

I SAMUEL - Perek

The reason we are given details of the desecrations committed by the sons of Eli is that their transgressions were so severe, we later find that their punishment was equally severe.

הנרות והחלות - The gifts normally allotted to the Priests were severely proscribed by the Torah. Chafni and Pinhas exploited their positions; whatever the three-pronged fork brought up they took for themselves. In addition to being exploitative, it was crude, vulgar.

אף חרס וקטן This again manifests the entire desecration of the אהות כהן, and in the process they used strong-arm methods.

אשר אלה In the midst of reading about the sins of the sons of Eli, we are suddenly told that Samuel ministered and was a young boy. The Torah is here presenting a study in contrast. While the two (Chafni and Pinhas) are making alucrative business out of the Kehunah, the other (Samuel) is entirely selfless in his devotion.

אך אלוהים This garment was normally only worn by Kohanim, but Samuel wore it to give it a sense of reverence, as opposed to Chafni and Pinhas, who although Kohanim disgraced it.

קטן This little coat is very interesting -- almost tender. Every year Hannah came and brought Samuel a little coat. Apparently the literal meaning is that each year she brought him

a new coat. In Rabbinic tradition, Agadah, the coat assumes new proportions; we are told some interesting things about it.

Wings DON - Hannah didn't make a new coat for him each year; she made it only once. She brought it to him for Yom Tov and took it back home with her afterwards. The following year the same process was repeated, and the coat fit Samuel. And so throughout the years the same coat fitted Samuel. After Hannah died, he still wore the coat, and was buried in the same coat. (Reminiscent of "The Picture of Dorian Gray," wherein only the picture grows old; he remains eternally young.)

Two things are interesting: Why the coat growing and why was he buried in it? As I interpret it, there seems to be something very special involved which tells us something about Hannah's character which is important for the character of any mother; it is based on an analysis of Erich Fromm. Maternal love is to keep a child with you. The ultimate separation of mother from child is a difficult problem. The child's maturity requires that he grow away from his mother (often a serious family problem). The inability of a mother to let a child go is understandable, but a cruel, necessary part of development. Hannah was devoted to Samuel. Yet the greatness of Hannah as a mother is that after holding him with her for a while, she is willing to give him up -- her love is symbolized^{by}/the coat. But her^{LOVE} grows too; as Samuel grows, her love expands. He is buried in the coat to show that the entire development of his

character and personality is a result of that coat; she did not permit her love for him/^{to}stifle or stunt his development. Here is a woman with a power ful love for her child -- but she was powerful enough to effect the result that hss growth was not strangled. So our Rabbis give this legend as a tribute to her as a mother. (difficult to strike delicate balance - hold him, yet let him go.)

נח (1) Although in the past the lending of Samuel to HaShem was attributed to Hannah, it is not attributed to Elkanah.

(2) Abarbanel: The blessing of Eli was: You should have other children like Samuel; he is such a marvelous child that my berakhah is that you have others just like him,

(3) Since you wanted this child so desperately and can't have the nachas of watching him grow, may God grant you other children to remain with you and be a solace to you in your old age, to compensate for the loss, as it were, of this child.

לחנך (1)- The other children you will have will walk in his place, (2) they went home in a different manner than that in which they had come; reassured and confident that Eli's blessing would take effect. (3) Abarbanel: This is not a postscript to the first half of the verse; it is part of Eli's blessing: May you have other children to replace Samuel.

אלהן נפס'ם ישי' We return to the tragic story of what transpires with Eli's sons.

אלהן נפס'ם ישי' (1) Medrash Tanchumah - וְיָשָׁן עָלָיו וְיָשָׁן עָלָיו . Eli didn't grow old slowly; he aged very quickly, as a result of the חַיִּים from his children.

(2) Abarbanel: Eli was getting naturally old, and all of this is read as an excuse and apology for Eli. We can blame him; it was his business to train his sons properly. This is an apologia for his lack of training them; you couldn't expect him in his old age to reproach his children when his חַיִּים were gone.

