

## Hophni and Phinehas I Sam. 2:12-4:18

### Introduction:

The name “Hophni” only appears in the first four chapters of I Samuel. The name “Phinehas” appears several times outside of our text. Phinehas was apparently a common name, and there were others of the same name. The most notable is Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the grandson of Aaron. This is important to note since both of them were priest of the Lord.

In regards to these two priests of God, there is nothing positive said about either of them. They were very corrupt in the way that they handled the sacrifices of Israel.

Hophni and Phinehas are introduced in **I Sam. 1:3**. Nothing more is said of them until chapter 2.

### **I. Hophni and Phinehas did not know the Lord (2:12-17).**

- A. This statement is even more remarkable when we remember exactly who Hophni and Phinehas were.
  - 1. They were the priests of God.
  - 2. Notice two things that are mentioned that they do that violated the commands of God.
    - a. They were the ones that the people would go to in order to make their sacrifices (**2:13-17**).
      - 1) In order to see what they were supposed to do with the sacrifices, notice two passages from Leviticus.
        - 2) **Lev. 3:1-17**
        - 3) **Lev. 7:29-34**
      - b. They also had sexual relationship with the women who came to the door of the tabernacle of meeting (**2:22-25**).
    - 3. Even in this powerful position, it is said that “they did not know the Lord.”
  - B. Today, we are the priests of God.
    - 1. Notice two statements by Peter.
      - a. **I Pet. 2:4-5** - Coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious, {5} you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.
      - b. **I Pet. 2:9** - But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light;
    - 2. It is also possible for us to “not know the Lord.”
      - a. It does not matter if we are present at every service.

- b. It does not matter if others think that we are doing good all of the time.
  - c. If we are not living according to the commandments of God then it can be said of us that we do “not know the Lord.”
3. This is why it is important for us to continue to study the word of God for ourselves and obey that great word.

## II. God gives Eli two prophecies concerning his sons.

- A. Notice the two prophecies concerning Hophni and Phinehas.
  - 1. To Eli: 2:27-36
  - 2. To Samuel: 3:10-18
  - 3. Both of these prophecies could easily be seen as warnings for Eli to control his evil sons.
    - a. However, Eli refused to listen to either prophecy.
    - b. Twice, Eli was told about the evil behavior of his sons, and he refused to do anything about it.
    - c. Even as evil as his sons were, Eli “did not restrain them” (3:13).
  - 4. These prophecies were given because Hophni and Phinehas did not obey the direct commands of God.
- B. Today, we have been told by God exactly what He wants us to do.
  - 1. We have the word of God to instruct us in the ways of God.
    - a. II Tim. 3:16-17 - All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, {17} that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.
    - b. God tells us how He wants us to live our lives.
  - 2. It is up to us to know that word.
    - a. II Tim. 2:15 - Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.
    - b. I Pet. 3:15 - But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear;
  - 3. It is also up to us to obey that word.

## III. There is no glory in the death of the unrighteous (4:1b-11).

- A. Notice the account of the death of Hophni and Phinehas.
  - 1. Hophni and Phinehas helped to bring the ark of God into battle with them (which was captured in the battle – 4:11).
  - 2. Hophni and Phinehas were killed in battle with the Philistines (4:11).
- B. Because of their death (and the way in which they died), notice what else happens.
  - 1. Eli, their father, dies (4:12-18)
  - 2. The wife of Phinehas gives birth (4:19-22).
    - a. She names the child “Ichabod.”

- b. This name literally means “inglorious,” because she said, “The glory has departed from Israel” (4:21-22).
- C. There is no glory in the death of the unrighteous.
  - 1. Several times while on this earth, Jesus warned of the death of the wicked.
    - a. Mt. 13:40-42 (Parable of the Wheat and Tares) - Therefore as the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of this age. {41} The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness, {42} and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth.
    - b. Mt. 13:49-50 (Parable of the Dragnet) - So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come forth, separate the wicked from among the just, {50} and cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth.
    - c. In Matthew 25:31-46, Jesus talks about the great Day of Judgment.
      - a. The sheep will be on the right; the goats will be on the left.
      - b. Those who are on the right will be invited to live with the Father for eternity.
      - c. Notice what is said to those on the left.
        - 1) Jesus reminds them that they did not do good to others while they were alive.
        - 2) Mt. 25:41, 46 - Then He will also say to those on the left hand, ‘Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels: {46} And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.
  - 2. There is no glory because there is no hope!
- D. However, blessed are those who die in the Lord.
  - 1. Ps. 116:15 - Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of His saints.
  - 2. Rev. 14:13 - Then I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, "Write: 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.'" "Yes," says the Spirit, "that they may rest from their labors, and their works follow them."
  - 3. This is why Solomon could say what he did.
    - a. Ecc. 7:1 - A good name is better than precious ointment, and the day of death than the day of one's birth;

Conclusion:

- I. Hophni and Phinehas, the priests of God, did not know the Lord.
- II. They were not obedient to the commands of God.
- III. Because they were unfaithful, there was no glory in their death.