

**COMPARATIVE TEXTUAL STUDY OF I SAMUEL 2:12-17 AND LUKE 3:18-20 AND THE RELEVANCE FOR CONTEMPORARY CHRISTIAN FAMILY EDUCATION**Subaedah Luma<sup>1</sup>, Ryanto Adilang<sup>2</sup>

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| <b>Diterima</b> : 07 Mei 2025<br><b>Direvisi</b> : 22 Mei 2025<br><b>Disetujui</b> : 29 Mei 2025 | <b>Abstrak</b><br><i>The dilemma between strict and gentle education patterns is still trapped in a never-ending turmoil. In Indonesia itself, this can still be seen clearly. Through the decision of the Governor of West Java to send naughty children to be trained in military barracks, many have reacted and spoken up. Some agree with the breakthrough, but some oppose it on the grounds that the action is not good for the child's psychology. Therefore, an understanding is needed regarding which pattern is most suitable for shaping the child's character. Families need to apply it in family Christian education and it also needs to be applied in the social environment.</i><br><i>This study uses a qualitative research method with a comparative approach. This study compares two priestly families in the Bible recorded in the book of Samuel and the Gospel of Luke. To analyze the text, the hermeneutic method of Thematic Criticism is used. The main theory underlying this study is Albert Bandura's Social Learning Theory which is used to highlight the influence of the environment on children's learning.</i><br><i>This research is expected to contribute to determining the right educational pattern, especially the education of today's Christian families. From this research, it is also expected that an understanding will emerge about how the Bible describes and elaborates on the fact that the social environment can influence the education of children in Christian families.</i> |
| <b>Kata Kunci</b> : christian, education, family, bible, comparative                             |  |

**Introduction**

The world of education is always caught in a dilemma about the most appropriate way to provide education and teaching. The world of education here is not only limited to formal education or schools, but also the most influential non-formal educational institution, namely the family. There is an opinion that education for children must be strict, but this often leads to depression for children.<sup>1</sup> So parents will be suspected as the guilty party in this condition.<sup>2</sup> Because depression is one of the early signs of mental disorders, this method cannot be justified.<sup>3</sup> Thus, another more suitable way is needed. Addressing depression in children due to a pattern of education that is too harsh or often known as

<sup>1</sup> Ktut Dianovinina, "Depresi Pada Remaja: Gejala Dan Permasalahannya," *Journal Psikogenesis* 6, no. 1 (2018): 69–78.

<sup>2</sup> Alvia Setyaningrum, Asmaa Mufida Rahman, and Maheswari Ngesti, "Dampak Harapan Orang Tua Yang Tidak Realistis Terhadap Akademik Remaja: Kajian Sistematis," *Jurnal Psikologi* 1, no. 4 (2024): 16.

<sup>3</sup> Direktorat Rehabilitasi et al., "DEPRESI : SUATU TINJAUAN PSIKOLOGIS Wandansari Sulistyorini Muslim Sabarisman Abstrak Perubahan Sosial Dan Kultur Sebagai Dampak Dari Kemajuan Teknologi Yang Sangat Pesat Di Era Globalisasi Sekarang Tidak Bisa Dipungkiri Membawa Dampak Pada Kehidupan , B" 3, no. 02 (n.d.): 153–164.

tiger parenting,<sup>4</sup> many parents prefer to do the opposite. Instead of educating firmly and harshly, many parents today educate their children in a relaxed and spoiled manner.<sup>5</sup> This also turns out to result in the destruction of the child's morals and character and is a loss for the child who ultimately has difficulty facing the challenges of adulthood.<sup>6</sup> So once again spoiling children is not the solution.

The Bible through the book of Proverbs agrees that a firm and disciplined educational method is very appropriate for educating children and youth.<sup>7</sup> This pattern has persisted for quite some time and has become a mainstay for the baby boomer generation.<sup>8</sup> It cannot be denied that a firm educational pattern has a direct impact on discipline.<sup>9</sup> Although this cannot be generalized to all cases. Because it was also found that strict educational patterns actually gave the opposite results.

From the description above, Christian Education, especially education in Christian families, requires the right approach and strategy. A strategy that ensures the growth and development of children in discipline to achieve success, but does not make children depressed. On the other hand, this growth and development must also ensure that children grow without intimidation but still produce strong and independent adults.

