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BIB102 OT

31 January 2023

### Eli's Character: Pros & Cons

There was a significant character in Israel's history named Eli. He is primarily mentioned in 1Sam 1–3 and was working as both a judge and priest. Eli has some admirable traits, but he also has serious weaknesses that ultimately cause him to fail. We can learn about what it means to be a faithful follower of God by looking at his behavior.

One of his more admirable traits would be compassion and empathy. Eli showed these traits to Hannah, a woman who was coping with the shame and sadness that comes with being barren. She screamed out for help, and Eli not only heard her but also encouraged her and blessed her to go in peace, believing that God would hear her prayers (1Sam 1:17-18). These actions demonstrate Eli's pure heart and desire to assist those in need.

He was proved to be right because Hannah did indeed get pregnant and give birth. To show gratitude to the lord, Hannah committed her one and only child, Samuel, to serve God at the temple. Eli then proceeded to raise him as his son (1Sam 1:27-28). Eli was not above taking care of a child and raising him as his own despite being a priest and a judge. This shows his willingness to carry out his duties and his affection for other people.

Eli has some admirable qualities, however, they became overshadowed by his shortcomings as a spiritual leader. Hophni and Phinehas, Eli's two biological sons, were also priests, but they were dishonest and engaged in evil behavior (1Sam 2:12-17). Eli was aware of their transgressions but did nothing to effectively remedy them. Instead, he just gently corrected them, failing to take the initiative and sufficient measures to put an end to their immoral behavior. Although we as humans can't force people to make the right decisions, we can put more effort and use persuasive measures; Eli did not. Eli and his family finally experience God's judgment as a result of this neglect (1Sam 3:11-14).

In my opinion, Eli possessed both positive and negative qualities. Although he was kind-hearted and eager to carry out his duties, he neglected to address the corruption in his family and allowed them to carry on living sinfully. His failure tells us that spiritual leadership demands action and righting wrongdoing, not merely giving out polite reprimands. Christians are responsible for actively combating sin and advancing holiness in their own lives as well as the lives of those around them.

Finally, Eli's life teaches us important lessons that still apply today. We can take inspiration from his desire to take on responsibility and his compassion, but we also need to be aware of the risks involved in turning a blind eye to immorality and corruption. In our own lives and the lives of others, we must work to be obedient and brave leaders who confront sin and advance virtue.