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Eli the priest

In the Old Testament, Eli was viewed as a wise priest who had dedicated his life to serving the Lord and helping guide his people. However, like other humans in this world, there are many times when the Bible presented scenarios where Eli had gone wrong. The purpose of this paper is to focus on and analyze Eli's life and discuss the good and bad things he did during the three Chapters. In addition, I will discuss my personal view of Eli and ways to apply it to my faith and walk with the Lord.

In 1Samuel 1:8, it is clear how Hannah felt about not being able to bear children. In verse, it says that whenever Hannah would go to the temple of the Lord with her husband's other wife, the wife would provoke her until she wept and would not eat. In 1Samuel 1:9-11 it describes how Hannah prayed to the Lord, weeping bitterly, making a vow to serve the Lord and dedicate her child to the Lord if the Lord would only provide her with a son. In response to her powerful prayer to the Lord, 1Samuel 1:13 states that Eli says to Hannah, "How long are you going to stay drunk? Put away your wine" (NIV). In this verse, Eli may be seen as "bad" because instead of asking the woman if anything was troubling her, he had automatically assumed she is a drunkard. As a priest and a man of God, it is his calling to be there to guide those enduring pain and troubles, but instead of doing so, he was quick to make a judgment against Hannah. As the readers continue to read, we see that Hannah corrects Eli, and he responds by telling her to go in peace so that the Lord will grant her what she requested. In a way, we see a positive perspective of Eli through the blessing he granted to Hannah. In continuation to the story, the Bible reveals that Hannah was able to have a son whom she later dedicated to the Lord. In 1 Samuel Chapter 3,

the Bible shows Eli in a positive light by the way he takes Samuel in and teaches him the way of the Lord and how to speak to the Lord.

In addition, another area we see Eli from a negative perspective is in 1Samuel 2:12 -22. In these verses, the Bible discusses all the wicked things Eli's sons had done before the Lord during the offering and when they had been sleeping with the women who served at the entrance to the tent. As the reader continues to read, it is apparent in verse 23 that Eli confronts his sons, saying, "Who do you do such things? I hear from all the people about these wicked deeds of yours" (NIV). Instead of listening to their father, it is made apparent that the sons did not listen to their father's rebuke. In my opinion, I believe that it was good that Eli decided to confront his sons regarding the situation. However, I felt like Eli was being lenient towards his sons. His sons were taking advantage of his kindness and the role their father had among the people, but there were no severe consequences from their father, which led this behavior to worsen over time.

After completing 1Samuel 1:3, I believed Eli was a good man. Eli was a man who dedicated his life to God, but that did not mean he was not allowed to make mistakes. At the end of the day, Eli is human. Despite making a quick judgment against Hannah in the temple and his leniency against his son, he still dedicated his life to serving the Lord and guided Samuel through the process of speaking to the Lord. After reading all three chapters, judgment is one thing I took away from this story. As Christians, it is so easy to see this world in a different light and automatically make a judgment on people based on what we see, but sometimes the things we see can be a misperception of what is actually going on. As Christians we are called on by the Lord to not make judgment against anyone since we too are sinners. In the future, I hope to be able to catch myself and reevaluate my thinking the next time I am quick to make judgment.