וְהָיוּ לְעֵלִי וְלִבְנָיו - Here we are confronted with another charge which is either more or less heinous than the aforementioned desecrations of the מִזְבֵּחַ. Our Rabbis have two interpretations: The minority take the text literally; they acted immorally, (morally lax) and would seduce women who used to come to offer sacrifices to the Temple.

וַיָּבֹאוּ לְעֹלֹת הַקֹּרְבָּנִים (וְהָיוּ לְעֵלִי וְלִבְנָיו) - gathered for the services

וְהָיוּ לְעֹלֹת הַקֹּרְבָּנִים Targum Jonathan: Who came to pray

The majority opinion is different. Ben Zakkai says: וְהָיוּ לְעֹלֹת הַקֹּרְבָּנִים לְעֵלִי וְלִבְנָיו. What it means is this: The women came to offer sacrifices that were peculiar to women. Law at that time required of women that after her menstrual period, in addition to חַיִּים she offer a sacrifice (pigeon, or dove), and then she had fulfilled her obligations. The same

was true for giving birth. It was an inexpensive sacrifice; the Kohanim would receive only a meager part of it and therefore would ignore them, because there was nothing in it for them. The difference financially was enormous to the Kohanim. As a result, the women had to wait in a long line and sleep overnight in the courtyard, away from their families. The fact that they had to sleep outside and were denied the company of their husbands is considered for the Kohanim as tantamount

to אלהים, to אלהים.

8N1C style reik - Why doesn't Eli enumerate those from whom

he heard? Our Rabbis say we can learn here a moral courtesy -


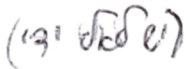
מבקרת הדת ד"ר ארץ - שגור שומע אלה של חזק אחרות


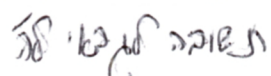

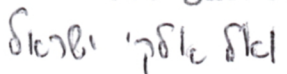
By reporting to a friend the source of the good you heard about him, you increase moral cohesion. (Obverse is self-explanatory)


YD Sk - Abarbanel: If this is the way you conduct yourselves, you are not my sons; biologically yes, but otherwise not.

3 JX J'2XN - j'30- This report is dreadful because it
purshes away the people of the Lord. People are being denied
access to the Temple. Men are afraid because it costs so
much, and woman are afraid of your reputation. You are causing
the people of the Lord to be pushed aside.

1991c 1601 pk - If a man sins against a man God should judge him, if against the Lord, who shall pray for him? Who should entreat for him?

- (1) Kodesh - God (2) Hol - profane -  power, 

elohim - judges. Most commentators translate it: If a man sins, the courts shall judge him; there is a recourse to another party. But if he sins against God, who will call God to justice, so it is worse than a sin against man. In what sense is a sin against man worse than a sin against God? In the case of lashon ha-ra, when you can't make retribution. A sin against God is only against Him, but a sin against man is against both man and God. Sin against man is autonomous? In Christian theology, if you sin against man it is regarded as sinful only because God forbids it. In Judaism it is considered a sin against both man and God. (If you sin against a man and he dies before you have a chance to apologize or compensate him, fine -- you can compensate the children. But what about apology? Asking for  is equivalent to . You must gather minyan and go to graveside saying:  . So that the idea of social relations or ethical autonomy, your own stature independent of relations to God is a Jewish idea.

If read as kodesh, Rabbi David Kimchi () interprets: If a man sins, the man whom he sinned against can pray for him to God. But one who sins against God, his prayer is stained because he sinned, the injured party is God, He can't pray for you.

שמעתי ש' פון ד' - Sounds terrible. But -- there comes a point where free choice automatically disappears. Their father reproached them again and again, but they continually failed to hear him. Does the Lord ever want to kill anybody? Yes -- at some point people have forfeited their lives.

How then do we account for the following from Ezekiel: *פונעם וואס*

אין וואס א פלאץ וואס מ'האט זיך געטון. Two answers. After a man does teshuvah, God doesn't want him to die. As long as man has even a *מחשבה טובה*, HaShem keeps options open. But when man is determined to do wrong, then he himself doesn't hear what is said to him, and God doesn't give him a special chance to be able to return. (2) at this point they had been so dreadful in their conduct that God no longer held the door open. This is why we encountered before the detailed description of how crude and vulgar their sins were.