A comparative study between the Old Testament and New Testament texts, specifically between the texts of I Samuel 1:12-17 and Luke 3:18-20, attempts to produce an appropriate educational pattern for today's Christian family education that answers the questions that have been previously described in this article. This needs to be done based on the text of the Bible because the Christian Church agrees that the Bible is the basis of faith as well as the basis of theology. So, the Bible automatically also becomes the basis of Christian education.

## State of Research

The theme of education in scientific research is a common and frequently encountered theme. Family education has also long been highlighted so that many academics have discussed this as the main topic. It can be seen for example from Anam Besari's research which highlights family education as basic education for children.<sup>10</sup> There is also research from Sri Wahyuni and friends on Christian education in families in

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<sup>4</sup> Woran Zhang, "Tiger Parenting and Its Influence on American High School Students," *World Journal of Educational Research* 10, no. 5 (2023): p164.

<sup>5</sup> Wiwit Sri Suwarni, "Hubungan Sikap Manja Terhadap Tingkat Kreativitas Anak Taman Kanak-Kanak Dharma Wanita Persatuan Tulungagung," *Jurnal Sains dan teknologi* 5, no. 1 (2012): 1–20.

<sup>6</sup> Ema Fitria Agustina and Dewi Ulya Mailasari, "Spoiled Children: Problem Dan Solusi," *ThufuLA: Jurnal Inovasi Pendidikan Guru Raudhatul Athfal* 5, no. 2 (2018): 332.

<sup>7</sup> Sensius Amon Karlau, "OTORITAS GURU PAK DAN ORANG TUA : Disiplin Dan Hukuman Fisik Dalam Perspektif Amsal 13 : 24 Guru Pendidikan Agama Kristen Di Sekolah Bersikap , Dengan Tetap Tidak Ditegaskan Oleh Bagian Teks Yang Dikemukakan Dalam Amsal 13 : 24 ." 2, no. 2 (2020): 203–224.

<sup>8</sup> Chika Aulia, Sofia Retnowati, and Annisa Reginasari, "Quality Time: What Baby Boomers Need for Parenting Their Generation Z Children," *ANIMA Indonesian Psychological Journal* 38, no. 2 (2023): e07.

<sup>9</sup> Syarifah Wahidah, "Hubungan Tindakan Tegas Mendidik Guru Bk Dengan Kedisiplinan Siswa Di Mts. Negeri 2 Medan" (2018): 20.

<sup>10</sup> Anam Besari, "Pendidikan Keluarga Sebagai Pendidikan Pertama Bagi Anak," *Besari, Anam* 13, no. 1 (2022): 165.

the digital era.<sup>11</sup> Then there is also research from Jamsah Sigalingging and Joice Raranta regarding the role of Christian Religious Education in the formation of children's mental, spiritual and character from family life.<sup>12</sup> Of the three, none have used a comparative textual study of the Bible text in their research.

Similar to family education which is commonly discussed in the world of education, comparative studies have also been quite often found in Theological research. One of them is the research of Siti Mutmuinah which discusses the comparison of the Eschatological figures of the Bible with the Eschatological figures of Javanese society.<sup>13</sup> Research was also found by Sugiono and Befly which compared the theology of the letter to the Romans with the letter to James regarding salvation.<sup>14</sup> Of the many studies, one study was found that was almost similar to the topic of this study, namely the study by Maria Endojowatiningsih which highlighted the text of I Samuel 2-3 in relation to the children of God's servants today.<sup>15</sup> However, this study has not highlighted Christian education in the family and has not been compared with other texts. From several studies that have been presented, there has not been found any comparative research that highlights Christian education in the family reviewed from the comparison of I Samuel and Luke. Therefore, this will be the novelty of this study.

