

Lesson 14: 1 Samuel 2:18- 3:21 and 7:2-6

Hannah's Reward, A Prophecy against Eli's Household, The LORD calls Samuel

In our last lesson, we were introduced to Hannah and her husband Elkanah, a Levite. Hannah was barren and prayed to the LORD for a child and to take away the shame associated with being childless. Her prayers were answered and she gave birth to Samuel. Samuel was dedicated to the LORD and delivered to the sanctuary after he was weaned, (probably around the age of 3 or 4). We also read that Eli, who was the High Priest at the sanctuary in Shiloh had two sons who were also priests. They are prideful, selfish and arrogant and had nothing but contempt for the offerings and sacrifices made to the LORD.

1. Read 1 Samuel 2:18-26 and footnotes. Share any information you find in your footnotes.

What kind of life is Samuel living at this point?

How does the text compare the sons of Eli to Samuel?

What is the warning that Eli gives his sons?

Is it possible that Eli was aware of his son's actions, but ignored them until this time?

What is meant by "sins against the LORD" in verse 25?

2. Read 1 Samuel 2:27-36 and any footnotes on these verses. Share the information from your footnotes.

Who is the "man of God" who is speaking to Levi?

Reflection: Why is Eli being held responsible for the behavior of his sons? (Or to what extent is Eli responsible for the behavior of his sons in the sanctuary *and* in the world?)

What is it that the "man of God" is prophesying? Give verses.

Reflection: After recalling our study of *The Book of Judges*, what is the danger to Israel, if a corrupt priesthood continues "forever?"

3. Read 1 Samuel 3:1-6 and footnotes.

Who does Samuel think is calling him?

Where are Eli and Samuel sleeping?

How is Samuel's call like Abraham's call and Moses' call? See Genesis 22:1-2 and Exodus 3:3-5 below.

Genesis 22:1-2 ¹Sometime afterward, God put Abraham to the test and said to him: Abraham! "Here I am!" he replied. ²Then God said: Take your son Isaac, your only one, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah. There offer him up as a burnt offering on one of the heights that I will point out to you.

Exodus 3:3-5 So Moses decided, "I must turn aside to look at this remarkable sight. Why does the bush not burn up?" ⁴When the LORD saw that he had turned aside to look, God called out to him from the bush: Moses! Moses! He answered, "Here I am." ⁵God said: Do not come near! Remove your sandals from your feet, for the place where you stand is holy ground.

4. Read 1 Samuel 3:7-11 and Genesis 1:1-3, and John 1:1-5.

Who was *really* calling Samuel?

Reflection: Some bible scholars say that a manifestation of the LORD, such as this one, is actually the "pre-incarnate Jesus." How do the verses below help to support this? (See 1 Samuel 3:10 and verses from Genesis and John below)

Genesis 1:1-3 In the beginning, when God created the heavens and the earth— ²and the earth was without form or shape, with darkness over the abyss and a mighty wind sweeping over the waters— ³Then God said: Let there be light, and there was light.

John 1:1-5 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was in the beginning with God. ³All things came to be through him, and without him nothing came to be. What came to be ⁴through him was life, and this life was the light of the human race; ⁵the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

5. Read 1 Samuel 3:12-18 and footnotes.

What did the Lord tell Samuel?

What is the meaning of verse 3:14?

Did the prophecies come true? See 1 Samuel 4:10-18.

6. Read 1 Samuel 3:19-21 and 1 Samuel 3:1. What did Samuel bring back to Israel?

7. Read 1 Samuel 7:2-6. What is Samuel's role in these verses? How do these verses remind you of the Book of Judges?