

“The Birth Of Samuel”

1 Samuel 1:1-28

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May 12, 2019

Teaching Aim: To explore chapter one of First Samuel and experience the heartbreak and pain Hannah went through because of her barrenness. To recognize the magnitude of Hannah’s vow to God if He would enable her to bear a son. To understand the importance of keeping our promises even when it hurts. To realize Elkanah agreed to Hannah’s vow, but their pain would turn out to be Israel’s gain!

DIGGING DEEPER INTO GOD’S WORD (BIBLE STUDY)

Part I: A broken woman and a rival who would not stop mocking her (1 Sam. 1:1-10)

1. What city was Elkanah’s home? (**vs. 1**) What is a better-known name for this city? (See Commentaries) How could Elkanah be called an Ephramite when in fact he was a Levite (**vs. 1**)? What were the names of Elkanah’s two wives (**vs. 2**)? Why do most people believe he had two wives? Which of his two wives was unable to bare children?

2. What three Feasts of Israel were Jewish men required to attend if they lived close enough and were healthy enough to make the trip? (See **Exod. 23:14-17; 34:18-23; Deut. 16:1-17**) In what city was the tabernacle located in during this era of history (**vs. 3**)? (See **Josh. 18:1**) What festival do most commentators believe is referred to here? (See Commentaries)

3. When the “*peace offering*” was brought to the priests, the people bringing the offering were allowed to eat of it along with the priests; but Hannah had no peace. (See **Lev. 11:18**) How did Hannah respond to Elkanah’s loving offer of a double portion for her; sometimes called the honorable portion (**vv. 4-5**)? To put this in a more modern setting, how would you respond if a guest refused to eat Thanksgiving Dinner at your house?

4. How did Elkanah respond to the crisis Hannah was facing (**vs. 8**)? Have you ever had to fight depression because of a struggle you’ve had in your life? How did it affect your walk with the Lord and relationship with others?

5. Hannah did not eat this meal. What did she do once the others were done eating (**vs. 9**)? Who did this broken lady run into at the tabernacle? What can we learn about the structure of the tabernacle from the description of a doorpost in **verse 9**? (See Commentaries)

6. What can we determine about Hannah's mental state from **verse 10**? What do we find Hannah doing at the tabernacle as she went to God with her grief? What added to Hannah's pain? (See **1 Sam. 1:6**) Why was it so important for woman to have children, especially a son in those days?

Part 2: Hannah's uncomfortable encounter with Israel's High Priest (1 Sam. 1:11-18)

1. What desperate vow did Hannah make to God in **verse 11**? Three times in **verse 11**, Hannah referred to herself as "*Your maidservant*" when addressing God. Why? What did she specifically request? What did she promise? What three requirements were required from anyone making a Nazarite vow? (See **Num. 6:1-8**) Who made the vow in this case?

2. Who observed Hannah as she prayed (**vs. 12**)? What can we learn about Hannah's prayer from **verse 13**? Have you ever gone through a time of brokenness in your life like Hannah? How did it affect your self-worth? What did Eli think as he watched Hannah pray?

3. Did the High Priest Eli comfort Hannah or chastise her (**vs. 14**)? Have you ever been guilty of judging someone before first finding out the facts? How did you feel afterwards?

4. How did Hannah respond to this false accusation from Eli (**vs. 15**)? Why do you think more people don't go to the house of the LORD today when they are hurting? What can the modern Christian learn from **1 Pet. 5:6-7** and **Phil. 4:6-7**? According to these Scriptures, should hurting Christians be pouring out their hearts to God in prayer today?

5. What plea did Hannah make to Eli in **verse 16**? The Hebrew for “wicked woman” literally meant “the daughter of Belial” or “without value.” Have you ever struggled with your own self-worth? Who is the name “Belial” a reference to? (See **2 Cor. 6:14-15**)

6. According to **verse 17**, did Eli accept Hannah’s explanation or reject it? How did Eli, as the High Priest of Israel, intercede for Hannah? Do you have Christian friends who intercede in prayer for you when you are struggling? Why is it so important to pray for one another?

7. What can we learn about the change in Hannah’s disposition from **verse 18**? How have past struggles helped you grow in your faith? Why do you think James wrote, “My Brethren, count it all joy when you fall in to various trials?” (See **Jam. 1:1-6**)

Part 3: God’s kindness to Hannah and Hannah’s faithfulness to keep her promise (1 Sam. 1:19-28)

1. By the time Elkanah and the family left Shiloh, Hannah had found her peace (**vs. 19**). Hannah left her problem with God and returned home to Ramah. What does the Scripture mean when it says, “And Elkanah knew Hannah his wife?” Where else do we see this phrase used in Scripture? (See **Gen. 4:1**)

2. What happened following God’s remembrance of Hannah’s plight (**vs. 20**)? What name did Hannah give to her son? What is the meaning of this name? What other famous women in the Old Testament had to wait many years before their prayer for a son was answered? Why is it important to be patient as we wait for God to answer our prayers? (See **Rom. 8:28**)

3. Each year Elkanah took his family to Shiloh to worship at this major festival (**vs. 21**). Did Hannah go along with him this time (**vs. 22**)? Why? Did Hannah renege on her vow to God? What was she doing? In ancient times there was no refrigeration, how long did most mother’s breast feed their children? (Hint: Google **2 Maccabees 7:27**)

4. How did Elkanah respond to Hannah's request not to go to Shiloh this time (**vs. 23**)? What did Elkanah's request of Hannah? Do you desire to honor the LORD with every aspect of your life? (See **Matt. 22:37-40**) What steps are you taking to improve yourself spiritually?

5. What can we learn about Elkanah's wealth from **verse 24**? (See **Num. 15:8-10**) Why do you think Elkanah offered such a large gift to God?

6. The emotion must have been incredible as the time came to give up the child (**vs. 25**). What are some of the factors that would make these actions extra difficult? (See **1 Sam. 2:12**) Did Elkanah, as the man of the house, have the option to cancel Hannah's vow to God? (See **Num. 30:6-7**) Why do you think he didn't?

7. What can we learn about Hannah's devotion to God from **verses 26 and 27**? Do you think the High Priest Eli even remembered her three or four years later? Have you ever been in a position where you had to keep your promise even though it hurt? (See **Psa. 15:4b**) How might this concept relate to such things as credit cards and student loans today?

8. How long did Hannah say the child Samuel would be "*lent*" (or given) to the LORD (**vs. 28**)? How did this grieving father and mother respond to their loss? Are you faithful to worship God even when it hurts? If the translation "*lent*" is correct, did Hannah receive her child back in any way? Note: Samuel was born in Ramah, lived his adult life in Ramah, and died in Ramah.

9. Have you experienced the grief of having to give your children or grandchildren over to God and trusting Him for the outcome because they have walked away from the Lord?

MINER'S CORNER ~ Manna to live by!

- Hannah was a woman of prayer and taught her son (a future spiritual giant in Israel) to be a man of prayer!
- Never underestimate the influence of a godly home or the potential of a child dedicated to God!
- Samuel was the last of Israel's Judges and the first prophet/priest during the new era known as "*The Monarchy*;" it was he who anointed King Saul and King David into office!
- As in the case of Hannah, we should never judge a person unless we find out all the facts!
- When broken in spirit, Peter instructs us to cast our cares upon God for He cares for us!
- As Christians, we are to keep our vows even when it hurts!
- A praying mother can lay the foundation for a godly life and by doing so can change the world!