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Why does it matter or help us to study the Old Testament? First of all, it is all God's Word and He says:

***2 Timothy 3:16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:***

No other reason is needed but it has always struck me as I study God's Word and these people who served Him are in Heaven and as Believers, we will have the honor of meeting these very people someday. God does not want us to be ignorant of such things. These were mighty men and women of God and deserve our respect by studying their amazing feats for God. I realize at times there seems to be a disconnect between our lives today and these ancient followers of God, but we can always learn if nothing else how to walk in righteousness from their actions.

## **Samuel the Prophet and Judge**

Judges lasted for about 330 years from 1383 BC, to 1052 BC. God put Judges in place and protected them as long as they lived, and they walked with God.

**Judges 10:15: "But the Israelites said to the LORD, 'We have sinned. Do with us whatever you think best, but please rescue us now.'"**

History showed that each time a Judge died, Israel would revert to its old ways every man doing as he saw fit. As many of the Hebrews realized that they needed someone to rule them and tell them what God wanted, they would call out to Him to be rescued.

**Judges 21:25: “In those days Israel had no king; everyone did as he saw fit.”**

Who were the Judges of Israel?

**1. Joshua**

**1398 to 1380 B.C.**

Joshua, appointed by Moses to be leader of God's people after his death, took God's people into the Promised Land in 1405 B.C. He became the first Judge at the age of 92 after battling seven years to conquer as much of the land of milk and honey as possible. Joshua lived to the age of 110 (Judg. 2:8).

**2. Othniel**

**1350 to 1310 B.C.**

God allowed Israel, after they began to indulge in evil and idolatry, to be oppressed by Chushanrishathaim who was the king of Mesopotamia (Judges 3:8). After eight long years the Lord answered the cries of his people by raising up Othniel. He valiantly led Israel's army against the Mesopotamian king and was victorious! He served as Israel's judge for forty years (verses 7 - 11).

**3. Ehud**

**1292 to 1212**

After the people begin to indulge in evil they are allowed to be oppressed by Moab's king and his allies for eighteen years (Judges 3). God then raises up Ehud, a rare left-handed warrior, to free his people after they cry out to him.

#### **4. Shamgar** **??? to 1212?**

A man named Shamgar championed the cause of God's people by killing 600 Philistines with nothing more than an ox goad (verse 31). Scripture seems to indicate he was the fourth person to serve as a Judge of Israel.

The Bible, unfortunately, is silent regarding who Shamgar was, who his parents were or which tribe he came from. It also does not state how long Shamgar was a Judge. His service, west of the Jordan River, may have overlapped that of Ehud (see Judg. 4:1) who served in Israel's territory east of the Jordan.

Shamgar may also have served for a short period of time, possibly only a year (Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible). The song of Deborah and Barak mentions him by name (5:6).

#### **5. Deborah and Barak** **1192 to 1152 B.C.**

Israel, as soon as Ehud was dead, yet again, begin to indulge in sins that stir up God's wrath. He allows his people to come under the harsh treatment of Jabin, the king of Canaan, for twenty years. He then inspires Deborah, a prophetess who would become the only female Judge, to encourage Barak to attack the enemy. His successful attack leads to forty years of peace (Judges 4 - 5).

#### **6. Eli** **1153 to 1113**

Eli, a large man, was both a High Priest and Judge in Israel. He died, at the age of 98, after falling backwards on his chair and breaking his neck (1Samuel 1 - 4, 14:3).

#### **7. Gideon** **1145 to 1105**

The people's indulgence in sin, once again, leads to oppression by an enemy. The Midianites, for seven long years, are allowed to rule over and impoverish the people. God then raises up Gideon who, along with his 300-man army, surprises the enemy and wins a great victory (Judges 6 - 8)!

## **8. Abimelech**

**1105 to 1102**

Abimelech, one of Gideon's sons, arranges for the city of Shechem to make him their king. He then has all his sixty-nine brothers, save one, murdered. He assumes the power of a king over northern Israel, a claim which most of the people seem to accept. He is finally killed when a woman drops a millstone on his head (Judges 9)!

