

The Birth of Samuel

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[0 : 00] I'll take your Bibles tonight and open them to 1 Samuel.

! I gave kind of an introduction a couple of weeks ago, and really a very brief one, wanting. I didn't have a lot of time, and I wanted to get on to our business meeting, but I kind of gave you a little overview of the book, some basic things. I might say a few things again about that, kind of by way of introduction, because it's helpful for us as we kind of set the stage for what is going to take place in chapter 1. So I want to go ahead and read the first chapter of 1 Samuel. So if you have a Bible open there, not all that long, 28 verses.

I think we can do that. And so let me, rather, read that, and then we'll kind of walk our way through it. Now there was a certain man of Ramathayim, Zophim, of the mountains of Ephraim, and his name was Elkanah, son of Jeroham, the son of Elihu, the son of Tohu, the son of Zuth, and an Ephraimite, an Ephraimite.

All right? I spent all afternoon trying to pronounce all those words correctly, okay? Okay. Just kidding. Those are actually the easier ones. That sounds quite hard in Scripture. And he had two wives. All right?

Two wives. Bless his heart. The name of one was Hannah, and the name of the other, Peninnah.

[2 : 00] Peninnah. I've heard it pronounced Peninnah, Peninnah, but it's Peninnah. All right? You say Peninnah, I say Peninnah. You say tomato, I say tomato, whatever. Peninnah. Peninnah had children, but Hannah had no children.

This man went up from his city yearly to worship and sacrifice to the Lord of hosts in Shiloh, also the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, the priests of the Lord, were there. And whenever the time came for Elkanah to make an offering, he would give portions to Peninnah, his wife, and to all her sons and daughters. But to Hannah, he would give a double portion, for he loved her. He loved Hannah, although the Lord had closed her womb. And her rival also provoked her severely to make her miserable because the Lord had closed her womb. So it was year by year when she went up to the house of the Lord that she provoked her. Therefore she wept, did not eat. Then Elkanah, her husband, said to her, Hannah, why do you weep? Why do you not eat? And why is your heart grieved? Am I not better to you than ten sons? So Hannah arose after they had finished eating and drinking in Shiloh. Now Eli, the priest, was sitting on the seat by the doorpost of the tabernacle of the Lord. Matter of fact, we kind of look ahead, that's about the only place we find Eli sitting. And actually a little bit later in the story, he's going to fall off that chair, break his neck. That's a story we'll get to a little bit later. All right, so he's sitting there. And where was I? All right, verse 10. And she was in bitterness, bitterness of soul, and prayed to the Lord and wept in anguish. And she made a vow and said, O Lord of hosts, if you will indeed look on the affliction of your maidservant and remember me and not forget your maidservant, but will give your maidservant a male child, then I will give him to the

Lord all the days of his life and no razor shall come upon his head. And it happened as she continued praying before the Lord that Eli watched her mouth. Now Hannah spoke in her heart, only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard. Therefore, Eli thought she was drunk. So Eli said to her, How long will you be drunk? Put your wine away from you. But Hannah answered and said, No, my Lord, I am a woman of sorrowful spirit. I have drunk neither wine nor intoxicating drink, but have poured out my soul before the Lord. Do not consider your maidservant a wicked woman, for out of the abundance of my complaint and grief I have spoken until now. Then Eli answered and said, Go in peace, and the God of Israel grant your petition which you have asked of him. And she said, Let your maidservant find favor in your sight. So the woman went her way and ate, and her face was no longer sad. Then they rose early in the morning and worshipped before the Lord and returned and came to their house at Ramah. And Elkanah knew Hannah his wife, and the Lord

remembered her. So it came to pass in the process of time that Hannah conceived and bore a son and called his name Samuel, saying, Because I have asked for him from the Lord.

Now the man Elkanah and all his house went up to offer to the Lord the yearly sacrifice and his vow. But Hannah did not go up, for she said to her husband, Not until the child is weaned, then I will take him, that he may appear before the Lord and remain there forever. So Elkanah, her husband, said to her, Do what seems best to you. Wait until you have weaned him. Only let the Lord establish his word.

