

## STUDIES IN SAMUEL

### CHAPTER 1 IN REVIEW

1. What was Samuel's father's name? \_\_\_\_\_
2. What was Samuel's mother's name? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Where was Samuel's home? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Where was the Ark in Samuel's day? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Who was the high priest? \_\_\_\_\_
6. What were his sons' names? \_\_\_\_\_
7. Of what tribe was Samuel a member? \_\_\_\_\_
8. In which tribe's land was Samuel's home? \_\_\_\_\_
9. Who was the other wife of Samuel's father? \_\_\_\_\_
10. Which wife did Samuel's father love more? \_\_\_\_\_

### A DIGEST OF CHAPTER 2

Vv. 1-11 *Hannah's song.* This grand passage in the Old Testament finds a parallel best in Mary's "Magnificat" in Luke 1:46-55. Both women must have spoken as they were moved by the Spirit of God, and both were expressing their heartfelt thanks for God's blessings in their lives.

Vv. 12-17 *Eli's sinful sons.* A strange contrast is seen between the wicked ways of Eli's sons and the pious ways of Elkanah's household. Perhaps the contrast is greater because more is expected of religious leaders such as the high priests of Israel.

It is nonetheless true that piety can be displayed in the lives of any of God's people. A man does not have to be born into the household of a priest in order to live a godly life. Any man who is willing to trust God and keep his commandments can become a leader in God's kingdom.

Vv. 18-26 *Samuel's service in the tabernacle.* The child Samuel was able to perform many needful tasks around the house of God. Under Eli's direc-

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tions he grew into manhood through years of toil at menial tasks.

Vv. 27-35 *Prophecy against Eli's wicked sons.* An unnamed man of God brought God's message of condemnation against the sinful sons of the old high priest.

Eli had learned of the impious ways of his boys, but his rebukes were not strong enough. Parental indulgences have been the undoing of many a son and daughter of doting mothers and fathers.

### LESSONS FOR LEARNING

1. *Man cannot outgive God.* Hannah might have been tempted to go back on her promise to give Samuel to God, but she did not do it. She faithfully performed her vow and brought the child to God. As a result, ". . . the Lord visited Hannah, so that she conceived, and bare three sons and two daughters" (I Samuel 2: 21). She who had no child at first was blessed greatly. She gave her first son back to God. God gave her additional sons and daughters as extra blessings.
2. *Unchastened sons are a heaviness of heart to mothers and fathers.* It may have been hard for Eli to correct his sons, but he would have been infinitely better off in the long run to have punished them more severely. His halfhearted rebukes made it possible for them to continue in their sinful ways and eventually led to Eli's being rejected as high priest.

*Hannah's song.* 2:1-11

And Hannah prayed, and said,

My heart rejoiceth in the Lord,

mine horn is exalted in the Lord;

my mouth is enlarged over mine enemies:

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- because I rejoice in thy salvation.
- 2 *There is* none holy as the Lord:  
for *there is* none besides thee:  
neither *is there* any rock like our God
- 3 Talk no more so exceeding proudly;  
let *not* arrogancy come out of your mouth:  
for the Lord *is* a God of knowledge,  
and by him actions are weighed.
- 4 The bows of the mighty men *are* broken,  
and they that stumbled are girded with strength.
- 5 *They that were full* have hired out themselves for  
bread;  
and *they that were hungry* ceased:  
so that the barren hath borne seven;  
and she that hath many children is waxed feeble.
- 6 The Lord killeth, and maketh alive:  
he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up.
- 7 The Lord maketh poor, and maketh rich:  
he bringeth low, and lifeth up.
- 8 He raiseth up the poor out of the dust,  
*and* lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill,  
to set *them* among princes,  
and to make them inherit the throne of glory:  
for the pillars of the earth *are* the Lord's,  
and he hath set the world upon them.
- 9 He will keep the feet of his saints,  
and the wicked shall be silent in darkness;  
for by strength shall no man prevail.
- 10 The adversaries of the Lord shall be broken to pieces;  
out of heaven shall he thunder upon them:  
the Lord shall judge the ends of the earth;  
and he shall give strength unto his king,  
and exalt the horn of his anointed.
- 11 And Elkanah went to Ramah to his house. And the  
child did minister unto the Lord before Eli the priest.

