

The Jewish Kingdom - Lesson 4

Samuel's Rise and Eli's Decline

We continue our look at the early life of Samuel. In these events we will see the Samuel grow in body and service and also the terrible state of the priesthood.

4. The Character of Hophni and Phinehas - I Samuel 2:12-18

- vs. 12 - how curious it is that these men, serving as priests of the true God, were themselves unbelievers!
- The priest and their taking of a portion of the sacrifice is not wholly unbiblical in precedent (Deuteronomy 18:3). However, the portion being taken here was not appointed to the priests. Overall, we see the greed and abuse of power of the two men.

5. The Growth of Samuel and his Ministry - I Samuel 2:11,18-21,26

- We see a drastic contrast in the character of Samuel versus that of Hophni and Phinehas.
- We have here a beautiful picture of a mother's care in Hannah's care of her son.
- Linen was common for priestly attire (see Aaron's garment in Exodus 28)
- vs. 26 echoes Luke 2:52

6. Eli's Rebuke of His Sons - I Samuel 2:22-25

- Why is Eli just now finding out about this and doing something about it?
- The last part of vs. 25 shows us God's intervention in Hophni and Phinehas' doom. Their sin would require greater judgment than just a rebuke. Why? Probably because they were priests and held to a much higher standard and that they abused the holy office they were entrusted with.

7. The Rejection of Eli's House - I Samuel 2:27-36

- I love that a nameless man of God delivers this message. God's not into names, just faithful service.
- vs. 29 - note that Eli is guilty in the sin of his sons by enabling it.
- vs. 35 - many scholars believe this does not refer to Samuel, but to Zadok who replaced Abiathar after he sided with Adonijah (I Kings 1:7, 2:26-27)