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BIB102: Old Testament Lecture

February 6, 2023

Samuel 1-3 Analysis

In *1 Samuel 1-3* tells the story of Hannah, a woman who was barren and unable to have children. She was married to Elkanah and lived in Ramah, where she regularly visited the temple of the Lord to pray for a child. One day, she met the high priest Eli and poured out her heart to him, asking for a son. Eli blessed her, and soon after she conceived and gave birth to a son, Samuel. She dedicated Samuel to the Lord and raised him in the temple under the care of Eli.

In chapter 2, Hannah prays a song of thanksgiving to the Lord, praising Him for answering her prayers and for his grace and power. Finally, in chapter 3 introduces Samuel as a young boy serving the Lord in the temple under Eli's guidance. Samuel received a message from the Lord, calling him by name, and although he was confused at first, Eli helped him understand that it was the Lord speaking to him. This marked the beginning of Samuel's prophecy and leadership in Israel.

On the other hand, in *1 Samuel 1-3*, Eli the high priest is portrayed as a good man who serves the Lord in the temple. He is depicted as being kind and understanding, as seen when he comforts and blesses Hannah when she pours out her heart to him, asking for a child. Eli also helps Samuel understand that it is the Lord speaking to him when he received his first prophetic message. He guides Samuel in his service to the Lord and his role as a prophet. In these chapters, Eli is portrayed as a spiritual leader and mentor who is dedicated to serving the Lord.

On the other hand, in 1 Samuel 1-3, Eli is not depicted as doing anything explicitly bad. However, in later chapters, it is revealed that he has some shortcomings as a leader. For example, in 1 Samuel 2:12-17, it is stated that Eli's sons, Hophni and Phinehas, were wicked men who were not honoring the Lord. They were taking advantage of their positions as priests to take food from the people and they were sleeping with women who served at the entrance of the tent of meeting. Despite these actions being against the Lord's commands, Eli did not discipline or correct his sons, which led to his judgment and downfall.

Additionally, in 1 Samuel 4:17-18, it is revealed that Eli fell backwards out of his chair and died when he heard the news that the Ark of the Covenant had been captured by the Philistines. This event is seen as a judgment against Eli for his failure to discipline his sons and for allowing them to lead the people astray. So, while Eli is depicted as a good and virtuous person in 1 Samuel 1-3, later events reveal some shortcomings in his leadership and suggest that he failed to fulfill some of his responsibilities as a priest and spiritual leader.

From my point of view Eli is a good character. He seems to me a man who, as mentioned before, obeys the voice of God, and wants to share the word of God. He is a humble character who, after all, wants the best for his loved ones. It is true that there may be moments in history that can be considered a failure, but inside him, that is, his heart is pure, and full of good intentions.

Finally, from Eli's example in 1 Samuel 1-3, we can learn the following lessons for our Christian walk today:

First is discipline and accountability. Eli failed to discipline his sons, who were wicked and took advantage of the people. This led to God's judgment on Eli's household. We can learn from Eli's mistake and strive to hold ourselves and others accountable to God's Word. Second is respect for God's Word. Eli was a priest, but he failed to respect God's Word and discipline his sons. We can learn from Eli's mistake and strive to respect God's Word and take it seriously in our daily lives.

Third is the importance of leadership. As a priest, Eli was in a position of leadership, but he failed to lead by example. We can learn from Eli's mistakes and strive to be good leaders, setting a positive example for others to follow. Lastly, consequences of disobedience. Eli's disobedience to God's Word had consequences for him and his household. We can learn from Eli's example and understand that our actions have consequences, and we must be accountable for them.

In conclusion, Eli's story inspires many people to follow the Lord's word and continue with some of the steps he took, but actions are also concluded that are better to avoid, and that are part of a process of evolution of each person.

Bibliography:

“1 Samuel 1:1-17”, “1 Samuel 2:22”. *The Holy Bible: New international Version*. Zondervan, 2011”