## **9. Tola**

**1102 to 1079**

Tola was from the tribe of Issachar and lived in a city within Ephraim's territory. He is called to take on the responsibility of Judge, for the northern part of the Promised Land, after the death of Abimelech. Nothing more is known about him other than he was buried in his hometown of Shamir (Judg. 10:1 - 2).

## **10. Jephthah**

**1087 to 1081**

Israel's indulgence in sin earns them more oppression, this time from the Ammonites for eighteen years (Judges 11 - 12). God then raises up Jephthah, the son of a harlot, to free his people. He ultimately serves in the eastern portion of the land (east of the Jordan River) for six years.

## **11. Samson**

**1085 to 1065**

Due to their many sins, the southern and western sections of the land are allowed to be dominated by the Philistines for forty years. The Lord then raises up Samson, a Nazarite from birth, to deliver his people. His unique superhuman strength destroys many Philistine leaders and weakens their nation for several years.

## **12. Samuel**

**1085 to 1053 B.C.**

Samuel, called by God at an early age, becomes a prophet and well-respected Judge. He anoints both Saul and David as kings over Israel (1Samuel, 2 Samuel).

**13. Ibzan**  
**1081 to 1074**

Ibzan served the eastern section of Israel's territory. Not much is recorded about him other than he grew up in Bethlehem (Judges 12:8 - 10).

**14. Jair**  
**1079 to 1057**

Jair, who was wealthy, had thirty sons (Judges 10:3 - 5). He was an inhabitant of Gilead who governed the northern part of the land for 22 years.

**15. Elon**  
**1074 to 1064**

Elon was of the tribe of Zebulun (Joshua 12:11 - 12). Nothing more is known about him except that he served the eastern part of the Promised Land for ten years.

**16. Abdon**  
**1064 to 1056**

Abdon had forty sons and thirty nephews (Judges 12:14). He served, in the eastern section of the country, for eight years.

**17. Joel 18. Abijah**  
**1053 to 1050**

Joel and Abijah were Samuel's two sons who served as the last Judges of Israel. Samuel's advanced age, as well as the corruption of his two sons, leads the people to request a human king be placed over them. God reluctantly approves of this request and has Samuel anoint Saul as king in 1050 B.C.

The Judges were used by God to turn Israel back to Him. Every time Israel was without a Judge they turned back to Idol Worship.

We need to take a couple of Sundays and see how pervasive idol worship was and still exists today. Idol worship draws mankind away from God and has since its inception by Satan at Babel. Still prevalent today.

### **Now to Samuel and his history:**

The Prophet Samuel was the only son of Hannah. Hannah was one of two wives of Elkanah. The Bible describes this Elkanah as the son of Jeroham, from the tribe of Levi, living in the [days of the judges](#). Elkanah's other wife was Peninnah, who bore a number of children to Elkanah.

The Book of Samual is believed to have perhaps two or three writers. Samuel is believed to have written part of 1<sup>st</sup> Samuel along with Gad and or Nathan writing the rest of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Samuel. Both Gad and Nathan were prophets or what was called "seers" of God and lived during the time of King David.

Nathan was in the court of King David and was one of David's most valued advisors. Nathan was the prophet that after David had an affair with Bathsheba and had her husband killed, Nathan called David out for that. You could find that in 2 Samuel 12.

It should be noted that the Temple had not yet been built in Jerusalem and that the Tabernacle where the Ark was lodged was at Shiloh. This hill country of Ephraim where Hannah lived with Elkanah is taking place is about halfway between where Jerusalem is and where Shiloh was.

1<sup>st</sup> Samuel starts out with Hannah going to Shiloh where the tabernacle was and where sacrifices were offered. While present at the feast, at the Tabernacle, Hannah commits to ardent prayer asking God to bless her with a son.

In her prayer she commits to giving her son to God as a servant for his entire life. She is so fervent in her prayer that it draws the attention of Eli the High Priest. Eli watching her, thinks she is drunk and begins to condemn her for it. In a following conversation Eli realizes the dedication Hannah has to God and her willingness to give her first and only son to God to serve.

God honors Hannah and gives her a son, Samuel.

