

FAITHFULNESS AND LEGACY: AN EXEGESIS OF 1 SAMUEL 2:33-35

A Paper

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³³For I will cut off every man but one of yours from my altar so as to wear out your eyes and to waste away your life – and all the new children of your house will die in the prime of life. ³⁴And this is the sign for you that will happen to your two sons, Hophni and Phinehas – both of them will die on a single day. ³⁵Then I will raise up for myself a faithful priest who will do as I intend and desire. I will build an enduring house for him, and he will serve before my anointed for all time.

(Author's Interpretive Translation – 1 Samuel 2:33-35)

Introduction

Samuel is a book of comparative contrasts, deliberately and artfully arranged to pervade and define its themes and characterizations.¹ John Martin points out multiple themes running through Samuel which drive the formation and interpretation of the text. One major theme is the link between faithful obedience to the covenant and a God-provisioned family legacy (along with the corresponding failing legacy of the disobedient).² This theme is prevalent in the judgment of this passage and sets the tone for the rest of Samuel. Likewise, Martin emphasizes the reversal of fortunes motif, in which the humble are raised up (Samuel vs. Eli's sons) and the lofty are lowered (Eli vs. Zadok).³ This passage, in which Eli and his house are judged and replaced by a faithful priest with an enduring legacy, not only sets the tone for the rest of Samuel; but it defines

¹ Moshe Garsiel, *The First Book of Samuel: A Literary Study of Comparative Structures, Analogies And Parallels* (Israel: Revivim Publishing House, 1985), 5, 11.

² John A. Martin, "Studies in 1 and 2 Samuel, Part 2: The Literary Quality of 1 and 2 Samuel," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 141, no. 562 (Apr 1984): 140.

³ Martin, "Studies...", 135.

the criteria for God's actions in the text and ultimately points forward to the most faithful of priests and the most enduring of houses.

Judgment on Eli's House (v.33)

Verse 33 continues a judgment on Eli and his priestly descendants that began in verse 30. It is divine discourse directly recited by "a man of God", an unnamed prophet that delivers God's judgment to Eli.

The second half of verse 33 contains a pair of infinitive clauses that exhibit an important textual critical problem. These exemplify the common textual case for Samuel, in which the Septuagintal and Qumran manuscripts are agreed against the MT and there are no other definitive clues as to which is superior. Unfortunately, in this case, the resulting text has an extended effect on translation choices for the rest of the verse and must be dealt with in advance. While the Masoretic text reads "cause *your* eyes to weep and *your* soul to grieve," applying this grief to Eli, the Septuagint and 4QSam^a read "cause *his* eyes to weep and *his* soul to grieve", applying it instead to Eli's family member, mentioned at the outset of the verse. Those who choose the LXX (McCarter, Klein, Gordon, Smith) will emphasize the contrast of this man's fate from the rest of the judgment⁴, while those who choose the MT (Tsumura, Bergen, Omanson, Youngblood, and this paper⁵) will tend to translate to more continuously incorporate verse 33 into the greater context of judgment on Eli.

⁴ A contributing factor for many scholars is a proclivity for reading the fulfillment of the prophecy (Abiathar in 22:17-20; 1 Ki 2:27) back into the prophecy itself - a practice justified by a cynical view of a deuteronomist/Josianic redactor with political motives. See McCarter, 89, 91-92; Gordon, 23; Klein, 24; Cf Bergen, 84 n.43).

⁵ For a further treatment of this textual-critical problem, see Appendix 4.

A Sole Survivor (v.33a)

“For I will cut off every man but one of yours from my altar...”

This first clause begins with a simple conjunctive waw (“and/or/but...”). Many translations and scholars drop it altogether (NIV, ESV), while others give it a disjunctive meaning (NASB, “Yet...”). The problem of a disjunctive approach is that, while it does recognize the excepted family member of Eli’s that follows, it also sets up a contrast with the judgment of verse 32, in which Eli is told that his house would have no more old men. If verse 33 were meant as a message of hope or of relief from judgment (as it could seem from the first clause) then this would fit. But any hope or exception to judgment should not have the grievous result for Eli (or the excepted man) that verse 33 goes on to describe (“... in order to wear out your eyes and to cause your life to waste away”). Leaving the conjunction out is a neutral option, but an epexegetical usage⁶ (as above, “For I will cut off...”) may serve to move the meaning along more clearly as an extension of judgment.

The verb in this clause is a form of כרת (“cut off”), and can also take the meaning “exterminate.”⁷ Scholars and translators are almost universal, however, in retaining “cut off” in their translations, allowing the reader to make the interpretive choice. The literal translation, “a man I will not cut off of yours...” leaves a lot of flexibility to the translator. Most translators agree that the object refers to “one man”

⁶ Bruce K. Waltke and Michael Patrick O'Connor, *An Introduction to Biblical Hebrew* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1990), 652.

⁷ Ludwig; Walter Baumgartner Koehler, M.E.J Richardson and Johann Jakob Stamm, "כרת," in *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament (HALOT)*, (Leiden, New York: E.J. Brill, 1999), 500.

(excepting the NIV’s “every one of you that I do not cut off...”, which Roger Omanson in the UBS handbook chides as clearly unacceptable⁸). Translators who take the LXX version of the second clause will emphasize this one man more. McCarter renders it “One man shall I spare you at my altar⁹,” while Klein translates “The man whom I do not cut off for you from my altar.¹⁰” Versions that use the MT and emphasize the continuation of judgment on Eli will handle the one man as a smaller figure in a bigger purpose, such as Tsumura’s “all but one man of you shall I cut off from my altar¹¹,” or this paper’s “I will cut off every man but one of yours from my altar.”

A Resulting Curse (v.33b)

“...so as to wear out your eyes and to waste away your life...”

