



## 1 Samuel 1-2

Tape #7079  
1 Samuel 1-2  
By Chuck Smith

### CHAPTER 1

So we turn now to the book of I Samuel, chapter 1. The book of I Samuel is a transition period in the history of Israel. The nation is moving to a theocracy, a monarchy. However, they weren't really following God as King. You might say that they were moving to an Anarchy because several times through the book of Judges it says, "Every man did that what was right in his own sight," moving into a monarchy, where they have an earthly king. But more than that, it is a transition from a period of judges into the period of kings, where the nation will no longer be ruled by judges. Instead, we are introduced to the kings.

Now this book is called elsewhere, in the Septuagint, The First Book of the Kings. I & II Samuel and I & II Kings in the Septuagint are called I, II, III, & IV Kings. It is divided as to the life of Samuel, the life of Saul, and the life of David in this book of I Samuel.

*Now there was a certain man of Ramathaimzophim, of mount Ephraim, and his name was Elkanah [Which means, "Acquired of God"] the son of Jeroham, the son of Elihu, the son of Tohu, the son of Zuph, an Ephrathite:*

Now in I Chronicles, chapter 6, verses 26-27: as the genealogies are there given, we find that Samuel, or his father Elkanah, is of the Levitical tribe of Kohath. Though they lived in Ephraim, they lived in one of the Levitical cities of Ephraim. So they were called an Ephraimite because that is the area that they came from. They were of the tribe of Levi. He was the family of Kohath. Their genealogy is listed there in I Chronicles 6. Some people have a problem because Samuel was offering sacrifices, and if he was in the tribe of Ephraim, that would not be his position. He was of the tribe of Levi, living in one of the Levitical cities in Ephraim. Thus, called an Ephrathite; but in reality of the tribe of Levi, a Kohathite.

In those days polygamy was practiced, and this man, Elkanah, had two wives. The name of the first one was Grace, or "Hannah," in Hebrew. Translated into English, it is "Grace." The name of the second was Peninnah, which in English is "Pearl." Now Pearl had children, but Grace had no children.

*And this man went up out of his city every year to worship and to sacrifice unto the LORD of Hosts in Shiloh.*

This is the first time the name the Lord of Hosts, JEHOVAH Sabaoth, is used in the Bible. It is not used at all in the Pentateuch. This is the first mention of JEHOVAH Sabaoth, the LORD of Hosts. JEHOVAH Sabaoth is His name. It is used 281 times in the Bible, but this is the first use of the LORD of Hosts. Shiloh was at that time the religious center, that's where the tabernacle was placed. This is where the ark of the covenant was. The place of worship was Shiloh, and thus, they were going to Shiloh each year to worship the LORD at the time of the feast.

Now, the priest at that time was Eli. He had two sons, Hophni and Phinehas: they were the priests of the Lord.

*And when the time was that Elkanah offered his sacrifice, he gave to Peninnah and to all of her sons and daughters, he gave portions: But unto Hannah he gave a worthy portion; for he loved her:*

*but the LORD had shut up her womb.*

So in those days, not being able to bear children was a cultural curse. The primary duty of the wife was to produce a son for her husband according to that culture. If she was unable to do so, her husband could divorce her legally and take another wife. It would appear that Elkanah had married Hannah first. It was probably her inability to have children that caused him to take the second wife, Peninnah. Peninnah, in contrast to Hannah, was very fruitful. She had many children: sons and daughters. Yet Hannah was still the apparent favorite of Elkanah, in that, when they offered, he gave unto Peninnah and to each of her sons and daughters, portions. But unto Hannah, special portions. They were extraordinary portions because he loved Hannah - **her** adversary. Of course that is a tragic word to be used in a family relationship, but Peninnah was the adversary of Hannah. There was no doubt jealousy involved because of the affections of Elkanah. This jealousy caused Peninnah to constantly be chiding Hannah in her inability to bear children.