In this age when a child was between 2 and 5 they would be weaned. When Samuel was around 4 years old Samuel is given

to the temple under the care of Eli and lives there serving God and growing in stature before God.

Samuel will grow to be perhaps the most influential Prophet of God to Israel as it leaves the time of Judges and moves to a King. Samuel is opposed to Israel wanting a king but surrenders to God's Will but God warns Israel of what to expect with a King.

Samuel will be the Prophet of God that anoints both Saul and David as Kings.

There is so much history about the 12 Tribes of Israel and how as Joseph's sons Ephraim and Manasseh ended up with a land inheritance with the brothers of Joseph, the 11 brothers:

The sons of Jacob renamed Israel by God and His 12 sons.

1. Reuben ----- none
2. Simeon ----- none
3. Levi ----- Aaron, Moses, Eli, John the Baptist
4. Judah ----- David, Jesus
5. Dan ----- Samson
6. Naphtali ----- Barak, Elijah were from the land of Naphtali
7. Gad ----- Jephthah were from the land of Gad
8. Asher ----- none



- 9. Issachar ----- none
- 10. Zebulun ----- none
- 11. Joseph ----- Joshua, Gideon, Samuel
- 12. Benjamin ----- Saul, Esther, Paul

## Samuel 1

### **Elkanah and his Wives**

**([1 Kings 22:51-53](#); [2 Kings 1:1-16](#); [Psalm 113:1-9](#))**

**1Now there was a certain man of Ramathaimzophim, of mount Ephraim, and his name was Elkanah, the son of Jeroham, the son of Elihu, the son of Tohu, the son of Zuph, an Ephrathite:**

The name **Ramathaimzophim** Greek means double heights watchers. The city was built in tiers on the side of a hills of Ephraim and this town was at the top of the hill giving them a 360 view of surrounding area: thus, being a great observation post for watchers.

Some times in scripture when we see a list of names usually a history of lineage, God gives a message through the meaning of the names. Not always but I usually check when I see this. Here is what may be a simple statement from God of His intention.

The names in this verse have the following definitions:

**Elkanah:** His name means “God Created or God has taken possession”

**Jeroham:** “may He be compassionate”

**Elihu:** “He is my God”

**Tohu:** “good advice wise council”

**Zuph:** root word to “flow or swim”

**Ephrathite:** is from Ephraim meaning “double fruit”

God does nothing by accident or flippantly, even naming children.  
One possible rendering of these specific names might be this:

*God created all things, He is my God, may He be compassionate and provide good advice that double fruit might flow to me.*

Now this verse seems to present the idea that Elkanah was from the tribe of Ephraim, as it shows he was living in this hill country of Ephraim, but Elkanah was of the tribe of Levi according to 1 Chronicles.

**1 Chronicles 6: 16***The sons of Levi; Gershom, Kohath, and Merari.*

Jumping to verse 27 in 1 Chronicles 6:

**27***Eliab his son, Jeroham his son, Elkanah his son. 28***And the sons of Samuel; the firstborn Vashni, and Abiah.**

Elkanah means: “God has created, or God has taken possession.”

Hannah means: “favored”

Peninnah means: “pearl”

These three names conjugated might create this sentence:

***God has created a favored pearl.***

Even though Peninnah might mean “pearl” she was anything but when it came to her actions and words toward Hannah as we will see shortly.

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

Polygamy was often fraught with competition mainly around who could deliver the most children. We saw this happen with Jacob, Leah and Rachael. Also, Abraham and Sarah, even though Abraham never took a second wife. Sarah’s handmaiden was given to Abraham to bare him children out of impatience from Sarah. It did not turn out well.

Likewise with these two women, one fruitful and delivering many children, the other barren but loved by her husband.

**3And this man went up out of his city yearly to worship and to sacrifice unto the LORD of hosts in Shiloh. And the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, the priests of the LORD, were there.**

Eli means to “arise”. Hophni means “to grasp or fist”, Phinehas means, “dark skinned one, or serpent”.

**4And when the time was that Elkanah offered, he gave to Peninnah his wife, and to all her sons and her daughters, portions:**

In the Jewish tradition it was essential that the family shared in the sacrifices and afterward a family meal where the father/husband would hand out meal portions. This verse amplifies the large number of children that Peninnah had given Elkanah.