And the woman stayed, nursed her son until she had weaned him. Now when she had weaned him, she took him up with her with three bulls, one ephah of flour, and a skin of wine, and brought him to the house of the Lord in Shiloh. And the child was young. Then she slaughtered a bull and brought the child to Eli. And he said, Oh my Lord, she said, Oh my Lord, as your soul lives, my Lord, I am woman.

[6 : 55] I am the woman who stood by you here praying to the Lord. For this child I prayed, and the Lord has granted me my petition which I asked of him. Therefore I also have lent him to the Lord.

So long as he lives, he shall be lent to the Lord. So they worshiped the Lord there, and Hannah prayed and said. And we go on into chapter two, and we have Hannah's prayer. We'll get to chapter two next week, but let's kind of set this up a little bit. Some of it just to remind you of a few of the things I said last or two weeks ago, by way of introduction, to kind of introduce the book of 1 Samuel. We don't know the author of the book, all right? It's not signed. We don't have any indication of that. There's some guesses. Samuel wrote some of it, and a few other prophets wrote a few things in it, but we really don't know. And we also don't know when it was written.

And probably after Solomon's reign, most scholars would tell us, and probably then would be even as far out as the divided kingdom, when the kingdom divided, Israel divided north and south, Israel and Judah. And which would make it, I think, somewhere around, they say, about 931 BC. So a long time ago, right, when this was written. But also quite a bit of time after the events took place, maybe as early as 30 years after David died. So it was written around that time. But we do know this.

We do know that the events of 1 and 2 Samuel, and I mentioned this last time, the events took place over a span of just 135 years. So relatively short period of time in relation to some of the time spans that we have in other Old Testament books. For example, Judges took place over quite a long span of time. And so 135 years, really, from the birth of Samuel, probably took place in 1105 BC, to the last words of David, which come at the close of 2 Samuel. And I mentioned this before, 1 and 2 Samuel really appears one book in the Hebrew Bible. And so about 931, 971 BC, with the words of kind of the final words of David. So short period of time. And again, as I said, a couple of weeks ago, with both books, 1 and 2 Samuel, we're dealing with a short period of time. And yet a lot happened during that 135 years, give or take a few years, a lot of very significant things took place in that short period of time. Israel went from a, really being rather a ragtag, kind of loose-knit group of tribes, led by a series of regional judges, and the last of them being Samuel himself. So it went from that kind of scenario or description of Israel, all the way to a united nation under a centralized monarchy. First under Saul, the first king, first official king, and then of course under David. And that takes us through 1 and 2 Samuel. All right, so the principal characters in these two books are Samuel first, then Saul, then David. Those are the principal characters, the reason for which the book was written and appears in Scripture, though tonight we're going to be focusing on another very key character in the book, and that would be Hannah. But all of that to lead us to Samuel. So Samuel, Saul, and then David. Now the first seven chapters of the book of 1 Samuel focuses on Samuel. I guess you couldn't have guessed that. Samuel is our focus. Starting with his birth, that will be our focus tonight. Then to Samuel's rise to leadership in Israel as a prophet, first of all. We might even say a priest prophet. Then Samuel's prophecy concerning the high priest's sons, Eli's sons, Hophni and Phinehas. And then finally to Samuel's rise to leadership in Israel as a judge. And we have the stories of the Philistines being there, of course, the enemies during this time period. They capture the ark and all the interesting things that happened to them as a result. And then Samuel basically leading Israel to a great victory over the Philistines. So that takes us through the first seven chapters of the book. Now, though that's a kind of a broad stroke of the brush, kind of outlining what's going to take place for the next seven chapters, we want to focus tonight on chapter one. And we'll make it through that entire chapter if I'll get to it here. And namely the birth of Samuel, the birth of Samuel. And in order to really delve into that chapter, we need to

have some understanding about the setting.

[12:35] The setting. You might remember a couple of weeks ago in my introduction, I mentioned that Ruth in the Hebrew Bible, Ruth does not appear between Judges and 1 Samuel. Actually goes from Judges to 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Samuel, though in the Hebrew Bible it's just one book of Samuel. Ruth's not there.

It's in the English Bible that we have Ruth in between those two. And it makes sense because historically and chronologically, the events that took place in the book of Ruth took place during the time of the Judges. And so that's why in the English Bible you have that appearing in between these two books. But in the Hebrew text, it goes from Judges to Samuel. Samuel. And the last words written then in the book of Judges are important for us to understand the setting of Samuel. The last words in the book of Judges, chapter 21 and verse 25, very last verse, read like this. In those days there was no king in Israel, we could insert not even Yahweh was king. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes. That's how the book of Judges ends. And you know, I guess we could maybe label that as some aberrant form of democracy.

