

Bri'ana Sebro

Professor David Emmanuel

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Written Assignment #2

1Sam 1-3 introduces the reader to a woman by the name of Hannah, who was married to a man by the name of Elkanah. Hannah struggled with accepting that God had closed her womb, preventing her from having kids. Hannah prayed to God at the Tabernacle, asking for his guidance in delivering a child. Hannah said unto God `` O Lord of the host, if you will indeed look on the affliction of Your maidservant and remember me, and not forget Your maidservant a male child, then I will give him to the Lord all the days of his life, and no razor shall come upon his head” 1Sam 1:11 (NKJV). During this time Eli saw Hannah because her lips were moving but her voice was not heard. Eli immediately assumed that Hannah was drunk. Hannah responded to Eli by not only denying her partaking in drinking at the temple and expressed the pain and the sorrow felt. After hearing this Eli then gives Hannah his blessing and instructs her to “ go in peace” and that the God of Israel will give Hannah what she has asked. God bore Hannah a child and Hannah kept her promise to God and gave the first and only born back to God; by delivering him to the priest at the Tabernacle.

1Sam chapters 1-3 not only introduce Hannah (Samuel's mother) but also introduces the reader to Eli (the priest). Eli had two sons who also were priests by the name of Hophni and Phinehas and both these men were known for not only being priests but also being corrupt. We learned that Eli is a priest during Hannah’s pain and struggle. The chapters give us a glimpse

of how Eli is a priest. By doing his part as a priest and firm believer in God to affirm Hannah's prayer. Yet there are also parenting skills of Eli that we get a glimpse of as well. Eli is shown to be a good father to his sons by giving them whatever they needed or wanted. It is stated that “*Now the sons of Eli were corrupt; [b] they did not know the Lord. And the priest's custom with the people was that when any man offered a sacrifice, the priest's servant would come with a three-pronged flesh hook in his hand while the meat was boiling. Then he would thrust it into the pan, or kettle, or caldron, or pot, and the priest would take for himself all that the flesh hook brought up. So they did in Shiloh to all the Israelites who came there. 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.” And if the man said to him, “They should 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.”* 1 Sam 2:12-16

When reading the text you see that Eli did well by doing the work of God, once he realized that Hannah was not drunk, but was praying. Yet the more I read and dissected the text, the more Eli although there are good traits there are also bad. Eli allowed his sons to do as they please and did not confront them about their actions, like the situation shown in 1 Sam 2: 12-16 shows that Eli has more love and faith in his children than in God. Allowing them to disrespect God's people as well as the place of worship.

When considering whether or not Eli is good or bad, there is a struggle with coming up with a concrete answer. I believe that Eli was a good person but sometimes made bad decisions. His lack of disciplining his sons which in return caused a ripple effect of problems not only for “Eli's house” but also for the people of Israel. Not only did he lack disciplining his sons but also

the lack of properly devoting one's life to God and truly learning to not only be a believer in Christ but to believe through one's actions, as well. Overall reading these 1 Sam (chapters 1-3) reveals that the lesson behind it seems to be understanding that a parent's impact is impactful.

To conclude, I found 1 Sam 1-3 very interesting, to see how devoted Hannah was, all she wanted was a child and to know that she was willing to give him back to God. To me it is amazing, you can see that her devotion to God made her a great mother. You can see that Eli's devotion to his sons rather than God, made him indulge his son's needs and wants; no matter good or bad.

Works Cited

House, Zondervan Publishing, and Zondervan. *Holy Bible*. 2013.

Henry, Matthew. *On the Whole Bible*. 1995.