Two infinitive constructs, לְכַלֹּת (‘‘to cause to fail’’) and וְלִאֲרִיב (‘‘to grieve’’) are connected in parallel here, each teamed with a typical Hebrew word pair, עֵין (‘‘eyes’’) and נֶפֶשׁ (‘‘life’’). The word pair is typically used in situations of grief or distress brought by judgment (Lev 26:16; Deut 28:65; Jer. 13:17; Ezek 24:21; Ps. 116:8; Eccl.

⁸ Roger L. Omanson and John Ellington, *A Handbook on the First Book of Samuel*. UBS handbook series (New York: United Bible Societies, 2001), 84.

⁹ P.K. McCarter, Jr, *1 Samuel: A New Translation with Introduction, Notes and Commentary*. Anchor Bible, Volume 8 (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1980), 86.

¹⁰ R. W. Klein, *1 Samuel*, Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 10 (Waco, TX: Word Books, 1983), 22.

¹¹ Tsumura, David, *New International Commentary on the Old Testament*, ed. R.K. Harrison and Robert L. Hubbard, Jr, *The First Book of Samuel* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Co, 2007), 164.

6:9).¹² Their usage here is appropriate, as the infinitives serve as introductions to result (an argument for purpose could be made) clauses, showing the consequences for Eli of all but one of his family being cut off from the altar¹³ (or the consequences for the man not being cut off from v.33a if translated “his eyes/life”, as discussed earlier). This semantic choice is supported by the causative sense of לְכַלֵּית, ¹⁴ as well as the intertextual implication of divinely-imposed diseased eyes from Leviticus 26:16 and Deuteronomy 28:65.¹⁵ A closer comparison to Leviticus 26:16 and Deuteronomy 28:65 links this result to a “curse formula” for those breaking covenant with God.¹⁶

וְלִאֲדָיִב is, as a hapax legomenon, contested by many scholars, although Gesenius uses it as an example of an unusual form¹⁷. Most scholars feel it is a corruption and go to Leviticus 26:16 to claim לְהִדָּרֵיב (“pine/drain away”) as a replacement with little effect on the meaning.¹⁸

¹² Tsumura, *Samuel*, 169.

¹³ Waltke and O'Connor, *Biblical Hebrew*, 607.

¹⁴ "כִּלְהֵ" in *HALOT*, 476-477.

¹⁵ Tsumura, *Samuel*, 169-170.

¹⁶ R. P. Gordon, *1 & 2 Samuel* (Exeter: Paternoster, 1986), 87.

¹⁷ Friedrich Wilhelm Gesenius, "§ 53. Hiph'ıl and Hoph'al; part q," in *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar, 2nd English ed*, ed. Kautzsch, E. and Sir Arthur Ernest Cowley (Bellingham, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc, 2003), 148.

¹⁸ "אֲדָיִב," in *HALOT*, 11; Klein, 23; McCarter, 89; Youngblood, 589. Smith (24) prefers a Deut 28:65 equivalent, and Tsumura conjectures that all three roots could have come from “an original bi-consonantal *db” (164).

A Withering Legacy (v.33c)

“...and all the new children of your house will die in the prime of life.”

Here is another place in which the choice of translation of the conjunctive waw depends somewhat on the choices elsewhere in the verse. If the verse prior to this point largely discusses the man of Eli’s house and the judgment on him, then this would mark a return to judgment on Eli and would suggest a disjunctive waw (McCarter, 86; Klein, 22; “but all the...”). A continual focus on the judgment of Eli, however, allows the use of a simple conjunctive waw linking this clause as an extension of the continuing judgment (this paper; “...and all the new children...”) ¹⁹. While this has traditionally been translated “the increase of your house”, Tsumura suggests along with HALOT that it is more effectively rendered “all the new children” without losing meaning. ²⁰

The conclusion of this verse is another point of varied opinion both due to a very undefinitive (though not incoherent) text in the MT and an attractive text-critical alternative from the Qumran/Septuagintal pairing which would provide significant clarification to the meaning. The MT reads **יָמוּתוּ אֲנָשִׁים** which translates literally as “[they] will die men”. The alternative manuscripts add the word-phrase **בְּתֵקֶרֶב** (“by the sword of”) to complete the thought “[they] will die *by the sword of* men.” Unfortunately, this neat resolution of the difficulty adds to the likelihood that the word-phrase was added to the text by an overly helpful scribe to resolve the difficulty. ²¹ While many are satisfied

¹⁹ Waltke and O'Connor, *Biblical Hebrew*, 653-654.

²⁰ Tsumura, *Samuel*, 164; *HALOT*, 631.

²¹ Ellis R. Brotzman, *Old Testament Textual Criticism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 1994), 128.

to take this solution²², other scholars are again reluctant to amend the MT on ambiguous evidence.²³

Those who do not emend the MT are forced to guess at the relationship between the final two words. The traditional solution has been to add the particle “as” creating the idiomatic “die as men”, which could refer to death “in the prime of life” (NASB; NIV). CTAT, the textual rating group, recommends that it be taken as “will die as ordinary men,” meaning that they will not be priests when they die.²⁴ Tsumura suggests two options, one of “by the hand of men,” suggesting their death by means of violence (rather than their age/state at death), and one of making “men” the subject (“men will die”), once again noting that only the males were priests.²⁵ Each of these options from the MT, however, is largely speculative or draws on the tricky practice of drawing on later fulfillment to translate the prophecy. For this reason, this paper will stick with what is the most conservative of the MT solutions, “[they] will die in the prime of life,” with the caveat that it does have the added support of mirroring vs. 31’s “there will not be an old man in your house.”

Eli’s Confirming Sign (v.34)

In verse 34, Eli is given a sign to confirm to him the authenticity and sure completion of God’s judgement (as he will not be alive to witness its continual

²² McCarter, 86; Gordon, 87; Klein, 22; Smith, 23; ESV.

