

Unfolding Unveiling: Studies of Christ Revealed in the Types of Joshua, David, and Solomon

Part Four: Samuel

Chapter Nine: New Hope

Ruth and Hannah: Carriers of the Seed

The time of the judges was a dark era because that generation did not know the Lord (cf. Jud. 2:10) and therefore failed to keep His covenant (cf. Jud. 2:20). The result was a defeated lifestyle because they could not drive out the inhabitants and a mixed lifestyle that was a combination of what the Lord had set up and other things that were not of God, such as inhabitants, idols, and high places. Israel was in a holding pattern until the Lord could find someone through whom He could be allowed to work His will in the earth. One judge after another delivered Israel from their enemies, but no one wanted to actually be submitted to His purposes in the earth.

The Scriptures record the stories of two people who did identify with the Lord to such a degree: those of Ruth and Hannah. It is no small coincidence that in each of their cases, the emphasis is on an identification with the Lord. Ruth told Naomi that Naomi's people and God would be her own people and God (cf. Ruth 1:16). Ruth married – became one with – Boaz. Hannah told the Lord that if He would cause her to bring forth life, that it would not be her own.

David came through Ruth and Samuel through Hannah, the two men who did the most for Israel since the time of Joshua. Through Ruth's story, we see that identifying with God makes us One. Through Hannah, we see that allowing God to be the source of our life results in a life coming forth that is not our own, that lives unto God.

Ruth was a Moabitess; she had not one ounce of Israelite blood in her. Deuteronomy 23:3 says that a Moabite could not enter into the house of the Lord up to the tenth generation. David was a "fourth generation Moabite" by the law's reckoning, yet he worshipped the Lord before the ark. How could this be? When Ruth went back to Israel with Naomi, she made a decision, that "where thou goest, I will go; where thou lodgest, I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God, my God." Ruth was no longer a Moabitess; she was One.

Hannah's Prayer

While the darkness of the book of Judges continues in Israel up until David begins to reign – darkness being lack of the knowledge of the Lord – the reason for a new book (Samuel) is because God is beginning a new work. Under the Judges, Israel was going nowhere, and the state of Israel remained the same up until the kingdom was turned to David. But God was at work to change the situation, which is something we do not see in the book of Judges. In I Samuel, the Lord is very obviously working toward something. Hannah's prayer in I Samuel 2:1-10 is the first of three prophetic passages that follow upon one another in rapid succession. All of them have to do with an end and a beginning in Israel, the history of which will be recorded in the books of I and II Samuel.

Hannah's prayer was the prophecy of all that was about to come. She prophesied the end of self-government and the beginning of being gathered in the One. This song is about the death, burial and resurrection of the one who would save Israel. In type, she is speaking of King David. In reality, she is speaking of Christ (cf. I Pet. 1:10-12). Lay I Samuel 2:1-10 beside the following, and the meaning of the passage is clear:

- v. 1 – David is the Lord's salvation for Israel.
- v. 4-6 – The death of Saul and all of Israel in him when he was killed in battle.
- v. 6 – The Lord brought the ark and David down to death and with them, the priesthood and king Saul. David and the ark were made alive again.
- v. 7 – David was made both poor and rich. He was brought down low and lifted up. Being poor and low represent death while being rich and lifted up represent resurrection.
- v. 8 – The Lord raised up David from being a poor fugitive, living off of the wealth of others, to sitting on the throne of glory. This is the Lord's resurrection.
- v. 9 – The feet of the saints speaks of David and the wicked is Saul, who tried to prevail by strength but failed.
- v. 10 – The Lord gave strength to his king David, who was his anointed. This is the resurrection.

We can see that this is a prophecy of all that was about to take place in the following chapters. God does all things according to His Son, our true King. Once again, in Israel's experience, we can understand how the Lord works among His Spiritual Israel. Forever His answer to any problem will be death and resurrection. Of this we may be sure.

Impending Judgment

The story of Eli, his sons, and Samuel takes place during the period of the judges. Therefore all the qualities of that time period are in effect throughout the early chapters of I Samuel. For us, their story begins with a prophetic word concerning what God was about to do in Israel

God had some very strong words for Eli in I Samuel 2:27-36 and even seems as though He were being a bit harsh. It was not as if Eli was sinning himself, like his two sons were. He was not a Jeroboam or a Manasseh, causing God's people to worship idols. As a matter of fact, he was both a priest and a judge in Israel (cf. I Sam. 4:18). Only God could

raise up a judge! Eli was not a malicious man, nor was he intent upon hindering God's purposes in the earth. No, he was a servant of God! Why was God warning him of impending judgment, then? It was because he was propagating the religious system by allowing his sons to use their office as a means to their own end. He was lax in executing his office. He lightly esteemed the Lord (cf. I Sam. 2:29-30). There was no open vision (cf. I Sam. 3:1). God would not allow the religious system to be associated with the identification of His people with Himself.