1. *What was Hannah's "horn"?* 2:1

Perhaps the figure is taken from the life of animals. An animal with a large horn is thought to be powerful. It is also a mark of full development and beauty. Deer, for example, are prized for their antlers. Other animals use their horns as they fight with others. If this is the meaning Hannah had in mind, she is saying that God has given her a mark of strength and excellence.

2. *Why did Hannah refer to God as a "rock"?* 2:2

Moses spoke of the Lord as the "Rock of his salvation" (Deuteronomy 32:15b). Isaiah chided Israel saying that they had ". . . forgotten the God of thy salvation, and hast not been mindful of the rock of thy strength" (17:10). The steadfastness of God is like a rock to a soul tossed to and fro in the stormy seas of life. This conception of God has been constant among those who have feared Him in all ages. Moses also challenged the heathen nations saying, "Where are their gods, their rock in whom they trusted" (Deuteronomy 32:37). The Israelites knew that the Lord was not just one god among many. He was the one true and living God. Hannah thus could say: ". . . neither is there any rock like our God" (v. 2b). There was no god like Jehovah, the God of Israel. There was no anchor for the soul like the Lord.

3. *Whom was Hannah warning against arrogance?* 2:3

No doubt Hannah was remembering Peninnah's arrogant speeches against her personally, but her warning is always meaningful and timely for God's people. Too much proud talk is found among the servants of God as they take credit for what is achieved in Christian work. Too much arrogance is found among those whom God has blessed abundantly. All should remember that they will eventually be judged by God, and God knows their weaknesses.

4. *What is the meaning of the "bows of the mighty men being broken"? 2:4*

Hannah is simply suggesting that the first are now last. The last are therefore first. Underneath all this is her great joy over being blessed of God. Before she had been reviled by Peninnah because she had no children. Peninnah thought that she was one of the "mighty men." Hannah would consider herself as being among them that "stumbled." Now Hannah was girded with strength.

5. *Did Hannah have seven children? 2:5*

Personal references seem to abound through this poem of thanksgiving, but we have little evidence of Hannah's having seven children. In verse twenty-one of this chapter, we learn that Hannah did have three sons and two daughters. This would make a total of five children and lead us to believe that she uses the number seven in this reference as an indication that she had received an abundant blessing. The number seven is sometimes used to indicate fullness or completeness. What Hannah says may not only be applied to her own abundant blessing, but it is always true for all those who fully trust the Lord.

6. *What powers did Hannah attribute to God? 2:6-10*

Hannah attributed all power to God. She regarded the Lord as the one who gave life in the first place. She also believed that life ended at His command. Life and death are in His hands. In addition, by His providences man is made poor or rich. He is exalted or abased. Those of low estate are often made to sit in high places. Even the very foundations of the earth were laid by God. The paths of God's saints are directed by God Himself, and no man prevails by his own strength alone. Eventually the voice of the wicked will be silenced, and the Lord's adversaries will be destroyed. Once again Hannah returns to the figure of the "horn" as she speaks of the way in which God will give strength to His chosen leaders. She attributed the following traits to God:

1. The power over life and death
2. The control of wealth
3. Providences that either bring fame or disgrace
4. The rendering of fair judgments on rich and poor alike
5. The direction of the work of His people
6. The eventual judgment of the wicked
7. The creation of the physical universe

7. *In what way did Samuel "minister" before Eli? 2:11*

A lad like Samuel could perform many menial tasks about the Tabernacle. The priests and their Levites had their assigned duties, but others might also be of service. Mention is made in this same chapter of women who "assembled at the door of the Tabernacle" (v. 22; cf. Exodus 38:8). A part of the ministry might also have been in worship; such as a part of the way God's people "minister unto the Lord." Since mention is made of the "lamp of God" (3:3), we are left to wonder if this might not have been a part of Samuel's service. He may have tended this lamp, lighting it when it was to be lit; and extinguishing it when it was to be put out.

2. The Childhood of Samuel, 2:12—3:21.

*Eli's sinful sons. 2:12-17*

12 Now the sons of Eli were sons of Belial; they knew not the Lord.

13 And the priests' custom with the people *was, that*, when any man offered sacrifice, the priest's servant came, while the flesh was in seething, with a fleshhook of three teeth in his hand;

14 And he stuck *it* into the pan, or kettle, or caldron, or pot; all that the fleshhook brought up the priest took for himself. So they did in Shiloh unto all the Israelites that came thither.