²³ For a further treatment of the textual-critical problem, see Appendix 5.

²⁴ Roger L. Omanson and John Ellington, *A Handbook on the First Book of Samuel*. UBS handbook series (New York: United Bible Societies, 2001), 85.

²⁵ Tsumura, *Samuel*, 164, 170.

progression).

A Sign of Things to Come (v.34a)

“And this is the sign for you...”

The initial simple conjunctive *waw* carries no significant weight, other than to continue the prophetic message. וְזֶה-לְךָ (“and this for you”) initiates a nominal clause of identification²⁶ assuming an equative verb (“is”). The initial embedded demonstrative pronoun זֶה (“this”) points forward cataphorically to the predicate תִּשְׂמָחָה (“the sign”), as well as further to the content of the clause that explains the sign.²⁷ The appended preposition and pronominal suffix לְךָ (“for you”) state that the sign is given for Eli’s attention, if not necessarily his benefit.²⁸

תִּשְׂמָחָה (“sign”) is used in a variety of ways in the Old Testament. It is an indicator of some other truth, sometimes as a reminder and sometimes as an indication of veracity. Typically, when given in a prophecy, such as in our text, the sign serves to authenticate the messenger as a prophet of God, to validate the prophecy as an intent of God, and to remind the recipient of the dependability of God to fulfill his commitments, whether in blessing or judgment.²⁹ This sign served to reinforce the intention and ability

²⁶ “Clauses of identification”, Waltke and O’Connor, *Biblical Hebrew*, 130-131.

²⁷ “Deictic relative force”, Waltke and O’Connor, *Biblical Hebrew*, 311-312.

²⁸ Paul Joüon and T. Muraoka, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew: Revised English Edition* (Roma: Pontificio istituto biblico, 2006), 458-459.

²⁹ More information on תִּשְׂמָחָה is available in a word study in Appendix 6.

of God to fulfill his prophetic judgment, so that even as Eli was dying he would be confident of the continuing judgment against his family.³⁰

A Deserving Pair (v.34b)

“...that will happen to your two sons, Hophni and Phinehas,...”

This is a relative clause begun with the relative pronoun אֲשֶׁר (“who/which/that”), and is a dependent relative clause without resumption.³¹ It modifies אֵלֶּיךָ of the previous clause and serves epexegetically to describe the recipients of the action of the sign. The sons are named in the appositional clause, and the clause is introduced by the duplication of the accusative particle, further confirming their receipt of the action of the verb. Smith holds that this appositional clause is “superfluous and perhaps a gloss,” but there is no significant support for doubting its role, and by the text the two sons had already been named and singled out for death (1 Sam 1:3, 2:25).³²

A Sad Day (v.34b)

“... both of them will die on a single day.”

In this case, the number אֶחָד (“one”) gives “an emphatic, counting force” to the indefinite noun בַּיּוֹם (“in a day”).³³

³⁰ Gordon, *Samuel*, 87.

³¹ “Uses of אֲשֶׁר”, Waltke and O'Connor, *Biblical Hebrew*, 333.

³² H. P. Smith, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Books of Samuel*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1899), 24.

³³ “Cardinal ‘One,’ ’Two’”, Waltke and O'Connor, *Biblical Hebrew*, 274.

A Faithful Replacement (v.35)

Verse 35 shows God’s providence in the face of man’s failure. God’s purposes will not be thwarted, but instead Eli’s failure will lead to the contrasting arrival of a faithful and obedient priest whose legacy will continue in testament to God’s sovereignty.

A Faithful Priest (v.35a)

“Then I will raise up for myself a faithful priest...”

The verse begins with a waw consecutive verb for the first time since verse 32, marking a continuation of the narrative (perfect consecutive) but a fresh focus. The consecutive waw here can give the verse a future temporal perspective (“then I will...”).³⁴ Tsumura and the ESV both use a simple conjunction here (“And...”), while the NASB gives it a disjunctive sense (“But...”) to contrast this priest with the judged Eli and family.³⁵ Of the three, the simple conjunctive would seem to be the weakest, acknowledging no shift in the text, while the other two options are both contextually valid. The hifil form of the verb root קָוַם (“to rise”) gives it a causative effect (“to cause to rise = to raise”), while the reflexive “for myself” comes not from the verb but from לִי (“to/for me”), in which the preposition לְ indicates the beneficiary of the action.³⁶

The verbal root אָמַן is used to signify that which can be trusted or believed, that which is reliable and consistent. In this verse it is used twice in its Niphal participle

³⁴ Ronald J. Williams, *Williams' Hebrew Syntax, Third Edition* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007), 76.

³⁵ Tsumura, *Samuel*, 164.

³⁶ Joüon, *A Grammar*, 458-459.

form, in which it consistently refers adjectivally to mean “trustworthy”, “reliable”, and “faithful” or to mean “consistent”, “dependable”, and “enduring”. It functions in this clause as an attributive adjectival participle modifying **כֹּהֵן** (“priest”).³⁷ It is modeled in the everlasting faithfulness of God and is contrasted with the wavering fidelity of man. In this verse it initiates a recurring verbal tie to God’s faithfulness in establishing a faithful priest and an enduring lineage. This motif emerges first with Samuel, later with Zadok and David, and through all to Christ the Prophet, Priest, and King.³⁸

An Obedient Priest (v.35b)

“...who will do as I intend and desire.”

The clause begins with **כַּאֲשֶׁר** (“just as / according to”), an inseparable preposition prefixed to a relative pronoun. The result can be quite variable, though in this case it presents the comparison between what God desires and what this faithful priest will do (lit. “just as [what is] in my heart and [what is] in my soul [so] he shall do.”).³⁹ While some begin a new sentence with this clause, it is more common to treat it as a relative clause, as above. “Heart” and “soul” are an idiomatic word pair, denoting the will and the desire, respectively.⁴⁰ Youngblood seems to take it even a step farther, asserting that this faithful priest would “be privy to the very thoughts of God,” perhaps with

³⁷ Williams, *Hebrew Syntax*, 88.

