

During the grave turn
of events in salem.

Business, Decision Making



During the era of accused witchcraft in Salem during the 1690's, the Puritan society revolved heavily on the words and the will of God, bestowed upon it by the reverends and other church officials. Within *The Crucible*, written by Arthur Miller, Reverend Parris is arguably the most liable individual for the grave turn of events in Salem. Parris, the newly appointed reverend of the town, allowed his pride, ego, and greed to cloud his judgement and decision making throughout the duration of the witchcraft accusals. The weak reverend's inability to speak up for those he knew were falsely accused, in lieu of losing his coveted position, was the true catalyst for the grave events that took place. In Act I, Parris understands that the witchcraft has originated not only in his town, yet under his roof by his daughter and niece, giving him fear about his reputation.

Parris tells Abigail, " I have fought here three long years to bend these stiff-necked people to me, and now, just now when some good respect is rising for me in the parish, you compromise my very character." This bitter, urgent remark is not used in worried-questioning for the well-being of Abigail or his daughter Ruth, who has become unresponsive, yet simply to ensure all he has worked for is safe, and that his own reputation is still in tact. Parris refuses to even acknowledge the fact that he saw the girls dancing naked in the forest, cutting straight to the importance of his person in the community. This lack of understanding the girls and their outcry for attention, although common for this time period, continues to speak for who Parris was as a man. He did not care for the well being of others, would simply preach in his own way, regardless of traditional methods, and disregarded any issue unless it directly pertained to his status. Later in the same act of the play,

Proctor's righteousness is under question for his lack of attendance at church, which he blames upon Parris, simply stating that, " There are many others who stay away from church these days because you hardly ever mention God anymore" (Act I).

This eye-opening section of the play, Proctor validates that Parris is truly not a holy man that has strong connections to God as he has previously claimed. Instead, he helps readers understand that Parris is desperately trying to maintain the societal status he has achieved thus far, not caring about anything other than his influence and power in the community. Additionally, in Act II, Proctor continues to bash Parris' pride, ego, and connection to God, twisting the knife in further by saying, " I have stopped attending church because Rev. Parris only preaches about golden candlesticks and sinners going to Hell." In continuously undermining and speaking slander of Parris' abilities as a reverend, which is all he holds dear to him, Proctor is getting back at him for not using his influence to fix the out of control situation. He even speaks about how he does not trust the man to baptize his sons because he doesn't believe in the blather that Parris calls preaching.

As the play goes on, and person after person is accused until there are almost none left within the town, it is only with a threat on his life that Parris feels the need to do something. This threat, as he explains, " Tonight, when I open my door to leave my house-a dagger clattered to the ground...there is danger for me" (Act IV). Upon the threat on his life, this is the first time Parris feels the need to put an end to the madness he helped create. He had no intentions of putting an end to the girls' antics, both keeping his status as

the powerful messenger of God aiding the people, and remaining out of the line of fire.

His ego, pride, and selfishness interfered with his proper taking care of his girls and community, which ultimately led to the total eruption of chaos and loss of societal order, resulting in the fatal trials.