

Dr. Robert Chisholm, 1 & 2 Samuel, Session 2

1 Samuel 2

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This is Dr. Robert Chisholm in his teaching on the books of 1st and 2nd Samuel. This is session 2, 1 Samuel 2:12-36. Disrespect can be deadly.

In this next lesson, we're going to be looking at 1st Samuel chapter 2 verses 12 through 36. You'll remember that in the first part of 1st Samuel chapter 1 and then through chapter 2 and verse 11 we were looking at Hannah and we saw the main theme in Hannah's story is that the Lord vindicates his loyal followers. Hannah remained faithful to the Lord.

She did not turn to all worship in order to have a child. She remained faithful to the Lord. She looked to the Lord in the midst of her oppression and the Lord vindicated her.

He gave her a son and she thanked the Lord for that and also saw her experience as foreshadowing what the Lord would do for Israel. And of course, as we progress through the book we're going to see the Lord doing for Israel what he had done for Hannah. Her son Samuel is going to be a very important part of this.

He is going to in many ways be a prophet like Moses as was predicted in Deuteronomy. He is going to be the kind of leader that Israel needs. What we're going to see here in the remainder of chapter 2 is Eli and his sons are going to become more prominent in the story and there's going to be a contrast between them and Samuel.

I entitle this particular section, Disrespect Can Be Deadly, and that's what Eli and his sons are going to discover. The main idea of this section I would state this way, the Lord opposes those who treat him with contempt and he withholds his promised blessings from those who despise him. So, prior to this, we see the Lord vindicating his loyal follower Hannah.

Here we see him announcing punishment for those who treat him with contempt and he is going to withhold his blessings from them. And what we're going to see as we work through chapter 2 and then on through 3 and 4 really is there's going to be this marked contrast. The focus is going to be on Eli's sons in verses 12 through 17 of chapter 2. Then we're going to switch back to Samuel and actually Hannah is going to leave the stage at this point but we're going to read one more time about Hannah's relationship to Samuel and Samuel's growth and then we'll switch back to Eli's sons.

Briefly, we will then get a description of Samuel but then the focus in verses 27 through 36 will be on Eli and his sons. A man of God shows up and announces that God is going to bring judgment upon Eli and his sons. And then we go into chapter 3 and we see the call of Samuel as a prophet in contrast to the judgment that's coming upon Eli and his sons.

So, we're going to kind of go back and forth here and see this contrast. And Samuel is an important character in the book for another reason. He is going to be the one who will remove Saul from kingship and the one who will anoint David as king.

So, one of the things the author is doing in this section, is establishing the credibility of Samuel as the Lord's prophet because the book as a whole is designed in part to demonstrate to ancient Israelite readers that Saul was indeed rejected by God and David is the chosen king. There was some tension. There were some people who were loyal to Saul and so the book in part is trying to demonstrate that David is the chosen one, not Saul.

You need to put Saul behind you. He was rejected. The future is with David and his dynasty and so it's very important to establish the credibility of Samuel as the Lord's prophet because he is going to be instrumental in all of that.

He is the one who is going to come to Saul and say the Lord has rejected you and he is the one who's going to come to David and say you are the new king. So that's part of what's going on here. Also, what happens with Eli and his sons foreshadows what will happen with Saul and his sons.

Some might have said, well Saul was chosen by the Lord. Well, having read Samuel you could come back and say so was Eli but that didn't protect him. God wanted to do great things through Eli but when Eli and his sons treated him with contempt the Lord rejected them and he did the same with Saul.

So, there's kind of a literary connection between Eli and his sons and Saul and there's a literary connection between Hannah, Samuel, and David. So, with those introductory comments in mind let's dive into the passage. Remember Elkanah went home to Ramah and Samuel is ministering before the Lord under Eli the priest.

That's where we left off. And then in verse 12, we have the beginning of a new episode in the story. This is signaled in the Hebrew text by the subject coming first.