³⁸ For more on this word, see the word study in Appendix 7.

³⁹ Williams, *Hebrew Syntax*, 104.

⁴⁰ McCarter, *Samuel*, 91; *see also* Tsumura, *Samuel*, 171.

Samuel the prophet in consideration.⁴¹

A Lasting Legacy (v.35c)

“I will build an enduring house for him...”

Another perfect waw consecutive verb, וַיִּבְנֶה (‘‘and I will build’’) continues this verse, but generally as a new sentence. Scholars are split on whether to explicitly acknowledge the conjunction, and those who do translate it as the simple conjunction (‘‘and’’). It could be taken as a response to the priest’s faithfulness, and thus be translated with the resultative ‘‘so’’ or ‘‘therefore’’. This usage would fit the thematic context of Samuel in which faithfulness to God and covenant is directly tied to familial continuance.⁴² However, while Joüon acknowledges the potential for a waw consecutive to take on a resultative sense (‘‘a logical consecution’’), he warns against interrupting a perfect consecutive sequence without significant cause.⁴³ As this usage falls in the middle of a continuing series of perfect consecutives, breaking the series so strongly would be a poor choice.

An enduring house quickly becomes a theme through the Old Testament after this text, though it is the reiterated form in a different promise to David that becomes dominant. The house generally represents the household, and can be expanded to refer to

⁴¹ Ronald F. Youngblood, *1, 2 Samuel*, The Expositor's Bible Commentary, ed. Frank E. Gaebelein, vol. 3 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1992), 588.

⁴² Martin, ‘‘Studies...’’, 140.

⁴³ Joüon, *A Grammar*, 368-369. Compare §119e with §119f, and note the continuing prevalence of perfect consecutives in verses 35-36.

the greater family lineage, posterity, or descendants.⁴⁴ It builds on the same participle נֶאֱמָן (“faithful/enduring”) as discussed above, this time describing the house – or line of descendants – that God will faithfully provide and provide for.

A Secure Position (v.35d)

“...and he will serve before my anointed for all time.”

This clause begins with another perfect consecutive, this time of the hithpael form וְהִתְהַלֵּךְ (“to walk about”). A simple continuing “and” best links this clause in continuance with the previous clause, as there are no other significant syntactical markers or pressures. The verbal form is difficult to pin down semantically, as Waltke-O’Conner traces several competing attempts to classify it.⁴⁵ It can be generally said, however, to mean “to walk about” – and when used as above (“to walk about *before a person*”), it takes on the figurative use of service or ministry to and on behalf of that person.⁴⁶

לְפָנַי־מְשִׁיחַי (lit. “before the face of my anointed one”) is a compound word and must be handled semantically and figuratively. The initial preposition-noun form a typical union and in this case specify a local adverbial direction to the preceding verb (*i.e.* – “to walk before”).⁴⁷ מְשִׁיחַי (“my anointed”) is a reference to the coming Israelite king,

⁴⁴ Ethelbert William Bullinger, "Metonymy of the Subject: House is put for household," in *Figures of Speech Used in the Bible*, (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1898), 573.

⁴⁵ “Hithpael Stem: Comparative Semitic Proposals”, Waltke and O’Connor, *Biblical Hebrew*, 427.

⁴⁶ McCarter, *Samuel*, 90-91; see also Tsumura, *Samuel*, 164.

⁴⁷ “Complex Prepositions and Nouns”, Waltke and O’Connor, *Biblical Hebrew*,

having already been mentioned in the song of Hannah (1 Samuel 2:10). While it is the Hebrew term “messiah”, it has not at this point developed the “messianic deliverer” sense it does in later prophetic use. Here, it begins to note the impending arrival of a leader for Israel especially chosen and sanctified by God.⁴⁸ Altogether, the verb and compound word following becomes “will serve before my anointed...”.

Finally, **כָּל־הַיָּמִים** (“all of the days”) modifies the verb **וְהִתְהַלַּךְ** temporally, setting a time from that the faithful priest’s service will endure.

Conclusion

This paper has spent little time considering the implications of the text, focusing instead on syntactical and textual decisions to render an accurate understanding of the authorial meaning. It is clear, however, that this passage has significant contributions not just to the understanding of Samuel, but further into the relationship of prophet to priest to King, the Davidic promise, and the Messianic fulfillment in Christ.

Many scholars see this passage as a deuteronomist addition, intent on justifying the Josianic reforms by inserting a judgment on Elide priests and an ordaining of Zadokite priests.⁴⁹ The truth of this passage, however, is that Eli’s willingness to honor his sons above God highlighted the corruption of the priesthood at Shiloh and served as a contrast to Samuel, who was faithfully serving before the Lord. It is no accident that the author writes that Samuel was confirmed (**נִאֲמַרְתָּ**) as a prophet. He did indeed stand as

221.

⁴⁸ Tsumura, *Samuel*, 150, 171.

⁴⁹ See McCarter, 89, 91-92; Gordon, 23; Klein, 24; Cf Bergen, 84 n.43).

the first, though incomplete, fulfillment of this promised faithful replacement. His role as a faithful prophet serves as a continual foil to not only Eli, but eventually Saul as well.

Zadok's replacement of Abiathar shows, however, that God's provision for sin is not only found in grace, but in His sovereign plan of judgment as well. His judgment on Eli's house did not break his covenant with the Aaronic priests. And Samuel's continual comparisons and linguistic links between faithful priest, insightful prophet, and anointed King pave the way for a greater Messianic fulfillment in Christ.

