

Oct. 4, 2020

Speaker: Eric Naus **Series:** Kingdom Come – The book of 1 Samuel

Passage: 1 Samuel 2:12-36

Read the passage aloud as a group, and then work through the following discussion questions.

1. The author of 1 Samuel intends for us to compare and contrast Eli's wicked sons with the admirable character of the boy Samuel. Notice all the brief descriptions of Samuel (see vs. 11, 18, 21b, and vs. 26) in comparison with the description of Eli's sons and their actions in vv. 12-17. As we compare the two, what lessons do we learn about the importance of godly character? What do we learn about religious hypocrisy, and how does this passage warn us against it?
2. Two families are contrasted in vv. 18-25. In the one case, we see Samuel's family, who modeled faithful devotion to God and active care for their son. They honored God above Samuel, as evidenced by their faithfulness to Hannah's vow over the long haul. By contrast, Eli was a passive father who honored his sons above God (see vs. 29) and refused to stop their wicked activities. He coddled them, spoiled them, and endorsed their behavior by failing to stop it. What principles of parenting and family life can we pick up as we compare these two families and their relationship with their kids?
3. In verses 27-36, a prophet delivers a devastating word of judgment from the Lord to the house of Eli. His priestly line would be cut off, and God would raise up a new and faithful priest who would do God's will forever (see vs. 35). This promise finds some degree of fulfillment in Samuel, who serves God faithfully over the course of his life. However, Samuel's sons fail to walk rightly before God (see 1 Sam. 8:3). The promise finds deeper fulfillment in King Solomon's day, when he replaced Eli's priestly line with the line of Zadok (see 1 Kings 2:35). Yet, the priesthood stemming from Zadok's line would eventually fail to lead the people rightly, and it was the priestly class that would eventually put the Messiah to death when he came (see Mark 14:1). It was not until the coming of Jesus Christ that the prophecy of 1 Samuel 2:35 would find ultimate fulfillment. Jesus is the only truly faithful priest who lived faithfully before God, offered up his own life as a perfect sacrifice, and then rose to life, ascended into heaven, and now serves at the Father's side as our Great High Priest. Read Hebrews 4:14-16. How does Jesus meet and exceed all expectations for what a true leader should be? How is Jesus able to accept and forgive us with all our ongoing failures and weaknesses, and make us into the faithful people that God requires?