**5But unto Hannah he gave a worthy portion; for he loved Hannah: but the LORD had shut up her womb.**

Elkanah loved Hannah and gave her a double portion, likely to assuage her feelings of inadequacy toward Peninnah over children. This verse also declares that it is God that either closes or opens the womb for women. God always has a reason, it is never by oversight nor random, it is purposeful.

**6And her adversary also provoked her sore, for to make her fret, because the LORD had shut up her womb.**

I would just say that two women in the same home is perhaps not a good idea. The same would be with men, but there seems to be an added conflict with women in situations like this.

**7And as he did so year by year, when she went up to the house of the LORD, so she provoked her; therefore she wept, and did not eat.**

Whether this meal is the one spoken of in vs 5 is not totally clear but is likely the same one where Elkanah gives the wife, he loves a double portion. Which apparently ignited a mean word from Peninnah. What good comes from making snide comments to anyone one might ask?

**8Then said Elkanah her husband to her, Hannah, why weepest thou? and why eatest thou not? and why is thy heart grieved? am not I better to thee than ten sons?**

Elkanah tries to consol Hannah by pointing out how he cares for her and is it not better to have him to love her than to have 10 sons?

This entire chapter is about how God at a time of His choosing will reward the faithful servant. We will see shortly that Peninnah will disappear from scripture but here we are 3 thousand years later talking about a woman who love God and God honored her with the son she asked for.

**9So Hannah rose up after they had eaten in Shiloh, and after they had drunk. Now Eli the priest sat upon a seat by a post of the temple of the LORD.**

Vs 9 is about a festival after the sacrifices have been made and the families sat down to a meal. The word “drunk” is quite obvious

and as with most meals in Israel wine was drank. That is the reason for Eli's suspicion in vs 14.

Now Eli was the Priest presiding over the festival so he could see the Israelites. His seat was by one of the entry posts of the Temple.

There were 5 bronze pillars or posts at the entrance of the Tabernacle. Eli likely sat at one of those specific posts. It was the entry into the divine from the world or common.

Hannah stands up from their meal and goes to one of the posts near the entrance and near Eli to pray.

**10And she was in bitterness of soul, and prayed unto the LORD, and wept sore.**

Likely a combination of being barren, the events with all the children around that were not Her's and the mean behavior of Peninnah caused Hannah to become emotional and distressed over her not bearing a child. Instead of reaching out in anger she turned to God the Creator of all things. The only One who could change her circumstances. Her prayers were heartfelt and accompanied with tears of pain.

**11And she vowed a vow, and said, O LORD of hosts, if thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of thine handmaid,**

**and remember me, and not forget thine handmaid, but wilt give unto thine handmaid a man child, then I will give him unto the LORD all the days of his life, and there shall no razor come upon his head.**

Bargaining is not usually recommended with God. But when there is no hope and all that is left is to offer yourself or something you dearly love to God in exchange for an answer, it has been done many times. Rarely is God moved by bargaining from His Will in any matter. Hannah wanted a child, more specifically a boy. She was willing to dedicate him to God for a life of service. No angel told her this, she decided in her own spirit that this is what she would do if God blessed her with a son.

**12And it came to pass, as she continued praying before the LORD, that Eli marked her mouth.**

Eli was watching Hannah's mouth move in silent prayer before God. Those circumstances led Eli to conclude that she had drunk too much wine and was inebriated.

**13Now Hannah, she spake in her heart; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard: therefore Eli thought she had been drunken. 14And Eli said unto her, How long wilt thou be drunken? put away thy wine from thee.**

Eli basing his opinion on what he had seen obviously took Hannah for being drunk from wine. Understandable and he was the person in charge of Israel at the time.

**15And Hannah answered and said, No, my lord, I am a woman of a sorrowful spirit: I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but have poured out my soul before the LORD.**

Hannah at once corrects the misunderstanding and declares why she is so distraught.

