

## 1 Samuel 2:22-36 - Thursday, July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2013

- Because it's been three weeks since we were in 1<sup>st</sup> Samuel, I'd like to quickly go over the backstory so we can sort of hit the ground running.
- In chapter one Hannah had dedicated her only begotten son Samuel to Lord, such that he'd serve the Lord in the Tabernacle alongside Eli.
- The first ten verses of chapter two recorded for us Hannah's prayer of praise and thanksgiving to God for Him answering her plea for a son.

- In verses 11-21, we turned a corner of sorts as the narrative shifted focus from Hannah and her blessed son, to Eli and his wicked sons.
- And, in so doing, the Holy Spirit was careful to weave the stark threads of contrast between them throughout the fabric of this 2<sup>nd</sup> chapter.
- Perhaps you'll indulge me for just a bit so we can quickly revisit ten of the invaluable life lessons we've learned just from Hannah's prayer.

1. Beginning in verse one we saw from Hannah's prayer, how God made her a woman of blessedness, after being a woman of barrenness.
2. A second lesson is, that which Hannah sought in prayer, and wrought through prayer, did not mean that Hannah would cease from prayer.
3. A third lesson is, in addition to her continuing, and abounding, in prayer after receiving her heart's desire, Hannah does not break her vow.
4. This dovetailed into our fourth lesson, which is God's calling comes packaged with God's empowering to do hard things He calls us to.
5. The fifth lesson found in verse one is Hannah had a personal and experiential knowledge of the God of the Word and the Word of God.
6. God will have the final word for those who so arrogantly speak against God, and God's people, as did Hannah's "sister-wife," Peninnah.
7. God will vindicate us before those enemies who intend evil for us, and He does it by bringing good from that which they meant for evil.
9. God will humble those who exalt themselves, and He will also exalt those who humble themselves, and in so doing He silences boasters.
9. God will work it out, and set it right. Just as He sets the world upon the pillars of the earth and strengthens it, so too will He strengthen us.
10. God will be glorified in and through the hardship and difficulty He calls us to and fulfill His purpose, making us into the likeness of Christ.

- The contrast continues in verse 11 when we're told Eli's sons, were corrupt, and ungodly, whereas Samuel would remain pure and godly.
- Samuel was raised in the same environment, yet he remained steadfast even as Eli's sons were committing detestable and damnable acts.
- These were the priest's sons, such that they may have known about the Lord, however, they didn't have a saving knowledge of the Lord.

- In effect, they were taking for themselves that which first and foremost belonged to God, instead of being content with their rightful portion.
- So much so, in verse seventeen we're told that their sin was very great before the Lord, and that the people abhorred offering to the Lord.
- Be that as it may, this didn't deter Elkanah and Hannah from continuing their offerings, and as such, God would bless them abundantly.

- Lastly, we looked at how it is that Samuel would witness the most horrific hypocrisy with Eli's sons, and yet still minister before the Lord.
- You would think God would protect Samuel as a young and influential child so he wouldn't be stumbled and worse yet fall away from God.
- The question was actually twofold first, why does God allow him to witness it, and how does he remain faithful to God being subjected to it?

- I would suggest, God is exposing Samuel to the grievous sin and hypocrisy of Eli's sons in order for him to learn what not to do as a priest.
- While I truly wish I could learn all my life lessons by watching someone do it right, I really learn the most from watching them do it wrong.
- The reason for this is that the horrific consequences, for such horrific sins, in someone else's life, leave an indelible impression in my life.

(22) Now Eli was very old; and he heard everything his sons did to all Israel, and how they lay with the women who assembled at the door of the tabernacle of meeting.

- If you think it couldn't get any worse, think again. Eli's sons are so sinful they commit sexual immorality with the women at the tabernacle.
- It's important to keep in mind that Samuel would have known about this, and as such, he would keep himself pure by staying on message.
- By that I mean, while Samuel would not be raised in a godly environment, he would still be raised up as a godly man regardless of all this.

Charles Spurgeon - "But while this holy child was living near to God, Eli's sons went from bad to worse, till at last Eli spoke to them of their great sins."

(23) So he said to them, "Why do you do such things? For I hear of your evil dealings from all the people. (24) No, my sons! For *it is* not a good report that I hear. You make the LORD's people transgress. (25) If one man sins against another, God will judge him. But if a man sins against the LORD, who will intercede for him?" Nevertheless they did not heed the voice of their father, because the LORD desired to kill them. (26) And the child Samuel grew in stature, and in favor both with the LORD and men.

- I can't help but notice this contrast between Samuel and Eli's sons. They sin against the Lord, whereas Samuel is in favor with the Lord.
- The reason I bring this up is that both were raised in the same home with the same father yet Samuel is as godly as Eli's sons are ungodly.
- It's for this reason that the question becomes one of why? Why don't children raised in Christian homes necessarily become godly men?

