

5-14-2023, COTR Texarkana

Title: Hannah's Problem and God's Plan

Purpose: Help people believe God has a plan and continue walking in obedience when life doesn't make sense.

Truth for Today: Stay faithful to God and do what He says when life doesn't make sense.

Text: 1 Samuel chapters 1 & 2

Topic: Mother's Day, Hannah, Samuel, Disappointment, God's Plan

## **Hannah's Problem and God's Plan**

### I. Introduction: Video before countdown Mother's Day

A. LaNell...an encouraging word: Moms raising kids, Moms whose kids are grown, Moms dealing with trouble and disappointment: (1) Moms whose kids are on the wrong path, (2) Women who want to be a mom but aren't, (3) Mom's whose kids won't have anything to do with her or have been taken from her.

B. Today we're going to talk about a 'want to be' mom named Hannah with a problem. She couldn't get pregnant. What she didn't know was God had a plan when she couldn't understand what was happening. She's an example to us when life doesn't make sense. This will be applicable to all of us because God's is still working in the midst of our problem or need. God blessed Hannah's faithfulness and obedience. He'll do the same for us.

C. Title: Hannah's Problem and God's Plan

### II. Hannah was faithful and obedient to God when her life didn't make sense.

A. Overview: [Judges 21:25 (ESV) In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes.] Even the priests were corrupt. Eli, lost control of his priestly sons who sinned by (1) robbing God's offerings from the people, (2) they engaged in ritual fornication like the pagan Canaanites.<sup>1</sup> Moral and social anarchy characterized the deplorable spiritual condition of the nation.<sup>2</sup> God needed a spiritual man to turn the nation around. Samuel would be that man. 1 Samuel ch. 1 & 2 are about how God used Hannah, a barren woman, to give birth to one of Israel's greatest prophets, priests and judges, Samuel. To get a man to lead Israel, God needed a mom to cooperate with His plan. He chose Hannah.

B. [1 Samuel 2–2:21 (NLT) Elkanah had **two wives**, Hannah and Peninnah.

**Peninnah had children, but Hannah did not.]**

1. There are examples of polygamy in the Bible but that doesn't mean God supports it. God's plan for marriage is an exclusive marriage between 1 man and 1 woman. Jesus quoted, [Ge. 2:24 (ESV) **a man** shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to **his wife**, and they shall become one flesh.] Biblical characters could have adopted polygamy because (1) It was a rational, cultural practice when a woman couldn't have kids, e.g., Sarah couldn't have kids, so she helped God by giving Abraham Hagar. A man's posterity was bound up in his having a son to perpetuate his name, his wife's inability to conceive a son was regarded as a curse from God, Deut. 7:13–14 having children was a sign of God's blessing.<sup>3</sup> (2) Hardness of heart against God's laws, e.g., Moses' divorce laws.<sup>1</sup>
2. Life app: #1: The smart, reasonable thing to do is not always the right thing to do.

C. [Vs. 3 Each year Elkanah would travel to Shiloh to **worship and sacrifice** to the Lord, (ESV) 4 On the day when Elkanah sacrificed, he would give portions to Peninnah his wife and to all her sons and daughters. 5 But to Hannah he gave a double portion, because he loved her, though **the LORD had closed her womb**. (NLT) 6 So **Peninnah would taunt Hannah and make fun of her...**]

1. Life App. #2: Even godly people have problems they can't understand. The big issue is do we give up on God or seek Him more and do what He says.
2. Life App. #3: God sees problems and has a solution, but He needs a willing partner. God used Hannah's barrenness to be part of the solution. Sometimes our lives don't make sense, but God is still good and in control.
3. Life app. # 4, Sometimes satan uses people to torment us while we're in God's plan, e.g., Joseph's brothers.

D. [Vs. 7 Year after year...Peninnah would taunt Hannah as they went to the Tabernacle. ...Hannah would be reduced to tears and would not even eat. 8 “Why are you crying, Hannah?” Elkanah would ask....Why be downhearted just because you have no children? **You have me—isn’t that better than having ten sons?**”]

1. Life app. #5, Sometimes people's attempt to comfort us makes it worse. They're speaking from their mind/ reason/ experience instead of by

revelation of the HS, e.g., your child died, and someone says God needed another angel in heaven.

E. \*Pivotal moment, [Vs. 9 Once after a sacrificial meal at Shiloh, **Hannah got up and went to pray.**]

1. Life app. #6: When life isn't working the way you want it to, seek God...and keep on seeking God till you know what to do. Pray for strength to endure. At our core we must believe God is still good even when situations are bad. [Ro. 8:28 (ESV) And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.]

F. \*[Vs. 10 **Hannah was...crying bitterly as she prayed to the Lord.** 11 And she made this **vow:** "O Lord...if you will...answer my prayer and give me a son, then I will give him back to you. He will be yours for his entire lifetime..."]