That's one of the ways they signal paragraph divisions and new episodes and those sorts of things. And Eli's sons who were briefly mentioned in the beginning of chapter one now become center stage. So, we're clearly in a different episode.

Eli's sons were wicked men. The author doesn't beat around the bush. And there's that word, b'liah, that we commented on in chapter one where Hannah said to Eli when he accused her of being a drunkard, don't consider me a worthless, wicked woman, a daughter of b'liah.

I'm not that kind of person. But now the narrator is commenting on Eli's sons and that word b'liah, worthless, applies to them. So, Eli, confused as always, thought Hannah was that kind of person when in reality his own sons were that kind of person.

And so, Eli's sons were wicked men. They had no regard for the Lord. And that literally says they did not know the Lord.

But they knew the Lord. They knew about the Lord. They knew who the Lord was.

After all, they were serving at his sanctuary. So, they knew who the Lord was. But sometimes in Hebrew when it uses the word know, it uses it in the sense of recognizing the authority of someone.

And so, they did not recognize the Lord's authority. They may have given lip service to it, but that's not what we're talking about. By their actions, they demonstrated that they did not know the Lord in the sense that they did not recognize him as having authority over them.

So, Eli's sons were wicked men. They had no regard for the Lord. They really didn't know the Lord in the sense that you're supposed to know the Lord.

Remember in Jeremiah 22, the current king is oppressing people and the Lord confronts him through his prophet and he says, you need to be like Josiah who cared about the poor and needy. And is this not what it means to know me? Josiah knew the Lord in the sense that he understood that his job as the Lord's king under the Lord's sovereignty was to take care of the poor and needy. This was in the law and he recognized the Lord's authority, he obeyed what the law said and demonstrated that he really knew the Lord.

Now it was the practice of the priests with the people that whenever anyone offered a sacrifice and while the meat was being boiled, the servant of the priest would come with a three-pronged fork in his hand and he would plunge it into the pan or kettle or cauldron or pot and the priest would take for himself whatever the fork brought up. And you may think, well, what's so wrong with that? These poor priests have got to eat. Well, if you go back to the law, there are several passages that talk about portions that were for the priest.

And the priest did not have the right to just come along and take whatever they wanted. And I'm sure they'd figured out how to get the best parts of the animal. So, what they're really doing here is they're stealing from the Lord.

This is how they treated all the Israelites who came to Shiloh. But even before the fat was burned, and remember when you brought a sacrifice to the Lord, the Lord gets the fat. And you may think, why? When I eat meat, I don't want the fat.

But it was considered the best part of the meat. And so, it belonged to the Lord. But even before the fat was burned before the Lord was given his proper portion, the servant of the priest would come and say to the man who was sacrificing, give the priest some meat to roast.

He won't accept boiled meat from you, but only raw. And if the man said to him, let the fat be burned up first, the Lord's portion needs to be dealt with first, and then take whatever you want. The servant would then answer, no, hand it over now.

If you don't, I'll take it by force. And so apparently what they were doing when the meat first came to them raw, they would demand a portion of it before the Lord even got his portion. And then when the meat was boiling, they'd come along again with their three-pronged fork and take more.

So, they're gorging themselves, as it were, on meat that is sacrificed to the Lord. Yes, they were to have their proper portion at the proper time, but they were doing it all wrong. And from the Lord's perspective, this made them wicked.

This sin of the young men was very great in the Lord's sight, for they were treating the Lord's offering with contempt. And you have this idea of the great sin. That kind of wording is used elsewhere for idolatry and adultery, you even see it in the culture.

But this is the only place in the additional very great in the Lord's sight. So, you might think on the surface, taking a little too much meat, doesn't seem too serious to me, but no, they were violating specific commands that were laid out in the law. They were greedy.

They were greedy people. And from the Lord's perspective, this was a very great sin before the Lord. They were treating his offering with contempt.

Now we get one of these switches. We're going to switch to Samuel in verse 18. But as for Samuel, he was ministering before the Lord, a boy wearing a linen ephod, a priestly garment.

