

Hannah: An Example of a Godly Woman

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AM Service**

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Text:

1 Samuel 1:1 Now there was a certain man of Ramathaim-zophim, 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: 2: And 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. 3: And 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. 4: And when the time was that Elkanah offered, he gave to Peninnah his wife, and to all her sons and her daughters, portions: 5: But unto Hannah he gave a worthy portion; for he loved Hannah: but the LORD had shut up her womb. 6: And her adversary also provoked her sore, for to make her fret, because the LORD had shut up her womb. 7: And 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. 8: Then 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?

Introduction

Being a mother is a special privilege and a sacred duty. Just think about the role a mother plays in the nurture and development of a child. It has been said that *“Godly mothers writes on the hearts of their children what the world’s rough hands cannot erase.”*

If you really think about it, the most powerful people in the world these days is not the President nor the Prime Minister nor the CEO of a big corporation. No, the most influential people in the world are people who live right in our homes - our mothers. No other force in the life of the child is as strong an influence as is his mother.

We live in a day and age where there is a growing number of people who are belittling the role of the mother. But we should remember that great and wise men have long recognized the important role mother plays in our lives. After becoming president, **Abraham Lincoln** said, “All that I am, or can become, I owe to my angel mother.” **Theodore Roosevelt** put it this way: “The mother is the one supreme asset of the national life. She is more important, by far, than the successful statesman, businessman, artist or scientist.”

Down through the centuries the mother has been a stabilizing factor in the shaping of history. “The future destiny of the child,” said **Napoleon**, “is always the work of the mother.”

William Rose Wallace a famous poet recognized this, listen to the a poem he wrote about mothers ...

*They say that man is mighty,
He governs land and sea,
He wields a mighty scepter,
Over lesser powers that be.
But a mightier power and stronger,
Man from his throne has hurled,
For the hand that rocks the cradle,
Is the hand that rules the world.*

This morning we will look at one particular mother in the Bible who fulfilled that role and her name was Hannah. Hannah's life is an example we all men and women, boys and girls can follow. May each of us model our lives after her.

I - Hannah's Problems

First, she had problems just like everyone else. Don't ever be thinking that women of faith do not have problems. Sometimes we think that faithful and committed Christians are exempt from problems in this life. That is not true, for the Scripture is full of examples of men and women of faith who suffered, not because they were ungodly or disobedient. The righteous often suffers. A classic example of this, is Job.

[Job 1:8](#) And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?

Here is a man who is described by God as blameless and upright, fears God and stays away from evil, yet in spite of Job's godliness he suffered, and suffered much.

So, what were Hannah's problems? She had at least two problems.

1. She was barren

[1 Samuel 1:1](#) Now there was a certain man of Ramathaim-zophim, 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: [2:](#) And 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.**

Hannah had no children. She couldn't have children. Though she was married and still within child bearing years. It was not her fault that she could not have a child and for sure it was not because Elkanah has children by his other wife. But we are told in verse 5 that she could not have children because the LORD had shut up her womb.

[1 Samuel 1:5](#) But unto Hannah he gave a worthy portion; for he loved Hannah: but the LORD had shut up her womb.

Again we are not told why the LORD shut up her womb.

This is not a light problem because in their culture **barrenness was considered to be a curse from God**, whereas children were considered a blessing. This is one of Hannah's problems, she was barren; she had no ability to bear a child because the LORD had shut up her womb.

2. She was harassed

As we are told in verse 2, Elkanah the husband was a polygamist. He had another wife.

1 Samuel 1:1 Now there was a certain man of Ramathaim-zophim, 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: 2: And 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.

In ancient time polygamy was a part of human culture. But understand this was never God's design. In Genesis we see God's designed for marriage is one man and one woman, leaving their parents, cleaving to one another for life. But human society became corrupt and polygamy became part of the culture.

Polygamy and bigamy are illegal in the US. But I will not be surprised if someday even in our lifetime that these will be soon legalized.

Listen to this article I got from Politico Magazine entitled "*It's Time to Legalize Polygamy*"
Subtitle: Why group marriage is the next horizon of social liberalism.

By Fredrick Deboer
June 26, 2015

"Welcome to the exciting new world of the slippery slope. With the Supreme Court's landmark ruling this Friday legalizing same sex marriage in all 50 states, social liberalism has achieved one of its central goals. A right seemingly unthinkable two decades ago has now been broadly applied to a whole new class of citizens. Following on the rejection of interracial marriage bans in the 20th Century, the Supreme Court decision clearly shows that marriage should be a broadly applicable right—one that forces the government to recognize, as Friday's decision said, a private couple's "love, fidelity, devotion, sacrifice and family."

The question presents itself: Where does the next advance come? The answer is going to make nearly everyone uncomfortable: Now that we have defined that love and devotion and family isn't driven by gender alone, why should it be limited to just two individuals? The most natural advance next for marriage lies in legalized polygamy"

But we know that polygamy does not work. Polygamy poisons the whole home life of the family. In polygamous home there are all kinds of heartaches and all kinds of problems. There is jealousy, grief, anger, and malice. There is rivalry in the family and we see that in the case of Hannah. Her rival in the family harassed her.

1 Samuel 1:6 And her adversary also provoked her sore, for to make her fret, because the LORD had shut up her womb. 7: And 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.

Peninnah the second wife of Elkanah who had children would provoke Hannah severely to make her miserable. She used Hannah's barrenness as a means of ridicule. She mocked Hannah and made her life miserable! Year after year, when Hannah went up to the house of the LORD, the other wife would provoke her; would make fun of her.

