

1 Samuel 1 New American Standard Bible

Elkanah and His Wives

Now there was a man from Ramathaim-zophim from the hill country 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; and Peninnah had children, but Hannah had no children.

³ Now this man would go up from his city yearly to worship and to sacrifice to the Lord of armies in Shiloh. And the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were priests to the Lord there. ⁴ When the day came that Elkanah sacrificed, he would give portions to his wife Peninnah and to all her sons and daughters; ⁵ but to Hannah he would give a double portion, because he loved Hannah, but the Lord had closed her womb.

⁶ Her rival, moreover, would provoke her bitterly to irritate her, because the Lord had closed her womb. ⁷ And it happened year after year, as often as she went up to the house of the Lord, that she would provoke her; so she wept and would not eat.

⁸ Then Elkanah her husband would say to her, “Hannah, why do you weep, and why do you not eat, and why is your heart sad? Am I not better to you than ten sons?”

⁹ Then Hannah got up after eating and drinking in Shiloh. Now Eli the priest was sitting on the seat by the doorpost of the temple of the Lord. ¹⁰ She, greatly distressed, prayed to the Lord and wept bitterly. ¹¹ And she made a vow and said, “Lord of armies, if You will indeed look on the affliction of Your bond-servant and remember me, and not forget Your bond-servant, but will give Your bond-servant a son, then I will give him to the Lord all the days of his life, and a razor shall never come on his head.”

¹² Now it came about, as she continued praying before the Lord, that Eli was watching her mouth. ¹³ As for Hannah, she was speaking in her heart, only her lips were quivering, but her voice was not heard. So Eli thought that she was drunk. ¹⁴ Then Eli said to her, “How long will you behave like a drunk? Get rid of your wine!” ¹⁵ But Hannah answered and said, “No, my lord, I am a woman despairing in spirit; I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but I have poured out my soul before the Lord.

¹⁶ Do not consider your bond-servant a useless woman, for I have spoken until now out of my great concern and provocation.” ¹⁷ Then Eli answered and said, “Go in peace; and may the God of Israel grant your request that you have asked of Him.” ¹⁸ She said, “Let your bond-servant find favor in your sight.” So the woman went on her way and ate, and her face was no longer *sad*.

Samuel Is Born to Hannah

¹⁹ Then they got up early in the morning and worshiped before the Lord, and returned again to their house in Ramah. And Elkanah had relations with Hannah his wife, and the Lord remembered her. ²⁰ It came about in due time, after Hannah had conceived, that she gave birth to a son; and she named him Samuel, *saying*, “Because I have asked for him of the Lord.”

²¹ Then the man Elkanah went up with all his household to offer to the Lord the yearly sacrifice and *to pay* his vow. ²² But Hannah did not go up, for she said to her husband, “*I will not go* until the child is weaned; then I will bring him, so that he may appear before

the Lord and stay there for life.”²³ Elkanah her husband said to her, “Do what seems best to you. Stay until you have weaned him; only may the Lord confirm His word.”

So the woman stayed and nursed her son until she weaned him.²⁴ Now when she had weaned him, she took him up with her, with a three-year-old bull, one ephah of flour, and a jug of wine, and brought him to the house of the Lord in Shiloh, although the child was young.²⁵ Then they slaughtered the bull, and brought the boy to Eli.²⁶ And she said, “Pardon me, my lord! As your soul lives, my lord, I am the woman who stood here beside you, praying to the Lord.²⁷ For this boy I prayed, and the Lord has granted me my request which I asked of Him.²⁸ So I have also dedicated him to the Lord; as long as he lives he is dedicated to the Lord.” And he worshiped the Lord there.

