

- Don't forget – next week is the last session for the Spring!
- Class notes and audio anytime at www.htchurch.com/samuel.

The Corrupt Sons Of Eli (1 Samuel 2:12-17)

12 Now the sons of Eli were corrupt; they did not know the Lord. 13 And the priests' custom with the people was that when any man offered a sacrifice, the priest's servant would come with a three-pronged fleshhook in his hand while the meat was boiling. 14 Then he would thrust it into the pan, or kettle, or caldron, or pot; and the priest would take for himself all that the fleshhook brought up. So they did in Shiloh to all the Israelites who came there. 15 Also, before they burned the fat, the priest's servant would come and say to the man who sacrificed, "Give meat for roasting to the priest, for he will not take boiled meat from you, but raw."

16 And if the man said to him, "They should really burn the fat first; then you may take as much as your heart desires," he would then answer him, "No, but you must give it now; and if not, I will take it by force." 17 Therefore the sin of the young men was very great before the Lord, for men abhorred the offering of the Lord.

- Hophni and Phinehas were *sons of Belial* (worthlessness). A powerful contrast: Hannah had said, "*Do not consider your maidservant a daughter of Belial...*"
- Ultimately they were corrupt because they did not know the Lord. Contrast this with the words of Hannah, who said that YHWH is a God of knowledge.
- They were greedy and dishonored the Lord. This caused people to stop making their offerings. The priests were taking portions above that which was permitted.

- They were also taking the fat that was supposed to be burned as a sacrifice to the Lord. People despised God’s offering — and because of that the sin of Hophni and Phinehas was very great. This is a great lesson for anyone in leadership.

Samuel Grows Before The Lord (1 Sam. 2:18-21)

18 But Samuel ministered before the Lord, even as a child, wearing a linen ephod. 19 Moreover his mother used to make him a little robe, and bring it to him year by year when she came up with her husband to offer the yearly sacrifice. 20 And Eli would bless Elkanah and his wife, and say, “The Lord give you descendants from this woman for the loan that was given to the Lord.” Then they would go to their own home. 21 And the Lord visited Hannah, so that she conceived and bore three sons and two daughters. Meanwhile the child Samuel grew before the Lord.

- Ministering to the Lord has two aspects: one outward, one inward. The picture is highlighted by showing us Samuel in an ephod, the garment worn by the priests. Samuel was acting like a priest and he looked like one even though he wasn’t.
- Hannah continued to minister to him as a mother. Elkanah’s house is a picture of a blessed family, unlike Eli’s family, which will come under God’s judgment.

Contrasts (1 Sam. 2:22-26)

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. 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.

- Here are three types of wickedness that religious leaders have fallen into: dishonoring the things of God; greed; and, sexual immorality.
- Their sin was compounded because they were leaders, called to set an example, and priests, people called to holiness and called to show the way of YHWH.
- Eli’s speech isn’t a sharp rebuke. Nor does he take any dramatic action. They did not listen to him anyway. God had already determined their sentence.
- Another obvious contrast with Samuel: he is growing, not only in stature, but in favor with God and men. He is building a reputation.

A Prophet Delivers God's Rebuke (1 Sam. 2:27-30)

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? 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?’ 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.’

- *Man of God* was a common expression for prophets. Such a person uniquely lives before God and belongs to Him. He speaks in the typical formula of messengers.
- God reminds Eli of all the privileges they had because they were priests, including eating of the sacrifices, according to the rule that God set up. Significantly, Eli has honored his sons more than the Lord.
- See how Eli was harsh to Hannah, but when it came to his own sons, he was very ready to give them a pass.
- God also says *you've made yourself fat with the sacrifices*. Perhaps Eli was also involved in that sin. God says *You made yourselves fat*. So, now the Lord issues this dramatic word, *“Those who honor Me I will honor, and those who despise Me shall be lightly esteemed.”* In Hebrew, God says if you honor Him, He will make you heavy, and if you despise Him, He will make you light.
- Eli was heavy, but in the wrong way; he was fat from stolen sacrifices, and misusing things that people had given to God.

The Prophecy Against Eli's House (1 Sam. 2:31-36)

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. 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. 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. 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. 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."'''

- God says he will cut off, or *shatter* their arms. What an amazing picture, as this tale of sin began with sinful arms reaching into a pot.
- The man of God also declares that there will no longer be any old men in Eli's family, ever, which is referenced by him saying *your father's house*. Even the ones who survive what God is about to do will pass their lives in grief. Nor will live to see all the great things which God would do for Israel.
- His two sons will die on the same day, which did come to pass. Eventually, whoever is left from Eli's house will be in such a degraded condition that they will have to go to the priest who is ministering in those days and beg for a position.

The House Of Eli And the Priestly Families

- Aaron was the first chief priest. He married a woman named Elisheva or Elisheba, of the Tribe of Judah. (Exod. 6:23) Her brother was Naashon, chief of Judah. Her father was Amminadab. These men were ancestors of Jesus. It's interesting that the priests were also of the blood of Judah.
 - Aaron had four sons. The first two were Nadab and Abihu, and they were slain for offering strange fire before the Lord. After Nadab and Abihu died, the high priesthood passed to Aaron's third son, Eleazar.
- We don't know how Eli became the High Priest, because he was from the line of Aaron's fourth son, Ithamar. Maybe Eli was filling that ministry because there was no one else qualified at that time.

Prophecy Fulfilled

Solomon would banish the last surviving priest of the line of Eli, Abiathar. Abiathar had supported Solomon's rival for the throne, Adonijah. Solomon was supported by the Prophet Nathan, and a priest named Zadok:

26 And to Abiathar the priest the king said, "Go to Anathoth, to your own fields, for you are deserving of death; but I will not put you to death at this time, because you carried the ark of the Lord God before my father David, and because you were afflicted every time my father was afflicted." 27 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. (1 Kings 2:26-27)

The priesthood then rested in the line of Zadok, a descendant of Eleazar and Phinehas.

The Faithful Priest

This leaves us with an unanswered question... who is the **faithful priest**? Samuel isn't a good choice because he was a Levite. It makes more sense to see this as a prophecy of Zadok. Of course, we have a faithful High Priest, the Lord Jesus Christ, but this is speaking of a priest who ministers before God's anointed.

*All quotes NKJV except as noted. New King James Version®
Copyright © 1982 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved.*



High Priest wearing the ephod