Eli: The Personification of the State of Israel

Eli was both a judge and a priest of Israel, yet he was not in tune with the mind of the Lord. Here are the symptoms:

- 1) He rebuked Hannah, who was wholeheartedly seeking the Lord the right way (1:12-15).
- 2) He did not put his household in order (2:22-25).
- 3) He was careless about his responsibilities in the tabernacle (3:1-3).
- 4) He made himself fat on the offerings of Israel (2:29, 4:18).
- 5) His eyesight was dimmed, almost to the point of blindness, thus signifying the lack of revelation and the darkness that engulfed Israel (3:2, 4:15).

I Samuel 3:1-3 is very significant. No one was seeing the Lord, and Eli was "lying down on the job", meaning that he was asleep to the Lord and to His mind. It says that Eli's eyes were growing dim and could not see. He was distant from the Lord and not seeing Him. It is his spiritual eyes, rather than his natural eyes, to which this passage refers. He did not properly discern Hannah's situation, nor did he properly discern the gravity of the situation with his sons.

Verse three also says that the lamp of the Lord was about to go out in the temple. Eli was responsible for letting the lamp of the Lord go out! Perhaps the lamp is a sign of revelation (I Sam. 3:1 says that there was no frequent vision). Perhaps the lamp was a type of what God's people are supposed to be on this earth, a light to the nations. This light was about to go out altogether. God's purpose in the earth was almost extinct. This is the level to which Israel's lifestyle had brought them as depicted in the book of the Judges.

Perhaps I Samuel 3:1-3 is talking about the end of the ministry of priests as a type. There was no more vision. Eli could not see, so the priests had lost the vision for their function in Israel, which was to point toward Christ. God rejected the priesthood because it no longer reflected Christ (cf. I Sam. 2:30-36).

I Samuel 3:1 may have been a prophetic picture of what was about to happen. All through the book of Judges, the priests ministered in the tabernacle before the Lord. Even through all of Israel's defeats and oppressions, the tabernacle was still Israel's proof that God was with them. It was there as a reminder of what they were about and where they were headed. It was their "light", if you will. It was just before the Light of the Lord went out in Israel that God sovereignly moved and spoke to Samuel concerning this thing that He

was about to do in Israel, so that whosoever heard it, their ears would tingle (cf. I Sam. 3:11). That “thing” was an ending of the priesthood and a capturing of the ark. God was ending that which was not after Himself and raising up a priest which was (cf. I Samuel 2:35).

The Priest of Israel

I Samuel 2:35 is not referring to Samuel. These Scriptures say that the priest that the Lord was going to raise up would walk before His anointed forever. That priest could not possibly be Samuel because he was the only one from his family who ministered before the Lord as a priest. Furthermore, his sons did not follow the Lord (cf. I Sam. 8:1-2), so God could not have been referring to Samuel’s offspring. This passage is referring to the resurrected Christ, of whom we are a part. It is for His Son that God will build a sure house (family).

This priest of whom God spoke would walk before His anointed. This priest cares about what is in the Lord’ heart, and this priest will be faithful to the end to complete the work.

Verse 35 is speaking of David, not Samuel. Samuel’s house was not established and did not walk before the Lord’s anointed forever. No one came to bow down before Samuel’s offspring; no one asked Samuel for provision, or to be placed in a priestly office. All of this is true of David, however, the only person to whom He promised an established house (cf. II Sam. 7:11-16). David and his offspring walked before the Lord’s anointed as the kings of Israel and Judah. David reinstated and enlarged the abilities of the priesthood, which was in turn provision for their families.

What about David being a priest? Is there a place in the Scriptures where he mediates between the Lord and His people? Yes. In II Samuel 6:12-19 when Israel brought the Ark to Jerusalem, David wore a linen ephod and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings directly in front of the ark of the covenant in the tabernacle of David. There was no altar of burnt offering, no veil that eclipsed the view of the ark. David was the high priest that mediated the relationship of Israel as One relating to their God and God relating to Israel as One.

Right here, in the middle of all the darkness, we see the Lord’ heart spring up to the surface, unstoppable, like rivers of living water! God had to endure so much disappointment with His people for so long. God must have to keep His eyes on Christ and on His plan, too, even as we do, or He will begin to despair that we will ever come into His plan, like us!

An Afterthought on Eli

Oftentimes in manmade religion, in our zeal to throw out everything that is not of Christ, we erroneously assume that there is nothing of God in religion. But this is not entirely true. According to I Samuel 3:2, his eyes were dimmed. But he was not so blind that he could not be of help to Samuel when the Lord called him for the first time. Usually it is not that religious Christianity has nothing to do with God's truth so much as that it has dimmed our eyesight to it so that we cannot properly see. But to what degree it can see, it can still be of use.

Eli had had some sort of spiritual insight at some point in his ministry. He was going blind, and yet he had enough insight to perceive that it was God speaking to Samuel in the middle of the night (cf. I Sam. 3:8). We must add to this the fact that he was afraid for the ark of God when it was taken into battle (cf. I Sam. 4:13). He did care about the things of the Lord to some degree. And even though he did not have much spiritual perception, it seems as though he had more than the rest of the nation, who had no clue what a bad idea it was for them to take the ark into battle.