## Methodology

This study uses a qualitative research method. Qualitative research methods tend to explore meanings that are qualitative and do not only rely on quantitative data. The approach used is comparative, in this case a comparison between two Bible texts. Comparative studies are in the nature of comparing two variables with the intention of finding deep meaning about a theme.<sup>16</sup> To study the biblical text, the hermeneutic method of Thematic Criticism will be used. This method is used in an effort to find similar "themes" in two different literary works. Therefore, through this method, literary works will be studied based on the agreed theme.<sup>17</sup> Meanwhile, the theory that will be used to "dissect" this research is the Social Learning Theory by Albert Bandura. This theory explains that one of the most influential factors in learning activities is the environment. The environment here is not only about the physical environment, but also the philosophical environment.<sup>18</sup> The meaning of the philosophical environment is that there are values from the surrounding

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<sup>11</sup> Sri Wahyuni, "Pendidikan Agama Kristen Dalam Keluarga Di Era Digital," *Prosiding Stt Erikson-Tritt* 1, no. 1 (2021): 79–89.

<sup>12</sup> Jamsah Sigalingging and Joice Ester Raranta, "Peran Pendidikan Agama Kristen (PAK) Dalam Keluarga Terhadap Pembentukan Mental, Spiritual, Dan Karakter Anak," *Edukatif: Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan* 4, no. 6 (2022): 7426–7436.

<sup>13</sup> Ratu Adil and D A N Kristus, "STUDI KOMPARATIF DUA TOKOH ESKATOLOGI" (2005).

<sup>14</sup> Sugiono Sugiono and Befly Harly Dompas, "Studi Komparatif Teologi Paulus Berdasarkan Surat Roma Dengan Teologi Yakobus Berdasarkan Surat Yakobus Tentang Keselamatan," *ELEOS: Jurnal Teologi dan Pendidikan Agama Kristen* 2, no. 1 (2022): 50–67.

<sup>15</sup> Maria Hanie Endojowatiningsih, "Anak-Anak Imam Eli (I Samuel 2-3) Dan Refleksinya Bagi Anak-Anak Hamba Tuhan," *Missio Ecclesiae* 11, no. 1 (2022): 37–50.

<sup>16</sup> Andi Ibrahim dkk, *Metodologi Penelitian*, Jakarta; Gunadarma Ilmu, 2018, h. 43.

<sup>17</sup> Bernard Zelechow, "The Return of Thematic Criticism," *History of European Ideas* 21, no. 2 (1995): 271–280.

<sup>18</sup> Albert Bandura, "Albert B Andura and S Ocial Learning" (1977).

environment that will influence human perspective. Therefore, how humans see and respond to their world will be very much determined by their environment.<sup>19</sup> It should be noted that the environment can also influence education within the family.

### **Exegesis of I Samuel 2:12-17**

This text appears at the beginning of the book of I Samuel and tells about the ministry of the priest Eli and his two sons. What is unique is that the narrator explicitly describes the sons of the priest Eli as immoral people, and is even reinforced by the term "not respecting the Lord". Samuel as the author of this book seems to have a special urgency in conveying the temperament of Eli's sons. This is seen from how he reveals their character first, then elaborates on the reasons for the argument at the beginning of this passage (I Samuel 2:12).<sup>20</sup>

After building a fairly strong argument in verse 12, the author and narrator continue their explanation and argument. The continuation of this argument is still consistent with a strong and direct tone. There is also a continuation of the explanation regarding the character of Eli's sons in verse 13, namely that they did not respect the limits of the priests' rights towards the nation of Israel. Thus, there are three attitudes highlighted by the author. First, that Eli's sons were immoral people, second, that they did not respect God, and third, that they also did not respect the rights of the priests. The use of the word immoral which is translated from the Hebrew word *Beliyaal* indicates that the crimes of Eli's sons were not ordinary crimes. The word *Beliyaal* has a similar meaning to *Belial* which is the name of the devil. In addition, the words *Beliyaal* and *Belial* also mean useless and detrimental.<sup>21</sup> This can be a reinforcement of the fact that Samuel is the author of this book. considering that he is part of the story as well as the narrator, it is natural that there is a personal dimension in Samuel's efforts to tell about the evil of Eli's sons.

Samuel continues his story with an explanation of how Eli's sons carried out their actions. Their crimes are shown in several kinds of actions, one of which is considered very fatal which is then stated in verses 13 and so on. It is explained that everyone who comes to Shiloh and wants to offer sacrifices will always be victims of deception by the sons of the priest Eli. This passage (I Samuel 2:11-26) does not provide much information about the identity of Eli's sons. However, there is a little clue about their identity in the next passage, precisely in verse 34. This verse provides information that the priest Eli had two sons named Hophni and Phinehas. They served as priests in the tabernacle in Shiloh.

