

LifeGroup Questions
Based on: 1 Samuel 1:1-28
February 3, 2019

Overview

The Prophet Samuel's story begins with family drama. His father Elkanah had two wives: Hannah and Peninnah. It was common in this middle eastern culture to have more than one wife. There were several reasons for this. If a man's first wife was barren he would take another to have children. This was done to keep the family heritage and also as a retirement package for the parents. They needed children to take care of them when they got older. There wasn't a system in place other than family to take care of aging parents.

Even though the text doesn't say which wife Elkanah married first, we can make a good case for it being Hannah. Since Hannah was barren Elkanah would have married Peninnah to have kids. Hannah pleaded before the Lord to give her a child. God heard her prayer and she gave birth to Samuel. Hannah had promised that Samuel would serve the Lord all his life. Even before Samuel was born he was going to be living under a Nazirite vow (never cutting his hair).

Samuel was to be raised by the priest Eli instead of by his mother, Hannah. Eli had two other sons named Hophni and Phinehas. They were completely taking advantage of their position and abusing their authority. God would choose to wipe out the lineage of Eli. Samuel was to be the new priest.

How was Eli able to raise Samuel to fear the Lord and yet fail with his own two sons? The text doesn't address this specifically. It is possible that Eli raised his two sons around God and not with God. He taught them the rituals, but left out the relationship. These two men were around religious activities their whole lives and yet it never changed their behavior.

Is it possible today to raise kids around Jesus and not with Jesus? Is church something they attend on the weekend or is there a deep relationship with God being developed?

Bible Study:

1. Discuss Hannah's dedication to the Lord that she would be willing to give up her son.
2. Is there something or someone you would never let go of for God? What would it take for you to completely surrender what is most precious to you?

Read Ephesians 5:21-33.

Women during the first century had little to no rights. The radical part of this passage was not for wives to submit, but for husbands to love.

3. What does it mean to love your wife like Christ loves the church?
4. Why must submission and love must be done together?