Rabbi Lamm: For all sins, man can do teshuvah.

One amongst those few for which can can not be atoned is Hillul Hashem. They were priests and they allowed corruption and sexual laxity to enter into the Mikdash, what could be worse? They are desecrating God's Name in allowing His Name and His Mikdash to come into disrepute. Other than these three (*אונזערהייט, פילגמש, און חילול שם שמים*)

פילגמש, אונזערהייט, און חילול שם שמים), Hillul Hashem is worst of all. We are above all commanded to honor our teachers, even above respect for parents. But -- if a teacher is guilty of Hillul Hashem, it vitiates the commandment to honor him. God too can perform Hillul and Kiddush

Ha-Shem. In practically every Haftorah of Ezekiel he asks God to perform Kiddush Hashem and not to perform Hillul Hashem - how? How does He sanctify His own Name? By the prosperity, by the fortunes of Israel. God had promised us since antiquity that He would preserve us. If Israel suffers, God's reputation suffers. When Israel prospers, the entire world suddenly becomes aware that Israel's history is different. During those miraculous days of the Six-Day War, the people of the world stood up and listened and suddenly realized in their bones that there is something different about the people Israel. The intelligent ones understood that the difference lies in something transcendent, something beyond. When Israel prospers, God's reputation is enhanced. Death is a Hillul Hashem. This is why it is followed by Kaddish. God, sanctify Your Name. Logically, we can't do anything about death. But emotionally we see it as a flaw in creation. It is an intuitive feeling -- mortality is an evil. It is a flaw in creation and reflects upon the Creator. Therefore, after death we pray for Kiddush Hashem. We ask for a society that will be perfect, man will be perfect, and in the escheton, ultimately --

פִּינֵהוּ שִׁנֵּהוּ .

פִּיגֵל פֶּס - Abarbanel: He (Samuel) grew up well with the children of Eli too, because he wasn't a stool-pigeon. He didn't tattle on them to Eli. (As opposed to Joseph. For all his piety, he failed, because he talked about his brothers. Samuel was *גוֹס 13 פִּיגֵל 13*, a quality which qualified him for leadership -- he became Shofet. Joseph was denied

this and it passed instead to Judah. Joseph became a leader of *ב"ח*, in Egypt, but could not become leader of the Jews, because of this element in his personality.

נביא ע"כ -- A prophet, but we aren't told who. Whenever we have a mysterious verse of this sort, Tradition fills it in for us. Who was it? Elkanah, who came to warn him.

ב' אלהים -- A true Prophet always speaks in the Name of God. (RNL: Jesus had unmitigated chutzpah to say, "the Father says thus, and I say thus." By this alone he should be precluded from having been a true Prophet). As a matter of fact, all of our *ב"ח* rebelled at the idea of becoming Prophets. The Prophet which spoke in his own name was stoned to death. They spoke only in God's Name.

הנני אומר -- the *ה* is difficult; meant here for intensification as if to say, "indeed."

והבנים ב' את ביתך -- Your sons desecrated the Temple, and instead of throwing them out, you scholded them mildly.

אני חשבתי -- At one time I thought that the *בית* would perpetually stay with your family, but now, *אני אומר*, far be it from me to permit you to continue to be a *ב' אלהים*.

Three elements inherent in this curse: (1) Your family will no longer be permitted to minister in the Temple; (2) The replacement I choose in your stead will be your *ב' אלהים*, as you forfeited your *ב' אלהים* right. (3) Your children will die as young men.

They will die not as children, nor as old men -- rather, as young men. This was the curse given because of their desecration, corruption, and licentiousness. But why should children be responsible forever?

Gemara:

They were grieved and turned to _____, who said:

. So they asked: If this is true, how can we get rid of this curse? Rabbi Yochanan: So they stopped dealing in the family business and became scholars and lived to a ripe old age. They developed the surname _____. The curse continues, but can be overcome by studying Torah; you can achieve longevity by overcoming the sin.

The same is told of the times of R. Meir, who counseled them:

History identifies the man as _____, who became officially High Priest, in the days of Solomon.