*So her adversary provoked her grievously, to make her fret, because the LORD had shut up her womb.*

The thing to note was that it is the LORD who had shut up her womb. It was God that had caused her to become barren in order that God might work out His eternal purpose and plan in her life.

*As He did year by year, when she went up to the house of the LORD, Peninnah would provoke her; therefore she wept, and did not eat.*

Going up to the house of the LORD was going up for the feast. It was a time of great feasting. You would offer up your sacrifice, your peace offering unto the LORD. You would give the LORD His portion, but then take your portion. There was always a time of great feasting. As you worship God you would worship Him with feasting. Like Thanksgivings, when we gather, we worship the LORD, we thank God for his goodness: we have the big spread and we eat together, giving thanks unto God for His blessings. That is what the feasts, the Jewish holidays, were. When there were feast days, they would come to Jerusalem to feast.

But because of this vexation that she was experiencing, because of Peninnah's constant taunting, Hannah found that she couldn't eat. She was just weeping all the time. This had become now an obsession, the inability to have a child. And the fact that Peninnah was just really pressing in on that point.

*So Elkanah her husband asked her, Hannah, why are you weeping? and why don't you eat? why is your heart grieved? am I not better to thee than ten sons?*

He didn't understand. What she was needing was sympathetic understanding. But we husbands are so clumsy in these areas. When your wife is going through an emotional problem, she doesn't need reasons, she needs understanding. She doesn't need for you to tell her, "Now honey, there's nothing to it. There's nothing wrong here. Why are you crying? There is no sense in crying, you know. Everything is fine!" She doesn't need a rational, she needs understanding. Sympathetic understanding. "Honey, I understand." That's what she needs. That will do more than all the reasons in the world, just to know that you understand. ["Look, I'm better to you than ten sons. You got me baby! You don't need a lot of kids."] How we men misunderstand the needs of our women: "You got me, ain't that enough?"

*So Hannah rose up after they had eaten in Shiloh, and after they had drunk. Now Eli the priest sat upon a seat by the post of the temple of the LORD. [Or, "the tabernacle," as it was.] She was in bitterness of soul, and prayed unto the LORD, and wept sore.*

She “wept grievously,” or, “wept sorely,” or, “sobbed convulsively.” The bitterness of her soul, praying unto God. She did the right thing. She brought her grief and sorrows to the LORD, poured out her heart to God. That’s really where we are going to find our help. That’s where we’re going to find the sympathetic understanding that we need.

As she was praying --

*She vowed a vow, and said, O LORD of hosts, if thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of your handmaiden, remember me, and not forget me, but you will give unto your handmaid a man child, I will give him unto the LORD all the days of his life, and there shall no razor come upon his head.*

She is promising to give the child back to God: “LORD, if you’ll just give me a child, I’ll give him back to you.” This is the vow that she made. And in this we discover the purpose for God delaying the answers to her prayers. So, no doubt, she had been praying for years for a child. Now it’s desperate. Now she can’t eat. She’s crying all the time. In the desperation of her need, she promises the LORD, “If you’ll just give me a child, I’ll give him back to you. He’ll be consecrated to you all the days of his life. Not a razor will come to his head.”

She, no doubt, had heard the story of Samson’s mother who lived contemporaneously with her, who was about 30 years old, or so. But she heard the story of Samson’s mother, who, also barren, was promised by the angel of the LORD that God was going to give to her a son. That no razor should come to his head. He would be a Nazarite under God from his birth.

At this time Samson was the judge in Israel. At this time he was performing his heroics against the Philistines, but already becoming corrupted by the weakness of his flesh.

Hearing how that God gave to Samson’s mother a son, who was to be dedicated to God, she said, *“LORD, I’ll dedicate my child to you. I’ll not let a razor come to his head. I’ll give him back to you all the days of his life.”*

God needed a man to lead the children of Israel to a spiritual revival, and there was no man in Israel that God could use.

