



“REASONS TO REJOICE”

*“Your Words were found, and I ate them,
and Your Word was to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart.” Jeremiah 15:16*

I and II SAMUEL Lesson 2

Now that we’ve looked at the Book of I Samuel as a whole, we’re ready to begin studying chapter by chapter. Today we will be reading chapters 1 and 2. Please remember to pray before you begin, asking the Holy Spirit to give you wisdom and understanding as you read. I Corinthians 2:14 tells us that “the things of the Spirit of God are spiritually discerned.” We need the Holy Spirit to give us discernment as we read the Scripture, and then teach us how to apply it to our lives.

The first three chapters of I Samuel record much of what was going on during the transitional years between the judges and the kings. We are about to read about the birth of a very great man, as well as the story of one incredible lady!

First Day

- 1. Read I Samuel chapters 1 and 2. Summarize the main point of each chapter in one or two sentences. Give each chapter a title.*

Chapter One: Summary and Title

Chapter Two: Summary and Title

2. *List some of the significant facts in these two chapters. (Don't worry, you don't have to list them all!)*

3. *Who are the main characters?*

4. *Where did this story take place? (Locate this on a Bible map)*

5. *Why do you think we are introduced to Eli's sons so early in the chapter? (verse 3) Read 2:12-17 and 3:13. How does it relate to the question Eli asked of Hannah?*

6. *What immediate application do you see for your life in these chapters?*

We should note that the practice of polygamy or bigamy in the ancient world was widespread and usually practiced for cultural or economic reasons. Large families were often considered a necessity, and many times there was a fear there would be no offspring. If one wife wasn't bearing children, then he might take another. Also, marriages were often used as a peace treaty between nations. (Yuck!) Even though several Old Testament figures had more than one wife, polygamy was never God's intended purpose for man. Warren Wiersbe says that it may be that "God permitted polygamy because of the hardness of men's hearts."

We'll end here for today. Isn't this exciting? Tomorrow we will look more closely at Hannah's dilemma. In the mean time, think about your parenting skills. Whose do they resemble more, Hannah's or Eli's?

Memory Verse of the Week: *"There is none holy like the Lord, for there is none besides You, nor is there any Rock like our God." I Samuel 2:2*

Second Day

Practice your memory verse. How is God like a rock?

Today we will concentrate on Hannah's problem. Have you ever felt like you were in a hopeless situation? I believe Hannah did. Let's see how she handled it ...

- 1. Read I Samuel chapter 1.*
- 2. Briefly describe Hannah's dilemma.*
- 3. What kind of man do you think Elkanah was?*
- 4. Briefly contrast Hannah and Penninah.*
- 5. Why do you think Hannah was so grieved?*

This story began in Ramathaim, which may be another name for Ramah (1:19, 2:11). This city is about six miles north of Jerusalem. This was the birthplace of Samuel, his judicial residence, and place of burial (1:19, 7:17, 25:1).

In verse 3 we find Elkanah going up to Shiloh to worship and sacrifice. Joshua had set up this temporary tabernacle, or “tent,” which the Jewish men traveled to (Joshua 18:1). This tabernacle was recognized as the nation’s worship center until the time of David, when Solomon built a permanent temple. The men of Israel were required to go to three festivals yearly (Deuteronomy 16:16-17). In the commentary on I Samuel in the LifeChanges Series we are told, “Elkanah probably brought his wives to the Feast of Tabernacles, when the nation celebrated God’s blessings on the year’s fertility of crops and herds (Deuteronomy 16:13-15). This would have been an especially sad time for a barren woman.”

6. *What did Hannah do about her dilemma?*

7. *What other choice did Hannah have? How “could” she have handled it?*

8. *How do you handle disappointment and discouragement? (Are you discouraged right now? What should you do?)*

9. *What vow did Hannah make to God? (Was she bargaining with the Lord? What do you think her motives were?) (Vows were characteristic of this particular age of the judges.) Read Numbers 6:1-21 and Acts 21:20-26. What were the requirements of the vow?*

10. *Have you ever prayed for something for so long that it seemed like God had forgotten you? How does this story encourage you?*

11. *In her anguish, Hannah ran to the Lord. She “cast her cares on Him” (1 Peter 5:7). What happens when we do this?*

Twice in this chapter God is called the Lord of Hosts. This term is found about 260 times in the Old Testament. (This is the first) It refers to both the armies of Israel (1 Samuel 17:45) and the myriads of heavenly angels that the Lord is commander over (1 Kings 22:19). Idolatrous worship of the heavens was common, so this title beautifully stresses His universal supremacy over all. Hannah calls upon the Lord who is over Heaven and earth to hear her cry! Are you calling out to Him?