We will use five tools on our expedition that are built around five questions

– What questions were provoked within you?
Did anything confuse you?
Did anything move you emotionally?
Did God instruct you to do something?
Did you gain any insight into God’s character

Paul’s observations and insights

1. We are introduced to a family from the tribe of Ephraim.
2. Elkanah had two wives, one was barren – Hannah, and the other was fertile – Penninah.
3. According to the law Elkanah and his family would go to Shiloh yearly to worship God.
4. Now at Shiloh Eli and his two sons were priests to the Lord.
5. Elkanah would offer sacrifices to the Lord and share his food with his wives, but he would give more food to Hannah than Penninah.
6. Why would a husband create this type of division within his family?
7. Penninah was jealous of Hannah and attacked her at the point of her pain.
8. Why are some people so cruel?
9. The fact the statement recalls that Elkanah loves Hannah show where this problem of jealousy arose.
10. Did Elkanah not love Penninah?
11. Why did they think that it was God who had closed Hannah’s womb?
12. In those days people often accredited this kind of situation as a curse from God.
13. Did God close Hannah’s womb?
14. This proved to be an annual intimidation from Penninah. How sad that people can behave so cruelly.
15. Hannah was depressed by the situation of being barren, it was considered to be a humiliation for a women not to be able to bear a child.
16. Hannah was being controlled by her circumstances.
17. Elkanah doesn’t understand women.
18. He is unable to bring Hannah out of her depression.

19. He fires questions at her that are an acknowledgement of the symptoms of the problem.
20. He deflects the focus upon himself and brings into question her love for him.
21. Was it better for her to have ten sons or to have a husband?
22. Elkanah failed to see that Hannah was unfulfilled.
23. Hannah acts, it is as if she had an inspiration in her depression.
24. We need to remember that God speaks to us if we are willing to listen.
25. Hannah runs to the temple and Eli sees her. She is praying bitterly to the Lord.
26. What is it to pray bitterly?
27. She makes a vow to the Lord. Why do people do this? If you do this Lord, I will do that!
28. She invites God to bless her womb and give her a child and in return she will dedicate the child to the Lord's service for his entire life.
29. She is willing to let go of all that she has ever wanted.
30. God gives to her in the depths of her depression the desires of her heart.
31. This child will be separated, that is set apart to the Lord, even as Samson was set apart.
32. Eli noticed Hannah's mouth was moving but no sound was coming out. She was praying within her heart, within her spirit.
33. Because Eli never heard Hannah speaking he jumped to conclusions. How often does jumping to conclusions get us into trouble?
34. Eli acts upon his assumptions and accuses Hannah.
35. One of the attacks of the evil one is to be the accuser of the brethren.
36. Eli called Hannah a drunk and set about reprimanding her, a reprimand that was not justified.
37. Hannah defends herself and educates this priest of the Lord who is ready to accuse a woman in her deep depression.
38. How many times have the broken sort the presence of the Lord, only to be judged at the door by the pharisaic leaders.
39. Jesus says 'women where are your accusers?'
40. Hannah had recognised the condition she had, she declares 'I am a woman depressed in spirit, but I have poured out my soul to the Lord'. Her soul represented what she thought, what she felt and what she did.
41. How many people have come into church and felt worthless in the eyes of the religious?
42. Hannah was speaking out of her concern and provocation, out of the circumstances of her pain.
43. Eli recognised her sincerity and brings her a blessing of the Lord.
44. God has a heart of generosity so Hannah left Eli's presence satisfied of soul and spirit, her appetite returned for she knew she would receive the blessings of the priest.
45. Hannah was no longer sad.
46. When we receive with faith and expectation our countenance will change, Hannah was full of joy and worshipped God.
47. They all went back home as a family and would wait for the Lord's blessing to come.
48. Hannah and Elkanah had intercourse and God's blessing came upon her.
49. King Solomon, having built the temple, asked the Lord to remember his people, it was for occasions such as this.

50. Nature took its course and Hannah fell pregnant and gave birth to a son who she named Samuel.
51. Hannah chose not to go up to worship with the family until Samuel was weaned.
52. Do you think that she was tempted never to go up again?
53. Hannah had declared the day that she went up she would let go of her Son to the Lord forever.
54. Elkanah like any good husband said 'do as you see fit'.
55. He wanted reassurance from the Lord that this was in His will to give Samuel away.
56. The day came when she would go up to the temple and say goodbye to her son. Along with the offering she offered Samuel to the Lord. From that point on Eli would take care of Samuel.
57. What does the term 'as your soul lives' mean?
58. Samuel steps into his calling alongside the priest, a prophet, a seer of the Lord.