

Don't Lose The Awe

Discussion Notes- September 7, 2025

1. What's one way you personally like to connect with God (prayer, music, nature, journaling)?

This week's sermon reminded us not to lose the awe of God in our lives. Eli began faithfully but grew complacent, allowing his sons to treat the Lord's offerings with contempt, and his legacy ended in tragedy. In contrast, Hannah's humble prayer showed a heart of reverence and trust, while Samuel's call demonstrates the blessing of listening and responding to God's voice, growing in favor with both God and man. Together, their stories challenge us to honor the sacred, maintain awe in our relationship with God, and leave a legacy that impacts the next generation.

Read Psalm 33:6-9

"By the word of the Lord the heavens were made, and by the breath of his mouth all their host. He gathers the waters of the sea as a heap; he puts the deeps in storehouses. Let all the earth fear the Lord; let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him! For he spoke, and it came to be; he commanded, and it stood firm."

This passage reminds us that the same God who created all things still calls us to live in awe of Him. Just as He called Samuel, God's voice calls each of us to trust, listen, and obey. Hannah's prayer shows the posture of a heart fully surrendered, while Eli's story warns of the danger of taking the sacred for granted. Psalm 33 encourages us to cultivate reverence, honor God in our daily lives, and leave a lasting, awe-filled legacy.

2. What's one truth from the sermon that stood out to you, especially from the examples of Hannah, Samuel, or Eli?

Read 1 Samuel 1:5-7, 10-16

"But to Hannah he gave a double portion, because he loved her, though the LORD had closed her womb. And her rival used to provoke her grievously to irritate her, because the LORD had closed her womb. So it went on year by year. As often as she went up to the house of the LORD, she used to provoke her. Therefore Hannah wept and would not eat... She was deeply distressed and prayed to the LORD and wept bitterly. And she vowed a vow and said, 'O LORD of hosts, if you will indeed look on the affliction of your servant and remember me and not forget your servant, but will give to your servant a son, then I will give him to the LORD all the days of his life, and no razor shall touch his head.' As she continued praying before the LORD, Eli observed her mouth. Hannah was speaking in her heart; only her lips moved, and her voice was not heard. Therefore Eli took her to be a drunken woman. And Eli said to her, 'How long will you go on being drunk? Put your wine away from you.' But Hannah answered, 'No, my lord, I am a woman troubled in spirit. I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but I have been pouring out my soul before the LORD. Do not regard your servant as a worthless woman, for all along I have been speaking out of my great anxiety and vexation.'"

Hannah's example shows that reverence for God can lead us to act in faith and boldness, even when it looks unusual or draws misunderstanding from others. Her awe of God fueled her persistence in prayer, trusting Him completely despite the opinions around her. Choosing to honor God in this way shaped her decisions and led to a powerful outcome—Samuel's birth and God's continued work through him.

3. In what ways can reverence for God's presence practically shape your daily choices?

Read Romans 1:18-21

"For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened."

Eli's sons grew up in the presence of God, fully aware of His holiness and the sacred duties of the priesthood. Yet, like Paul describes in Romans 1:21, they failed to honor God and treated His offerings with contempt. Their lack of reverence led them to make foolish, selfish choices, ultimately bringing judgment on themselves and causing harm to God's people.

4. What dangers do you see when we lose our sense of awe for God?

Read 1 Samuel 3:10

"And the LORD came and stood, calling as at other times, 'Samuel! Samuel!'" And Samuel said, "Speak, for your servant hears."

When Samuel said, *"Speak, for your servant hears"* (1 Samuel 3:10), it wasn't just obedience—it reflected a heart of awe and humility before God. His willingness to listen shows a deep reverence, a recognition that God's voice carries authority, wisdom, and life-changing power. Samuel's posture reminds us that awe isn't just about feelings—it shapes our actions, keeping us attentive and responsive to God in every situation. Just as Hannah's prayer and Eli's cautionary story teach us, maintaining awe transforms the way we approach God, guiding our choices and shaping the way we live day by day.

5. Where in your life do you sense God calling you to say, *"Speak, Lord, your servant is listening"*?

Prayer/Closing:

- Pray for hearts that approach God with awe, reverence, and humility in every area of life.
- Pray for boldness and persistence in prayer, trusting God even when misunderstood or challenged.

- Pray for attentiveness to God's voice and the willingness to respond faithfully, following His guidance in daily choices.

Deeper Dive- The Sins of Eli's Sons

Eli's sons were priests, but instead of honoring God, they treated His sacrifices with contempt and abused their position. Scripture calls them *worthless men* who did not truly know the Lord, even though they were serving in ministry. Their corruption not only dishonored God but also caused others to stumble and turn away from Him.

What Were They Doing Wrong?

Read 1 Samuel 2:13-17

"The custom of the priests with the people was that when any man offered sacrifice, the priest's servant would come, while the meat was boiling, with a three-pronged fork in his hand, and he would thrust it into the pan or kettle or cauldron or pot. All that the fork brought up the priest would take for himself. This is what they did at Shiloh to all the Israelites who came there. Moreover, before the fat was burned, the priest's servant would come and say to the man who was sacrificing, 'Give meat for the priest to roast, for he will not accept boiled meat from you but only raw.' And if the man said to him, 'Let them burn the fat first, and then take as much as you wish,' he would say, 'No, you must give it now, and if not, I will take it by force.' Thus the sin of the young men was very great in the sight of the LORD, for the men treated the offering of the LORD with contempt."

1. What do you notice about how they treated the sacrifices?

Why Did God Call Their Actions Worthless?

Read 1 Samuel 2:12

"Now the sons of Eli were worthless men. They did not know the LORD."

2. Can someone be in ministry or leadership and still not really know God?

What Other Sins Did They Commit?

Read 1 Samuel 2:22-25

"Now Eli was very old, and he kept hearing all that his sons were doing to all Israel, and how they lay with the women who were serving at the entrance to the tent of meeting. And he said to them, 'Why do you do such things? For I hear of your evil dealings from all these people. No, my sons; it is no good report that I hear the people of the LORD spreading abroad. If someone sins against a man, God will mediate for him, but if someone sins against the LORD, who can intercede for him?' But they would not listen to the voice of their father, for it was the will of the LORD to put them to death."

3. Have you ever seen someone's faith shaken because of a leader's sin?

How Did Their Sin Affect Others?

Read 1 Samuel 2:17. 24

“Thus the sin of the young men was very great in the sight of the LORD, for the men treated the offering of the LORD with contempt... No, my sons; it is no good report that I hear the people of the LORD spreading abroad.”

4. How did their sin make others turn away from God?

New Testament Connection

Jesus takes sin very seriously, especially when it leads others astray. He warns that causing one of His “little ones” to stumble is so severe that it would be better to have a millstone tied around the neck and be drowned. This connects to Eli’s sons, whose corruption not only dishonored God but also led others into disrespect and unbelief — showing us how dangerous it is when spiritual leaders lose their awe of God.

Read Matthew 18:6

“But whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin,[a] it would be better for him to have a great millstone fastened around his neck and to be drowned in the depth of the sea.”

5. How can we protect others, especially the young or new believers, by living with integrity?