The deception they committed was by first taking the meat of the burnt offering that was to be offered to God so that they could eat until they were full. The meat was taken while it was being cooked or even when it was still raw. This was very fatal because they enjoyed what belonged to God first. They ate the burnt offering first and then gave the

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<sup>19</sup> Razieh Tadayon Nabavi and Mohammad Sadegh Bijandi, "A Literature Review on Bandura 's Social Learning Theory & Social Cognitive Learning Theory," no. January 2012 (2024).

<sup>20</sup> Dian Agustina<sup>20</sup>, Yenny Anita Pattinama, and Febriaman Lalaziduhu Harefa, "Spiritualitas Hana Menurut 1 Samuel 1:1-28 Dan Implementasinya Bagi Wanita," *SCRIPTA: Jurnal Teologi dan Pelayanan Kontekstual* 10, no. 2 (2020): 1–20.

<sup>21</sup> Michael Koplitz, "Hebraic Analysis of 2 Samuel 23," no. June (2020).

“leftovers” to God. This behavior violates the principle of offering sacrifices which are truly only for God and without blemish.<sup>22</sup> This behavior indicates that they felt superior to God, so they felt entitled to eat the burnt offering before it was offered to God. Another interesting fact about Hophni and Phinehas is that their crimes were not only limited to deception, but were also exacerbated by other things. In verses 15 and 16, the author of the book of Samuel narrates that sometimes there were people who questioned their actions. The people understood that the fat from the sacrifice had to be burned first and then the meat could be taken by the priests.<sup>23</sup> However, the people's question will be immediately responded to with arrogance by Eli's two sons. They threaten that if it is not given, then they will take it by force. Samuel closes the narrative about Hophni and Phinehas with the statement that the two young priests have a very big sin before God.

### **Exegesis of Luke 3:18-20**

Verses 18 to 20 in chapter three are actually part of a single pericope that discusses John the Baptist. Luke shows his comprehensive understanding of this figure. It is seen that Luke discusses and builds the narrative about John in the most structured pattern compared to the Synoptic Gospels.<sup>24</sup> Luke as the writer of the Gospel of Luke, wrote in sequence starting from the beginning of John's arrival, his teachings and the reasons behind the punishment that had to be received.<sup>25</sup> Luke really needed to do this so that his community could fully understand John the Baptist, because the community that read Luke's Gospel were non-Jews and those who were marginalized from society.<sup>26</sup> This is one of the many reasons why this Gospel is special.

Luke opens in verse eighteen of chapter three with the information that John had received much admonition and was preaching the good news to the people. Much of the admonition he received here is likely a reference to advice Luke received from several people, including Jesus, before he went into the mission of preaching the gospel.<sup>27</sup> This risky mission of preaching the gospel was carried out by John until he had to accept a punishment that was not light, namely being thrown into prison (verse 20). Actually, being in prison was not a direct cause of John's preaching of the gospel. He was imprisoned by Herod for reprimanding the king for various mistakes he had made, including marrying his own brother's wife. However, this can also be considered part of preaching the gospel, because John tried to reveal the truth through real rebuke, but it was unacceptable to Herod.

The interesting thing about John the Baptist that can then be drawn from the story in Luke 3: 1-20 is about how commendable John's character was, including his willingness. John the Baptist was the son of the priest Zechariah, so he actually had the right to inherit

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<sup>22</sup> Ani Teguh Purwanto, “Arti Korban Menurut Kitab Imamat Sekolah Tinggi, Injili, Teologi Surabaya, Indonesia” (2014).

<sup>23</sup> Norman H Snaith, “Sacrifices in the Old Testament Author ( s ): Norman H . Snaith Published by : Brill Stable URL : <https://www.jstor.org/stable/1516202>” 7, no. May 2025 (1957): 308–317.

<sup>24</sup> Yohanes Pembaptis et al., “Pendahuluan” 6, no. 1 (2022): 1–20.

<sup>25</sup> Josep Ferry Susanto, “Injil Lukas: Mengenal Sang Teolog Keselamatan Yesus Kristus,” *STF Driyarkara* (2022).