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APPENDIX 1

EXEGETICAL OUTLINE

- A. **Judgment on Eli's House:** Eli is told that the very legacy he honored above God would be cut off from the priesthood and that his family would die out (2:33)
1. **A Sole Survivor:** The family of Eli, with the exception of one descendant, would be cut off from the priesthood. (33a)
 2. **A Resulting Curse:** Eli's moral failure and subsequent judgment would result in physical failure (33b)
 3. **A Withering Legacy:** Eli's family line would die out (33c)
- B. **Eli's Confirming Sign:** Eli is given a prophetic sign to confirm God's judgement, initiating the fatal judgment already given on the two sons that Eli honored above God (2:34)
1. **A Sign of Things to Come:** Eli will be given a sign to authenticate the prophecy and to confirm the full extent of God's judgment even after Eli's death (34a)
 2. **A Deserving Pair:** The sign will fall on Eli's two sons, the very sons Eli failed to judge himself and so brought about this judgment (34b)
 3. **A Sad Day:** The two sons would die on the same day, the beginning of the Eli's family's priestly and familial fall (34c)
- C. **A Faithful Replacement:** In contrast to Eli, God will provide a faithful priest that will serve in obedience, and God will ensure his family's legacy (2.35)
1. **A Faithful Priest:** God will bring up another priest who is characterized by his reliable devotion to God (35a)
 2. **An Obedient Priest:** This priest will perceive and obey God's intentions and desires (35b)
 3. **A Lasting Legacy:** God will, in turn, provide this priest with a perpetual and reliable familial and priestly legacy (35c)
 4. **A Secure Position:** This priest and his legacy will have a continual ministry before God's chosen and sanctified King (35d)

APPENDIX 2

STRUCTURAL OUTLINE

מִזְבְּחִי מֵעַם לָךְ לֹא־אֶכְרִית וְאִישׁ³³
 my altar from of yours I will not cut off And a man

אֶת־עֵינֶיךָ לְכַלּוֹת
 your eyes to wear out

אֶת־נַפְשְׁךָ וְלֹא־יָרִיב
 Your life and to waste away

וְכָל־מַרְבִּית בֵּיתְךָ יָמוּתוּ אֲנָשִׁים:
 men will die your house and all the increase of

וְזֶה־לְךָ³⁴ הָאוֹת
 the sign and this (will be) for you

וּפִינְחָס אֶל־חֹפְנִי בְנֵיךָ אֶל־שְׁנֵי יָבֵא אִשָּׁר
 and Phinehas to Hophni your sons to the two of will come that

בְּיוֹם אֶחָד יָמוּתוּ שְׁנֵיהֶם:
 the two of them will die on the same day

וְהִקְיַמְתִּי³⁵ לִי כֹהֵן נֶאֱמָן
 reliable priest for myself and I will raise

כַּאֲשֶׁר בְּלִבִּי וּבִנְפֹשִׁי יַעֲשֶׂה
 will do and in my soul in my heart as that

וּבְנִיתִי לוֹ בַּיִת נֶאֱמָן
 enduring a house for him and I will build

וְהִתְהַלֵּךְ לִפְנֵי־מְשִׁיחִי כָּל־הַיָּמִים:
 All of the days before my anointed one and he will walk about

APPENDIX 3

HOMILETICAL OUTLINE & MAIN IDEA

Homiletical Idea: Though we live under God's grace and mercy, deliberate disobedience to Him will result in direct consequences, including the forfeiture of our ministry and the weakening of our home.

- A. Judgment of disobedience will be more severe than you expect.
 - a. His family's position as priests, which he thought was secure [cf v.30]
 - b. His family's continuing legacy
 - c. His own health and vitality
- B. That which you honor above God will be the first thing He removes, to make His judgment clear
 - a. Eli had honored his sons above God
 - i. As priests
 - ii. As family
- C. God's plan will not be thwarted, his ministry will reflect His character
 - a. Samuel was a faithful prophet
 - b. Zadok was a faithful priest
 - c. Christ was the faithful prophet, priest, and King who did according to what was in God's heart and in His soul

Conclusion: Complacency with sin will result in judgment on us and in replacement in ministry.

APPENDIX 4

A TEXTUAL PROBLEM IN 1 SAMUEL 2:33 [A]: “your” vs. “his”

וְאִישׁ לֹא-אֶכְרִית לְךָ מֵעַם מִזְבְּחִי לְכַלּוֹת אֶת-עֵינֶיךָ וְלֹאֲרִיב אֶת-נַפְשֶׁךָ
 וְכָל-מִרְבֵּית בֵּיתְךָ יָמוּתוּ אֲנָשִׁים:

“And/But I will not cut off [every] man of yours from-with My altar to cause your eyes to fail and to cause your soul to grieve, and all the increase of your house will die [as] men.”
 (1 Samuel 2:33 – A Simple Literal Translation by Student)

Simple Statement of TC Problem: According to the BHS Apparatus, Septuagintal Manuscripts, Qumran manuscripts, and some Old Latin manuscripts read with a 3rd person singular suffix on both “אֶת-עֵינֶיךָ” (“your eyes”) and “אֶת-נַפְשֶׁךָ” (“your soul”), rendering instead “אֶת-עֵינָיו” (“his eyes”) and “אֶת-נַפְשׁוֹ” (“his soul”).

Reading #1 : MT	Reading #2: Qumran	Reading #3: Septuagint
לְכַלּוֹת אֶת-עֵינֶיךָ וְלֹאֲרִיב אֶת-נַפְשֶׁךָ וְכָל-מִרְבֵּית	לְכַלּוֹת אֶת-עֵינָיו וְלֹאֲרִיב אֶת-נַפְשׁוֹ וְכָל-מִרְבֵּית	ἐκλιπεῖν τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς αὐτοῦ καὶ καταρρεῖν τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ ⁵⁰
	3ms suffixes “his” rather than 2ms “your” suffixes	
“to cause your eyes to fail and to cause your soul to grieve”	“to cause his eyes to fail and to cause his soul to grieve”	“to fail his eyes and to disease his soul.”

