

**God Will Judge and Punish Evil**  
I Samuel 13:10-13, September 6, 2015  
Trinity Sunday XIV

Sermon Text, I Samuel 13:10-13 (KJV):

*“And it came to pass, that as soon as he had made an end of offering the burnt offering, behold, Samuel came; and Saul went out to meet him, that he might salute him. And Samuel said, What hast thou done? And Saul said, Because I saw that the people were scattered from me, and that thou camest not within the days appointed, and that the Philistines gathered themselves together at Michmash; Therefore said I, The Philistines will come down now upon me to Gilgal, and I have not made supplication unto the LORD: I forced myself therefore, and offered a burnt offering. And Samuel said to Saul, Thou hast done foolishly: thou hast not kept the commandment of the LORD thy God, which he commanded thee: for now would the LORD have established thy kingdom upon Israel for ever.”*

Beloved of the Lord.....This week in the news most of us heard about the imprisonment of Kim Davis, a Kentucky County Clerk who refused to grant a marriage license to two homosexuals. Because Kim Davis is a Christian, she followed her conscience and God's Word which teaches that only a man and woman can be married. The judge however tried to get her to violate her Christian faith and conscience, but she held firm and he sentenced her to jail. This is what the devil thinks of all Christians who have the courage to confess the truth of God's Word.

When we see such open persecution of Christ in this country, we wonder, where is the justice here?..... and why doesn't God intervene? Will the evil of this judge go unpunished? Will the devil and the ungodly win? The devil wants us to think so. Satan wants us to see all the injustice of the world and all his victories against Christendom so that we become so fearful and afraid and fall into misbelief and despair. But the devil is not omnipotent dear believer! Jesus is! Jesus is far stronger than this blind judge who condemns an innocent Christian to jail. Jesus is far stronger than five Supreme Court judges who make themselves vile, ruling against the nature of marriage. Jesus is also far stronger than our President or butchers of Planned Parenthood. And more important than all this, Jesus is far stronger than the devil himself.

Simply put, the devil can't win, for he has already been defeated by Jesus who suffered for our sins upon the cross. By His own blood Jesus has justified the entire world of sinners so there is forgiveness for all, and all who believe in Jesus are justified and saved from Satan's power, and there is nothing the devil can do about it. But when you see the world dying before your eyes, running down the broad path to destruction, stay on the narrow way knowing Jesus has given you that most precious promise “Lo I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.”

He is with you in this battle dear believer, standing by your side and mine, ever faithful “with us always”. If only the unbelievers of this world could see our Friend and Brother Jesus, and they knew by God's Word all Jesus had done for them, they would run to Him rather than away, rejoicing in the faith. Therefore let not one of us despair, but let us rejoice and trust in the power of God's Word to convert even our enemies, and as Moses

said, "Be strong and of a good courage, fear not, nor be afraid of them: for the LORD thy God, he *it is* that doth go with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee."

I. God does not fail to judge and punish the wickedness of man. Naturally today's lesson is about God's judgment and punishment upon both Eli and his sons. Eli had two sons named Hophni and Phinehas. These two were priests before God, and Eli was a priest and the judge of the people. But the Bible says of Hophni and Phinehas were sons of Belial, namely they were wicked men who did not fear God but they despised God's commandments. They were guilty of two primary sins. First, when the people of Israel came to give a peace offering to God, an animal sacrifice, Hophni and Phinehas took the meat of the sacrifice which God had forbidden, and they would even force the people to give what was forbidden, and if they did not give they would take it by force (2:16). This is like pastors or priests taking money out of the collection plate without people knowing, or telling a church member how much they must give to church. The other wicked sin of Eli's two sons was they would seduce and fornicate with certain women who served at the tabernacle. The Bible says (2:22) "they lay with the women that assembled at the door of the Tabernacle of the Congregation." Yet the Bible teaches, "Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body." Don't you know "your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost *which is* in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?"

As for Eli and God's anger against Eli, the Lord revealed all this to Eli through the little servant named Samuel. "For I have told him that I will judge his house for ever for the iniquity which he knoweth; because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not." Though it is true Eli admonished his sons for the wickedness, Eli did not go far enough. He didn't restrain them from their evil though it was in his power. He could have put them out of the priesthood so they would no longer defile God's house, but he didn't do that. By favoring his sons and not judging rightly, Eli was a bad father, partial and bias and weak, unfaithful to God the Judge of all men. By not restraining their evil, Eli was also a partaker of their sins, honoring his sons above God. This truth is told us in First Samuel 2:29. The Lord there said to Eli, "Wherefore kick ye at my sacrifice and at mine offering, which I have commanded *in my* habitation; and honourest thy sons above me, to make yourselves fat with the chiefest of all the offerings of Israel my people?" In like manner when parents do not restrain the evil of their own children or discipline them as God commands according to their need, parents are holding children up higher than God Himself. It is a form of idolatry, for God says "Thou shalt have no other gods before Me". Likewise Proverbs 22:15 says, "Foolishness *is* bound in the heart of a child; *but* the rod of correction shall drive it far from him." Proverbs 19:18 says, "Chasten thy son while there is hope, and let not thy soul spare for his crying." Parents who are too soft on their children, failing to discipline bad or defiant behavior, create monsters who grow up spoiled and defiant and lazy. They live only for pleasure and hurt people by their sins, and this harm caused by such adults are the fault of the parent who didn't obey God's command when the child was young.