It is a sad story: God’s need for a man at the time of Ezekiel, the prophet. When God’s judgment was coming upon the nation because of their sin, God was wanting -- still, to forestall the judgment. God said in Ezekiel, *“And I sought for a man among them, who would stand in the gap, and who would fill in the hedge, but I found none: and therefore my judgment had to come.”* God could not find the man who would intercede and stand between the judgment of God and the people. Thus, not finding a man, judgment came.

I wonder how often that is repeated in history, where God is seeking for a man who will fully dedicate his life to the purposes and plan of God, and how many times God comes up short.

Not finding a man, God found a woman.

As we go into chapter 2, you’ll see that she was indeed a very godly woman. Probably because of all the problems that she had. There is nothing like problems to drive you to the LORD. Just being pressed day by day, by this other wife, living in such misery, probably just drove her to the LORD and brought her into a deep relationship with God.

There’s a book called, Crowded to Christ, by B.M. Maxwell. I imagine it’s out of print by now. It is a

book that speaks about how God so often uses adverse circumstances to just push us to Jesus Christ -- how we're crowded unto Christ through the trials and the problems that we face.

Here was Hannah, crowded unto God by the problems that she had. She was a deeply spiritual woman and God used her to bring forth a man unto the earth that He could use for His purposes. First of all, He had to get Hannah in alignment with His purposes. This happened as she was praying, "God if you'll just give me a son, I'll give him to you all the days of His life."

*And so it came to pass, as she continued praying before the LORD, that Eli noticed her mouth. Now Hannah, she was speaking in her heart; her lips were moving, but her voice was not heard: therefore Eli presumed that she was drunk.*

She was lying there in the agony and bitterness of her soul. The bitterness was so deep, so great, that she can't even audibly express her prayer to God. Just in the agony of her heart, pouring out her soul to God, her lips moving: but no words coming forth. There she is sobbing convulsively. As she is lying there, her body is heaving with sobs and the mouth is moving. Eli looks and says, "Man, this woman has had too much."

Now, here's an interesting thing: it gives you an insight to the moral degeneracy of the times. Here is the priest in the temple, seeing a woman really pouring out her heart unto God. It is such an unusual sight to him, that he doesn't think she's praying. He figures she's drunk. Which means that the women were perhaps lying around drunk after feast times. This was his initial presumption, that she was drunk. Rather than realizing that, "Hey, here's a woman in real agony and bitterness in her soul, pouring out her heart to God." He just presumed that she was drunk. So he says to her, "Hey lady! How long are you going to be drunk? Put away your booze."

*And 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.*

It says that she was praying from, "her heart." Now she says that she poured out her **soul** to the LORD. This is probably prayer at its deepest. You remember in Romans 8, where Paul tells us, *"The Spirit also helps our weaknesses: for we do not always know how to pray as we ought: the spirit will make intercession through groanings which can not be uttered."* This was the case with Hannah. There was no sound, there was no utterance. But the groaning of her spirit, the pouring out of her soul: the prayer that was coming out of her heart could not be uttered. She was in deep spiritual communication with God. The Bible tells us that, "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."

I think that too many times our prayers are from our heads instead of our hearts. I give very little value to prayers of rote: "God is great, God is good, thank you Father for this food, Amen. -- Now I lay me down to sleep. I pray the Lord my soul to keep." Though they be good for a child in teaching the child the initial communication with God, it is good to encourage your child very early in life to break away from prayers of rote: to begin to express their hearts and their minds unto God.

I am amazed in the ability of a child to communicate to God in a very meaningful way. My little grandchildren, two and three years old, are able to express themselves in prayer to God in very meaningful ways. Not by rote, but they actually pray for specifics. They pray for things, and even things that I didn't think to pray about. I love to hear them pray. In fact, whenever I get sick, they're the ones I want to pray for me more than any other else. I think that they have more faith than almost anybody else. Man, I call my grandkids and say, "Pray for Grandpa!" Now a lot of people call me to pray for them, but I call my grandkids.

