

2:19-20

Moreover his mother used to make him a little robe, and bring it to him year by year when she came up with her husband from Ramah (1:3) to offer the yearly sacrifice. 20 And Eli would bless Elkanah and his wife, and say, “The LORD give you descendants from this woman for the loan that was given to the LORD.” Then they would go to their own home. With all the parallels in Luke 2, one would wonder if all the ½ siblings of Jesus (end of Matthew 12; end of Matthew 13) were in answer to the blessing of Simeon in Luke 2 (see next verse).

2:21

And the LORD visited Hannah, in answer to the blessings each year from Eli. so that she conceived and bore three sons and two daughters. Meanwhile the child Samuel grew before the LORD.

2:22-25

Now Eli was very old; and he heard everything his sons did to all Israel, and how they lay with the women who assembled at the door of the tabernacle of meeting. 4:19 shows that maybe one of these elicit relationships resulted in a wife for Phinehas. These are probably the women otherwise serving in that location (Exodus 38:8),¹ and this may have been what Anna was doing in the temple in Luke 2.² These practices were more pagan than anything (Isaiah 66; Hosea 4). **23 So he said to them, “Why do you do such things? For I hear of your evil dealings from all the people.** Notice how Eli didn’t feel the need to name his sources. There were more than enough sources that naming them would have proven irrelevant. The boys wouldn’t deny anything. **24 No, my sons! For it is not a good report that I hear. You make the LORD’s people transgress.** How? Perhaps through lack of example or perhaps through direct influence. **25 If one man sins against another, God will judge him.** The implication is that **God will judge him** through the judicial hands of the courts (Deuteronomy 1:17). **But if a man sins against the LORD, who will intercede for him?”** This flies in the face, frankly, of the notion that “a sin is a sin,” and “all sins are equal.” If Eli is telling the truth, (and it seems that the issue here is the boys’ rejection and not the character of their father’s rebuke) then some sins are far more severe than others.

Nevertheless they did not heed the voice of their father, because the LORD desired to kill them. God determined that they would not respond well to correction so that He could kill them. This reminds us of 2 Chronicles 36:15-16 & Proverbs 29:2. The marvel is that they would not be killed for two more chapters. Samuel had to get older and things had to develop so that Eli could be quickly replaced. What patience God has! What longsuffering He has to “endure with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction” in order to make ready his “vessel of mercy” (Romans 9)! This has the same feel as the objection of Samson’s parents concerning his choice of wife (Judges 14:4) and serves as another proof of common human authorship.³

2:26

¹ _____ *Saint Joseph Edition of The New American Bible* (New York: Catholic Book Publishing Company, 1986), 266.

² Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset, and David Brown, *Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible*, vol. 1 (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997), 176–177.

³See footnote on opening chapter of Ruth commentary.

And the child Samuel grew in stature, and in favor both with the LORD and men. I wonder if Solomon—in Proverbs 3:4 (“**God and men**”)—was identifying Jesus as the great lawkeeper and **favor** receiver (Luke 2:52).