered by God to oversee and govern mankind.
 6. Within the general population God elected a people, the Jews, through whom He would work with the goal of blessing all peoples.
 7. We live in what is referred to as The Church Age; a period in which the followers of the Lord Jesus Christ represent God and His Kingdom upon the earth.
 8. As Christians we have been given the authority to speak authoritatively to our world; the time and place in which we live.
 9. Additionally, God has ordained that local bodies of believers exist, that those bodies function in keeping with the clear teachings of Scripture, and that those bodies be governed by those to whom God has given oversight and authority.
- NOTE: I might add that it is God's stated purpose that every true follower of the Lord Jesus Christ is to be scripturally baptized into a local body of believers, properly instructed, and accountable to that church family.
10. Sadly, because of sin and man's rebellion against God, His original intent is rarely perfectly realized in the family, the culture or the church.
 11. Our present world and the condition of the church in the world is a direct result of man's rejection of God's authority.
 12. The period of the Judges serves as an example of what happens when God's intentions are not man's intentions.

I. A sad situation.

- A. The Tabernacle was set up at a place called Shiloh, and a man named Eli was the chief priest.
- B. His two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, served as priests under the authority of their father.
- C. The text tells us that both of these men were worthless, and that they did not know the Lord.

1. They despised the offering of the Lord by taking the best part for themselves. 2:17
2. They took advantage of the people who came to worship and committed adultery with the women who served at the doorway of the Tabernacle. 2:22

II. A weak response. 2:22-25

- A. Eli knew what his sons were doing.
- B. He confronted them, reproved them, and warned them, but they would not listen to the voice of their father.
- C. What he did not do is exercise his authority as their father and as the chief priest and remove them from their positions.

NOTE: God expects those to whom He has given authority and oversight to exercise both regardless of the consequences or who is involved. Matt 18:15-18

"If your brother sins, go and show him his fault in private; if he listens to you, you have won your brother. 16 "But if he does not listen to you, take one or two more with you, so that BY THE MOUTH OF TWO OR THREE WITNESSES EVERY FACT MAY BE CONFIRMED. 17 "If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. 18 "Truly I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven."

III. A two-fold warning.

- A. God does not discipline or judge without first warning people of the consequences of their actions.
- B. The first warning was delivered by an unnamed prophet. 2:27-36
 1. God reminded Eli of his privileged position. 27-28
 2. God reprimanded Eli for failing to fulfill his ministry and for honoring his sons above God. 29
 3. God rescinded His previously stated intention. 30
 4. God recited what was going to take place. 31-36

- C. The second warning was delivered by Samuel. 3:10-14

1. Samuel had been dedicated to the Lord by his mother Hannah.
2. He ministered before the Lord as soon as he was old enough to do so.
3. In 3:2-9 God began to speak to Samuel even though he was still a boy.

NOTE: Eli's advice to Samuel in 3:9 was sound even though Eli did not heed his own words.

4. God told Samuel that He was going to do to Eli and his sons everything that He said he would do.

NOTE: We do not know what the outcome would have been had Eli obeyed God instead of enabling his sons.

NOTE: God means what He says, and those who disregard Him bring a curse upon themselves.

IV. A disastrous result. 4:1-22

- A. Due to being defeated by the Philistines the elders of Israel decided to take the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord to the battlefield, thinking it would ensure victory.
- B. Their strategy did not work and thirty thousand Israelite foot soldiers were killed, the Ark was taken, and Eli's two sons died as well.
- C. When given the news Eli, who was now ninety-eight years old, blind, and overweight, fell off his seat backward, broke his neck and died.
- D. About the same time Phinehas's pregnant wife, having heard the news of the Ark being taken and the death of her father-in-law and husband, went into labor.
- E. She delivered a son and named him Ichabod, which means "the glory has departed," and then died herself.

APPLICATION

1. This is not a feel-good account, but it did lead to the long, anointed ministry of Samuel in his three-fold role as prophet, priest, and judge. 1 Sam 3:19-21

Thus Samuel grew and the Lord was with him and let none of his words fail. 20 All Israel from Dan even to Beersheba knew that Samuel was confirmed as a prophet of the Lord. 21 And the Lord appeared again at Shiloh, because the Lord revealed Himself to Samuel at Shiloh by the word of the Lord.

NOTE: God manifests His presence when the right conditions exist.

2. As stated last week God never leaves Himself without a witness.
3. May you and I fulfill our God-given roles as individuals, under the Lordship of Christ, and in relationship to and under the authority of a local body of believers.
4. Let us not be guilty of honoring ourselves or others above God.