

1 Samuel 1:1-7 Chapter Study

INTRODUCTION

I. Samuel Chs. 1-8

II. Saul Chs. 9-15

III. David Chs. 16-31

1 Samuel is important in a historical sense because it marks the transition from the time of the Judges to the rule of the kings of Israel.

If you were here when we studied Judges a few months ago, you'll remember that following Israel's conquest of Canaan under Joshua, the land was apportioned to the tribes of Israel, with each tribe moving to take possession of the land allotted to them.

They had varying degrees of success at rooting out the last remnants of Canaanites who still lived in their territories.

Because they failed to finish the job of removing them, the Jews ended up being seduced by their wicked practices.

When the people turned away from God, as had been agreed to in the Covenant, God allowed the *elements to distress* & their *enemies to oppress* them.

After a few years of adversity, Israel would come to their senses, realize they were being hammered because they'd forsaken God, repent, & return to the Lord & His renewed blessing.

God's means of deliverance from oppression was a dynamic leader called a *judge*.

A man or woman would appear on the scene who rallied the people both spiritually & militarily.

As long as the judge lived, the people followed the Lord & knew His abundance.

But enjoying His blessing, as soon as the judge passed from the scene, the people of Israel once again lost their sense of dependence on God & the sad cycle of rebellion started all over again.

Samuel was the 13th & last of the Judges.

He serves as the bridge between the time when politically, Israel was decentralized and ruled by tribal elders.

There was no political center or capital of the nation because there was no central or federal government.

Israel was merely a collection of tribal regions, and the government was based on tribal leadership.

The only real center of the nation, what tied them together was their worship of Yahweh, whose tabernacle was located at Shiloh, in the very center of the land.

[Map]

It was there at the tabernacle that the people were to meet 3 times every year to celebrate the feasts that commemorated the Exodus & their covenant with God.

These annual feasts were the *key element* in reminding the tribes they were united & bound together in a joint agreement with the Lord.

It's understood by most conservative scholars that Samuel wrote 1 Samuel; all except for the end, which was probably penned by Nathan & Gad, the prophets.

The date for the book is the 11th Century – right around 1000 BC.

For reference – Abraham was right around 2000 BC

The Exodus, roughly 1400 BC

David – right about 1000 BC

- I. Samuel** **Chs. 1-8**
- A. His Birth** **Ch. 1-2:11**
- 1. Elkanah's family** **1:1-8**

1a

This was shortened to Ramah.

1b

As I mentioned Sunday – 1 Chr. 6 tells us that Elkanah was of a Levite.

So when it says here that he was an Ephraimite, it means he lived in the region of the tribe of Ephraim.

Since only a limited number of priests could live at the tabernacle in Shiloh, the majority of them lived in various other locales all over Israel.

They served as the local pastor for the villages and towns of the land.

Elkanah was Ramah's pastor-priest.

2

Because Hannah is mentioned first, that means she was his first & favored wife.

But it would appear that when she proved barren, Elkanah had married Peninnah, who turned out to be a baby-making machine.

3

Elkanah set a good example when it came to observing the rules of his religion.

He made sure he made the 16 mile trek from Ramah to Shiloh for the annual feasts commanded in the Law of Moses.

This was during the time when the high priest Eli's 2 sons were serving at the tabernacle.

These guys who we'll learn more about later, were total snakes.

The point being made here is that Elkanah was a good & godly man who lived at a time of religious decadence & spiritual darkness.

4-5

When the family went to Shiloh to celebrate the feasts and shared the fellowship offering, Elkanah demonstrated his special love for the favored wife Hannah by giving her twice as much as Peninnah & her kids.

Elkanah knew Hannah was distressed over her barrenness and tried to make her feel better by this display of affection.

But all it did was incite Peninnah to jealousy.

6-7

Hannah never learned to live with Peninnah's merciless taunting.

As the years went by, she grew more distressed at the digs.

It got to the point where Hannah was unable to enjoy the blessing her husband was trying to show her by loading her with food.

And of course, that was exactly Peninnah's goal.

She was jealous of Hannah & the favor Elkanah was showing her – so she aimed to make her rival miserable.

We looked at all of this Sunday & saw some great lessons on envy, contentment, & how to deal with those who seem to have made it *their* goal in life to make *your* life miserable.