

1 Samuel 2:34

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And this shall be a sign unto thee, that shall come upon thy two sons, on Hophni and Phinehas; in one day they shall die both of them.

Analysis

A confirming sign seals the prophecy: Hophni and Phinehas will die on the same day. This near-term fulfillment validates the entire prophetic message. When the sign comes true (chapter 4), Eli can know the extended prophecy will also be fulfilled. The doubling of death - both sons together - emphasizes divine judgment rather than coincidence. Signs in prophetic literature serve to authenticate the prophet's message and call the hearers to response. Eli's response will determine his personal standing before God.

Historical Context

Prophetic signs often involved near-term fulfillments that confirmed longer-term prophecies. Isaiah offered Ahaz a similar confirming sign (Isaiah 7:14). The literary pattern of announcing judgment with immediate verification appears throughout prophetic literature.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How do you respond when God confirms His word through fulfilled prophecy?
2. What near-term signs might God be using to call attention to larger messages?

Interlinear Text

וְזֶה	לָכֵן	הָאֵת	אֲשֶׁר	יָבֹא	אֵל		
H2088	H0		H834		H413		
		And this shall be a sign		unto thee that shall come			
		H226		H935			
שְׁנֵיהֶם:	בְּנֵי יִצְחָק	אֵל	חֹפְנִי	וּפִינֵחַס	אֶחָד	בְּיוֹם	יָמָם
		H413					
both	sons		on Hophni	and Phinehas	day	in one	they shall die
H8147	H1121		H2652	H6372	H3117	H259	H4191
שְׁנֵיהֶם:							
both							
H8147							

Additional Cross-References

1 Kings 13:3 (Parallel theme): And he gave a sign the same day, saying, This is the sign which the LORD hath spoken; Behold, the altar shall be rent, and the ashes that are upon it shall be poured out.

1 Samuel 4:11 (Parallel theme): And the ark of God was taken; and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were slain.

1 Samuel 4:17 (Parallel theme): And the messenger answered and said, Israel is fled before the Philistines, and there hath been also a great slaughter among the people, and thy two sons also, Hophni and Phinehas, are dead, and the ark of God is taken.