

## ENCORE | 1 Sam. 1:1-2:11: Seeking & Obeying the Lord

- 1) What was Hannah's problem (v. 1:5-6)?
- 2) Why did she have this problem?
- 3) Was it within her power to fix it?
- 4) What can we learn from this?
- 5) What did Hannah do (v. 1:10)?
- 6) Do you see any differences between Hannah's vow (1:11) and Jephthah's (Judges 11:30-31). If so, what are these differences?
- 7) Read Matthew 5:33-37 and James 5:12. Should Christians today make oaths or vows to God?
- 8) Some would say Hannah's desire for children had become an idol; do you agree? Why or why not?

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## Looking Ahead | 1 Sam. 2:12-36: How to Raise Corrupt Children

**Monday (v. 12)** – “Now the sons of Eli were corrupt; they did not know the Lord.” So here we have two priests of the Lord who are actually unbelievers. Maybe that is not terribly shocking to us today, we have heard so many stories or maybe you even know someone who wears the name “Christian” or “priest” who clearly does not know the Lord. Also our study of the Judges has revealed some deeply rooted spiritual problems in the Children of Israel at this time. However think about this for a moment: these men were representing God on earth, they were in line to be high-priest, they would minister the sacrifices, they were to judge the people. They were ones who were to teach the people to know and follow the Lord but they didn't even know Him themselves.

*Daily Bible Reading: Ps. 64, 70; Jn. 6:1-21*

**Tuesday (v. 13-17)** – God had decreed that His priests were to be provided for by the offerings of the people (see Leviticus 2:3, 10; 3:16-17; 7:5-9). The custom was for the priest to take his share by putting a big fork into the meat while it was boiling (after it had cooked for a while). This would give the priest plenty for his basic needs. Eli's sons wanted to stick their fork into the meat while it was raw, taking a larger chunk (or even all of it). They wanted more meat, they wanted it roasted instead of boiled and they even resorted to threats to get what they wanted. As a result of their sinful behavior people hated the offering.

*Daily Bible Reading: 2 Sam. 21-22; Ps. 18; Jn. 6:22-40*

**Wednesday (v. 18-21)** – Verse 18 starts out with a “But.” Samuel is held up in contrast to Eli's two corrupt sons. “But Samuel ministered before the Lord, even as a child.” We have Eli's two, older, corrupt sons who are causing people to hate even the offering and we have Samuel, a young child, ministering before the Lord. We can certainly learn that age is not necessarily a limiting factor in serving the Lord. I am not certain that is the main message of this passage. Notice Hannah & Elkanah are back on the scene. Notice also that we are reminded at this point that Hannah “lent” Samuel to the Lord; something very important to remember as we consider the contrast presented in this chapter.

*Daily Bible Reading: 2 Sam. 23-24; Jn. 6:41-71*

**Thursday (v. 22-26)** – We might (sadly) call these verses “too little, too late.” Verse 22 says Eli was very old and that he “heard” all about the behavior of his sons. Do you think he was actually oblivious about the character until this moment? This was likely a last-ditch effort to rebuke his sons or just his frustration with them coming out. Notice how Phinehas and Hophni (Eli's sons) were totally self-centered; they struggled with many of the same kind of sins that Samson struggled with (women, gluttony etc.). It is interesting to note that this is around the same time when Samson was alive they might have even known him.

*Daily Bible Reading: Ps. 4-6; Jn. 7:1-27*

**Friday (v. 27-29)** – Notice first that God didn't speak to Eli; He sent a messenger. God (through this messenger) gives Eli a history lesson by posing several questions to him. God had so blessed Eli and his family; He had revealed Himself to them, He had chosen them to be His priests (such a privilege), He had provided everything they would need, yet it wasn't enough for Eli. Eli wanted more. Where did Phinehas and Hophni learn to serve themselves? Notice that God didn't rebuke Eli for the sins of his sons He rebuked Eli for his own sins; “why do you kick at My sacrifice?” Eli honored his sons more than God (who had given him so much) and lived a life of ease. The man chosen to be God's servant instead chose to serve himself.

*Daily Bible Reading: Ps. 7-8; Jn. 7:28-53*

**Saturday (v. 30-36)** – This “man of God” who spoke to Eli pronounced a very stern assessment of Eli's heart “those who despise Me shall be lightly esteemed (v.30)” Eli's main problem was not laziness or gluttony or even a failure to be a good dad; his failure was in that he did not put God first in his life “those who honor Me I will honor” Eli failed as a parent because he failed at being a God-follower and his sons simply followed his example. Today would be a good day to ask yourself; who (or what) has first place in your life?

*Daily Bible Reading: Ps. 9-11; Jn. 8:1-27*

**Sunday** – *Daily Bible Reading: Ps. 12-14; Jn. 8:28-59*