**16Count not thine handmaid for a daughter of Belial: for out of the abundance of my complaint and grief have I spoken hitherto.**

Strong's Concordance renders "Belial" as: "evil, naughty, ungodly (men), wicked". Hannah tells Eli that she is grieved over her circumstances in not having a child and had taken her petition to the One who can change it, God.

**17Then Eli answered and said, Go in peace: and the God of Israel grant thee thy petition that thou hast asked of him.**

With understanding Hannah's plight Eli agrees with her petition to God and says so with authority.



**18And she said, Let thine handmaid find grace in thy sight. So the woman went her way, and did eat, and her countenance was no more sad.**

Finally laying out her heart to God and asking for Him to bless her with child, she is relieved of the pressure she was under and now finds joy in knowing God has heard her prayer.

### **The Birth of Samuel**

**19And they rose up in the morning early, and worshipped before the LORD, and returned, and came to their house to Ramah: and Elkanah knew Hannah his wife; and the LORD remembered her.**

Worshiping before God in all things is God's desire for us all. Fully putting into His hands our lives and the difficulties we face. God is gentle and loving of His children wanting only the best for them. Sometimes God will test us to see where our hearts are truly at. It is in those challenging times that can last minutes or even years that God is seeking our hearts. Prayers can sometimes take years for answers, sometimes moments, but it up to God as to when and how He will answer.

Jesus in Luke 18 tells a parable of a woman who is persistent with the judge until he finally relents and grants the woman's petition. Jesus says we are to be that way with God to pray and pray continually until we get an answer.

**20Wherefore it came to pass, when the time was come about after Hannah had conceived, that she bare a son, and called his name Samuel, saying, Because I have asked him of the LORD.**

Hannah likely knew fairly early on that she was pregnant, but the fulfillment of her prayer took another 9 months to come to pass.

**21And the man Elkanah, and all his house, went up to offer unto the LORD the yearly sacrifice, and his vow.**

God commanded three such feast and sacrifices:

***Deuteronomy 16:16 Three times a year all your men are to appear before the LORD your God in the place He will choose: at the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the Feast of Weeks, and the Feast of Tabernacles. No one should appear before the LORD empty-handed.***

**22But Hannah went not up; for she said unto her husband, I will not go up until the child be weaned, and then I will bring him, that he may appear before the LORD, and there abide for ever. 23And Elkanah her husband said unto her, Do what seemeth thee good; tarry until thou have weaned him; only the LORD establish his word.**

As you all know a true bonding of a child and its parents happens early in life. The first three years are critical to this bonding and shaping of a young life as the parents see fit. For Hannah and her husband, they prepared young Samuel for service to God.

Hannah had made a Nazarite vow to not cut Samuel's hair as well as prepare him to serve God.

**So the woman abode, and gave her son suck until she weaned him. 24And when she had weaned him, she took him up with her, with three bullocks, and one ephah of flour, and a bottle of wine, and brought him unto the house of the LORD in Shiloh: and the child was young.**

Samuel was 4 or 5 years old when he was taken to Eli to serve God. Eli would bond with this young man, holding him in high esteem just as his mother and father did. God had not revealed His plan for how He would use Samuel, but he would become one of the greatest prophets and judges in the history of Israel. He would anoint the first two kings of Israel even though he was against Israel having kings. In Samuel's mind, God was their King and they needed no other.

**25And they slew a bullock, and brought the child to Eli. 26And she said, Oh my lord, as thy soul liveth, my lord, I am the woman that stood by thee here, praying unto the LORD. 27For this child I prayed; and the LORD hath given me my petition which I asked of him: 28Therefore also I have lent him to the LORD; as long as he liveth he shall be lent to the LORD. And he worshipped the LORD there.**

Perhaps, our children are loaned to us by God. It is our responsibility to raise them up in the Fear of the Lord.

**Psalm 127:3-5 Children are indeed a heritage from the LORD, and the fruit of the womb is His reward. / Like arrows in the hand of a warrior, so are children born in one's youth. / Blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them. He will not be put to shame when he confronts the enemies at the gate.**

As parents we are to train them up in the ways of the Lord so that in their later life, they would not depart from it.

***Proverbs 22:6 Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.***

Hannah was a faithful woman of God, who carried out a most difficult task and that is letting her son go.

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