Each year, his mother made him a little robe. You know, when children are growing up, they have to have new clothes. Every school year, they have to have new clothes that now fit them because they're taller.

And so his mother would show up with a little robe and take it to him when she went up with her husband to offer the annual sacrifice. So, Hannah sees Samuel annually. And Eli would bless Elkanah and his wife saying, may the Lord give you children by this woman to take the place of the one she prayed for and gave to the Lord.

And then they would go home. And the Lord was gracious to Hannah. She conceived and gave birth to three sons and two daughters.

Meanwhile, the boy Samuel grew up in the presence of the Lord. And there's some subtle things going on here. As we know, as the story progresses, you see this the second time around.

Hannah is getting more children. She's going to have three more sons in addition to Samuel. Eli's going to lose the two sons that he has in contrast to Hannah.

And Samuel is growing up before the Lord. And in Hebrew, that's the verb gadol, to become big. He's growing.

It's the same root that was used for the sin of Eli's sons. Their sin was gedolah. It was great.

These are subtleties that you see in Hebrew with words that are connected that translators simply can't reflect because they're trying to do the best with a particular word in a particular context. So, looking at the Hebrew text, if you're inclined to study Hebrew, I would say go do it. You see more.

It's like looking at the text in HD, you know, color HD, as opposed to old black and white or something like that. So, Samuel is growing. He is serving the Lord and in contrast to Eli's sons.

Now we switch back. So, we clearly have these contrasts that are developed and the text just shifts and mentions Eli's name now at this point. Now, Eli, who was very old, heard about everything his sons were doing to all of Israel.

And now here's a new one. And how they slept with the women who served at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting. That expression, that statement is not in all of our textual witnesses.

And so, some people will argue that was added later. It's not mentioned earlier. It's not mentioned later.

But I think that it is original. Why is it added here? Well, it's just an additional comment to show just how vile they were. And it does connect with what we've seen earlier thematically.

They're greedy people who are filled with greed and lust. They want a lot of food. They want to sleep with women.

And they're doing it right there. Excuse me. They're doing it right there in the tent of meeting.

And so, he said to them, why do you do such things? I hear from all the people about these wicked deeds of yours. No, my sons, it is not a good report. And that's an understatement.

Not a good report. He did say wicked deeds, but not a good report that I hear spreading among the Lord's people. And then he reasons with them.

If a man sins against another man, God may mediate for him. In other words, God may come along and serve as the mediator and make sure that justice is served. But if a man sins against the Lord, who will intercede for him? When you sin against the Lord and he brings judgment against you, who's going to stand up as your defense attorney against the Lord? You're in a very precarious position.

And so, it seems as if Eli is doing the right thing here. He's scolding his sons. He's correcting his sons.

But as we will see, this is not enough from the Lord's perspective. Eli is in a position of authority, and he could have ended this. He could have fired, as it were, his sons.

But all he does is just rebuke them. And from the Lord's perspective, it's not enough. And it doesn't do any good.

His sons, however, did not listen to their father's rebuke. And at this point, you might be thinking, four. Four.

They were vile people who just wouldn't listen to reason. But no, this is interesting. For it was the Lord's will to put them to death.

You might be thinking, why didn't they listen to their father? It was too late for that. And this is a scary passage, because what we see here is these fellas had gone too far. They had crossed a line with the Lord, and the Lord had decided, I am going to put them to death.

I am going to take them off the playing field. If Eli won't do it, I will. And so, you see this elsewhere in the Old Testament, where the Lord comes to a point where he decides it's too late.

The same thing happens with Rehoboam in Kings. He's the son of Solomon who becomes the new king, and Solomon had been a little oppressive with the northern workforce, and they come to Rehoboam, and they say, your father really oppressed us, and so we would like you to be more fair and to lighten our load a bit. And he listens to two different parties.

The older fellows say you need to go along with what they're saying. But his younger buddies tell him, no, you just tell them you're going to be tougher than your father. That's what he does.

