

**Lecture 16- The Rise and Fall of King Saul (I)**

*I prayed for this child, and the LORD has granted me what I asked of him. So now I give him to the LORD. For his whole life he will be given over to the LORD.” And he worshiped the LORD there.  
1 Sam 1:27-28*

**Key Terms**

King Saul, God’s rules, God’s man, God’s prophet

**Lecture Objectives**

- Outline the historical setting of the opening of 1 Samuel.
- Describe the relationship between Eli and his sons and the historical setting, especially noting its theological significance.
- Consider some parallels between the opening of 1 Samuel and our own day.

**Preliminary Questions**

- 1 Samuel 3:7 says of Eli’s sons, “They did not all recognize the Lord.” In what ways can such a statement be said of leaders in our culture? Recognizing that it was said of Eli and his sons, who were religious leaders, in what ways can it be said of ourselves insofar as we are God’s people in the world and, in that sense, leaders?

Review of the kings (See appendix A)

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Introduction to the books of Samuel

**I. Before the Monarchy: God Rules and Rescues His People (1 Sam 1-7)****A. God’s man: Samuel and Eli at Shiloh (1 Sam 1-3)****1. Samuel’s birth and Hannah’s song (1:1-2:10)****a. Eli****b. Birth of God’s new man**

- 1) Some say a reworked birth narrative of Saul (1:17, 20, 27, 28)
- 2) Biblical etymologies often work on word plays.
- 3) Samuel = sounds like “heart of God” “he who is from God” “name of God”
- 4) There is sufficient reason to believe it is Samuel’s birth narrative.

**c. Possible courses of action for Hannah****d. Hannah’s vow – “let’s make a deal,” or submitting herself to a prompting from God****e. Hannah’s prayer - anticipates Mary’s Magnificat**

- 1) 2:1 jubilation over God’s deliverance. Horn = symbol of strength
- 2) 2:2 extol the Lord’s uniqueness and holiness
- 3) 2:3 condemns proud boasting
- 4) 2:4-8 God reverses human fortunes
- 5) 2:9-10 God’s faithful care for his people
- 6) 2:10 God’s king

Turn to Lk. 1:46-55. Compare Mary's prayer with Hannah's. Is Hannah's prayer predicting Christ?

2. Eli and his sons (2:12f) "They did not all recognize the Lord." (cp 3:7)
  - a. Eli growing dim sighted physically and spiritually.
  - b. If God provides an opportunity to repent, take it!
  - c. 2:29 "honor" = "to give weight to"
  - d. Eli's house is rejected over the issue of honor.

Why is 1 Sam. 2:29-30 a key passage to the book?

What is the relationship between prophets, seers and priests? Prophets and seers are roughly equivalent. Priests and kings were subject to a prophet's rebuke. Loss of position of leadership.

3. Establishment of Samuel as a prophet (3-4:1)
  - a. What purpose does this story serve in the larger picture?
    - 1) Transition of power – at the beginning of the chapter, Eli is the authority, but in the end Eli listens to Samuel
  - b. Eli's response to the word of God
  - c. 4:13 legally blind, but watching