15 Also before they burnt the fat, the priest's servant came, and said to the man that sacrificed, Give flesh to

roast for the priest; for he will not have sodden flesh of thee, but raw.

16 And *if* any man said unto him, Let them not fail to burn the fat presently, and *then* take *as much* as thy soul desireth; then he would answer him, *Nay*; but thou shalt give *it me* now: and if not, I will take *it* by force.

17 Wherefore the sin of the young men was very great before the Lord: for men abhorred the offering of the Lord.

8. *What is the meaning of the term "sons of Belial?"*  
2:12

They were "base fellows," meaning "reckless, worthless, wicked." The term used is the masculine equivalent of the feminine form used in 1:16, where Hannah besought Eli not to count her as a wicked woman. The word "Belial" may be used as a proper name; but whatever its origin, it denotes extreme depravity. The wickedness of these men was not so much in what they stole from God, but in the leading of the people to be contemptuous of the sacrifices.

9. *Why did the sons of Eli not know the Lord? 2:12 b*

No doubt Eli's sons were well versed in the Pentateuch. Probably they could recite the Ten Commandments from memory. In order to be priests they were versed in the rituals of the sacrifices. They knew that God had given the Law to His people and must have been familiar with the past history of Israel. Their knowledge of God was "head knowledge." It was not "heart" knowledge. They did not personally follow the commandments of the Lord and thus caused many other people to go astray. They are like the people of Paul's day of whom he said "Even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind" (Romans 1:28).

10. *What was "a fleshhook of three teeth"?* 2:13

No mention is made of the number of teeth in the fleshhooks when they were first fashioned (Exodus 38:3).

The mention of three teeth in this setting leaves us to wonder if a part of the sin of Eli's sons was greediness. Certainly a fleshhook with three teeth would enable them to secure more meat than a fleshhook with only one prong. We learn that it was customary for them to strike it into the pan, kettle, caldron, or pot. All that the fleshhook brought up was for the priest. We know that the men were of base appetites, for they would not receive the sacrificial meat in the form prescribed by law. They wanted their meat to be given to them before it was roasted on the altar. They wanted raw meat, perhaps to be prepared in a way that would better satisfy their appetites.

11. *Why did all the Israelites come to Shiloh? 2:14*

Shiloh was the location of the Tabernacle. It had been there since the days of Joshua. In keeping with the commandments of God found in Deuteronomy 12, the people brought their sacrifices to this central location. Here is historical evidence of a central sanctuary. Radical critics deny that religion would be developed enough at this early age for people to have one place of worship. It is not because of the lack of evidence that the radical critics make this charge, but it is because of their own religious and philosophical presuppositions. They believe that religion like everything else must have evolved. They think that man began as a nature worshiper and evolved to a worshiper of demons. From demons he went to the place where he did believe in God, but he was a polytheist. To find Israel with one central sanctuary as early as 1,000 B.C. throws their schedule of evolutionary development of religion out of order. Yet we find good solid historical evidence of the fact that all Israel did come to this one central location to worship.

12. *What is wrong with wanting flesh to roast? 2:15*

Eli's sons were so contemptuous of the sacrifices of God that they demanded raw flesh of those who sacrificed.

Evidently they wanted to take this and prepare it in a more tasteful way than would be possible if they followed the directions given to the people in Leviticus 1-6. To demand this raw flesh from the people was to cause them to despise God's ordinances.

13. *Why did some people refuse? 2:16*

Many Israelites must have been willing to stand up for what they knew was right. All had not gone astray. In the times of Judges there were still many who had not given up their faith in the ordinances of God. It was for the sake of these people that changes had to be made in Israel's priesthood. If such conditions were allowed to prevail over a long period of time, hardly any could be found to maintain the faith.

14. *What was the real gravity of the sins of the young men? 2:17*

Hophni and Phinehas were corrupt in their own lives. This is bad enough. They also refused to reason with the worshipers who came to the tabernacle. The gravity of their sin is seen in the fact that they were threatening to inflict corporal punishment upon the people (2-16 b). They threatened to take some of the sacrificial meat by force. When men stoop to force in situations like this, they admit that their reasoning is wrong. The greatest sin lay in the fact that they caused other people to abhor the offering of the Lord. It is a tragedy that man comes to the place where he rejects God's commandments and loathes God's ordinances.