And you might think, wow, what a foolish thing to do. But then we discovered that this is from the Lord, because the Lord has decided to implement judgment against Solomon for his idolatry, and this is the first step in that. And so, the Lord will sometimes step in.

It's too late. And he will harden. He will give people over, Romans 1, to their sin.

And that's what's happened here. Sadly, Eli did not rebuke his sons soon enough. He should have removed them from office.

He didn't do that, and so we've come to a point here where the Lord is not even going to allow them to listen to reason. If they were inclined to do so, and I don't believe they were, but if they had been inclined to do so, even then, the Lord would have stepped in and said, no, it's too late. You see this same kind of thing in the hardening of Pharaoh.

Pharaoh rejects God's message so many times, and the Lord will harden him after he does that. And the boy, now back to Samuel, see the switch back, and the boy Samuel continued to grow in stature and in favor with the Lord and with men. And so, he's growing, and he is, and the word *tov* is used of him in their favor, his goodness.

Eli, his sons are doing things that are *lo tovah* in Hebrew. They're not good, but Samuel, in the sight of the Lord, is characterized by goodness, and so he has favor from the Lord, and so there's again this contrast between the two parties. Now verse 27, now a man of God, a phrase that's used of a prophet in this particular case, a man of God came to Eli and said to him, this is what the Lord says, did I not clearly reveal myself to your father's house when they were in Egypt under Pharaoh? And in this particular case, father's house, this is Aaron, Aaron who was called to be a priest, and

I chose your father, Aaron, out of all the tribes of Israel, to be my priest, to go up to my altar, to burn incense, and to wear an ephod in my presence.

We'll talk about what an ephod was later in Samuel. Priests used it to discern the will of God, but we'll talk more about it when it plays a more prominent role in the story. I also gave your father's house all the offerings made with fire by the Israelites, so I gave your father, Aaron, a prominent position as a priest to serve as a mediator between me and the people.

They're going to go up to the altar, they're going to burn incense, and I made provision for them to have food. I gave them all the offerings made with fire by the Israelites. Why do you scorn my sacrifice and offering that I prescribed for my dwelling? Why do you honor your sons more than me by fattening yourselves on the choice parts of every offering made by my people Israel? So, this is very interesting.

You might want to go back to those earlier verses and offer a defense for Eli. Well, he did speak up. He didn't approve of what his sons did.

He said something to them, but from the Lord's perspective, actions speak louder than words, and that's very important for us to remember because we have an inclination to talk a good game. We show up at church, we worship the Lord, we say all the right things, we pray, we sing the songs, but the Lord wants to see obedience from us, and what he really wanted to see, I think, from Eli was obedience in this regard. He wanted his priest to remove those rebellious sons from office, and he didn't do that.

In fact, when they brought him some of the meat that they had taken from the people that belonged to the Lord, he ate it. So even though he didn't approve of what they were doing, he participated in it in a sense. He didn't remove them from office, and he ate some of that meat, apparently, and so the Lord is calling him on this, and he's saying, you've scorned my sacrifice and offering.

You're honoring your sons more than me, and sometimes it's difficult for parents. You know, Jesus said you got to hate. I think he was using exaggerated language, but there may be a situation where you got to hate your family and choose me, and so Eli, in this case, couldn't have it both ways.

It was either the Lord or his sons, and even though he rebuked them, he didn't go far enough, and as far as the Lord was concerned, he is with his sons. Therefore, the Lord, the God of Israel, declares, I promised, literally just said, that your house and your father's house would minister before me forever, but now, the Lord declares, far be it from me. Those who honor me, I will honor, but those who despise me will be disdained, and so the Lord is essentially saying, I treat people the way they treat me.

If you show contempt for me, you despise me, then you'll get that back from me. If you honor me, I will honor you. That's the principle that I will follow, and you have forfeited your right to serve as priests.

The time is coming when I will cut short your strength and the strength of your father's house so that there will not be an old man in your family line. So apparently, they're going to continue as priests, but they're going to have a problem in that line of the family. They're going to die prematurely, and you will see distress in my dwelling.