<sup>26</sup> Vasika Hananti and Bambang Subandrijo, “Miskin Dan Kaya Dalam Injil Lukas Dan Teologi Pembebasan,” *Mitra Sriwijaya: Jurnal Teologi dan Pendidikan Kristen* 2, no. 1 (2021): 1–19.

<sup>27</sup> Eben Scheffler, “The Social Ethics of the Lucan Baptist,” *Neotestamentica* 24, no. 1 (1990): 21–36.

the duties and office of the priesthood at that time. Not only that, John had been educated in the tradition of priestly family life since childhood. Reflecting on his life experiences and history of ministry, John was very worthy of being the Messiah. Almost all aspects of his life were very supportive of this. Even many people thought he was the Messiah (Luke 3:15). However, it is truly extraordinary when John willingly admitted that he was not the Messiah and while using a very humble narrative, John shifted the prejudice of the Messiah to Jesus.<sup>28</sup> An interesting fact is that Jesus is actually still a close relative of John, precisely a cousin. The Gospel of John records their first meeting when they were still in their respective mothers' wombs, but they had shown a happy reaction. More than that, John also wanted to do a task that was far from the comfort of the priest's throne. John deliberately chose not to be silent and enjoy the comfort of life as a priest, but decided to go preach the gospel which was a dangerous and risky task.<sup>29</sup> Indeed, the Bible honestly tells that John faced a very difficult challenge. At first he had to accept the fact that his rebuke resulted in his imprisonment. An attempt to straighten out the actions of the ruler, instead made him end up behind bars. The suffering continued with a unique polemic that later caused him to lose his life.

### **Comparative Study of I Samuel 2:12-17 with Luke 3:18-20**

It should be noted that comparative studies are always limited to a theme. This theme will ensure that the two variables being compared receive an equal portion. So this comparison will be limited to the theme of "priestly family education". In this case, the two texts above (I Samuel 2:12-17 and Luke 3:18-20) tell about three people who were both raised in priestly families. Two people from the Old Testament text and one person from the New Testament text. From the Old Testament text, the book of Samuel presents Hophni and Phinehas who grew up and developed in the family of the priest Eli. While in the New Testament, Luke narrates about John who grew up in the family of the priest Zechariah.

The two priests who became the heads of the family (Eli and Zechariah) were known as good priests. The Bible tells of them as priests whose attitudes were commendable. Indeed, there are not many sources in the Bible that testify about Zechariah, but Luke 1:5-6 is enough to prove how commendable and holy the lifestyle of Zechariah was. While there are quite a few sources in the Old Testament that discuss the life of the priest Eli and describe him as a good man, some studies suggest that the priest Eli was a failed spiritual leader, and he even failed as a household leader because he failed to educate his children,<sup>30</sup> but this decision feels quite hasty. So through this writing, we want to reveal another side of the situation of the priest Eli behind the stupidity of his two sons.

The main focus of this comparative study is on Hophni, Phinehas and John. The three of them all have a father who is a priest and grew up in a family of devout priests.

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<sup>28</sup> Armand Barus, "Kepemimpinan Yohanes Pembaptis," *Veritas: Jurnal Teologi dan Pelayanan* 3, no. 1 (2002): 73–81.

<sup>29</sup> Yohanes Pembaptis and S I Manusia Bebas, "Yohanes Pembaptis, Si Manusia Bebas" (n.d.).

<sup>30</sup> J A Saputra, "IMAM ELI SALAH PAIRAN: Reinterpretasi Teks 1 Samuel 2: 12-17; 22-36; 4: 1-22 Dalam Perspektif Pairan Lembä Di Mamasa, Sulawesi Barat," *Teologis-Relevan-Aplikatif-Cendikia ...* 02, no. 01 (2023): 12–17,

<https://ejournal.stepsmg.ac.id/home/article/view/52%0Ahttps://ejournal.stepsmg.ac.id/home/article/download/52/47>.

However, there are striking differences between them. Hophni and Phinehas grew up to be people with very bad characters while John is the opposite. John has a very good and commendable character. If they grew up and developed in relatively the same conditions and family backgrounds, then what factors caused the contrasting differences in character between them? This is what we want to explore through a comparative study of the two texts in the Bible.