It is a heavy problem to be barren but to be harassed, ridiculed, and made fun of because of it makes it doubly hard. Understandably this provoked Hannah, caused her tears to the point that she wouldn't eat.

II - Hannah's Prayer

1 Samuel 1:9 So 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. 10: And she was in bitterness of soul, and prayed unto the LORD, and wept sore.

As I have said, godly women have problems just like other women. **What sets them apart as godly women is what they do when faced with their problems.** Hannah is a good example of a godly woman, first, because she did not react to ridicule like the world does. She did not retaliate against her rival, Peninnah.

Hannah, instead of turning to his rival in retaliation, **she turned to the LORD in prayer.** She did not go down the level of her rival; instead she response like a godly woman should, She didn't return evil for evil to the other wife. The other wife was mean to her, but Hannah took her problems to the One who could do something about them. Furthermore, **she did not use her misfortune and mistreatment as an excuse to quit.** She did not to give up, to give in. Instead, Hannah kept believing that God would give her children. Year after year she went to the house of the LORD and prayed.

Hannah, like all godly women, had problems. But she knew how to handle her problems – she took them to the LORD in prayer.

What did Hannah pray?

Hannah asked God for a son, and God answered her prayer. As a result of her steadfast faith and fervent prayer a great prophet was born – Samuel.

God answered Hannah's prayer. **Samuel the great man of God was a product of prayer.** It all started with his mother's prayers. **It is also never too early to teach a child to pray.**

1 Samuel 1:27 For this child I prayed; and the LORD hath given me my petition which I asked of him:

Every child should be a product of prayer. Every child should know the power of hearing his mother pray. More than one child has been brought back to the Lord by the memory of his mother's prayers. **It is unreasonable to expect God to bless our children if we don't care enough for them to pray daily.**

Notice Hannah's Prayer...

1 Samuel 1:10 And she was in bitterness of soul, and prayed unto the LORD, and wept sore. 11: And 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. 12: And it came to pass, as she continued praying before the LORD, that Eli marked her mouth. 13: Now Hannah, she spake in her heart; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard: therefore Eli thought she had been drunken. 14: And Eli said unto her, How long wilt thou be drunken? put away thy wine from thee. 15: 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. 16: Count not thine handmaid for a daughter of Belial: for out of the abundance of my complaint and grief have I spoken hitherto. 17: Then Eli answered and said, Go in peace: and the God of Israel grant thee thy petition that thou hast asked of him. 18: And 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.

III - Hannah's Promise

Not only did Hannah pray, she also made a vow.

1 Samuel 1:11 And 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.

What a beautiful prayer and promise. What an example of a godly woman. Hannah prayed and promised God that if He would give her a baby boy, she would give him back to the Lord all the days of his life. Hannah was not selfish; she wanted a child not just because she wanted her rival to stop ridiculing her. No, **she wanted a child so she could give the child back to the LORD** and that he would serve the LORD all the days of his life.

In verse 21 to 28, we are told that she carried out what she promised. She gave back Samuel to the LORD and she did it willingly and joyfully.

IV - Hannah's Praise

When God answered Hannah's prayer, she kept her promise and gave Samuel back to the LORD. **Most people would sing if they could keep their son, but Hannah sang** because she could give her son to the service of the Lord. **Instead of being depressed about the loss of her son, Hannah breaks forth in a hymn of praise to God.**

1 Samuel 2:1 And 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. 2: There is none holy as the LORD: for there is none beside thee: neither is there any rock like our God. 3: 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. 4: The bows of the mighty men are broken, and they that stumbled are girded with strength. 5: 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. 6: The LORD killeth, and maketh alive: he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up. 7: The LORD maketh poor, and maketh rich: he bringeth low, and lifteth up. 8: He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory: for the pillars of the earth are the LORD's, and he hath set the world upon them. 9: He will keep the feet of his saints, and the wicked shall be silent in darkness; for by strength shall no man prevail. 10: The adversaries of the LORD shall be 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 unto his king, and exalt the horn of his anointed.

Hannah praised God for the blessings she received from the LORD.

Hannah exalts God's greatness and human weakness. The theme is that **God works through the weak, not the strong**. God doesn't help the strong. He doesn't help those who help themselves. **God helps those who are helpless who call out to Him**. That's what grace means, that God showers His favor, not on those who deserve it, but on those who do not. By the way, the name Hannah, in Hebrew, means "grace."

1 Samuel 2:6 The LORD killeth, and maketh alive: he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up.

He allows us to experience difficult times but He delivers us.

1 Samuel 2:9 He will keep the feet of his saints, and the wicked shall be silent in darkness; for by strength shall no man prevail.

For not by might shall a man prevail. How do we prevail? **By going to God in our absolute weakness and calling out to Him**, so that the answer is clearly His doing. Then He gets all the praise and glory.

Closing Thoughts

Hannah is a great example for all of us. Her faith, her prayers, her commitment to God. We all face problems. We should bring our problems to God in prayer. We should pray in faith believing that He will answer. We should praise Him for His blessings. We should remain faithful to Him, not just during hard times. When we do we will begin to see God move in our life and do wonderful things for you and your family.

There are no perfect mothers here today; there are no perfect fathers, there are no families here today. As we looked at Hannah today, maybe you feel like you don't measure up with Hannah

and that may be true but today is a great opportunity for you and me to take the step in the right direction. Today is a great opportunity to make adjustments in our lives. Would you respond to the Word of God today? Would you take the step and begin by the grace of God to model your life after Hannah? Would you take the step and begin by the grace of God to follow the example of Hannah in the way she responded to trials, in the way she prayed, in the way she made a vow to the LORD and in the way kept her vow willingly and joyfully.

AMEN!