I think that God sometimes brings us to that place of utter desperation and despair. It brings us to a depth of prayer that we don't just normally enter into, when we really get desperate before God. I can remember when our youngest child, our younger daughter Cheryl, was quite small. She had been ill, had a high fever. She was always so full of life that it was just so painful to see those bright eyes dull, just to see her lie there. I just sat up all night, holding her. I loved her so dearly, as we loved all of our children. As I was holding her all night long, about ten o' clock in the morning, her body was feverish and she went into a convulsion.

I'd been praying all night that God would heal her, that God would touch her body. When she went into a convulsion, I called Kay. I put my finger in her mouth cause I didn't want her to bite her tongue. She just about bit my finger off, but I didn't care. I was desperate before God.

In that moment I said, "God, one of the greatest blessings that you've given to me was this beautiful little girl. You know how deeply I love her. Lord, if you want her, I give her to you. If it's your purpose and plan to take her, Lord, she's your child. I recognize that you've loaned her to me. She's brought such joy and blessing to our lives. But she's yours."

We jumped in the car and headed for the doctors office. I mean, we were really in desperation in prayer. On the way to the doctors office she just snapped right out of it, with bright eyes. We got her to the doctors office, he looked at her and said, "There's nothing wrong with her! How long since she's had a tetanus shot?" Well it had been a while. "Well, as long as your here, I'll give her a tetanus, but she's fine."

I mean, we were driven to that place of real depth of prayer, real earnestness of prayer. You just realize that, "Hey, this is it. This is life or death!" You come into a depth of prayer. You just can't at that time say, "Oh, Lord..(la-de-DA), nice to see you. Nice day, isn't it?...uh..take care of things will you?" No, your soul is poured out to God.

I can remember when my mother was with us and she was dying. She was in constant pain. She couldn't sleep because of the pain. I'd walk into her room: her hands would be lifted as she was lying there in the bed. She would be praising the Lord. It was hard..It was hard.

I remember slipping into her room early one morning. I looked at those hands, those beautiful hands. Through my mind, there raced the memories of the past. How those hands had comforted my fevered brow when I was a little kid. I thought of all the rolls, pies, cake, and all that those hands had baked for me as I was growing up. How those hands had ministered to me through my life. It was just one of those emotional moments. Just her hands, I don't know. Something touched off in me and I was an emotional basket case, just broken up. I was thinking of the beauty and wonder of those hands.

I sat at the foot of the bed and my soul was being poured out to God. I said, "God, she's yours. If you want to take her Lord, that's your business. I don't want to hold her here, especially in this condition, suffering as she is. If you want to take her, do take her. But, oh God, don't let her suffer any longer. Lord, I want you for a few hours to lay her suffering on me. I'm no hero, but I'll take it for a few hours. Just to give her some relief. Why don't you just put the pain and all on me for a little bit." I was pouring out my soul to God. I was desperate. There was a depth of communication there, so deep that, as I was praying, the Lord came and stood right next to me.

The Lord spoke to me. He said, "That's a foolish request. I already took her pain in my body." I said, "Oh Jesus, I thank you. I know you did. Forgive me of my foolish request." At that moment my mother sighed and said, "Oh,..the pain is all good. It feels so good not to have any pain." From that moment on she didn't experience any further pain. In fact, she started sleeping almost around the clock, for a while, waking

up only occasionally to say, “Oh, it feels so good not to have any pain and to be able to sleep.” Her kidneys that had been blocked for over a week, were unblocked. In two days she had excreted 37 pounds of liquids out of her body.

There is that depth that we’re sometimes driven to. Yet, they become some of the most meaningful experiences of our lives, as we relate to God in that deep, deep area of the spirit. Our heart poured out. On that case I was much like Hannah. My mouth was moving but there was no sounds. I didn’t want to disturb my mother. I was pouring out my soul to God. God heard, and God answered. When we get to that place when we are just really desperate before God, those are the times when we really need God. “In the day,” God said, “that you seek me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart. I will be found of you.”

