

290.1: Hearing and Honoring God (OT Gospel Doctrine Lesson 21, Updated)
God Will Honor Those Who Honor Him

Correction from David Bokovoy about Ruth and Boaz:

The language of the text suggests a sexual encounter occurred between Ruth and Boaz, even though he would not legally be able to marry Ruth in the end. She washes herself, applies perfume, waits until Boaz is drunk then lies down with him and uncovers his genitals, i.e. "feet." Boaz wakes up and is surprised to be naked with a woman. Ruth proposes marriage to him, i.e. "the cover," and he agrees. She then stays the rest of the night with him, leaving before anyone sees her.

This is simply another example of women using the most powerful (and sometimes only) resource available to them to survive in a male-dominated ancient society. It's important not to judge her or anyone else in the Bible according to modern ideals of morality. What Ruth did in an ancient Israelite context was perfectly appropriate and successful.

Reading Review

1 Samuel 2 Hannah's hymn is really cool. It is so precious to hear from women in the Bible.

Also note the parallels between this story and Luke's story of John the Baptist and Jesus. I like the touch that Hannah made Samuel a new robe each year. Note the theme of the institutional figures being losers/not treating their office with respect (Eli's sons the priests), but the outside raised up by God proving to be the faithful one. (But they would not listen to the voice of their father, for it was the will of the LORD to put them to death.

²⁶Now the boy Samuel continued to grow both in stature and in favor with the LORD and also with man. (Note the close, intentional parallel of Luke 2:52, And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man.) Interesting to note that the "man of God" who prophesies the fall of the house of Eli seems to have been a charismatic figure who felt called of God.

Title from 2:30 "Therefore the LORD, the God of Israel, declares: 'I promised that your house and the house of your father should go in and out before me forever,' but now the LORD declares: 'Far be it from me, for those who honor me I will honor, and those who despise me shall be lightly esteemed.

3 Interesting detail that Samuel was lying in the temple where the ark of the covenant was! I appreciate the detail that Samuel was sensitive enough to hear the word of God, but not informed enough to know it was God speaking. I think that frequently happens with us. (Side detail: As I discuss in the Study Notes section, this passage seems to have originally applied to "Saul" whose name sounds like the Hebrew word

for “hear” thus all the play on hear/ears etc). Eli trusts Samuel and listens to his message from the Lord, even though it goes against his own self interest. This shows great trust and openness and humility.

[8](#) Note the pattern of wicked children of righteous leaders (Eli and Samuel). A fascinating theological note is how God goes along with what the people want, even though it is wrong. The people reject God as their king (note the parallel in Ether 6)

Productive Sunday School

1. Key theme: How can we recognize when an idea or commandment is from God?
 - a. Be sensitive enough to receive God’s voice (the boy Samuel)
 - b. Learn to recognize God’s voice (Eli teaching Samuel)
 - c. Beware our own bias and self interest (Eli remaining open to Samuel’s message, the people’s mistaken desire for a king “like the other nations”)
 - d. Remain open to revelation from unexpected sources (Eli listening to Samuel)
2. God’s honor
 - a. 1 Sam. 2:30 is quite radical. This verse emphasizes the importance of worthiness rather than official roles. Eli’s house likely had received the very promise God quotes, that the priestly house would stand forever (Similar to the promise made about David’s kinship in 2 Sam.7) We need to be careful about seeking honor in official positions, callings, jobs, even roles such as parent, etc. God will honor us based on our worthiness and our relationships, not our titles or roles
3. Conclusion: Listening to the right messages.

290.2: Hearing and Honoring God (OT Gospel Doctrine Lesson 21, Sunday School)

[God Will Honor Those Who Honor Him](#)

What does it mean that God will honor us? What does it mean to honor God? This episode explores these questions in the context of the story of Samuel, as well as the important question of how we can balance our needs with those of others.

290.3: Hearing and Honoring God (OT Gospel Doctrine Lesson 21, Study Notes)

[God Will Honor Those Who Honor Him](#)

What does it mean that God will honor us? What does it mean to honor God? This section touches on Samuel in historical context, contributes a thoughtful correction to consider from last episode, and parses out the purpose according to the lesson manual. (I’m also hoping I dug into the interesting kingship issues but don’t remember)