

Hannah

Keeping the Right Focus

Thoughts to Ponder: What are the desires of your heart? What need are you crying out to God for? Where do you go to get your longings filled?

Intro to Hannah:

- Hannah is in the introduction to one of the most well-known prophets of Israel.
- A man during the time of transition in Israel – from Judges to Kings
- One of two wives of a Levite living in the hill country of Ephraim
- She had had no children while the second wife had several

1 Samuel 1: The Setting

- It was the feast of Tabernacles, they went to Shiloh to sacrifice and celebrate the feast.
- It was a time of celebration and was about relationship with the Lord just as Hannah's lesson teaches us.
- Hannah was loved by her husband (1:4 &5, 8) just like we are loved by our husband.
- He gives her a double portion and words of re-assurance.
- Something is missing in her life – children, not able to produce offspring, inheritance.
- Tormented by Peninnah and the expectation of others. (1:6-7)

Thoughts to Ponder:

- Where do we go in our deepest time of need? Do we go anywhere?
- Do we move at all or try to satisfy ourselves with replacements? (Hannah's husband 1:4, 8)
- Where are we taking a double portion only to find it falls short.
- Are we still unfulfilled?

Hannah's action:

- She had a desire so deep that the only place to go was to God.
- Tormented by her rival and seeking help she sought God.
- Hannah's deep need actually met a desire of God's.
- Eli's children were not honoring God and they needed to be replaced.

1 Samuel 1:11-14:

- Hannah pours her heart out in honest despair to God in prayer.
- She make a vow – (States a condition needing to be changed – Followed it by commitment if the condition is fulfilled.)
- Eli sees her and misinterprets what she is doing – judging it by what he had experienced. (sons?)
- She humbly explains what she was doing. (vs. 15)
- (16) “Do not consider your maidservant a wicked woman, for out of the abundance of my complaint and grief I have spoken until now.”

Thoughts to Ponder:

- What judgments do we make based on our own experiences and understanding from the outside?
- Do we have the attitude of Hannah?

1 Samuel 1:17-18

- Eli responds with a blessing adding his request that the Lord hear her and grant her request.
- She returned to her family, to the yet unchanged circumstances.
- She believed and didn't question the answer or her own worthiness.
- She went on with life.

1 Samuel 1:19-28

- God fulfilled the blessing and promise to Hannah.
- She remembered the vow she had made to God.
- When he was able to survive without her (vs23-28) they took the child to the Lord and Eli.
- She made a thank offering and did what would hurt any mother's heart – let go of her answer.

Right Focus:

- 1 Samuel 2:1-11 – She did not worship the gift more than the giver.
- She did not hold back what God gave her but was willing to let him use His gift.
- She remembers who He is and turned her attention to His desire and worshiped.
- She leaves Samuel in God's hands and keeping.

Remaining Faithful to complete the work:

- She did what was necessary to fulfill and complete God's work in the promise.
- She clothed Samuel and visited him. (1 Samuel 2:18-19)
- She worked to supply the needs instead of standing back and expecting God to do it all.
- Because of their faithfulness the Lord blessed her with more children
- Samuel grew in stature and favor with God. (1 Samuel 3:19-20)
- They could be trusted with the true riches of God's pleasure, approval and partnership.

Key Points:

- Hannah Seeks God – Do We? (Psalm 62:5-8)
- Hannah is faithful to complete what she promises – Are we focused and faithful? (James 1:2-7)
- Hannah's actions affect more than herself. They affect her family, community, country and ultimately us. – Are we aware or willing to let God use us for more than ourselves? (Psalm 37:3, 18)

Discussion Points:

- What judgments do we make based on our own experiences and understanding from the outside?
- Do we have the attitude of Hannah? (Humble thankfulness)
- Do we try to fill ourselves up and meet our own longings and desires without going to God and believing He has the best planned for us?
- Are we willing to put our answers to deep longings on the alter and let God use them however He wants to? Are we willing to trust Him with them in even when it looks like they are in danger?