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In Samuel chapters 1-3 Eli does a lot of things that are good but also some things that are questionable. Eli is a priest in the temple of Shiloh. His job is to take care of the Ark of the Covenant. He devoted 40 years as judge of Israel and was the first of priestly descent to regulate the affairs of the people. In my view I would say that Eli is a good person but has room for improvement on his character.

Eli was a kind guy who showed Hannah kindness in her hour of need and paid close attention to Hannah's son Samuel's upbringing and spiritual instruction. Once Samuel was born, Hannah dedicated Samuel's life to the Lord in which Eli ended up caring for Samuel. Eli took care of Samuel and Samuel accompanied him as his servant. Samuel's role is to take a fork and pull off part of the sacrificed animal's meat to deliver to the priest to consume while the flesh is burning. Hannah and her husband, Elkanah, are both blessed by Eli the priest, who praises them for allowing Samuel to work in the temple. He hopes they have another kid to take his place. Hannah and Elkanah have a total of five children. This portion shows what Eli does that is good and helpful to others.

It is safe to say that not everyone is perfect and sometimes we commit sins without realizing it. Eli sins by honoring his sons above God. He was too protective of his boys to chastise them when they were in need. Instead of punishing his children he would rather displease God. "Now the sons of Eli were sons of Belial; they knew not the Lord" (1 Sam. 2:12). His sons often used their authority as priests to steal from people. They would take their portion of meat brought to them to sacrifice before giving a portion to God. Not only this, his sons were also having sexual relations with the ladies who had

congregated before the tabernacle. Eli was aware of the wrongdoing his sons were committing. Eli confronted his sons, “Why do ye such things? ... Nay, my sons; for it is no good report that I hear: ye make the Lord’s people to transgress” (1 Sam. 2:23–24). His sons ignored the pleading words of his father to stop and Eli didn’t do anything else to get them to really stop.

In my view I would say that Eli is still a good character. As parents we often get blinded by what our children do because we want to protect them and sometimes even fear punishing them. I think that Eli knew what they were doing was wrong and he tried to stop them but he just didn’t go to the extent of punishing them. I believe that if someone else was committing these acts and not his sons then he would punish them in a different way which would get them to stop what they were doing. Soon after, a man of God came to Shiloh and gave a harsh admonition from the Lord: “Why kick ye at [treat with scorn] my sacrifice? ... Honourest thy sons above me? ... Them that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed. ... And this shall be a sign unto thee, that shall come upon thy two sons, ... in one day they shall die both of them” (1 Sam. 2:29–34). Eli had received a clear message from the Lord: restrict or remove your sons or they will perish. Even after he received this message he allowed his boys to continue working at the tabernacle. This is an example of how he was blinded by his parenting mode to punish his kids.

After reading this chapter from the Bible I can say that I’ve learned that if we choose to follow the world rather than the Lord, we will eventually be sad and regretful. The tragic circumstances that happened to Eli and his boys might serve as a lesson for today’s parents. It’s an instance of parental neglect on the part of someone who had the

holy and nontransferable obligation of teaching, encouraging, correcting, and disciplining his children in the ways of righteousness. Eli allowed Hophni and Phinehas to commit significant offenses without having to face the consequences. The major duty for raising children has been put on the shoulders of dads and mothers by the Lord. This is something that I know I can be more aware of whenever I become a mother and apply it to my Christian life.