Hannah said, --

*I am not a woman that drinks, I am a woman of a sorrowful spirit: I have just poured out my soul before the LORD. Don’t count your handmaid as a daughter of Belial: for out of my abundance of my complaint and grief have I spoken unto God. Then Eli answered and said, Go in peace: and the God of Israel grant thee your petition that you have asked of him. And she said, Let your handmaid find grace in your sight. So the woman went her way, and she ate, and her countenance was no more sad.*

She believed the promise of God, that God had heard her prayer. She believed that God was going to grant her request. The sign of faith was that she went ahead and ate, and was no more sad. Now she’s smiling, she’s happy. Why? Because she has that confidence that God will keep His word.

*They rose up early, and they worshipped before the LORD, --*

Prayer, if it follows the full cycle, will usually end in worship. It usually begins in worship, and enters into petition, then goes back to finish with worship. In the model prayer that the Lord gave us: “Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name..” Worship. It goes to petition: “Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.” And then it goes back to worship. “For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.”

In the early church, when they were gathered together, in Acts chapter 4, and they were praying because of the threats that were made against them, they said, “Oh Lord, thou art God, you have created heaven, and earth, and the sea, and everything that is in them.” Their prayer began with worship. The acknowledging of God: His sovereignty, His omniscience, His power and glory. Then they said, “Now, Lord, grant unto your servants, that with boldness we might proclaim thy word.” It goes into petition, but it began with worship. Prayer usually begins and ends with worship. Petition is somewhere in between.

*And they rose up early, and they worshipped before the LORD, --*

It is always a glorious time when the assurance of God’s Word comes to our hearts, and our petitions are changed to worship: “Oh LORD, thank you.” You have that assurance that God is going to work in you. You’ve committed it unto God and the Spirit just brings you that glorious peace. God is going to work and you just worship the LORD in confidence. It’s all taken care of. God is going to do His purpose and His plan. You just have that confidence and you worship God.

*And so they returned, and came to their house in Ramah: and Elkanah knew Hannah his wife; and the LORD remembered her. And so it came to pass, when the time was come about after*



*Hannah had conceived, that she bare a son, and called his name Samuel, [Which means, “Asked of the LORD.”] Saying, Because I have asked him of the LORD. And the man Elkanah, and all of his house, went up to offer unto the LORD the yearly sacrifice, and his vow. But Hannah did not go 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, that he might abide there forever.*

She had made the vow: “LORD, you give me a son. I will give him back to You all the days of his life.” So she wanted to keep him until he was weaned. And when she took him then after his weaning, that was to be it. He was to remain there with Eli as a servant of the LORD all the days of his life.

*Then Elkanah her husband said unto her, Do what seems good; wait until you have weaned him; only the LORD establish His word. So the woman abode, and nursed her child until she weaned him. And 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. And they slew a bullock, and brought the child to Eli. And she said, Oh my lord, as thy soul liveth, my lord, I am the woman that stood by thee here, praying unto the LORD. For this child I prayed; and the LORD hath given me my petition which I asked of him: Therefore 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.*

And so this sacrifice that she was willing to make: God answered her prayers, she kept her vow. Imagine her excitement as she meets Eli again. Now she has a little child. She says, “Oh! Oh! I was the woman that was standing here praying! And it was for this child that I was praying. And now I’ve brought the child to complete my vow to the LORD. God gave me my petition, therefore, I’m going to give him back to the LORD.”

## CHAPTER 2

Now as we move into chapter 2, we have here a sort of spontaneous worship that rises out of Hannah’s heart; which is really a prophecy, an extremely exciting prophecy in the Old Testament.