When parents sin in this manner, God Himself must sooner or later step in and punish rebellious children. In today's lesson God Himself places a curse upon those two sons, and Eli also. The punishment for their sins was that Hophni and Phinehas were soon after slain in battle. The ark of the covenant was also captured by the Philistines in the same

battle, and when a messenger came to tell Eli that both his sons had died in battle and the ark of the covenant was taken, the Bible says, "And it came to pass, when he made mention of the ark of God, that Eli fell from off the seat backward by the side of the gate, and his neck brake, and he died." Eli's daughter in law likewise, hearing the news of her husband and the loss of the ark, went into labor, and she died giving birth to Eli's grandson. The news of God's wrath against Eli's house was circulated far and wide in Israel, and it was a fulfillment of God's prophecy spoken to Samuel, for the Lord said, "Behold, I will do a thing in Israel, at which both the ears of every one that heareth it shall tingle." By this judgement all Israel knew God's punishment had befallen the wickedness of Eli's house, much like adulterous David lost the child who was the fruit of his adulterous affair.

Truly let us all take note, God sees and knows all that is going on in this world, and God is paying attention. And though always God is very gracious and longsuffering with sinners, giving most many years to repent and turn from their wickedness, if they do not.... God's punishment is swift and severe and no soul will escape, for "I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me." When God visits iniquity that means God punishes people for their sins. Any fool who thinks there is no god or devil or hell, any sinner who thinks they can get away with evil and hurt and harm and take advantage of their neighbor, such a fool will be absolutely terrified when the Judge of all flesh appears in the skies to judge the living and the dead. It is written in Revelation 14:10 says, "The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever." Hell is eternal and God does judge and punish evil.

II. How Christ our high priest keeps us from evil. But even this dreadful judgment happens only if that poor soul dies in unbelief, despising the grace of God. Because we have heard the Gospel we know well, that for our salvation, Jesus Himself came down from heaven, both to be a sacrifice and priest for our sins. The Bible says of Jesus "For such a high priest became us, *who is* holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself." Standing in the stead and place of all sinners, Jesus gave to God an offering for our sins we could never give, Jesus offered Himself so we would not perish. Because Jesus willingly offered Himself, that angry heart of God was moved, changed, turned, even pacified and overcome. What Jesus did was so great and wonderful, God could not be angry at man anymore for his sins, for what Jesus was willing to do moved God deeply in His heart, so deeply that God said, "For the sake of My Son, I truly forgive all men all sin. I now have in my heart peace and forgiveness for every sinner, and all who believe in Mine only-begotten Son will have everlasting life. This I promise and swear to you, because these things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God."

Therefore dear believer, when we now speak of “restraining evil”, it is this faith in God’s Son alone which can do it, or better, the Holy Spirit working such faith in us. When you know and believe within your heart, that your dear Lord Jesus laid down His life for your sake, you know you are free from sin and cannot be condemned, and this love of Christ so fills you with joy that now you actively fight and combat your own evil, the evil of your flesh, and you try to restrain the evil of others also.

While it is the job of temporal government to restrain the evil of our neighbor by the temporal sword, God has given to His Church the sword of the Spirit. The greatest power to restrain evil in this world is not of this world, but it is of God, namely His Word. Preach the law that the stubborn and impenitent might be broken knowing God is coming to judge their sins and punish. But preach the Gospel also, for if their rocky heart is broken, only the love of Christ can heal and convert. Once converted they will of their own self turn away from evil, because the love of Christ works within.

In like manner when you as an adult struggle with evil of your own, you must use the Word of God and prayer to overcome. This is why we pray in the Lord’s Prayer, “But deliver us from evil.” We need the Father’s help in heaven, to fight and resist and overcome all the evil that is in this world and even in our own soul. We need to daily know and remember that for the sake of God’s only-begotten Son, we will not be damned, but rather lifted up to heaven for Jesus sake. We don’t have an abiding country here, but heaven is our home. We are citizens of the world to come, our place of eternal rest.

Therefore dearly beloved, while you live here understand also, your heavenly Father is not going to fail you, as Eli did his two sons. For Christ’s sake, because He loves and cares for our souls, “whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth.” It is because He loves us and only wants us to be with Him, He uses the rod from time to time to humble our proud hearts. Whatever your troubles know they are deserved. Let us not resent Him but humbly accept His chastening with repentant hearts. Thanks be to God He does not let us grow wild in His Church, but like a patient but firm father, He spans us on the bottom from time to time. In this way He restrains our sinful flesh, and keeps us in His grace.

Whatever happens then in this early kingdom, understand God is still ruling from above and He knows what He is doing, and we must trust until we can see Him face to face. Because of our sins, in no wise do we deserve good judges and rulers, but because of God’s grace He can still bring good from their evil. Even so, “Trust in him at all times; ye people, pour out your heart before him: God *is* a refuge for us.” Amen.

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