Although good will be done to Israel, in your family line, there will never be an old man. An old age is viewed in this culture as a blessing from God, and that sign of divine blessing will not be present. On the contrary, it will be clear to those who are watching that this family line is not favored by the Lord.

Every one of you that I do not cut off from my altar will be spared only to blind your eyes with tears and to grieve your heart, and all your descendants will die in the prime of life. He seems to be speaking as if Eli's going to be around for all of this, but good grief, he's old. He's not going to be around for this, but in the Bible, they will often speak this way.

There's a close connection between parent and child, between ancestor and descendants. For example, in Genesis 28, the Lord is giving a promise to Jacob about how his offspring are going to spread out in all directions, and he says you will spread out north, south, east, west. Well, Jacob's not going to be around, but it's going to be done through his offspring, and so the Lord is using that kind of language here to describe Eli.

If you were around to see it, it would bring you to tears. So, this is what's going to happen in your line, and what happens to your two sons, Hophni and Phineas, will be a sign to you. They will both die on the same day, so there's going to be a preliminary sign that all of this is going to happen, and Hophni and Phineas are going to die on the same day, and that's going to happen pretty quickly.

Chapter four, I will raise up for myself a faithful priest who will do according to what is in my heart and mind. I will firmly establish his house, and he will minister before my anointed one always. And you may be thinking, is that Samuel? And some people argue that there was an initial fulfillment of this, but we know from a passage in Kings that this is referring to a situation that occurred in Solomon's time, when Solomon demoted the descendant of Eli, and he elevated Sadok or Zadok to the priesthood, and that was a different Aaronic line than Eli's line, and so that was fulfilled quite some time later.

The house of Eli was demoted. They were no longer the primary priests in Israel, and the house of Zadok was promoted in that particular case. Then everyone left in your family line will come and bow down before him for a piece of silver and a crust of bread and plead, appoint me to some priestly office so I can have food to eat.

And so, your descendants are going to be humiliated. They are not going to be the primary priestly line anymore. It's going to be a different line, and your descendants are actually going to come and beg for food.

And you may be thinking, that seems a little harsh, but how appropriate. You see this with God's judgments often. The punishment fits the crime.

There's what we call poetic justice in God's judgments. They were gorging themselves on meat taken from the people inappropriately that belonged to God, and so it's as if the Lord is saying, okay, you want to gorge yourself on meat that belongs to me. A day will come when you'll barely have enough to eat and you'll have to beg for food.

So, it's a very, very sad story. It has great significance in the larger context of Samuel, as we said, because what we have here is a priest who was promised a position forever, and you might think, well, if God's word is true, how could he go back on it? Now he's saying it's not going to be forever. What's going on here? Is God unfaithful to his promise? And that's going to be taken away from him.

The same thing's going to happen with Saul. The Lord is going to make promises to Saul. In fact, we'll see that he is going to say to Saul, I would have given you an everlasting dynasty, one that lasted forever, but you sinned, and so I'm taking that away.

So, you have got the same problem there. What's going on? Well, what we need to realize is when we're dealing with the Lord's promises in the Old Testament, that they are not all unconditional or irrevocable. The Lord makes those kinds of covenants and promises with people.

I think he made one with Abraham. By the time you get to chapter 22, I think the Lord confirms his promise to Abraham as irrevocable. He's not going to go back on that.

I think he makes one with David in 2 Samuel 7. You're probably not as familiar with a couple of others, one that he makes with a priest by the name of Phineas in Numbers, and also, he makes one of these promises to Caleb. And so there are times when the Lord makes an irrevocable promise. I hesitate to say unconditional because there are always conditions attached to these promises.

If they're really going to experience the blessing to the fullest, they have to live up to certain standards. You see this in 2 Samuel 7 in the Davidic covenant. If your son is unfaithful to me and disobeys me, I'll have to punish him.