⁵⁰ *Septuaginta : With morphology*. 1979 (electronic ed.) (1 Kgdms 2:33). Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft.

External Evidence

Please note, in the introduction of this paper, the discussion of the textual character of Samuel in the MT and the common agreement of the LXX/4QSam against it. It is the tendency of scholars to come to these textual critical problems in Samuel with a preference for or against amending the MT with the LXX/4QSam already in view.

The Qumran and the LXX of Samuel are both well-regarded early witnesses to the text. The nature of the relationship between the Qumran, the MT, and the LXX is still in debate as to their interdependence and the relative text-family of the Qumran.

Nonetheless, with the agreement of both against the MT, the external evidence would favor readings #2 & #3, the English reading “his eyes... his soul.”

Internal Evidence

None of the readings are nonsensical or jumbled. The change is unlikely to be an unintentional scribal error, as there are no likely contributing factors and the change is duplicated in both places.

The most significant internal evidence is that it could be a scribal change to deliberately shift the application of the verbals from Eli to the subject of the previous clauses, due to the potential redactor’s supposition that this was the original intent or the preferred interpretation.

As such, the internal evidence suggests that the MT Reading #1 is to be preferred as the more difficult reading (not from a textual/grammatical basis, but from an interpretive one), and thus the reading more likely to be amended by scribes.

Conclusion

The External evidence favors Readings #2 & #3 due to their diversity in text-

families, early witness, and reliable character. The Internal evidence, however, favors Reading #1 as the more difficult reading, but one which is still usable.

Omanson, in the UBS Handbook, remarks:

His eyes ... his heart. the Hebrew says “your [singular] eyes” and “your [singular] heart.” It has seemed impossible to many interpreters to think that the fate of Abiathar, long after Eli’s death, will cause Eli sorrow. Many translations therefore follow the Septuagint and a manuscript from Qumran, which say “his eyes” and “his soul.” CTAT, however, gives a {B} rating to the MT, stating that even though Eli will be dead, he will suffer by seeing Abiathar banished by Solomon. NIV, which attempts to translate the Hebrew, says “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.” See also NJPS, “I shall not cut off all your offspring from My altar; [but] to make your eyes pine and your spirit languish, all the increase in your house shall die as [ordinary] men.” The recommendation of CTAT as well as the translations in NIV and NJPS attempt to make sense of the second person pronouns in Hebrew, but such translations seem to force a strange meaning. Translators may follow the models of RSV and TEV in reading “his” instead of “your.”⁵¹

Due to the ambiguity of the evidence, I will retain the MT reading.

⁵¹ Omanson, *A Handbook*, 85.

APPENDIX 5

A TEXTUAL PROBLEM IN 1 SAMUEL 2:33 [B]: “by the sword”

וְאִישׁ לֹא-אֶכְרִית לְךָ מֵעַם מִזְבְּחִי לְכָלֹת אֶת-עֵינֶיךָ וְלֹא-אֶרְיֵב אֶת-נַפְשֶׁךָ
 וְכָל-מִרְבֵּית בֵּיתְךָ יָמוּתוּ אֲנָשִׁים:

“And/But I will not cut off [every] man of yours from-with My altar to cause your eyes to fail and to cause your soul to grieve, and all the increase of your house will die [as] men.”
 (1 Samuel 2:33 – A Simple Literal Translation)

Simple Statement of TC Problem: According to the BHS Apparatus, Septuagintal Manuscripts add “ἐν ῥομφαία” between “יָמוּתוּ” and “אֲנָשִׁים”, and Qumran manuscripts add “בַּחֶרֶב” in the same place.

Reading #1 : MT	Reading #2: Qumran	Reading #3: Septuagint
וְכָל-מִרְבֵּית בֵּיתְךָ יָמוּתוּ אֲנָשִׁים	וְכָל-מִרְבֵּית בֵּיתְךָ יָמוּתוּ בַּחֶרֶב אֲנָשִׁים	καὶ πᾶς περισσεύων οἴκου σου πεσοῦνται ἐν ῥομφαία ἀνδρῶν. ⁵²
	בַּחֶרֶב = בָּ + הַ + חֶרֶב Prep. “by” + def. art. “the” + segholate noun “knife/sword” (construct? “of”)	ἐν ῥομφαία prep. “in/with/by” + noun “large sword” + genitive plural object of the preposition “of men”
“and all the increase of your house will die [as] men.”	“and all the increase of your house will die <i>by the sword [of]</i> men.”	“and all the ones who abound of your house will fall [Liddell/Scott: possible: ‘be killed in battle’] <i>by the sword of</i> men.”

⁵² *Septuaginta : With morphology*. 1979 (electronic ed.) (1 Kgdms 2:33). Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft.

External Evidence

Please note, in the introduction of this paper, the discussion of the textual character of Samuel in the MT and the common agreement of the LXX/4QSam against it. It is the tendency of scholars to come to these textual critical problems in Samuel with a preference for or against amending the MT with the LXX/4QSam already in view.

The Qumran and the LXX of Samuel are both well-regarded early witnesses to the text. The nature of the relationship between the Qumran, the MT, and the LXX is still in debate as to their interdependence, derivation, and the relative text-family of the Qumran.

Nonetheless, with the agreement of both against the MT, the external evidence would favor readings #2 & #3, the English reading “die by the sword of men.”

Internal Evidence

None of the readings are nonsensical or jumbled. While the MT is an abrupt reading (lit. “... house will die men”), it can be and has been considered an idiomatic phrasing to convey that they “will die in the prime of life,” as the NASB translates the text.