There is in the New Testament, in the book of Luke, what is called, ‘The Magnificat of Mary.’ It is that expression of Mary when she meets her cousin Elizabeth. And it gives us insight into the character of Mary. It helps us to see what a deeply spiritual person she was. As she busts forth, *“My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit does rejoice in God my Savior. For He has regarded the low estate of his handmaid.”* She goes on in this glorious exaltation to God. There is nothing in it in scripture to equal except this glorious declaration and exaltation of Hannah here in the Old Testament.

As we look at this we get an insight into the depth of the character of this woman. And we understand why God chose this woman to fulfill His purpose to bring a man into the world that He could use for His plan and purpose for Israel.

*Hannah prayed, and said, My heart rejoiceth in the LORD, mine horn is exalted in the LORD: my mouth is enlarged over mine enemies; because I rejoice in thy salvation. There is none holy as the LORD: and there is none beside thee: neither is there any rock like our God.*

Beautiful expressions of praise to the Lord: *“My heart rejoices, my horn is exalted: my mouth is enlarged because I rejoice in thy salvation.”* When she declared ‘I rejoice in thy salvation,’ this begins a look forward. How is God’s salvation provided for us? Through Yeshua, “Jehovah is salvation.” When she said, “I look, and I rejoice in thy salvation,” she’s rejoicing actually in Jesus Christ. It turns into a prophecy

here, and I want you to notice what a remarkable prophecy it actually is.

Jesus is the Rock, the scripture says in II Corinthians: and there is no Rock like our God. Remember in Nebuchadnezzar's vision interpreted by Daniel, he saw the image until there was, "*a rock not cut with hands that smote the great image in the feet. So that the image crumbled and the rock grew up until it was a mountain that covered the earth.*" That rock was Jesus. Jesus said that, "*Upon this Rock I will build my church.*" What rock? The confession of Peter that, "*Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.*"

*Talk no more so exceeding proudly; let not arrogancy come out of your mouth: for the LORD is a God of knowledge, and by Him actions are weighed.*

It's not so much what you did, but **why you did it.** And God weighs the actions by what **motivated** them.

*The bows of the mighty men are broken, and they that stumbled are girded with strength. They that were full have hired out themselves for bread; and they that were hungry ceased: so that the barren hath born seven; and she that hath many children is waxed feeble.*

Here, at this point, she probably is talking about herself and Peninnah. She was barren but God is now making her fruitful. The one who had so many children is waxed feeble. Now the prophecy of Jesus:

*The Lord killeth, and maketh alive: -- [The death and resurrection of Jesus Christ] --he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up.*

Even as Jesus went into the grave and He arose out of the grave. The Lord maketh poor and maketh rich. He who was rich, yet for your sakes became poor, that you through His poverty, might know the riches of God.

*He bringeth low, and he lifted up.*

He humbled himself and came in the form of a man obedient as a servant even unto death, the death of the cross. Wherefore God has also highly exalted Him and given Him a name which is above every name. This is a marvelous prophecy concerning Jesus Christ.

*He raiseth up the poor out of the dust and lifteth up the beggar from the dung hill.*

Now he's talking about what Jesus does for those who trust in Him: raises the poor out of the dust, lifts the beggar out of the dung hill.

*To set them among princes, and make them inherit the throne of glory: for the pillars of the earth are the LORD's, and He has set the world upon them.*

So that glorious work of God's grace. And isn't it interesting that the name, 'Hannah' means, "grace?" Here she begins to express the glorious grace of God through Jesus Christ which has been extended unto us.

*He will keep the feet of his saints, and the wicked shall be silent in darkness; for by strength shall no man prevail. "Not by might, nor by the power, but by my spirit saith the Lord." The adversaries of the LORD shall be broken to pieces; out of heaven shall he thunder upon them: The great judgment period. She's prophesying on out until the end, the great judgment period, the great tribulation. The adversaries of the Lord broken to pieces; out of heaven shall He thunder upon*



*them: the LORD shall judge the ends of the earth; and He shall give strength to his king, -- Who is His king? Jesus Christ. And shall exalt the horn of His Messiah.*

The word, 'anointed' is the Hebrew word, "Messiah." Thus, a tremendous prophecy concerning the Messiah: His king, God will exalt. So this marvelous, marvelous prophecy of Hannah; almost unequal in scripture.