Third Day

Review your memory verse. How is it encouraging you this week?

- 1. Review chapters 1 and 2. Why did Eli think Hannah was drunk?*
- 2. What prophetic blessing did Eli give?*
- 3. Did she wait until she saw God’s plan unfold before she trusted Him? (How do we know?)*
- 4. Why is the phrase “in the process of time” so relevant? (verse 20) What do you know about God’s timing and His ways?*
- 5. Did Hannah keep her promise?*
- 6. What kind of mom do you think Hannah was?*

Hannah is a picture of trust. Do you trust God for your future? Your present? Your past? Hannah reminds us that the Lord of Hosts has everything under control. There's no reason to worry, or doubt.

7. *How was Hannah's faithfulness rewarded? Read Ephesians 3:20.*

Warren Wiersbe said, "If we had more parents like Elkanah and Hannah, we would have more godly people like Samuel." Hannah was a prayer warrior. She believed and trusted in God, and she committed herself, and her child, to Him. She trusted in God's will for her life. Although God rarely asks us to actually "give" our children to Him, we are called to commit them to the Lord. They are "His" kids, not ours.

8. *How can we commit our children to the Lord? (Give some examples)*

9. *Time to evaluate ... Have you given your children over to the Lord?
Have you made a commitment to bring them up in the ways of the Lord?
Are you praying for them, trusting God for their future?*

10. *Just a thought ... would the fervency of your prayers make you appear like you are drunk?*

Most Jewish women would wean their children around the age of three. At that time Hannah brought young Samuel to the tabernacle. Can you imagine how hard that must have been for her? It reminds me of Moses' mother, having to put him in a basket and send him down the Nile (Exodus 2:3). I don't know if I could bear it. But Hannah trusted the Lord Almighty,

the Lord of Hosts. He is the supreme ruler over all, therefore, He knows what's best. May we be challenged this week to trust in the Lord of Hosts as we commit our ways to Him.

Fourth Day

Practice your memory verse.

1. *Read I Samuel chapter 2. What is the tone of Hannah's prayer?*
2. *Read verses 1-10 and list some specific phrases that minister to you.*

The song of Hannah is both prophecy and poetic. It takes its place by such songs by Moses, Miriam, and Mary. These songs are reflective of their present circumstance, while at the same time they speak of Christ's Kingdom and His glory. Aren't they beautiful?

The word "horn" in verse 1 speaks of power and strength. The Layman's Bible Commentary explains that "the word horn is a poetic reference to the animal which lifts up its horned head in triumph, sure of its power." Hannah recognized that her strength was only in the Lord.

3. *Although we know our strength is in God, where else do we sometimes look? (Examine your own heart. Are you depending on the Lord for strength today?)*
4. *How is God like a "Rock"? (Read also Matthew 16:18 and 1 Peter 2:6)*

Knowing that all our strength is in God, and recognizing that there is no one like Him, should humble us incredibly. We need to come before Him in all humility, for He is the God of all knowledge! (Verse 3)

5. *Read verses 4-9 again. What do you think is the main thought of this section? What is Hannah saying about God?*

6. *Read Mary's prayer in Luke 1:46-55. How is it similar?*

Verse 10 is a wonderful prophecy of the coming of Christ. The word "anointed" is the Hebrew word for Messiah, which is translated "Christos" or Christ, in the Greek. God was getting ready to set up a Kingdom through which His Son would eventually reign. Jesus ... King of Kings and Lord of Lords!

Hannah wanted a son, but it seems like she had a deeper purpose. She was burdened for the people of Israel. She knew they needed a man to lead them from their sinful ways. Hannah wanted a son for herself, but more than that, for the good of the nation.

Hannah was elated that God answered her prayer. I love that she "rejoiced in her salvation." (vs 1) Are you rejoicing in yours? Are you thankful and blessed that God has "brought you up from a horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set your feet upon a rock"? (Psalm 40:2) Does your heart burst with thankfulness?

7. *Read Psalm 40:1-17. List some phrases that minister to you. Write a prayer, thanking Him for what He's done for you. (Maybe He'll put a new song in your mouth!)*

8. *Hannah was confident in God. We will find out that David was too. What exactly does it mean to be “confident in God”? Read Psalm 118:8-9 and Philippians 3:3.*

9. *Are you confident in God or in something else? Ask the Holy Spirit to search your heart on this.*

Verse 11 is a transitional paragraph, moving us now into a new scene, with a new problem.