The addition is unlikely to be an unintentional scribal error. There are no contributing factors of similar letters that could lead to a skipping of the eye from the beginning or end of a word. The most significant internal evidence is that it could be a scribal addition to ease the abruptness of the MT reading and provide a smoother reading that reflects the fulfilled prophecy later in the chapter.

As such, the internal evidence suggests that the MT Reading #1 is to be preferred as the more difficult reading, and thus the reading more likely to be amended by

scribes.

Conclusion

The External evidence favors Readings #2 & #3 due to their diversity in text-families, early witness, and reliable character. The Internal evidence, however, favors Reading #1 as the more difficult reading, but one which is still usable.

Due to the ambiguity of the evidence, I will retain the MT reading and take the phrase “will die men” idiomatically to reflect an untimely death of Eli’s family.

APPENDIX 6

אוֹת : A WORD STUDY FROM 1 SAMUEL 2:34

אוֹת (“sign”) text

וַיִּזְהַרְלֶךָ הָאוֹת אֲשֶׁר יָבֵא אֶל־שְׁנֵי בָנֶיךָ אֶל־חֶפְנֵי וּפִינֶחָס בַּיּוֹם אֶחָד יָמוּתוּ שְׁנֵיהֶם:

“This will be the sign to you which will come concerning your two sons, Hophni and Phinehas: on the same day both of them will die.” -- 1 Samuel 2:34, NASB95

Etymology of “אוֹת”

Because of the extensive usage of אוֹת throughout the Old Testament (~80 uses) and HALOT’s limited etymological context, this word study will focus on usage.

Usage

By Context

- Within 1 Samuel (not used in 2 Samuel), the root אוֹת is used 4 times.
 - Within **1 Samuel 2:34**, the articular form is used to describe a specific and significant event that will take place within a certain time frame, namely, the death of Eli’s two sons in one day. These signs are prophesied by a prophet.
 - In **1 Samuel 10:7**, Samuel is instructing Saul that when “these signs” (plural and articular) which he has just described, specifically spirit-filled prophecy, he would be overcome with the Spirit of the Lord and internally changed, and in **1 Samuel 10:9**, it confirmed that the signs did come about. These signs were prophesied by Samuel.
 - In **1 Samuel 10:14**, Jonathan tells his armor-bearer that if the enemy reacts in a predicted way, then it is a sign (singular articular) that God will grant them victory. It is unclear how Jonathan received this sign.
- Within the broader context of Judges and Kings, it is used 4 more times.
 - In **Judges 6:17**, Gideon asks the Lord for a sign (singular indefinite) that it is truly Him who is speaking to him. The Angel of the Lord responds by torching Gideon’s sacrifice.

- In **2 Kings 19:29**, Isaiah prophesies against Sennacherib king of Assyria in encouragement of King Hezekiah – he offers king Hezekiah a sign, a three year time of increasing crops to guarantee his prophecy.
- In **2 Kings 20:8-9**, King Hezekiah asks Isaiah for a sign that he would be healed. Isaiah offers an option of two possible miraculous signs “that the Lord will do the thing that He has spoken”, and when Hezekiah chooses the harder, Isaiah cries to the Lord and it is done.
- In the greater Old Testament, אֹת is used in these other significant ways.⁵³
 - As a distinguishing mark, as for Cain in Genesis 4:15, or the blood on the doorpost in Egypt in Ex 12:13;
 - As a marker to bear witness to a covenant, such as the rainbow in Gen 9:12-15, or the Sabbath as a marker to remind God’s people who sanctifies them in Ex 31:13;
 - As a marker to commemorate a significant event or place, such as the stones the Israelites took up from the Jordan in Josh 4:6,
 - An event to confirm the truth of a message, such as God’s sign to Moses in Ex 3:12 that He has sent them, that the Israelites will worship at that mountain

Usage Conclusions:

אֹת is used in a variety of ways as an indicator of something else, sometimes as a reminder and sometimes as an indication of truth. Typically, when given in a prophecy, such as in our text, the sign to authenticate the messenger as a prophet of God, to validate the prophecy as an intent of God, and serve as a reminder of the dependability of God to fulfill his commitments, whether in blessing or judgment.

⁵³ "אֹת" in *HALOT*, 26.

APPENDIX 7

נְאֻמָּן : A WORD STUDY FROM 1 SAMUEL 2:35

נְאֻמָּן (“faithful”) is the Niphal participle form of אָמַן (“to be firm, trustworthy, safe”), used twice in 1 Samuel 2:35 to describe both the nature of the priest God will raise up in contrast to Eli as well as the nature of the house God will build for this new priest. Its repetitive use in the passage and consistent use (particularly in this form) within 1 Samuel emphasize the descriptive importance of the term.

וְהִקִּימֹתִי לִי כֹהֵן נְאֻמָּן כַּאֲשֶׁר בְּלִבִּי וּבְנַפְשִׁי יַעֲשֶׂה וּבְנִיתִי לוֹ בַּיִת נְאֻמָּן וְהִתְהַלֵּךְ לִפְנֵי-מִשְׁחֵי כָּל-הַיָּמִים:

“But I will raise up for Myself a **faithful** priest who will do according to what is in My heart and in My soul; and I will build him an **enduring** house, and he will walk before My anointed always.” -- 1 Samuel 2:35, NASB95

Etymology of “אָמַן”

	Northwest Families	South Families	East Fam.
Early	Middle Hebrew & Phoenician (noun) have a form אִלְאָמָן matching a Syriac form meaning “to occupy oneself constantly with”;		
Mid	The hiphil form is thought to have influenced Aramaic הַיְמִין, Syriac “ <i>haimen</i> ”, and the Biblical Aramaic form meaning “to believe”	Form at left could have led to Arabic “ <i>haymana</i> ” meaning “to say Amen”, or alternatively to Arabic “ <i>amina</i> ” meaning “to be safe”, or “ <i>amuna</i> ” meaning “to be faithful”, “to believe”, or “to speak the truth” – or even the ESA “ <i>mn(t)</i> ” meaning “security”;	

Late	Ethiopic Tigre has a form “ <i>am(a)na</i> ” meaning “to believe”, while Egyptian has “ <i>mn</i> ” meaning “to be firm”
-------------	--

Etymological Conclusions: The Middle Hebrew and Phoenician “אמנ” has an early form that suggests “**an ongoing continual focus**,” while later derivations shift to a meaning more centered on “**belief**” and “**security**”. From the etymology alone, you might suppose “אמנ” to connote “**an ongoing belief or faith**”, or “**dependability**”.