1. How did she know to make this vow instead of promising God something else?
2. Life app. #7: When we seek God in prayer, God will reveal His will to our heart. [James 1:5 (NLT) If you need wisdom, **ask...God, and he will give it to you.**] God promises to guide us but the bigger question is will we obey.

G. [Vs. 19...Then they returned home...When Elkanah slept with Hannah...20 and **in due time she gave birth to a son.** She named him Samuel.]

1. Life app.#8: God's timetable is often different from ours, e.g., Joseph in prison.
2. What do we do while waiting? [Heb.10:36 (NLT) **Patient endurance** is what you need now, so that you will continue to **do God's will. Then you will receive all that he has promised.**

H. [Vs. 21 The next year Elkanah and his family went...to offer a sacrifice to the Lord and to keep his vow. 22 But **Hannah did not go.** She told her husband, "**Wait until the boy is weaned. Then I will take him to the Tabernacle and leave him there with the Lord permanently.**" 23 "Whatever you think is best," Elkanah agreed. "Stay here for now, and **may the Lord help you keep your promise...**"]

1. Life app. #9: Sometimes it's hard to keep our promises to God, Hannah loved her son and it was hard e.g., Lord if this deal goes through or my

investment pays off, I'll pay off the church mortgage. It does and you have 2<sup>nd</sup> thoughts.

- I. [Vs. 24 When the child was weaned, Hannah took him to the Tabernacle...**they brought the boy to Eli...28 Now I am giving him to the Lord, and he will belong to the Lord his whole life.**" And they worshiped the Lord there. 1 Then Hannah prayed: "**My heart rejoices in the Lord! The Lord has made me strong.**"
  - 1. Life App. #10: Sometimes doing God's will is hard but the Lord can give us joy and strength to do it.
- J. [Vs. 19 **Each year his mother made a small coat for him and brought it to him** when she came with her husband for the sacrifice. 20...Eli would bless Elkanah and his wife and say, "May the Lord give you other children to take the place of this one she gave to the Lord." 21 **And the Lord blessed Hannah, and she conceived and gave birth to three sons and two daughters.**]
  - 1. Life App. #11: There are ways to show love when we aren't with the ones we love
  - 2. Life app. #12: We can't outgive God. God rewards our obedience and sacrifice. Jesus, [Luke 6:38 (NCV) **Give, and you will receive.** You will be given much...]

### III. Conclusion

- A. [Vs. 21 **Meanwhile, Samuel grew up in the presence of the Lord.**] Samuel grew up to become one of Israel's greatest priests, prophets and judges. God used him to anoint Israel's 1<sup>st</sup> 2 kings, Saul and David. It all started with a mom, chosen by God to walk a difficult path and wait for God's timing to fulfill His plan. Hannah is an example to all of us when life is frustrating, and we don't know what God is doing. If we will seek God in prayer, He will speak to us like He did to Hannah and in His timing, our obedience and faithfulness to God will be rewarded.

### IV. Response

- A. Prayer (1) People who feel like Hannah, frustrated because they don't understand what's going on, (2) Moms and 'want to be moms' on Mother's Day.

- B. Souls

- V. Bibliography/ Resources: Logos Bible Software and Library, Platinum Edition, was used to prepare this message.

1. Merrill, E. H. (1985). [1 Samuel](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 1, pp. 434–435). Victor Books.
2. Lindsey, F. D. (1985). [Judges](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 1, p. 414). Victor Books.
3. Merrill, E. H. (1985). [1 Samuel](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 1, p. 433). Victor Books.

## VI. Supplemental Material

- A. II, God was behind her barrenness, and she didn't know why, // John the Baptists parents. Life app.: Sometimes our lives don't make sense but God is still good and in control.
- B. II, [Vs. 12 As she was praying to the Lord, Eli watched her. 13 Seeing her lips moving but hearing no sound, **he thought she had been drinking**. 14 “Must you come here drunk?” he demanded. “Throw away your wine!” 15 “Oh no, sir!” she replied. “I haven’t been drinking wine or anything stronger. But **I am very discouraged, and I was pouring out my heart to the Lord.** 16 Don’t think I am a wicked woman! For **I have been praying out of great anguish and sorrow.**” 17 “In that case,” Eli said, “go in peace! May the God of Israel grant the request you have asked of him.” 18 “Oh, thank you, sir!” she exclaimed. Then she went back and began to eat again, and she was no longer sad.]
- C. Life app. : God can even use an appointed, unspiritual man to advance His plan and bring good to our lives. E.g., Cyrus today’s world.
- D. Life app #6: What we need when facing frustration is encouragement from a fellow Christian, [1 Thes. 3:2–3 (NLT) we sent Timothy to...strengthen you, to encourage you in your faith, 3 and to keep you from being shaken by the troubles you were going through. But you know that we are destined for such troubles.]