10. *Read the rest of chapter 2, verses 11-36. What are your thoughts?*

*That’s it for today. I pray that we will be encouraged to find our strength and our confidence in God. Let’s take Hannah’s example and pray fervently for our kids, trusting God for their futures. And let’s make the “**Choice to Rejoice**” today, no matter what!*

Fifth Day

Write your verse from memory.

1. *Read I Samuel 2:11-36. Describe Eli’s sons. What sins were they guilty of?*

2. *Did Eli know that his sons were committing evil?*

3. *How did Eli respond to his son's behavior? (What do you think he should have done?)*

4. *Contrast Eli and Hannah as parents.*

There were some terrible things going on at the temple, weren't there? Eli's sons were not only abusing their privileges as men in authority, they were doing abominable things in the eyes of the Lord. The priests were allowed to receive a fair portion of the fellowship offering (Leviticus 7:28-36), but we see that privilege being abused in verses 15-16. The priests were to take boiled meat, although they were not forbidden to roast it. (Numbers 6:19-20). These men wanted it raw. They also wanted to take it before the fat was burned off. The Layman's Commentary explains this well: "To understand this we have to remember that the sacrifice here thought of was the "peace" or communion meal offering. In this type of sacrifice, the beast was slain; the blood, as the element containing the life principle, was drained off and poured out at the foot of the altar; the fat and the entrails were burned up on the altar; and the remaining flesh was eaten by the worshipers, the priests claiming their part. Until the fat had been burned, the sacrifice was totally holy; it was available only after the burning. The terrible crime of Eli's sons was that they disregarded the holiness of the sacrifice and claimed their portion before it had become profane or available for human consumption. Its end was not to give God glory but to satisfy gluttonous priests."

This offering was also to be voluntary, but the sons were threatening force.

5. *It's interesting that bits and pieces of Samuel and his parents are interwoven in this section (verses 18-21). Why is this significant?*

6. *What was Eli guilty of? (vs 29)*

7. *How did Eli compromise?*

How sad that the priest, a man of God, neglected the duties of being a father. Instead of disciplining them, he mildly rebuked them, and then seemed to just look the other way. This grieved God's heart very much; so much that He later replaced all of Eli's family from the priesthood.

8. *Name some ways that parents today can be guilty of the same thing.*

9. *How is it possible to "honor our children" more than God? (Sorry, you know I'm going to ask ... are you doing it?)*

10. *Do you think we are totally responsible for our children's actions? Explain your answer.*

11. *Sometimes we are guilty of "looking away." This happens not only in the training of our kids, but in other areas of our life as well. Is there an issue that you have chosen to "look away" from so you don't have to deal with it? If so, confess it to the Lord and ask for His forgiveness. He will help you deal with "it," whatever "it" is.*

12. Explain briefly what the “unknown” man from God said to Eli.

The words in verses 31-35 appear to refer to Samuel himself, who succeeded Eli as judge, as well as being the acting priest (7:9; 9:11-14). These words were specifically fulfilled when Solomon replaced Abiathar, who was from Eli’s family, with Zadok, who was from a different line (1 Kings 2:27; I Chronicles 24:3,6). The High Priesthood continued in the direct descendants of Zadok as long as the monarchy lasted. But verse 35 points to the priesthood that will last forever.

“In chapters 8-10, we are told how Samuel initiated a change in the form of government, from Judges to Kings. Under the Kingdom, office of king and priest would be separate. As here, in verse 35, an Eternal Priesthood is promised, so in II Samuel 7:16 David is promised an Eternal Throne. Eternal Priesthood and the Eternal Throne looked forward to the Messiah, in whom they merged, Christ becoming man’s Eternal Priest and Eternal King. The temporary merging of the offices of Judge and Priest in the person of Samuel, during the passage period from Judges to the Kingdom, seems to have been a sort of historical forepicture of the final fusing of the two offices of Christ.” (Halley’s Bible Handbook)

Isn’t that interesting? Samuel; a judge, a priest, and a prophet. He is what we call a “type of Christ.” And in Christ, the royal line and the priestly office are united!

13. One last question. What really spoke to your heart from these two chapters?

***“But the Lord has been my defense,
And my God the Rock of my refuge.” Psalm 94:22***

See you next week!