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Week 2 Written Assignment: 1 Samuel 1 to 3 Eli the High Priest.

1Sam 1-3 is an essential part of the Old Testament and is full of historical and theological significance. It consists of the genealogy of Elkanah son of Jeroham an Ephraimite. The story of Hannah and her firstborn son Samuel and his dedication to God. And the prophecy against Eli's household. Hannah is a barren woman but her husband, Elkanah, loves her. Whenever there is a time for Elkanah to make an offering, he will give portions to his wife Peninnah and to all his children with her, but to Hannah; he gives double. But even with this, Hannah is miserable; she wants a son. So, one day, after year after year of going to the house of the Lord, Hannah prayed and poured her heart to God, with her lips moving but not making any sound. She begged to have a male child, and if God granted it, she vowed to give him to the Lord to serve all the days of his life. The priest Eli saw this, and he thought that she was drunk. So Eli reprimanded her, saying, "How long will you be drunk? Put your wine away from you!" 1Sam 1:14. But Hannah let her lord Eli know that she was only praying to God. Eli reassured her, saying that the God of Israel would grant her prayer. So it came to pass, Hannah gave birth to Samuel, and she prepared him to be presented to Eli and reminded him that she was the one he saw praying to the Lord and Samuel was the

child she prayed for. So they worshipped God and Hannah prayed. Then, after they left, Samuel ministered to the Lord before the priest, Eli.

Eli, the High Priest, was a righteous and wise leader devoted to God. He directs the people in their religious observances and ministers to them. He was kind to Hannah, took Samuel and trained him to be in favor of God and men, chastised his children after hearing bad reports about them, and showed Samuel he respected God's decision after Samuel revealed to him what God had told him in 1Sam 3:11-14. Even at the expense of his family, he told Samuel, "It is the Lord. Let Him do what seems good to Him." 1Sam 3:18.

However, Eli was also a flawed man, as evidenced by the behavior of his sons, who not only would not listen to their father's instructions about offerings but also abused their position as priests and committed acts of violence to take whatever they wanted. Eli's sons Hophni and Phinehas are the priest of the Lord, and they must strictly obey to the Holiness Code: proper worship, eating, sexual activities, social conduct, the priest's conduct, and more because they are priests, but they did not. Even in Lev 3:16 "and the priest shall burn them on the altar as food, an offering made by fire for a sweet aroma; and all the fat is the Lord's". But even the fats they consume. Eli did not rebuke his sons or terminate their authority as priests, even after learning they made the people of Israel sins to one another and God.

Finally, Eli has both good and bad qualities. He is not a tyrant or a power-hungry priest like his sons, and I cannot blame him for his son's transgression because each person walks their path. We all work on our own salvation. And they have Free Will. Eli must have been busy in the matter of the people of Israel, so he do not have time to focus on his children's conducts all the time. On the positive side, he is humble before the Lord because he accepted his family's punishment, trusting that it was best to God. He showed kindness to Hannah, and taught Samuel to listen to the Lord and became the man that God raised to be a faithful priest who does according to God's heart and mind. And in my own experience, after exploring many religions throughout my life, the issue of sexual misconduct, fair justice, land and property ownership have always been present, so I come to a conclusion that I cannot tie my hope and my whole trust to a human like me. I can listen to what they say, do my own research, do my best to decide, stay away from trouble, let other people have their way, and just always go to God because only Him is perfect and only Him alone I can fully trust.

Works Cited

Branson, Robert, et al. *Discovering the Old Testament : Story and Faith*. Kansas City, Mo., Beacon Hill Press Of Kansas City, 2003.