Usage

By Form

1. The Niphal participle, as found in our passage, is typically used adjectivally as “**trustworthy**”, or “**faithful**”, or in a stative verbal sense as “**to be permanent**” or “**to endure**”. Similarly, it can be rephrased as “**that which is trustworthy**”, “**that which is intended to be faithful**”, or with prepositions to say “**entrusted with**” or “**appointed**”.
2. In the Niphal perfect or imperfect, it similarly suggests “**to be firm, reliable, faithful**”.
3. In the Hiphil, its usage shifts towards thought and belief. It can include the personal thought of an individual that led to an action; “**to have trust or believe something to be true;**” or “**to believe, have trust in, or have faith in God**”.

By Context

- Within 1 and 2 Samuel, the root אמנ is used 7 times, but 5 of those (including the two of our passage) are the Niphal participle form.
 - Within **1 Samuel 2:35**, the participles are used adjectivally to speak of the **trustworthiness/faithfulness** of the prophet that God will raise up, and the **permanence/endurance** of the “house” that God will build for this prophet. In contrast with Eli, the faithfulness of the prophet is in contrast to Eli’s unfaithfulness in regards to his children, and the endurance of the “house” – the enduring lineage of God’s new prophet – is in contrast to the judgment of the failure of Eli’s lineage.
 - In **1 Samuel 3:20**, the Niphal participle is used verbally to show Samuel “**confirmed**” as the prophet of God. The word could well be used to recall its earlier usage and Samuel’s position as the faithful prophet “**entrusted**” with God’s work. In **1 Samuel 22:14**, it is used to describe the “**faithfulness**” and “**unquestioned loyalty**” of David to Saul. Interestingly, it is used by Ahimelech, a priest of the house of Eli, just before he is killed, pointing once again to the fulfillment of the prophecy

in our passage. Finally, it is used in **1 Samuel 25:28** as Abigail entreats David for mercy and recognizes the blessing of God on David, that God will build him an “**enduring**” house. Once again, this phrase recalls the prophecy to Eli, and points past even Samuel further to the Davidic promise.

- In **1 Samuel 27:12**, the verb takes the form of a Hiphil imperfect, and following the Hiphil usage noted in #3 above means that Achish “**believed the word of**” David.
- In **2 Samuel 7:16**, there is a return to the Niphal (though perfect rather than participle) and to a linked usage to our verse. In it, God is covenanting with David, linking his house and his kingdom and stating that they would “**endure**” forever – once again extending the prophecy judging Eli’s house and emphasizing God’s enduring faithfulness.
- The Hiphil form, throughout the context of the OT, consistently stays within the usage of #3 above, and as such differs significantly in meaning from the Niphal as used in our verse (“believe” or “trust in” vs. “faithful” or “enduring”).
- Outside of 1 and 2 Samuel, the Niphal usage is consistent in noting “faithfulness”, “endurance”, “reliability”, “steadfastness”
 - In references following its usage in Samuel, the Niphal form is often used to point back to the Davidic covenant and God’s faithfulness, and thus even further back to our verse.
 - **1 Kings 11:38** – The Lord, through Ahijah, offers Jeroboam an “**enduring**” house as he built for David if Jeroboam is faithful as David was.
 - **Psalms 89:28, 37** directly referencing the Davidic covenant
 - **Isaiah 55:3**, in which God is extending David’s enduring covenant beyond Israel, offering an everlasting covenant according to the “**faithful**” mercies shown to David.
 - In this usage, it is sometimes used in the imperfect to refer to the “**fulfillment**” or “**establishment**” of the promise, such as in **1 Kings 8:26; 1 Chronicles 17:23-24; 2 Chronicles 1:9; 2 Chronicles 6:17;**
 - Some of those which predate or do not directly refer to the Davidic covenant speak of the consistent or inconsistent “**faithfulness**” of man following God, such as Moses in **Numbers 12:7** or the Israelites in **Psalms 78:37**. Some speak of “**reliable**” men, who are faithful to accomplish a task, such as workers in Nehemiah (**Neh 13:13**). And some speak of the “**trustworthiness**” of what is said, such as **Genesis 42:20**.
 - Finally, many of the uses amplify the consistent faithfulness and steadfastness of God. In **Psalms 93:5**, His laws are “**reliable**” or “**confirmed**”. In **Deuteronomy 7:9**, He is the “**faithful**” God, who keeps His covenant and His lovingkindness to a thousandth generation.

Usage Conclusions:

The root אָמַן is used to signify that which can be trusted or believed, that which is reliable and consistent. In its Niphal participle form, such as in our verse, it consistently refers adjectivally to mean “trustworthy”, “reliable”, and “faithful” or to mean “consistent”, “dependable”, and “enduring”.

It is modeled in the everlasting faithfulness of God, and is contrasted with the wavering fidelity of man. In our verse it initiates a recurring verbal tie to God’s faithfulness in establishing a faithful prophet and an enduring lineage. This motif emerges first with Samuel, later with David, and through both to Christ himself.