So, there's kind of a condition, but I won't take the promise away. You'll always have that dynastic promise. But not all promises God makes work that way.

Sometimes they are conditional. If the if is in there, then clearly they're conditional. The Lord sometimes will say, if you obey me, then this is what will happen.

But what we discover from looking at various passages like this one, sometimes the promise can be stated as if it were unconditional. You might think it was no condition in view, but nevertheless, it's implicitly conditional. And we see examples of this kind of thing, where the Lord will relent.

He will change his mind. He will say this, but then because his people have been disobedient, he relents from that and changes his course of action. The classic passage on this is in Jeremiah chapter 18, and I think we'll take time to go there because it really is the key passage in understanding what's going on here.

In this case, the Lord is dealing with his people, Israel, and he wants to exhort them to come back to him. He wants to give them a warning. And so this is the word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord, Jeremiah 18:1, and then verse 2, go down to the potter's house and there I will give you my message.

So, I went down to the potter's house. The potter is making clay pots. You know, it's his job.

He's making things out of clay. And I saw him working at the wheel, but the pot he was shaping from the clay was marred in his hands. So, the potter formed it into another pot.

So, he had one type of pot in mind, but there was something wrong with the clay. It wasn't pliable. There was a problem.

It got marred. And so he decided rather than throw it out, he's going to take it and form it into a different type of pot with a different design, shaping it as seen best to him. Then the word of the Lord came to me, O house of Israel, can I not do with you as this potter does, declares the Lord, like clay in the hand of the potter, so are you in my hand, O house of Israel.

If at any time I announce that a nation or kingdom is to be uprooted, torn down, and destroyed, and if that nation I warn repents of its evil, then I will relent and not inflict on it the disaster I had planned. So the Lord is saying there are times when I will

announce judgment upon a nation, but if that nation that I warn repents of its evil, I'll relent and not inflict on it the disaster I had planned. In other words, you get the impression here that the last thing the Lord wants to do is judge someone.

He would rather have them repent and have a proper relationship with him, but he sends the prophet to warn them with the hope that they will repent and so that he won't have to judge them. That seems to be what we see here and it's exactly what we see many times in the Old Testament, like in Jonah. Jonah shows up in Nineveh, 40 more days and Nineveh will be destroyed.

What are you going to do with that? He didn't say if, there's no indication of a condition. Now you could say, well maybe the 40 days is a window of opportunity. If the Lord were just committed to destroying us, maybe he'd just do it.

So why a 40-day waiting period? You could kind of go both ways with that. The king of Nineveh doesn't know what to do. In fact, he says we're going to do the smart thing.

This prophet has warned us and so we're going to repent and we're going to get the animals involved in the repentance. We're going to deprive them of food and they'll start mooing and doing whatever sounds they make when they're deprived of food. We're all going to repent because, he says, who knows, *mi yodea* in Hebrew, who knows, God may relent.

You know, he may see our repentance. He's not sure about it at all. And then, of course, the text tells us there toward the end of chapter three, the Lord saw what they did and the Lord did indeed relent from sending the judgment.

And then in chapter four, Jonah's not happy about this. He didn't want to be a part of the Nineveh reclamation project to begin with. He didn't want to be a part of that.

He didn't want to go. If you're wondering why did Jonah run away, it wasn't because he was afraid or something like that. It was he didn't want to be a part of this.

He didn't think the Ninevites deserved an opportunity to repent. The Assyrians had done some pretty nasty things to people throughout the ancient Near Eastern world and in the 800s they'd done some pretty nasty things to Israel. And so, Jonah was filled with hatred for the Assyrians and I think I would be too if I were an Israelite living at that time.

He didn't want to be a part of this and so in chapter four he's upset. He's really ticked off. He's mad and he says, I knew this would happen because this is the kind of God you are.

You're long-suffering and you're patient and you typically relent from judgment that you have threatened. This is what you do. And I knew it would happen here and I'm very upset about it.

And so, there's a case where the message wasn't clearly conditional. The king of Nineveh wasn't sure either way, but we find out that the message was indeed conditional. That's often the case in the Old Testament.