First, it must be understood that the priest Eli and the priest Zechariah served in very different times. The priest Eli served to bridge the Israelites with God. He served in the Old Testament. While the priest Zechariah served in the Inter-testament period until the New Testament period.<sup>31</sup> These two priests are known for their serious spirituality. So it is very likely that they educate their children with spirituality as well. So what makes the difference is how the environment influences their family education.

In the Old Testament, especially in the lives of the Israelites, priests played a very important role. Priests are included in the three positions that are anointed. Priests are considered the "bridge" of the people to God. Because of this, the life of priests in the Old Testament can be categorized as a comfortable life. The people respected them and prepared all their needs.<sup>32</sup> Meanwhile, the life of priests in the New Testament era is quite complex to explain. The situation since the Inter-testament era has had a very significant influence on the lives of priests. Starting from the invasion of Alexander the Great, the priests began to be squeezed. The way to survive was to "lick" the ruler who occupied the throne at that time. The situation became even more difficult for them when Alexander the Great died and his territory was fought over by four of his generals. The struggle for power and various political intrigues continued to occur in the Near East until finally Rome managed to take advantage of the situation to control the area. Until the time of Jesus' birth in Bethlehem, the best way for the priests to survive was to get close to the ruler. Many of them "slipped" to act hypocritically in order to get a decent life from the ruler at that time.<sup>33</sup>

Life did seem comfortable for priests who lived close to the rulers. However, they had to accept serious consequences for this because they lost their freedom and honesty in expressing something. So life became very difficult for priests who persisted in their honesty. Priest Zechariah, was included in the priests who were honest and far from the rulers. So it can be concluded that the life of priest Zechariah was a difficult life in almost all aspects, be it social, economic and so on.

It is clear how the social environment between priest Eli and priest Zechariah was very different. This certainly also influenced the development of children, even though they both grew up in priestly families. This is in line with the main theory of this study, namely the Social Learning Theory by Albert Bandura. In this case, in addition to the role of the family, it can also be observed that the children of the priests also learned from their social environment. Hophni and Phinehas learned from their comfortable environment, so they

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<sup>31</sup> Made Nopen Supriadi, Daniel Sarwono, and Estherlina Maria Ayawaila, "Kajian Analisis Deskriptif Prinsip Spiritualitas Zakharia Sebagai Upaya Pembaharuan Formasi Rohani Kristen Masa Kini," *Manna Rafflesia* 7, no. 2 (2021): 189–209.

<sup>32</sup> J. Blommendaal, *Pengantar Ke Dalam Perjanjian Lama*, (Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 1983).

<sup>33</sup> Paulus Kuno Baskoro, "Konsep Imam dan Jabatan Imam Pada Masa Intertestamental", *Jurnal Teologi Berita Hidup*, September (2020): 81-95.

grew up to be arrogant people. While John the Baptist grew up in a difficult environment, he grew up to be a good person and had a willing heart.

A difficult environment helped the family of the priest Zechariah to educate a John. The priest Zechariah who was a religious man was able to use his environment to help him raise his son to be a religious person. Meanwhile, in the context of the priest Eli, it was not only about the failure of the priest Eli as a father, but also how difficult it was for him to educate his children who had already enjoyed their comfort zone. John's character and spirituality grew because he was used to difficult circumstances. John did not stay in his comfort zone. The opposite happened to Hophni and Phinehas who experienced a decline in their character and spirituality because they had stayed in their comfortable situation for too long. The comfort zone made them arrogant and haughty.

## **Conclusion**

The damaged character of Hophni and Phinehas cannot be simply blamed on the mistakes of the priest Eli. This study explores various historical facts and theological issues to see how the social environment has a significant impact on the character and spirituality of children. Family education will indeed have an influence, but external influences from the environment cannot be ignored. Hophni and Phinehas, who were spoiled by circumstances, grew into priests who were full of arrogance and had bad characters. Meanwhile, John the Baptist, who was trained by difficult circumstances, managed to grow his spirituality and character. So actually, there is nothing wrong with a harsh education pattern, as long as it is still within reasonable limits. Learning from the case of Hophni and Phinehas, accustoming children to a comfortable pattern also has a negative impact on child development. Having a child with a character like John the Baptist is more enjoyable than having a child with a character like Hophni and Phinehas.

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