In order to answer this question, I'm going to borrow from one commentator who I think says it best. Here's what he wrote, "What a contrast to the wickedness of Eli's sons! This shows that although Eli was far from a perfect father, he was not a chronically bad father, because he essentially fathered Samuel and Samuel grew up to be a godly man. ...[So] why was Samuel godly and Eli's sons were not? It might be easy to say it was because Samuel grew up in a godly home and Eli's sons did not. But Eli does not seem to have been a particularly bad parent, though he obviously did some things wrong (as stated in the rest of the chapter). No, it would be wrong to give Eli all the blame for his sons, or to give Hannah all the credit for Samuel. There is a significant measure that, after all the parenting, is left up to the free will of the child."

(27) Then a man of God came to Eli and said to him, "Thus says the LORD: 'Did I not clearly reveal Myself to the house of your father when they were in Egypt in Pharaoh's house? (28) Did I not choose him out of all the tribes of Israel *to be* My priest, to offer upon My altar, to burn incense, and to wear an ephod before Me? And did I not give to the house of your father all the offerings of the children of Israel made by fire?

- Here we're told how that a prophet comes and speaks to Eli basically telling him of Eli's sin is of omission, and his sons is of commission.
- Let me explain, Eli is guilty of not doing what he should have done, whereas Eli's sons are guilty of doing what they should not have done.
- However, notice the prophet speaks only to Eli and not his sons. This may suggest that his sons had already sealed their fate and not Eli.

Charles Spurgeon - "They had gone so far that the Lord had resolved to destroy them, and therefore would not grant them grace to repent. Eli ought long before to have put an end to the wickedness of his sons by far stronger measures. Such a tame rebuke as this, which came so late in the day was of no use whatever. Had he chastened his sons betimes, he might have saved their characters and their lives. Children should be grateful for parents who will not let their sins go unpunished. It would be a dreadful thing for a curse to come upon a family, because the sons and daughters were not restrained from sin. A dear little girl who died believing in Jesus affectionately thanked her mother on her death-bed for all her tender love and then added, 'But, dear mother, I thank you most of all for having conquered my self-will.' Children sometimes think their parents needlessly sever, but when they grow up they will bless them for not indulging them in sin."

(29) Why do you kick at My sacrifice and My offering which I have commanded *in My dwelling place*, and honor your sons more than Me, to make yourselves fat with the best of all the offerings of Israel My people?'

- This verse tells us why Eli was guilty of the sin of omission, namely, it was because he honored his sons more than he honored his Lord.

Matthew 10:37-38 NIV "Anyone who loves his father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves his son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; (38) and anyone who does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me.

(30) Therefore the LORD God of Israel says: 'I said indeed *that* your house and the house of your father would walk before Me forever.' But now the LORD says: 'Far be it from Me; for those who honor Me I will honor, and those who despise Me shall be lightly esteemed. (31)

Behold, the days are coming that 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.

- I must warn you that the remainder of this chapter is going to be a little gnarly in the sense that God will mete out His justice on Eli's house.
- Here he's told that his lineage will be cut off, such that there won't be an old man in his house, and the priestly line won't stay in his house.
- We see a fulfillment of this concerning Eli later in Israel's history when Solomon, the son of King David, is reigning as the King of Israel.

1 Kings 2:27 NKJV So Solomon removed Abiathar from being priest to the LORD, that he might fulfill the word of the LORD which He spoke concerning the house of Eli at Shiloh.

(32) 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. (33) But 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.

- Eli is now told that even the descendants, of his who God doesn't cut off at a young age will still never taste from the cup of God's blessing.
- When Eli is told that they will consume his eyes and grieve his heart, it carries with it the idea that their lives will be hard and painful to see.

(34) Now this *shall be* a sign to you that will come upon your two sons, on Hophni and Phinehas: in one day they shall die, both of them.

- How sad is this? Can you imagine how Eli must've felt when he hears this? Oh the regret he must've had for not disciplining his two sons.
- This is why the book of proverbs is replete with passages about the importance of disciplining children so that we're not party to their death.

Proverbs 19:18 NIV Discipline your son, for in that there is hope; do not be a willing party to his death.

Proverbs 23:13-14 NIV Do not withhold discipline from a child; if you punish him with the rod, he will not die. (14) Punish him with the rod and save his soul from death.

Proverbs 13:24 NIV He who spares the rod hates his son, but he who loves him is careful to discipline him.

Proverbs 29:15 NIV The rod of correction imparts wisdom, but a child left to himself disgraces his mother.

Proverbs 29:17 NIV Discipline your son, and he will give you peace; he will bring delight to your soul.

(35) Then I will raise up for Myself a faithful priest *who* shall do according to what *is* in My heart and in My mind. I will build him a sure house, and he shall walk before My anointed forever.

- This is a prophecy of that would be fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ that would be raised up to become our faithful High Priest forever.

(36) And it shall come to pass that everyone who is left in your house will come *and* bow down to him for a piece of silver and a morsel of bread, and say, "Please, put me in one of the priestly positions, that I may eat a piece of bread." " "

- I can't think of a worse way to end a chapter, but I suppose we're left with no choice with this last part of the judgment that's pronounced.
- The reason I say this is that Eli's descendants would become poor beggars as a result of how Eli's sons would become greedy thieves.