

# 1 Samuel 4:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Now Eli was ninety and eight years old; and his eyes were dim, that he could not see.

## Analysis

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Eli's age (ninety-eight) and blindness are restated, emphasizing his frailty. He cannot see the messenger or read faces; he must wait for words. The physical description - aged, blind, unable to see - comprehensively describes Eli's condition. He has served as judge for forty years (verse 18), almost the entire period of Philistine oppression. His life ends as it was lived: in blindness to spiritual realities he should have seen and addressed.

## Historical Context

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Ninety-eight years represents exceptional longevity, suggesting Eli's life had been blessed despite his failures. The forty-year judgeship corresponds roughly to a generation, a common biblical time marker. His service bridged the period from judges to Samuel's prophetic ministry.

## Related Passages

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**James 2:17** — Faith and works

**Romans 1:17** — The righteous shall live by faith

**Matthew 25:31** — Final judgment

**Revelation 20:12** — Judgment according to deeds

## Study Questions

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1. How does Eli's physical condition mirror his spiritual condition throughout the narrative?
2. What does the length of Eli's judgeship suggest about his overall influence on Israel?

## Interlinear Text

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וְעַל י	בֶּן	תְּשַׁע יָמִים	וְשָׁמֹנֶה ה	שָׁנָה ה	וְעֵינָיו יו	קָמָה	וְלֹא א	H3808
Now Eli	old	was ninety	and eight	years	and his eyes	were dim		
H5941	H1121	H8673	H8083	H8141	H5869	H6965		
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יָכֹל	לִרְאוֹת:							
that he could	not see							
H3201	H7200							

## Additional Cross-References

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**1 Samuel 3:2** (Parallel theme): And it came to pass at that time, when Eli was laid down in his place, and his eyes began to wax dim, that he could not see;