

ENCOURAGING WORDS FOR THE OVERWHELMED

May 12, 2019

I. THE STORY OF HANNAH

1 Samuel 1:1-2 There was a certain man from Ramathaim, a Zuphite from the hill country of Ephraim, whose name was Elkanah son of Jeroham, the son of Elihu, the son of Tohu, the son of Zuph, an Ephraimite. He had two wives;

1 Samuel 1:2 He had two wives; one was called Hannah and the other Peninnah. Peninnah had children, but Hannah had none.

A. The pressures of accomplishment and competition can easily become our identity.

1 Samuel 1:3 Year after year this man went up from his town to worship and sacrifice to the Lord Almighty at Shiloh, where Hophni and Phinehas, the two sons of Eli, were priests of the Lord.

1 Samuel 1:4 Whenever the day came for Elkanah to sacrifice, he would give portions of the meat to his wife Peninnah and to all her sons and daughters.

1 Samuel 1:5 But to Hannah he gave a double portion because he loved her, and the Lord had closed her womb.

- *Even when love is real, pain can be real as well.*
- *Sometimes God is working through our disappointment.*

1 Samuel 1:6-7 Because the Lord had closed Hannah's womb, her rival kept provoking her in order to irritate her. This went on year after year. Whenever Hannah went up to the house of the Lord, her rival provoked her till she wept and would not eat.

- *Life often leaves us wondering if we are good enough.*

1 Samuel 1:8 Her husband Elkanah would say to her, "Hannah, why are you weeping? Why don't you eat? Why are you downhearted? Don't I mean more to you than ten sons?"

Proverbs 14:10 Each heart knows its own bitterness, and no one else can share its joy.

Proverbs 14:13 Even in laughter the heart may ache, and rejoicing may end in grief.

1 Samuel 1:9 Once when they had finished eating and drinking in Shiloh, Hannah stood up. Now Eli the priest was sitting on his chair by the doorpost of the Lord's house.

1 Samuel 1:10-11 In her deep anguish Hannah prayed to the Lord, weeping bitterly. And she made a vow, saying, "Lord Almighty, if you will only look on your servant's misery and remember me, and not forget your servant but give her a son, then I will give him to the Lord for all the days of his life, and no razor will ever be used on his head."

B. Prayer is a recognition of our great need and our great God.

1 Samuel 1:12-14 As she kept on praying to the Lord, Eli observed her mouth. Hannah was praying in her heart, and her lips were moving but her voice was not heard. Eli thought she was drunk and said to her, "How long are you going to stay drunk? Put away your wine."

1. People see the outside. God sees the inside.

1 Samuel 16:7 But the Lord said to Samuel, "Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."

- *Even when your heart is right, people may still assume you are wrong.*
- *A critical spirit is a sign of a distracted life.*

1 Samuel 1:15-17 "Not so, my lord," Hannah replied, "I am a woman who is deeply troubled. I have not been drinking wine or beer; I was pouring out my soul to the Lord. Do not take your servant for a wicked woman; I have been praying here out of my great anguish and grief." Eli answered, "Go in peace, and may the God of Israel grant you what you have asked of him."

- *Don't waste your pain.*

1 Samuel 1:18 She said, "May your servant find favor in your eyes." Then she went her way and ate something, and her face was no longer downcast.

2. We must trust God to hear our prayers before we see an answer to our prayers.

- *The promises of God change the state of our heart.*

1 Samuel 1:20 So in the course of time Hannah became pregnant and gave birth to a son. She named him Samuel, saying, “Because I asked the Lord for him.”

1 Samuel 2:18-21 But Samuel was ministering before the Lord—a boy wearing a linen ephod. Each year his mother made him a little robe and took it to him when she went up with her husband to offer the annual sacrifice. Eli would bless Elkanah and his wife, saying, “May the Lord give you children by this woman to take the place of the one she prayed for and gave to the Lord.” Then they would go home. And the Lord was gracious to Hannah; she gave birth to three sons and two daughters. Meanwhile, the boy Samuel grew up in the presence of the Lord.

II. ENCOURAGING WORDS FOR THE OVERWHELMED

1. *God hears your prayers.*

- *Jesus is our High Priest.*

Hebrews 4:14-16 Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has ascended into heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin. Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

2. *Life is not about getting what you want.*

- *God has a plan.*
- *We are to look for what God is doing in us and not just what God is doing for us.*

3. *Shut down the defeating voices in your head with God's truth.*

1 Samuel 1:17-18 Eli answered, “Go in peace, and may the God of Israel grant you what you have asked of him.” She said, “May your servant find favor in your eyes.” Then she went her way and ate something, and her face was no longer downcast.

Ephesians 2:10 For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

Philippians 4:13 I can do all this through Him who gives me strength.

1 Corinthians 15:57 But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Philippians 1:6 being confident of this, that He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.