*Samuel's service in the Tabernacle. 2:18-26*

18 But Samuel ministered before the Lord, *being* a child, girded with a linen ephod.

19 Moreover his mother made him a little coat, and brought *it* to him from year to year, when she came up with her husband to offer the yearly sacrifice.

20 And Eli blessed Elkanah and his wife, and said, The

Lord gave thee seed of this woman for the loan which is lent to the Lord. And they went unto their own home.

21 And the Lord visited Hannah, so that she conceived, and bare three sons and two daughters. And the child Samuel grew before the Lord.

22 Now Eli was very old, and heard all that his sons did unto all Israel; and how they lay with the women that assembled *at* the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.

23 And he said unto them, Why do ye such things? for I hear of your evil dealings by all this people.

24 Nay, my sons; for *it is* no good report that I hear: ye make the Lord's people to transgress.

25 If one man sin against another, the judge shall judge him: but if a man sin against the Lord, who shall entreat for him? Notwithstanding they hearkened not unto the voice of their father, because the Lord would slay them.

26 And the child Samuel grew on, and was in favor both with the Lord, and also with men.

15. *What is a linen ephod?* 2:18

A welcome change comes in the narrative as we read about the child Samuel ministering before the Lord. Earlier we read that he ministered "unto the Lord" (2:11b). His ministry was "before Eli the priest" (2:11b). Here we read that he ministered "before the Lord." All of this would indicate that his real service was unto God and not unto men. At the same time he was under the direction of Eli the priest. Samuel must have ministered conscientiously as one who would minister "before the Lord." The linen ephod which he wore was the distinctive garment worn by the priests. It was a part of the apparel as commanded by God through Moses for Aaron, the first priest and his sons (Exodus 28:4). The ephod was to be made of gold, of blue, of purple, of scarlet, and of fine twined linen with cunning work. It was joined with two shoulder pieces at the edges of it. A band went around

it. On the shoulders of the garment were two onyx stones on which were engraved the names of the children of Israel. The names of six tribes were on one stone and the other six names on the other stone. This was the garment that the high priest was to wear (Exodus 28:6, 12). Eli probably wore this distinctive garment, but the other priests were given ephods to wear. These ephods were something similar to the garments which we call jumpers today. Samuel was given this distinctive garment to wear. It was the sign of the fact that he was ministering as a priest around the Tabernacle.

16. *What kind of a coat did Hannah make for Samuel?*  
2:18

The priests were also commanded to wear a coat. Moses was told to make coats for Aaron and his sons as well as girdles to bind them at the waist. In addition, they wore bonnets "for glory and for beauty" (Exodus 28:40). Since it is not said that Hannah made the ephod for Samuel, we presume that the coat she made was more of a token of her abiding love for him than an effort to equip him in the full regalia of a priest. Her motherly devotion is seen in the fact that she made him a new one each year. As he grew in stature, it would be necessary for him to have a new garment.

17. *What blessing did Eli pronounce upon Elkanah and Hannah?* 2:20

Eli pronounced a blessing upon this devoted couple as they came to the Tabernacle. He prayed that the Lord would give them additional children in exchange for Samuel whom they had "lent to the Lord" (1:28). God visited Hannah as we read in the next verse. She conceived and had three sons and two daughters (2:21).

18. *In what way did Samuel grow?* 2:21

In a later verse (v. 26) we read that "Samuel grew on and was in favor both with the Lord and also with men." This is suggestive in the way in which John the Baptist

grew. Of him we read "the child grew and waxed strong in spirit" (Luke 1:80). Of Jesus it was said "Jesus increased in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man" (Luke 2:52).

19. *Who were the women that assembled at the door of the Tabernacle?* 2:22

When Moses built the Tabernacle, he made the laver of brass out of the "looking glasses of the women which assembled at the door of the Tabernacle of the congregation" (Exodus 38:8).