*Thus Elkanah went to Ramah to his house. And the child did minister unto the LORD before Eli the priest. They returned back to Ramah. They left Samuel there with Eli the priest. Now, again, an insight into the spiritual conditions: The sons of Eli were sons of Belial; [Or Satan] they knew not the Lord.*

Here they were priests, and yet, they didn't even know the Lord. And the priest's custom of the people was when any man offered sacrifice, the priest's servant would come while the flesh was seething and boiling. And he would take the flesh hook with the three teeth in his hand. He would put the hook into the meat and whatever portion would come out, then that would be for the priest. The rest would be offered unto the Lord or eaten by the people.

*He struck into the pan, or kettle, or the cauldron, or pot; all that the fleshhook brought up the priest took for himself. So they did in Shiloh unto all the Israelites that came there. Also before they burnt the fat, the priest's servants came, and said to the man that sacrificed, Give flesh to roast for the priest; he doesn't want that boiled flesh from you, he wants it raw. And if any man said unto him, Let them not fail to burn the fat presently, and then take as much as thy soul desires; then he would answer him, No; but you shall give it to me now: and if not, I will take it by force. Wherefore the sin of the young men was very great before the LORD: for men abhorred the offering of the LORD.*

What happened, was, because of their rotten attitude, their unrighteous attitudes, they were grabbing for themselves and enriching themselves from the ministry. What they did was actually a cause for people to actually hate to come to sacrifice to the LORD because of what they had to go through from these fellows. An extremely grievous sin. It is sad when men who are supposedly men of God, ministers of God, use their positions to enrich themselves, and make sort of a shame because they take from the people in an unrighteous way. What it does is cause people to blaspheme God.

I think that it is extremely tragic, the situation that has just arisen in the last couple of weeks, where this noted evangelist has declared a revelation that God is going to slay him by the first of March unless he can raise 4 million dollars. That has to be the most blasphemous thing I've heard. It was a gimmick that worked for him last summer. Then, it was 12 million dollars and he had to have it by the end of the year or the Lord was going to slay him. I just sort of hope the 4 million doesn't come in! I'd like to see what happens.

The same kind of thing was going on with Eli and his sons. They were out for themselves. They were getting what they could for themselves. They were taking the best, ripping off the people. And so the sin of the young men was very great before the Lord.

The Bible tells us, *'not to be many masters, knowing that we would receive the greater condemnation.'* When you are in the ministry, or when you are serving the Lord, you are being judged by tighter standards than people that are not up as God's representatives. To me, it is an extremely serious business to realize that I stand as God's representative to bring you God's truth. I don't look upon that lightly. I take that as a very serious position because I do not want to be guilty of misrepresenting God.

The God that I represent is not broke, and He's not on the verge of bankruptcy. He is not going out of business next week if you don't support Him. In fact, He doesn't need your support, you need His support. I don't want to represent God as on the verge of bankruptcy, or his program about ready to die unless you "bail God out." 'He's used such poor fiscal responsibility, that He's broke again.' And, 'you better help Him or it's going to be tragic when God files bankruptcy in the US. district court.'

This is the background of these evil sons, and the place where people come to worship God, a place where people just don't want to go because of the corruption that is there.

In this background this little boy Samuel began to serve the Lord. I can, in my own mind, get a mental picture of this little boy. Just working around the tabernacle there, doing the little odds and ends that needed to be done. He's folded in a priestly garment, linen robe; and yet, busying himself around the tabernacle.