Everybody did what was right in their own eyes. In fact, one has dubbed it democratized wickedness. You'll write that down. I think that's pretty good. Democratized wickedness, you know. And by the way, it sounds a little bit like our democratic republic, what it has become over the years. All right. So this is the setting. And so the designation in those days, that's how Judges ends, are the days of 1 Samuel. Those are the days. No king in Israel. Only the high priest to lead them. In fact, the high priest was the king or monarch figure in the life of Israel. So only the high priest was leading them. And at that, a very aging high priest, Eli, who was half blind, not only blind physically, but also spiritually, as we shall see. And everyone doing what was right in his own eyes. So situation ethics ruled in that culture, as it does quite a bit in our own culture. We could even call it a kind of subjective morality or moralism. Everybody did what was right in his own eyes. And so Israel was effectively leaderless, unless you want to count Hophni and Phinehas. But they were very poor leaders.

They had corrupted the priesthood, again, as we shall see as we go on with our study. And Israel, again, is oppressed. Oppressed by the Philistines. All right? Same ones that were the bad guys during the last judge in the book of Judges, that would be Samson. All right? So the Philistines still the trouble. So these were troubling times for Israel, which was something the Israelites were not a stranger, were no strangers to. Troubling times, and times away from God, and times of rebellion, and times of oppression. They had been going through that nearly all their history. And it won't end here.

[16:07] It's going to continue to be that way. And so, all right, so these were the days into which Samuel was born. And so the narration opens this way. Verse one, we'll just kind of walk our way through the text again, even though we've read it. I'm going to read nearly all of it, kind of step by step, step by step as we go through. Verse one, now there was a certain man. All right? So we begin with a certain man. We're still in those days, in the time of the Judges. We're still in that time period, even though we've moved from the book of Judges now into the book of Samuel, the first one.

But it's still those same days. And there was a certain man in that day. And that's how the narrator begins the story. And he's whoever the writer was. He's a very good writer.

And really kind of lures you in to the, lures you in rather, into the story. And some of the things that he uses, some of the techniques he uses, literary techniques are really masterful.

And so a certain man of Ramathaim, Zophim, of the mountains of Ephraim. All right, so he's just giving us some location. All right, we can already guess that he's an Ephraimite. And it's going to tell us that at the end. And then four generations are named. So Elkanah is that certain man. And we have four generations just kind of tie him in to the genealogy of Israel. And that would be important for the original readers. Not all that important to us. We don't even know really who these guys are.

There's a lot of speculation about him. And so I'm not going to spend any time talking about speculations. It's just enough to know that he's kind of set in history here for us. And some of the descriptions that are given, the names that are given, also help, for those who are interested, help with geography. Kind of giving us a location as to where all this is taking place. Kind of basically in the kind of northeastern part of the land or the promised land. In the primary, the land of the Philistine. All right, let's go on. Verse two. And he had two wives. The name of one was Hannah,

which by the way means grace. Grace. And the name of the other, Peninnah, which means jewel, by the way. Now, the fact that Hannah is named first usually tells us that she was the first wife. [18:38] First one that he married, that Elkanah married. First wife. And we could say the wife of his love. And we're not just speculating about that because verse five says he loved Hannah. He loved Hannah.

But, and this is also something that we can conclude, she was, because she was barren, God had closed her womb. Elkanah took a second wife, Peninnah. Peninnah, and she bore him a lot of children, sons and daughters.

Now, let me just interject here. And I don't think I really have to convince anybody in this place. There is no biblical mandate or permission for polygamy here. All right. And this is not the only time we find it in the Old Testament, is it? We find it a number of places. We can go back to Abraham, similar kind of set of circumstances, right? Sarah's barren. And so he, you know, has a concubine, not, not, doesn't have another wife, but a concubine. And, and so it happens. Key figures in the Old Testament had multiple wives. Solomon had how many wives? I can't remember the number, 700 some odd wives. What an idiot. I mean, what's going on? But anyway, so there's, there's no mandate here for polygamy. The Bible just simply giving, giving us the historical facts. This was the fact. It's not that God is condoning it or anything like that. And God did allow it, obviously did allow it.

And, but God is not sanctioning it. Really God's plan is stated, plan for marriage is stated back in Genesis chapter two, verse 24, where the Bible says, therefore a man, that's singular, shall leave his father and mother. And we know this is God's ongoing plan because Adam and Eve didn't have a father and mother. So this is not just for them. This is ongoing and leave father and mother and be joined to his wife. Singular, singular. And they, the two of them, man and wife shall be one flesh. So a man, singular, joined to his wife, singular. And by the way, it's not man joined to his man. Okay. I'm smirking. I mean, it's so ridiculous. It's not a man joined to his man or a woman joined to her wife or what, you know, whatever. But, but getting back to the point, there is no place in God's, no place in scripture where we have, we have any kind of principle where God would plan for polygamy or allowed, I mean, allowed it, but where he would sanction that. In fact, really, if you do a little study of those particular examples in the Old Testament, where men have multiple wives, do a little study of those you'll find in every case, they had trouble, lots of trouble, primarily because they had more than one wife. All right. And so that was the case here as well. All right, let's read on.

[21:49] Verse three, this man went up from his city yearly, ritual every year to worship and sacrifice to the Lord of hosts in Shiloh. Shiloh was the location, the center of worship in Israel in those days before it would be eventually moved to Jerusalem. Also, the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, the priests of the Lord were there. Now, by the way, they're just mentioned this, this is another kind of indication of how good a writer the author was. And, and so they're mentioned here, not because they figure into the story yet, but they're going to. And so you don't hear about them again until the 12th verse of chapter two. And so they, you know, and they do figure very big in the story of Samuel, not his birth, but in his rising to a place of leadership in Israel. So the author just kind of, it's kind of a foreshadowing of what is coming. So we're not going to forget. Oh, yeah, remember he mentioned

Hophni and Phinehas. And now we're going to find out about them. All right, getting back to the chapter, chapter one, verse four, and whenever the time came for Elkanah to make an offering, he would give portions to Peninnah, his wife, and to all her sons and daughters. She bore a lot of sons and daughters, a lot of children. Verse five, but to Hannah, he would give a double portion, for he loved Hannah, although, or even though, in spite of the fact that the Lord had closed her womb. Now the portion mentioned here, this portion refers to a portion of the meat of the sacrifice. This would be a kind of standard thing. And some of that meat would be taken and given to the wives and then would be given to their children to feed their children. It's just part of the deal. And so each wife would get a portion.

And so a portion was given to Peninnah for her children. And then we see something unusual, a double portion was given to Hannah. Double portion. And not because she had more children, she didn't have any. But the Bible says because he loved her. He loved Hannah. And by the way, the narrative says nothing about Elkanah loving Peninnah. Now I'm not saying he didn't. I don't really know. We can't argue from silence. But it could be that really in their relationship, Peninnah was really very little more than a concubine. Just someone to bear children because the wife of his love.

She could not have any children.

All right. So that sets up the kind of the real story, I think, pretty well. And though the chief character ultimately is going to be Samuel because that's the focus here. Samuel first, then Saul, then David. Samuel, the prophet, judge, who will anoint the first king of Israel and also anoint the second king of Israel and do a lot of other things as well. That's the real focus. And yet the focus in chapter one is not so much Samuel as it is Hannah. Hannah. And so we want to focus in on Hannah. So all that's kind of introduction. Let's consider what the Lord reveals to us about Hannah and through Hannah. [25 : 39] Three things. Three things if you take notes. First of all, Hannah's problem of barrenness. That's the first thing that we learn in the passage. And it's a big problem. It's an even bigger problem than we can even begin to imagine in our day, though barrenness is certainly a problem in our day and tremendous burden for for wives and wives who want to be mothers and have children. It's a terrible burden carried. But that said, it was even a more tremendous burden. Tragedy in these days.

Verse two says Hannah had no children. That's the first thing that is said about it. She had no children, no qualification about it. Just shouldn't have any, no children. And that's bad. And it was a terrible thing, of course, in this day for a wife to have born no children. But it's even worse than that. Verse five says the Lord had closed her womb. And it's repeated again in verse six.

The Lord had closed her womb. All right, we get it. So what was the cause of her barrenness? Was Elkanah infertile? No. He had lots of kids. Maybe the problems with Hannah. Hannah had a problem.

Maybe health. No. Was she sterile? No. Or maybe her age. Nothing said in there about her age. Maybe she was just past childbearing age. No, that was not the case. Or the Bible would have told us that.

[27 : 29] Kind of like it did Sarah. It wasn't for that reason at all. In fact, the reason we don't really like, if we'll think about it, I don't really like it. The reason the Bible gives us here.

And why we don't like it is because it places the cause of her barrenness on the Lord. God closed her womb. That's not just the writer's kind of superstitious opinion about it.

It's not just, well, you know, the Lord, like we might say, well, the Lord just didn't want her to have kids, right? No, it's more than that. It is the Lord actually deliberately, determinately, closed her womb.

Closed her womb. And we don't like that because it doesn't fit with, you know, our conception of the character of God, does it? Well, I don't think so. And so we have a hard time reconciling that.

And yet the biblical record stands, doesn't it? Stands true. The Lord closed her womb. And it's even harder for us to accept this when we read a little further.

[28 : 40] Verse 6, And her rival, now there's an interesting choice of words. Her rival, that's Peninnah, not just her husband's other wife, but her rival, also provoked her severely to make her miserable.

See, I was piling on these words. Provocation. Severe provocation. To make her, kind of premeditated desire to make her life miserable.

Because the Lord had closed her womb. So we can just only imagine that Peninnah, you know, what she might be thinking. You know, this is some judgment on Hannah. She must be a wicked woman.

God closed her womb. And so she wants her life to be miserable. She must be some terrible sinner. Not living right with God. You know, whatever her motivation is. Maybe it's even worse than that.

And that stinks. I mean, what a witch. Let me think about it. I didn't know Peninnah. Remember, Peninnah means jewel. One commentator said, Peninnah had a mouth to match her looks.

[29 : 52] And how terrible is this? For her to do this. To try to provoke her. And to make her life miserable.

But this was the thinking of the culture in this day. Right? And verse 7, so it was year by year. This is the author's way of telling us that this has just been going on and on.

It's not just once in a while that Peninnah gave grief to Hannah over her barrenness. But year after year after year when she went up to the house of the Lord that she, Peninnah, provoked her.

Therefore she wept and did not eat. That just breaks your heart. Think about this. How sad. How terrible. For Hannah. Now, the question of course is, why would God do a thing like that?

I mean, He clearly did. That's what Scripture says. He closed her womb. Now, why would God do that? Well, you know, I guess we could say at the very least that it certainly would cause Hannah to cast herself upon the mercy of God.

[31 : 01] Bring her to her knees in humility and cry out for God's mercy. And that's a good thing. And sometimes God does allow things to happen in our lives to break us, to bring us to a point of humility where we have nowhere else to turn.

No other options. I mean, Hannah had no other options. She couldn't leave this marriage and go somewhere else where she wouldn't be ridiculed.

She was stuck right there. No way she could leave. And so, maybe God is just simply bringing her to a place where she places all of her confidence in God and cries out for His mercy.

And that's certainly a part of it because she certainly does that. But beyond that, more importantly, God has a plan, obviously.

He has a plan. And it's going to unfold for us as we study through the book of 1 Samuel and 2 Samuel. And, you know, we're not always privy to God's plan when He allows affliction to come into the life of one of His children.

[32 : 12] We're not privy. Even those who are under the affliction don't always know the reason why this side of glory. But we're kind of privy to the reason and what God's plan was.

And we can see how God orchestrated all this and brought all these things about. I mean, certainly His plan was to reveal His mercy and grace and thereby bring great glory to Himself.

But it goes further than that. He did it to create this kind of scenario where Hannah would willingly dedicate her son to the Lord to make the Nazarite vow in His behalf, which would then bring Samuel into the house of the high priest because God needed him to be there because of the condition of the house of the high priest at the time and his sons Hophni and Phinehas.

That would bring Samuel in there, albeit he was only four years old when he was brought into there, but he would grow up and be an instrument in the hand of God. And that would then allow him to be eventually raised up and groomed to be a mighty prophet and to be a mighty judge for Israel and which would then lead him to the place where he could anoint the first king of Israel and the second king of Israel, the second king being the most significant.

Why? Because David's kingly dynasty would be eternal. It would be eternal. A kingdom that would never end.

[33 : 48] Of course, you know, it did end with David for a time, but it was just postponed until Jesus came. David was the figure, the type of Jesus, and Jesus, his kingdom, will never end.

Never end. So Samuel was a key figure, and God is orchestrating this, starting with closing Hannah's womb to bring her to a place where she called out for the mercy of God and willingly promising to give Samuel back to God and then God could use him for tremendous and wonderful things.

God had a plan. So Hannah's problem of barrenness. Second, Hannah's prayer of brokenness. Her prayer of brokenness. Verse 7 and following, Therefore she wept, did not eat. So she's fasting. Not fasting probably because she's thinking about the actual devotion and discipline of fasting, but she just can't eat.

She's so distraught. And verse 8, Then Elkanah, her husband, said to her, Hannah, why do you weep? Why do you not eat? And why is your heart grieved?

[35 : 08] Typical man. Now, I'm not saying that because I really see that, but because most of the women here are thinking that. Typical man. I mean, why? We can't see, can't understand here.

But I think we can cut Elkanah a little slack here because he does say something really very sweet. I mean, would you agree, ladies? Something very thoughtful or tender.

And he said, Am I not better to you than ten sons? I know, ladies. He doesn't understand. That's not good enough.

To me, that sounds pretty good. All right, but that's not going to do it. And, you know, he's just a man. But it was a sweet thing to say. I've got to give him credit for that.

Right? All right. Well, some of you agree with it. Verse 9. So Hannah arose after they had finished eating and drinking in Shiloh. And it's a little unclear whether she was finally eating and drinking.

[36 : 07] If she was, then what Elkanah said to her at least had a positive effect. Though it didn't solve anything, really. Now, Eli, the priest, was sitting on the seat by the doorpost of the tabernacle of the Lord.

And she, Hannah, was in bitterness of soul. She was greatly distressed. Not that she was bitter. You know, some have taken this word.

And I think it appears this word is also used in the King James, if I recall. And so there have been those who have charged Hannah with bitterness to God.

She was bitter to the Lord. But really, it is that she was just greatly distressed. Broken. And she prayed.

Prayed to the Lord and wept in anguish. Now, have you noticed something? Back there in verses 6 and 7, Peninnah is provoking her, ridiculing her, trying to provoke her, trying to make her life miserable, and Hannah doesn't say a single thing.

[37 : 26] At least nothing recorded in Scripture about it. I think the author is deliberate to have her silent during that time. You know, most of us, we'd say something.

I'd even do more than say something. But Hannah doesn't say a thing. And then, back there in verse 8, remember, Elkanah, you know, with the right heart, but still dumb as a stump like most guys.

He said, why do you eat? Why are you not eating? Why is your heart grieved? Am I not better than 10 sons? But Hannah doesn't say anything. She doesn't speak.

See, listen, the first time we read about Hannah speaking, who is she speaking to? Speaking to God. That's deliberate in the author's narration of this.

He wants us to get that. She's speaking to the Lord. And that's a testimony to her, I think, her faith, her dignity, her purity.

[38 : 35] This is a woman of great worth. Elkanah, I think, could see that. But Hannah is broken. She's broken. And she takes it to the Lord, which is the right thing to do.

She takes it to the Lord in prayer, like that old hymn, you know, have we trials and temptations? Is there trouble anywhere? We should never be discouraged to take it to the Lord in prayer.

We could probably sing that, but I'm not in the mood to sing right now. Now, what does Hannah pray in her brokenness?

Well, she makes a vow. That's not something that I think God is mandating, that barren wives who God blesses to give children.

I don't think there's a mandating scripture that new mothers should necessarily do this. But this is what Hannah did. She made a vow, prayed a vow. Verse 10, And she was in bitterness of soul and prayed to the Lord and wept in anguish.

[39 : 42] Then she made a vow and she said, O Lord of hosts, if you will indeed look on the affliction of your maidservant and remember me, not forget your maidservant, but will give your maidservant.

You notice how many times she repeated maidservant? She's making sure that she acknowledges her position before God. Your maidservant, a male child, give your maidservant a son, a boy.

Then I will give him to the Lord all the days of his life and no razor shall come upon his head. So she made a vow. And what is this vow? It's a Nazarite vow.

The Nazarite vow. Remember I said a couple weeks ago that Samuel and Samson were at least contemporaries, close contemporaries. Both of them were Nazarites.

And so she made a Nazarite vow for her son, not yet born, not even yet conceived, but she's praying for God to give her son.

[40 : 47] So in effect, she's saying, Lord, give me a son and I'll give him back to you for the rest of his life. And then verse 12, and it happened as she continued praying for the Lord that Eli watched her mouth.

You can just kind of picture this, can't you? Now Hannah spoke in her heart. I mean, she's speaking inside, right? Only her lips move. You know, if we were to see that, we'd think they had a Bluetooth thing for their cell phone.

All right, so she's speaking, her lips are moving, but her voice was not heard. And therefore, Eli thought she was drunk. So Eli, being the good Baptist preacher that he was, he said, how long will you be drunk?

Put your wine away from you. Another kind of typical man. He's not getting it. Not figuring this out. But actually, I think it is a testimony to the spiritual condition of Eli.

And we can make that assumption now based upon what we're going to learn later. And he was kind of blind spiritually. And it was indicative of the spiritual condition of Israel at the time, in those

days.

[41 : 59] It also explains the spiritual condition of Eli's sons. And so in verse 15, Hannah explains that she's not drunk, only praying. And she says, I have poured out my soul before the Lord.

I love that. And she really had to. And this is probably not the first time. So Hannah's problem of barrenness, Hannah's prayer of brokenness, and then one last thing.

We'll kind of wrap up the chapter and not really read all of it again, but Hannah's promise of blessedness. A promise that was fulfilled.

And so in verse 17, Eli answered and said, Go in peace. And the God of Israel grant your petition which you have asked of him.

Some of you might have the New American Standard, and I believe it has the word may in there, that God may answer your prayer or something to that.

[43 : 03] But that's really not grammatically correct. Essentially, or literally, he's saying, God will grant your petition. This is a word from God.

Not a printed word because there was no printed word. But it was a word from God through his priest to Hannah. And Eli said, God will grant your petition.

Effectively, that's what he said. Hannah believed. Hannah believed. That is, she believed God. As spoken through Eli.

And so, verse 18 says, And she said, Let your maidservant find favor in your sight. So the woman went her way and ate, and her face was no longer sad.

Dramatic change. She trusted God. She believed in prayer. She believed God's word.

[44 : 05] word. Now, we don't have to have a priest speak to us today. In fact, if a priest speaks, says this is the word from God, then you ought to say, wait a minute.

Because we have the completed word. So we're to believe God's word. She believed in prayer. She believed God's word. And in that day, his spoken word was through the priest.

And so Hannah went home. Everything's fine. No more distress. No more depression. No more discouragement. I don't know. The penina necessarily stopped her ragging her.

Well, at least for nine months she did. She may have. Until Hannah becomes pregnant. pregnant. And so God blessed.

And, you know, we can read the rest of the story. We don't need to reread it again. What happened? She had a child. Elkanah, her husband, loved his wife, Hannah.

[45 : 04] And he knew her, the Bible says. She had a child, a son. And she waited, of course, waited until he was weaned, probably in that day.

Scholars tell us maybe four years old. Maybe as old as five. And then she went up to Shiloh and presented her son, Samuel, to Eli.

And she left him there. He was dedicated to the Lord for the rest of his life. Can you imagine how hard that would be? And yet we don't really read anything in the passage that indicates that Hannah had any second thoughts about this or second guessing.

Now, I think she was human. She would struggle inside, but she was committed. She gave her promise, her bow to the Lord, turned Samuel over.

And then the rest of the story, Samuel's relationship with Eli, that really marvelous story where God speaks to Samuel. Later, Samuel's prophecy concerning Eli's sons, Hophni and Phinehas.

[46 : 24] There we just progress as Samuel grows, becomes a prophet and judge, and God uses him in a mighty, mighty way.

God moves in a mysterious way. his wonders to the morning. He plants his footsteps in the sea and rides upon the storm, deep in unfathomable minds of never-failing skill, treasures up his bright designs and works his sovereign will.

He has to to the He to his! He to his He to his He has to his!!

Thank you.