In fact, I tend to think that it's the case more often than not. And that's why you have some passages where the Lord says, I am not a man that I will change my mind. He, in 1 Samuel 15, he's going to say that to Saul.

It was too late. There are times when the Lord says, that's it, and he issues a statement that is irrevocable. This is what is going to happen, but that's not always the case.

And so he's simply making that point here. And that's what was going on with Eli and later with Saul. The Lord made a promise, but it wasn't an irrevocable promise.

They had a responsibility on their side to remain faithful. The implication was, if they didn't, the Lord would remove that promise. And it doesn't mean he's being unfaithful.

Some people will look at this and they'll say, well, if the Lord can relent like that, change his mind as it were, how can he be immutable? Because we affirm in theology that God is immutable. He's unchanging. Well, he's changing there.

But let's think about God's immutability and his attributes. God is a God of love and God is a God of mercy and grace. And so, he is immutably that.

That's his nature. So, he has to be able and willing in relationships to relent from sending judgment that he announced on someone in order to show mercy and grace. So, if you think properly about the doctrine of immutability, you understand that this does not contradict that doctrine.

It does not mean that God is being unfaithful. God is not some computer in the sky who spits out unconditional decrees. No, he's in a relationship with people.

And in that relationship, he will warn in hopes that they will come back. Also, verse nine, and if at another time I announce that a nation or kingdom is to be built up and planted, and if it does evil in my sight and does not obey me, then I will reconsider the good I intended to do for it. It works the other way, too.

God will come along and promise blessings. And, well, he may have to reconsider that. You get a good example of that in Joel, chapter two, where there's a promise that the Lord will always bless his people from this day forward.

Well, that didn't happen. The Lord had to judge his people many times after Joel, and because that promise was conditional. Now, therefore, say to the people of Judah and those living in Jerusalem, this is what the Lord says.

Look, I am preparing a disaster for you and devising a plan against you. So turn from your evil ways, each one of you, and reform your ways and your actions. But they will reply, it's no use.

We will continue with our own plans. Each of us will follow the stubbornness of his evil heart. And so, in Jeremiah's day, the people rejected the message and the Lord had to judge them.

You even see this with Jesus in Matthew 23, as he's looking over Jerusalem and he says, O, Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often I have willed, in the Greek, fellow, I have willed to bring you to myself like a mother hen with her chicks, but you are not willing, fellow, same verb, you are not willing. And so, judgment is coming. The Lord's ideal will, his antecedent will, his prior will, is that they would repent.

But when they don't do that, he's a just God, and he cannot tolerate the continuation of this evil. And so, his consequential will, plan B, as it were, his less than ideal will, but something that has to be done, that will kick in. And that happened with Israel in Jesus' time, and it happened many times with Israel in the Old Testament.

He had made promises to Eli and Saul, and he wanted to bless them, but when they did not obey him, he simply had to remove that promise and relent. And that's what he's saying here. So, it doesn't really violate the Lord's faithfulness to his word or his commitment to his people.

And it's scary because the Lord wants what's best for us, but sometimes we forfeit. We forfeit those blessings because we refuse to be obedient. The Lord is not going to reward sin.

And so it's a very sobering account. And what we're going to see in the chapters that follow, in chapter three, the Lord is going to call Samuel as his prophet. So, the Lord, the demise of Eli and his sons, doesn't mean that Israel is being rejected by the Lord.

The Lord is still going to work with his people. He's going to raise up a new leader, Samuel, a prophet like Moses, and he is going to raise him up. And then in chapter four, we're going to see the fall of Eli and his sons, and that sign that they're going to die in a single day, that's going to take place.

And so that contrast between Samuel and Eli and his sons is going to continue in the next two chapters, which we will look at in the next lesson.

This is Dr. Robert Chisholm in his teaching on the books of 1st and 2nd Samuel. This is session 2, 1 Samuel 2:12-36. Disrespect can be deadly.