Jephthah may have devoted his daughter to perpetual service at the Tabernacle (Judges 11:29-40). If he did not actually sacrifice her on an altar as a burnt offering, he may have devoted her to service as long as she lived. Such a dedication to holy service would be reason for the daughters of Israel to go up yearly to celebrate the daughter of Jephthah in a feast for four days in a year (Judges 11:40). When Jesus was born, Hannah the prophetess who gave her whole life to service around the Temple, came up to see the Messiah (Luke 2:36-38). Evidently there were many of these women in the days of Eli. They probably did what they could in service around the Tabernacle. At least they spent their time in prayer and worship. The baseness of the sons of Eli is brought out in the mention of the fact that they committed adultery with these women.

20. *Did Eli rebuke his sons?* 2:23, 24

Eli rebuked his sons, but his rebuke was very weak. When the man of God came to him, he said that Eli honored his sons above God (2:29). When God told Samuel that Eli was to be punished, God said of Eli and his sons that "he restrained them not" (3:13).

21. *What did Eli mean by a "sign against the Lord"?* 2:25

Eli is saying that when one man steals from another there is an earthly judge who renders the verdict. When our transgressions are against our fellowmen, we might

expect that our fellowmen would judge us. If our transgression is against God, God has already pronounced judgment. It is inexcusable for us to sin against the Lord. It would not do for man to plead the case for another man before the Lord. Only the Lord Jesus Christ is our advocate (I John 2:1). Those living under the Old Testament dispensation did not have the hope of the Christian for an advocate before God. They could expect only a certain fearful judgment.

22. *Did God want to slay Eli's sons? 2:25b*

God is not willing that any should perish (II Peter 3:9). He has laid down certain rules and laws of life. For example, it is written, "correction is grievous unto them that forsaketh the way and he that hateth reproof shall die" (Proverbs 15:10). Since Eli's sons would not listen to the correction of their father, they were doomed to destruction. God would slay them, for they could not be allowed to continue in their rebellion.

*Prophecy against Eli's wicked sons. 2:27-35*

27 And there came a man of God unto Eli, and said unto him, Thus saith the Lord, Did I plainly appear unto the house of thy father, when they were in Egypt in Pharaoh's house?

28 And did I choose him out of all the tribes of Israel *to be* my priest, to offer upon mine altar, to burn incense, to wear an ephod before me? and did I give unto the house of thy father all the offerings made by fire of the children of Israel?

29 Wherefore kick ye at my sacrifice and at mine offering, which I have commanded *in my* habitation; and honorest thy sons above me, to make yourselves fat with the chiefest of all the offerings of Israel my people?

30 Wherefore the Lord God of Israel saith, I said indeed *that* thy house, and the house of thy father, should walk before me for ever: but now the Lord saith, Be it far from

me; for them that honor me I will honor, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed.

31 Behold, the days come, that I will cut off thine arm, and the arm of thy father's house, that there shall not be an old man in thine house.

32 And thou shalt see an enemy *in my* habitation, in all *the wealth* which God shall give Israel: and there shall not be an old man in thine house for ever.

33 And the man of thine, *whom* I shall not cut off from mine altar, *shall be* to consume thine eyes, and to grieve thine heart: and all the increase of thine house shall die in the flower of their age.

34 And this *shall be* a sign unto thee, that shall come upon thy two sons, on Hophni and Phinehas; in one day they shall die both of them.

35 And I will raise me up a faithful priest, *that* shall do according to *that* which *is* in mine heart and in my mind: and I will build him a sure house; and he shall walk before mine anointed for ever.

36 And it shall come to pass, *that* every one that is left in thine house shall come *and* crouch to him for a piece of silver and a morsel of bread, and shall say, Put me, I pray thee, into one of the priests' offices, that I may eat a piece of bread.

### 23. *Who was the man of God? 2:27*

Sometimes we labor under the false apprehension that only the men mentioned in the Scriptures are active in the service of God. In every age God has had a great host of people who do His bidding. Some of them are important enough to be mentioned by name; others are anonymous characters that move across the pages of the Scripture and fulfill their ministry without much recognition. Of such nature was this "man of God" who came to Eli and pronounced God's judgment upon Eli's house. He was an unnamed prophet, a servant of God.

24. *Was Eli's father in Egypt? 2:27b*

Eli's father would have lived in the age of the judges. The period of Judges itself covers some three hundred years, and prior to this era was the time of Joshua. Moses preceded Joshua and led the people out of Egypt. The use of the word *father* in this verse must indicate that it refers to an ancestor. Levi was the son of Jacob, the founder of the tribe of which Eli was a member. God spoke to the Levites as they were in bondage in Egypt. He led these predecessors of Eli out of Egypt.

