**"ELI'S INEFFECTIVE REPROOF"**

[**1 Samuel 2:22-25**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/1%20Samuel%202.22-25)

**INTRODUCTION**

1. A man might be on the whole a good man, and yet be marked by some

 defect...

 a. Which mars his character and prevents his usefulness

 b. Which makes him the unintentional cause of much grief

2. Eli was such a man...

 a. He was a descendant of Ithamar, the youngest son of Aaron

 b. He held the office of high priest, and helped to raise Samuel

 c. He became judge at age 58, and judged Israel for 40 years - cf.

 [**1Sa 4:18**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/1Sa%204.18)

 d. When first mentioned, he must have been around 70 years old

 e. His sons were children of his old age, for sometimes afterward

 they were spoken of as young men - cf. [**1Sa 2:17**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/1Sa%202.17)

3. Yet he will always be known as man who did not restrain his sons...

 a. His sons Hophni and Phineas were corrupt, and did not know the

 Lord - [**1Sa 2:12-17**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/1Sa%202.12-17)

 b. He sought to reprove his sons, but it was ineffective - **1Sa 2:**

 **22-25**

 c. Therefore God sent a man of God to pronounce judgment on his

 household - [**1Sa 2:27-36**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/1Sa%202.27-36)

 d. The Lord also told Samuel of the reason for such judgment - **[1 Sam](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/1%20Sam%203.11-14%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)**

 **[3:11-14](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/1%20Sam%203.11-14%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)**

[Eli's reproof was clearly ineffective, and did not absolve him of

responsibility for his sons' behavior. Here are some possible reasons

why...]

**I. IT WAS NOT ADMINISTERED IN PROPER TIME**

 **A. IN THE CASE OF ELI AND HIS SONS...**

 1. His sons' propensity to sin must have been seen long before the

 rumour of their flagrant transgressions reached him

 2. It was evident his sons did not know the Lord, yet they had

 been appointed priests

 3. Eli, being old and weak, was evidently of gentle and easy going

 temperament

 4. Thus he failed to reprove them until they were too devoted to

 their evil ways

 5. In this Eli was like David and his son Adonijah - cf. [**1Ki 1:6**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/1Ki%201.6)

 **B. THEREFORE WE SHOULD REMEMBER...**

 1. The tendency to go wrong appears at an early age

 2. A little plant may be easily rooted up, but when it becomes a

 tree it can only be removed by extraordinary efforts

 3. Some children can be 'discouraged' by too much strictness - cf.

 [**Col 3:21**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Col%203.21)

 4. Yet far more are spoiled by too much indulgence ("Indulgence

 never produces gratitude or love in the heart of a child.")

[The ineffectiveness of Eli's reproof may also have been because...]

**II. IT WAS NOT GIVEN WITH SUFFICIENT EARNESTNESS**

 **A. IN THE CASE OF ELI AND HIS SONS...**

 1. It was not sufficiently pointed in its application

 a. Given to them collectively rather than individually

 b. By way of question, rather than a direct charge - [**1Sa 2:23**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/1Sa%202.23)

 c. Concerning things he had heard, but had not troubled himself

 to find out for certain

 2. It exhibited no sufficient sense of the evil of sin

 a. He spoke of the consequences of sin rather than the nature

 of sin

 b. He seemed more concerned about the reputation than the sin

 itself - [**1Sa 2:23-24**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/1Sa%202.23-24)

 3. It showed no sufficient determination to correct the sin

 a. He did not threaten to judge them for their injustice toward

 men

 b. He simply left them to the judgment of a higher tribunal

 - [**1Sa 2:25**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/1Sa%202.25)

 c. "In the case where the rebuke should have descended like a

 bolt from heaven we hear nothing but low and feeble

 murmurings, coming, as it were, out of the dust. Cruel

 indeed are the tenderest mercies of parental weakness and

 indulgence. And the fate of Eli shows that by such tender

 mercies the father may become the minister of vengeance unto

 his whole house."

 **B. THEREFORE WE SHOULD REMEMBER...**

 1. To make sure our reproofs sufficiently pointed ("You are the

 man!") - cf. [**2Sa 12:7**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/2Sa%2012.7)

 2. To communicate the exceedingly sinfulness of sin

 3. To make every effort within our power to stop the sinning being

 done

[We also see the ineffectiveness of Eli's reproof in that...]

**III. IT WAS NOT FOLLOWED BY ADEQUATE CHASTISEMENT**

 **A. IN THE CASE OF ELI AND HIS SONS...**

 1. The law of Moses in the case of disobedient children was very

 severe - [**Deut 21:18-21**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Deut%2021.18-21)

 2. But Eli did not observe this law "when they hearkened not to

 his voice" - [**1Sa 2:25**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/1Sa%202.25)

 3. Nor did he take any further steps to prevent the continuance of

 the evil which he reproved

 a. He did not have the zeal for which Phinehas the son of

 Eleazar was approved - cf. [**Num 25:1-13**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Num%2025.1-13)

 b. But as a father, a high priest, and a judge he was guilty of

 culpable infirmity and willful disobedience - cf. **1Sa 3:12-13**

 c. "Osiers" (flexible twig of a willow tree), says an old

 writer, "can never be pillars in the State or in the

 Church."

 **B. THEREFORE WE SHOULD REMEMBER...**

 1. Fathers who love their children chastise them appropriately

 - cf. [**Heb 12:6-8**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/He%2012.6-8)

 2. Fathers in a position to restrain their children's sinful

 behavior, have the duty to do so

 3. Whether it be in the home, in the church, or in the community

[Finally, we note the ineffectiveness of Eli's reproof by the fact...]

**IV. IT DID NOT RESULT IN ANY IMPROVEMENT**

 **A. IN THE CASE OF ELI AND HIS SONS...**

 1. Their contempt of reproof revealed that they were already

 infatuated and hardened

 2. God had already given them up to destruction - [**1Sa 2:25**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/1Sa%202.25)

 3. In them the proverb was to be fulfilled: "He that hateth

 reproof shall die" - [**Pr 15:10**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Pr%2015.10)

 **B. THEREFORE WE SHOULD REMEMBER...**

 1. If we wait too long to reprove, it may be too late

 2. It is possible for one to become hardened by sin - [**Ro 2:4-5**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Ro%202.4-5)**; [Heb](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/He%203.12-13%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)**

 **[3:12-13](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/He%203.12-13%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)**

 3. One can reach a point where it becomes impossible for us to

 restore them again to repentance - [**Heb 6:4-6**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/He%206.4-6)

**CONCLUSION**

1. Reproof is a solemn obligation...

 a. It should be given in an effective manner

 b. When not so given it can do more harm than good

2. When justly given, reproof should be humbly and obediently

 received...

 a. As Eli did, when he accepted the Lord's judgment - cf. **1Sa 3:**

 **15-18**

 b. How much better, to receive it before it’s too late! - cf. [**Pr 1:23**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Pr%201.23)

How sad, that Eli could accept reproof, but not give it as one

should...!

 **He who spares his rod hates his son, But he who loves him**

 **disciplines him promptly. -** [**Pr 13:24**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Pr%2013.24)

 **Chasten your son while there is hope, And do not set your heart**

 **on his destruction. -** [**Pr 19:18**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Pr%2019.18)

 **The rod and rebuke give wisdom, But a child left to himself**

 **brings shame to his mother. -** [**Pr 29:15**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Pr%2029.15)

 **Correct your son, and he will give you rest; Yes, he will give**

 **delight to your soul. -** [**Pr 29:17**](http://biblia.com/bible/nkjv/Pr%2029.17)