

# The Birth of Samuel

*Issues in Polygamy*

*Value of Humility*

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# What We Will Learn

- Issues in Polygamy
  - Interactions within family of Elkanah
  - Highlight issues in polygamy
- Value of Prayer, Humility and Respect
  - Hannah petitioned God directly
  - In the presence of Chief Priest Eli
  - And explained her actions to Eli
  - With humility, respect, and obedience
- 1 Samuel 1:1–20

# Family of Elkanah an Ephraimite

- Descendant of Ephraim, son of Joseph
- Two wives, Hannah and Peninnah
- Peninnah had several children
- Hannah had none (until much later)
- 1 Samuel 1:1–2

# 1 Samuel 1 (NKJV)

1 Now there was a certain man of Ramathaim Zophim, of the mountains of Ephraim, and his name was Elkanah the son of Jeroham, the son of Elihu, the son of Tohu, the son of Zuph, an Ephraimite.

2 And he had two wives: the name of one was Hannah, and the name of the other Peninnah. Peninnah had children, but Hannah had no children.

# Elkanah Family Interactions: Annual Worship and Sacrifice

- Travelled to Shiloh yearly
- To worship and sacrifice to the Lord
- Elkanah divided items of offering
  - Portions to Peninnah
  - Peninnah's sons and daughters
  - Two portions to Hannah
- 1 Samuel 1:3–5

# 1 Samuel 1 (NKJV)

3 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.

4 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.

# 1 Samuel 1 (NKJV)

5 But to Hannah he would give a double portion, for he loved Hannah, although the Lord had closed her womb.

# Elkanah Family Interactions: Hannah and Peninnah Rivalry

- Peninnah taunted Hannah frequently
- Because Hannah did not have children
- Made Hannah miserable and bitter
- In response, Hannah wept and did not eat
- Elkanah tried to comfort Hannah each time
- 1 Samuel 1:6–8



# 1 Samuel 1 (NKJV)

6 And her rival also provoked her severely, to make her miserable, because the Lord had closed her womb.

7 So it was, year by year, when she went up to the house of the Lord, that she provoked her; therefore she wept and did not eat.

# 1 Samuel 1 (NKJV)

8 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?”

# Polygamy Issues in Elkanah Family

- Head of two sub families
  - Peninnah and children
  - Hannah, with weight of childlessness
- Five sets of human interactions for Elkanah
  - Elkanah versus Peninnah
  - Elkanah versus Peninnah's children
  - Peninnah versus her children
  - Elkanah versus Hannah
  - Peninnah versus Hannah

# Head of Polygamist Household

- Manage multiple sets of human interactions
- Manage rivalry among wives
- Love one wife more than another
- Love some children more than others
- Unequal love for children could be related to unequal love for wives
- Example from Jacob's family

# Paul's Recommendation to Timothy

- Do not appoint polygamist as bishop or deacon
- 1 Timothy 3:2 and 12

# 1 Timothy 3 (NKJV)

2 A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach;

12 Let deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well.

# Hannah Petitions God

- Hannah talked to God directly
- And privately from her heart
- Made a vow as part of her petition
- Chief Priest Eli was present
- But not privy to Hannah's intense conversation with God
- 1 Samuel 1:9–18

# 1 Samuel 1 (NKJV)

9 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.

10 And she was in bitterness of soul, and prayed to the Lord and wept in anguish.



## 1 Samuel 1 (NKJV)

11 Then 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.”

12 And it happened, as she continued praying before the Lord, that Eli watched her mouth.

# 1 Samuel 1 (NKJV)

13 Now Hannah spoke in her heart; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard. Therefore Eli thought she was drunk.

14 So Eli said to her, “How long will you be drunk? Put your wine away from you!”

15 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.

## **1 Samuel 1 (NKJV)**

16 Do not consider your maidservant a wicked woman, for out of the abundance of my complaint and grief I have spoken until now.”

17 Then Eli answered and said, “Go in peace, and the God of Israel grant your petition which you have asked of Him.”

18 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.

# Hannah's Interaction with Eli

- Prayed directly without Eli
- Notwithstanding that Eli was present
- Responded respectfully to Eli's question
- Eli amplified her prayer subsequently
- She accepted Eli's prayer with humility and promise of obedience
- 1 Samuel 1:15–18

# 1 Samuel 1 (NKJV)

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# 1 Samuel 1 (NKJV)

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# More on Hannah's Interaction with Eli

- Hannah was humble
- Obedient, and respectful to Eli
- While she exercised her right
- To communicate directly with God

# God Grants Hannah's Petition

- They returned home to Rama
  - Hannah became pregnant
  - Gave birth to a son
  - Named him Samuel
- “Because I have asked for him from the Lord”
- 1 Samuel 1:19–20



# 1 Samuel 1 (NKJV)

19 Then they rose early in the morning and worshiped before the Lord, and returned and came to their house at Ramah. And Elkanah knew Hannah his wife, and the Lord remembered her.

20 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.”

# What We Learned

- Interactions within family of Elkanah highlight issues in polygamy
- Hannah petitions God directly in the presence of Chief Priest Eli
- Explained herself to Eli
- With humility, respect, and promise of obedience
- God granted her petition