*But Samuel ministered before the LORD, being a child, and he was girded with a linen ephod. Moreover his mother made him a little coat, and brought it to him from year to year, -- So every year she'd make a coat for him. When she'd come to visit there at the tabernacle, she would bring him a new little coat. She came up with her husband to offer the yearly sacrifice. And Eli blessed Elkanah and his wife, and said, The LORD give thee seed of this woman for the loan which she has lent to the LORD. 'My God, give her other children because she has lent this boy to the Lord.' And they went unto their own home. And the Lord visited Hannah, so that she did conceive, and bore three sons and two daughters. The child Samuel grew before the LORD. Now Eli was very old, and heard all that his sons did unto all of Israel; and how they were laying with the women there at the door to the tabernacle. They were fornicating with the women right there within the tabernacle precincts. And he said unto them, Why do you do such things? for I hear of your evil dealings by all of these people. Nay, my sons; for it is not a good report that I hear: ye make the LORD's people to transgress. If one man sin against another, the judge shall judge him: but if a man sin against the LORD, who shall entreat for him? Notwithstanding, they hearkened not unto the voice of their father, because the LORD would slay them. And the child Samuel grew on, and was in favour both with the LORD, and also with men.*

So you have the two forces now: little Samuel, growing up in a corrupted atmosphere; and yet, growing up in purity - serving the Lord. He was becoming more prominent in the minds and eyes of the people. They were looking to him, respecting him, and reverencing his ministry. Whereas the sons of Eli, not listening to their dad, continued in their evil and pernicious ways.

*Now there came a man of God unto Eli, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Did I plainly appear unto the house of thy father, when they were in Egypt in Pharaoh's house? And did I choose him out of all the tribes of Israel -- and did I choose him out of all the tribes of Israel to be my priest, to offer upon mine altar, to burn incense, to wear an ephod before me? and did I give unto the house of thy father all the offerings made by fire for the children of Israel? Why then do you kick at my sacrifice and my offerings, which I have commanded in my habitation; and you honor your sons above me, -- ?*

Here he was honoring his sons above the LORD. He wouldn't discipline them. He wouldn't stop them. To make yourselves fat with the chiefest of all the offerings of Israel my people. In other words, "You're getting fat off of the people. You're getting fat off of religion."

*Wherefore the Lord God of Israel saith, I said indeed that thy house, and the house of thy father, should walk before me for ever: but now the LORD saith, Be it far from me; for them that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed. Behold, the days come, that I will*

*cut off thine arm, and the arm of thy father's house, that there shall not be an old man in thine house. And you shall see an enemy in my habitation, in all the wealth which God shall give to Israel: and there shall not be an old man in thy house forever. The house of Eli is to be cut off. There's not to be an old man left in his house. And the man of thine, whom I shall not cut off from mine altar, shall be to consume thy eyes, and to grieve thine heart: and all the increase of thine house shall die in the flower of their age. And this shall be a sign unto you, that you shall come upon thy two sons, on Hophni and Phinehas; in one day they shall both die. That will be the sign. You're not going to have anybody who lives to an old age in your family, in your progeny. And I will raise me up a faithful priest, --*

Now, a prophecy again concerning Jesus Christ: Hebrews chapter 2 and chapter 6, the faithful priest.

*I will raise up a faithful priest, that shall do according to that which is in mine heart and in my mind: and I will build Him a sure house; and he shall walk before mine anointed for ever.*

And so the priesthood of Levi is to be set aside and **there is to be a new order of priesthood after the order of Melchizedek, even Jesus Christ, our great High Priest. He shall be our Priest and Anointed forever.**

*And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left in your house shall come and crouch to him for a piece of silver and a morsel of bread, and shall say, Put me, I pray you, into one of the priests' offices, that I may eat a piece of bread.*

Eli is rebuked by this man of God, who is unnamed, and is told that he will be cut off. The Levitical priesthood will be cut off. God will raise up a new priesthood fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

So we will begin next week in chapter 3, as we deal again with this little fellow Samuel, and how God works in his life and begins to speak to him. It is a fascinating experience as God begins to speak to Samuel.