25. *Who was chosen to be priest in Israel? 2:28*

God chose the tribe of Levi to be the priestly tribe. He further selected his priests to be the descendants of Aaron. Aaron himself was the first high priest. Aaron had four sons—Nadab, Abihu, Ithamar, and Eleazar. Two of the sons—Nadab and Abihu—were killed when they offered strange fire before the Lord (Leviticus 10). All the priests were thus descended from Ithamar and Eleazar, the sons of Aaron. These were the men whom God chose to be his priests. Eli was out of this priestly family.

26. *How did Eli kick at God's sacrifices? 2:29*

Eli himself may not have rejected God's sacrifices. We have no record of his making a complaint or "kicking" about what was provided for him. His sons were the ones who abhorred the offerings of the Lord. Since Eli was the high priest, he was responsible for the conduct of all the priests. He was especially responsible for the conduct of his own sons, and he is blamed for what was going on in the priesthood.

27. *What judgment was passed upon the house of Eli? 2:30-33*

God did not mean that he would literally cut off Eli's arms (v. 31), but he meant that the line of Eli would not expand. This would be the end of Eli's house. Those who were not actually to die in the flower of their youth would be removed from the priesthood and caused to beg

as poor people in the street. God had ordained that his priests would be supported through the tithes of the Israelites; but if the priests did not appreciate what He had done for them, He would put them out of their offices. They would then be wishing to have what they had rejected and would say "put me I pray thee in one of the priest's offices that I may eat a piece of bread" (2:36).

28. *What sign did God give Eli that he would be removed from the priesthood? 2:34*

God told Eli that both his sons would die in the same day. This explains partly why Eli took so seriously the announcement of the loss of the Ark and the death of his two sons. He knew that this was the end of his house. God had said that these things would come to pass and gave him a token of their being fulfilled. When the thing transpired, Eli knew that God was fulfilling His word.

29. *Who was the faithful priest? 2:35*

Some people believe that this was Samuel, but it is taken to be a reference to the other line of the priesthood. When Solomon put down the attempted usurpation of Adonijah, he took Zadok out of the priest's office and put Abiathar in his office (I Kings 2:35). Ezekiel makes reference to this change in the priesthood in his book (Ezekiel 44:15) and there is also a reference to it in I Chronicles 29:22. Samuel served as priest in the transition period. David had two priests (II Samuel 8:17; II Samuel 20:23-26) while the change was being made; but the word of God was fulfilled eventually nonetheless.

## CHAPTER 2 IN REVIEW

1. How many children did Hannah bear? \_\_\_\_\_
2. What figure did she use to describe God? \_\_\_\_\_
3. What instrument of war did she say was broken? \_\_\_\_\_
4. What was it that belonged to her and was exalted? \_\_\_\_\_

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5. What word was used to describe Samuel's service? \_\_\_\_\_
6. How many teeth were in the fleshhook used by Eli's sons? \_\_\_\_\_
7. What was the distinctive garment worn by the priests? \_\_\_\_\_
8. What garment did Hannah make for Samuel each year? \_\_\_\_\_
9. Who told Eli his house was doomed? \_\_\_\_\_
10. Who was to be killed as a sign God's prophecy was being fulfilled? \_\_\_\_\_

### A DIGEST OF CHAPTER 3

- Vv. 1-10 *Samuel's call.* The call of Samuel to the place of leadership in Israel is comparable to the call of Moses (Exodus 3 and 4) and the call of Isaiah (Isaiah 6). His natural reluctance is typical of those who are given a vision of the tremendous responsibility laid upon God's servants; but his alacrity is also demonstrated in his response: "Speak; for thy servant heareth" (v. 10b).
- Vv. 11-14 *Doom pronounced on Eli's house.* The earlier message of the unnamed prophet is verified in the revelation given to Samuel. Eli is condemned because he knew of the wicked ways of his sons, but he did not rebuke them strongly enough.
- Vv. 15-21 *Samuel established as a prophet.* Samuel's first message was perhaps his most difficult to deliver. After Samuel had faithfully delivered the message of doom against Eli's house, all the people in Israel knew that God had indeed set Samuel aside in the office of the prophet. From time to time thereafter, God revealed himself to Samuel in Shiloh.