The Tabernacle in View

The tabernacle was almost completely obscured from view during the time of the judges. Why? Because it had to do with spiritual reality instead of the natural realm, where Israel was living. The reality represented in the tabernacle is found in Christ, but Israel was not living there. The first time the tabernacle is mentioned since Joshua is when Hannah cried out to the Lord for a son. When David rules, the tabernacle again comes into play as he delegates the priests to continue their ministry there.

Here, for the first time in a very long time, the tabernacle again comes into the center of the picture, but the view is not a pleasant one. As we can see, its state, as well as the state of the priesthood, is less than desirable, as it reflects the condition of Israel at that time.

It is at this time that God began speaking to Samuel.

Hope For Israel: Samuel

All through chapters two and three, the state of the priesthood was being contrasted with Samuel's growth in the Lord (cf. I Sam. 2:18, 21, 26; 3:1, 19). We can see the dullness of the priesthood being laid side by side with the life and vibrancy that Samuel possessed in the Lord. It is almost as if the Lord was grieving for His priesthood and delighting in Samuel at the same time. I know that the Lord has certain plans and that He moves deliberately, but I also know that the Lord moves on the hearts of people when they are toward Him. Both seem to be the case with Samuel. God raised him up at a specific time in history to usher in a new way for God's people to relate to Himself. Even so, God is attracted to those whose hearts are toward Him. He moves through those who are alive to Him. He will be where these people are. As a result, God scrapped the priesthood,

removed the ark, and identified with what life He could find in Israel, which was in Samuel only.

It is also essential to note why it is that the Lord could use Samuel so freely. I Samuel 3:21 says that the Lord was revealed to him. Samuel saw the Lord. This is why God could use him so much. Samuel was looking at Reality face to face. God can only effectively use His people (and have lasting, eternal results) when they are living face to face with the Lord. Where did revelation occur? It occurred in Shiloh. Likewise, we must remain in Christ. And by what means was the Lord revealed? He was revealed by the Word. This is the means God has always chosen and will continue to choose. What a contrast Samuel's relationship with God is, when it is compared to Israel, from whom the glory of God had departed (cf. I Sam. 4:22)!

Shiloh

Shiloh is first mentioned in Genesis 49:10 as a Person. According to I Samuel 3:21, Samuel saw the Person Shiloh IN Shiloh and spoke that reality to all of Israel IN David.

In Hebrew, Shiloh means "He whose it is". Shiloh is Someone to Whom something belongs. The name Solomon is derived from the same root as Shiloh, and means "peaceful." God loves peace with His people, and He does not want to be at odds with them. In His heart He desired all along that they be gathered at Shiloh. The King was named Solomon because Israel finally came into what God desired of them.

The House Made Without Hands

Samuel saw the Lord in Shiloh, which is IN. He saw the reality in the ark of the covenant, the tabernacle, the sacrifices and priesthood that all of Israel was supposed to be seeing. He saw God's heart and intentions. Here, he saw a nation IN without spot or blemish. In the ark, he saw the reality that was being executed/worked out/manifested elsewhere.

The book of II Corinthians talks extensively about the ministry of the new covenant. Chapter three compares the two testaments. Chapter four shows how Paul has been entrusted with the administration of the new covenant, which is after the Spirit and not after the letter. Chapter five is about the spiritual building in the heavens and the ministry of reconciliation that had been entrusted to the new creation. Paul did not minister from an earthly tabernacle but from a building that is in the heavens, one that is made without hands. What Paul declared in these three chapters gives us further insight into Samuel's ministry and God's judgment of Eli.

In type, the Lord was about to build this house and give those who would live there the ministry of reconciliation. They would be ambassadors to bring all of God's people to be reconciled to Him (cf. II Cor. 5:18-20). This is the heart of God, who destroyed Eli's ministry (which had become an earthly one) with this sure house in mind. God has rejected the natural and put it away, along with anyone who ministered in that realm. Eli was so far from God's house that he had to be rejected.

The tabernacle had served its purpose. It was used to reveal the Lord to Samuel. Once he had sufficiently seen the Lord, God removed the ark and the priesthood so that He could deal with His people through life. When God cursed Eli's house and removed the ark, He was ridding Israel of dead rituals and a ministry that was drawing its motivation and purpose from the natural realm. He was not getting rid of the means by which His people were supposed to know Him. The true reality is always more important than the object that teaches it. Samuel living in a state of seeing the Lord was more important than keeping a teaching tool in place that was doing no good. God had what He wanted – someone who knew Him.

In the heart of God is all that we are right now and will ever manifest. When we live there, we live in that reality, whether we see it manifested now or not. When God's people stay in the natural instead of moving into God's spiritual reality, they stay with a cursed priesthood and a system with a missing ark.