

THE BOOK OF FIRST SAMUEL

"Family Roots"

1 Samuel 1:1-8

Introduction

1. The lines of prominent persons give evidence of the importance which is attached to family trees.

2. The Bible traces the heritage of families in much the same manner as men do today. The significance of the family relationships was great indeed.

3. In a true sense, the family of Samuel provided a root from which his branch could be nourished. This is evident in the description of the family:

1. ITS DESIGNATION v. 1.

a. Geographically.

Three items are mentioned to help locate the family:

- 1) Mt. Ephraim. In the territory of Benjamin. (Judges 4:5)
- 2) Ramath-zophim. Means "two heights of Zophites." Later referred to as Ramah (7:17; 15:43; cf. Josh. 18:25). Northwest of Jerusalem.
- 3) Ephrathite. Term means "fruitful" and reckons Elkanah as an Ephraimite since Levites were reckoned as belonging to the tribes amongst whom they lived (Judges 12:5; 1 Kings 11:26).

b. Geneologically.

A careful listing of the immediate family is given:

- 1) Zuph. Means "watcher or observer."
- 2) Tohu. Means "low, sunk down."
- 3) Elihu. Means "my God is He."
- 4) Jeroham. Means "he is tenderly loved."
- 5) Elkanah. Means "God has purchased or acquired."

N.B. relation to Kohathites 1 Chron. 6:26, 33.

2. ITS DEVOTIONS. vv. 3-5

Here is a family which had a devotion to the Lord which was outstanding. Consider these factors relating to their family worship. It was:

a. Continual.

The word "yearly" (v. 3) gives unquestioned support to the fact that this family was regular in meeting the divine requirements of the law (Ex. 34:23; Deut. 16:16).

b. Spiritual.

Proper attitudes in worship are prerequisites to acceptance with the Lord. This family had them! Word "worship" means the "presentation of possessions." They admitted in their worship that He is Lord of all!

c. Unusual.

It is recorded that all the family offered and one presented a double portion (vv. 4, 5). There were no black sheep here!

3. ITS DIVISIONS. vv. 6-10.

There is no covering up of mundane experiences in this family. These are noted:

a. Maritally.

Through a polygynist situation, Elkanah invited this soreness. Hannah is a name which means "grace" but she found it difficult to bear the affliction of barrenness. Penninah means "coral" or "shinning". She found it difficult to bear the blessing of fruitfulness. May one conclude that "grace" and "glitter" never can be harmonized?

b. Interpersonally.

The two unhappy women caused home friction. This posed:

- 1) Provocation. The one who had exasperated the one who didn't have! It was an illustration of common events today.
- 2) Commotion. The purpose of the inducement to irritation was "to make Hannah fret." Here is internal unrest.
- 3) Emotion. Here is an expression of specific emotional need - - tears and hunger strike. Deut. 26:14.

Conclusion.

Here are some family roots out of which a prominent branch rose - - Samuel. The genuine sincerity evidenced in this home is remarkable. God was really at work. The sensitivity to the Lord is patent and the family is kept in spiritual balance by a sure and specific dependence upon Him. Is not this our need also today?

NOTES: