

## **1 SAMUEL 1:11 -- HANNAH CRIES TO THE LORD FOR A SON; PROMISES TO CONSECRATE AND GIVE HIM TO THE LORD FOR LIFE**

***1Sa 1:11 Then she made a vow and said, "O LORD of hosts, if You will indeed look on the affliction of Your maidservant and remember me, and not forget Your maidservant, but will give Your maidservant a male child, then I will give him to the LORD all the days of his life, and no razor shall come upon his head."***

### **The Biblical Setting:**

- 1 Samuel is a transition period in the history of Israel of leadership from judges to kings. They weren't really following God as King. It could be said that they were moving to an Anarchy because several times through the book of Judges it says, "Every man did that what was right in his own sight,"
- We're introduced to Elkanah and his wife Hannah. Elkanah was a Levite of the tribe of Kohath. He had two wives – Hannah and Peninnah. Peninnah had children but Hannah was barren, Verse 5 tells us that "*the LORD had shut up her womb.*" Not being able to bear children was a cultural curse. The primary duty of the wife was to produce a son for her husband.
- Each year Elkanah would go up to Shiloh for the feast and take Hannah with him. *Peninnah would provoke her; therefore she wept, and did not eat.* Because of this vexation that she was experiencing, because of Peninnah's constant taunting, Hannah found that she couldn't eat. She was just weeping all the time.
- This had become now **an obsession, her inability to have a child.** And the fact that Peninnah was just really pressing in on that point. *So Elkanah her husband asked her, Hannah, why are you weeping? And why don't you eat? Why is your heart grieved? Am I not better to thee than ten sons?* He didn't understand. What she was needing was sympathetic understanding. She doesn't need a rational explanation, she needs understanding.

***1Sa 1:9 So Hannah arose after they had finished eating and drinking in Shiloh. Now Eli the priest was sitting on the seat by the doorpost of the tabernacle of the LORD.***

- Elkanah had gently reproofed Hannah for her tremendous grief, and here we find the good effect of the reproof. **It brought her to eat and to drink.** She did not harden herself in sorrow, nor grow sullen when she was reproofed for it; but, when she perceived her husband's uneasiness in her not coming and eating with them, she cheered up her own spirits as well as she could, and came to table. It is as great a piece of self-denial to control our passions as it is to control our appetites.

***1 Sa 1:10 And she was in bitterness (angry, discontented, chafed, heavy) of soul, and prayed to the LORD and wept in anguish (bewail, mourn with tears, weep).***

- She "*wept in anguish,*" or "sobbed convulsively." The bitterness of her soul, praying to the LORD.
- **She did the right thing. She brought her grief and sorrows to the LORD, poured out her heart to God.** That's really where we are going to find our help, the sympathetic understanding that we need.
- **This good use we should make of our afflictions,** they should make us the more active in our prayer life. Our Savior, Himself, *being in an agony, prayed more earnestly, Luk\_22:44. Hannah mingled tears with her prayers.* It was not a dry prayer: she wept in anguish. The prayer came from her heart, as the tears from her eyes.

***1Sa 1:11 Then she made a vow and said, "O LORD of hosts (first mention in this chapter of this term), if You will indeed look on the affliction of Your maidservant and remember me, and not forget Your maidservant, but will give Your maidservant a male child, then I will give him to the LORD all the days of his life, and no razor shall come upon his head."***

- First of all, **The LORD had to get Hannah in alignment with His purposes.** This happened as she was praying, “LORD, if You’ll just give me a son, I’ll give him to You all the days of his life.”
- She is **promising to give the male child back to God:** “LORD, if you’ll just give me a child, I’ll give him back to you.” This is the vow that she made. And **in this we discover the purpose for God delaying the answers to her prayers.** She, most likely, had been praying for years for a child. Now it’s desperate. Now she can’t eat. She’s crying all the time. In the desperation of her need, she promises the LORD, If You’ll just give me a child, I’ll give him back to you. He’ll be consecrated to You all the days of his life. No razor shall come to his head.”
- **God needed a man to lead the children of Israel to a spiritual revival,** and there was no man in Israel that God could use. At the time of Ezekiel, when God’s judgment was coming upon the nation because of their sin, God was wanting -- still, to forestall the judgment. God said in Ezekiel, “*And I sought for a man among them, who would stand in the gap, and who would fill in the hedge, but I found none: and therefore my judgment had to come.*” **God could not find the man who would intercede and stand between the judgment of God and the people.** Thus, not finding a man, judgment came.
- It has often been repeated in history, where God is seeking for a man who will fully dedicate his life to the purposes and plan of God. How many times God comes up short. Here, **not finding a man, God found a woman.** She was indeed a very godly woman. Possibly because **of all the problems that she had.** There is **nothing like problems to drive you to the LORD.**

*1Sa 1:12-13 And it happened, as she continued praying before the LORD, that Eli watched her mouth. [13] Now Hannah spoke in her heart; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard. Therefore Eli thought she was drunk.*

- It says that she was **praying from, “her heart.”** She was lying there in the agony and bitterness of her soul. The bitterness was so deep, so great, that **she can’t even audibly express her prayer to God.** Just **in the agony of her heart, pouring out her soul to God,** her lips moving: but no words coming forth. There she is sobbing convulsively. As she is lying there, her body is heaving with sobs and the mouth is moving. Eli looks and says, “This woman has had too much wine.”

*1Sa 1:15 But Hannah answered and said, "No, my lord, I am a woman of sorrowful (severe, grievous, hard) spirit. I have drunk neither wine nor intoxicating drink, but have poured (spill forth, gush out, expend, bleed) out my soul before the LORD.*

- Now she says that she poured out her **soul** to the LORD. This is **probably prayer at its deepest.** You remember in *Romans 8:26* “*The Spirit also helps our weaknesses: for we do not always know how to pray as we ought: the spirit will make intercession through groanings which cannot be uttered.*” This was the case with Hannah. There was no sound, there was no utterance. But the groaning of her spirit, the pouring out of her soul: the prayer that was coming out of her heart could not be uttered. She was in **deep spiritual communication** with God.
- **Too many times our prayers are from our heads instead of our hearts.** God sometimes brings us to **that place of utter desperation and despair.** It brings us **to a depth of prayer that we don’t just normally enter into, when we really get desperate** before God.

*1Sa 1:16-18 Do not consider your maidservant a wicked woman, for out of the abundance of my complaint and grief I have spoken until now." [17] Then Eli answered and said, "Go in peace, and the God of Israel grant your petition which you have asked of Him." [18] And she said, "Let your maidservant find favor in your sight." So the woman went her way and ate, and her face was no longer sad.*

- **She believed the promise of God, that God had heard her prayer.** She believed that God was going to grant her request. The sign of faith was that she went ahead and ate, and was no more sad.

Now she's smiling, she's happy. Why? Because **she has that confidence that God will keep His word.**

***1Sa 1:19 Then they rose early in the morning and worshiped before the LORD, and returned and came to their house at Ramah. And Elkanah knew Hannah his wife, and the LORD remembered her.***

- **Prayer, if it follows the full cycle, will usually end in worship.** It usually begins in worship, and enters into petition, then goes back to finish with worship. In the model prayer that the Lord gave us: "*Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name..*" Worship. It goes to petition: "*Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.*" And then it goes back to worship. "*For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.*"
- **It is always a glorious time when the assurance of God's Word comes to our hearts, and our petitions are changed to worship:** "Oh LORD, thank you." You have that assurance that God is going to work in you. You've committed it unto God and the Spirit just brings you that glorious peace. God is going to work and you just worship the LORD in confidence. **It's all taken care of.** God is going to do His purpose and His plan. You just have that confidence and you worship God.

***1Sa 1:20 So it came to pass in the process of time that Hannah conceived and bore a son, and called his name Samuel, saying, "Because I have asked for him from the LORD."***

She had made the vow: "*LORD, you give me a son. I will give him back to You all the days of his life.*" So she wanted to keep him until he was weaned. And when she took him then after his weaning, that was to be it. He was to remain there with Eli **as a servant of the LORD all the days of his life.**

#### **SUMMARY:**

- **At times of great vexation, anguish of spirit and sorrowful heart, who or what do you turn to?**
- **At such times do you turn to your only source of help? The Lord?**
- **At such times do you bargain with God? Do you ever make vows that you know you won't keep?**
- **Do you often pray full cycle – worship; prayer; worship?**
- **Do you frequently sense the assurance of God's Word at the end of your prayers?**
- **When finishing praying, do you usually sense His peace through His Spirit in knowing that all has been committed to Him and now it's in His hands?**