

Lessons from Hannah & Samuel

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Happy Sabbath to everyone! I'm read this story to get it fresh in our mind, and familiarized with the story. Then we're going to pick up some of the things of the story and think about some of the lessons. Certainly it's an amazing story of a great work that God did. Not only for His people through Samuel, but even the background of the entire story and how God operated with His servant Hannah.

There were so many things that Hannah did and said that if we stop and think about it, we're going to get a lot of things, and draw out those lessons and see how this applies to our lives, and what we can learn from the amazing miracle that God did with Hannah.

1-Samuel 1:1: "And there was a certain man of Ramathaim Zophim from the hills of Ephraim, and his name was Elkanah, the son of Jeroham, the son of Elihu, the son of Tohu, the son of Zuph, an Ephrathite. And he had two wives, the name of the one was Hannah, and the name of the second, Peninnah. And Peninnah had children, but Hannah had no children" (vs 1-2).

Verse 3: "And this man [Elkanah] went up out of his city from year to year to worship and to sacrifice to the LORD of hosts in Shiloh. And the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, the priests of the LORD, were there. And the time came that Elkanah offered, he gave portions to Peninnah his wife and to all her sons and her daughters. But to Hannah he gave one double portion, for he loved Hannah. However, the LORD had shut up her womb. And her foe also provoked her grievously, in order to frustrate her because the LORD had shut up her womb" (vs 3-6). *This is Peninnah giving Hannah a hard time!*

Verse 7: "And as he did so year by year, when she went up to the house of the LORD, so she provoked her. And she wept and did not eat. And Elkanah her husband said to her, 'Hannah, why do you weep? And why do you not eat? And why is your heart grieved? Am I not better to you than ten sons?' And Hannah rose up after they had eaten in Shiloh and after they had drunk. And Eli the priest sat upon the seat by the side post of the temple of the LORD" (vs 7-9). *Just to clarify, this is a tabernacle, the Temple of Solomon had not yet been built!*

Verse 10: "And she was in bitterness of soul, and prayed to the LORD, and wept sorely. And she vowed a vow and said, 'O, LORD of hosts, if You will indeed look upon the affliction of Your handmaid and remember me, and not forget Your handmaid, but will give to Your handmaid a man-child, then I will give him to the LORD all the days

of his life, and there shall no razor come upon his head.'" (vs 10-11).

Verse 12: "And it came to pass as she continued praying before the LORD, Eli noticed her mouth. Now Hannah spoke in her heart, only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard. And Eli thought she had become drunk. And Eli said to her, 'How long will you be drunken? Put away your wine from you!'" (vs 12-14).

Verse 15: "And Hannah answered, 'No, my lord, I am a woman of a sorrowful spirit. I have neither drunk wine nor strong drink, but have poured out my soul before the LORD. Do not count your handmaid for a daughter of wickedness, for out of the abundance of my anxiety and grief I have spoken until now.'" (vs 15-16).

Verse 17: "And Eli answered and said, 'Go in peace, and the God of Israel grant to you your petition that you have asked of Him.' And she said, 'Let your handmaid find grace in your sight.' So, the woman went her way and ate, and her face was no longer sad. And they rose up early in the morning, and worshiped before the LORD, and returned, and came to their house to Ramah. And Elkanah knew Hannah his wife, and the LORD remembered her. And it came to pass when the time had come, Hannah conceived and bore a son and called his name Samuel, saying, 'Because I have asked him of the LORD'" (vs 17-20).

Verse 21: "And the man Elkanah and all his house went up to offer to the LORD the yearly sacrifice and his vow. But Hannah did not go up, for she said to her husband, 'Until the child is weaned, and then I will bring him so that he may appear before the LORD and stay there forever.' And Elkanah her husband said to her, 'Do what seems good to you. Stay until you have weaned him. Only may the LORD establish His Word.' So, the woman stayed and gave her son suck until she weaned him" (vs 21-23).

Verse 24: "And when she had weaned him, she took him up with her, with three bulls and one ephah of flour, and a skin of wine, and brought him to the house of the LORD in Shiloh. And the child was young. And they killed a bull, and brought the child to Eli. And she said, 'O, my lord, as your soul lives, my lord, I am the woman who stood by you here, praying to the LORD; for this boy I prayed, and the LORD has given me my petition, which I asked of Him. And I have returned him to the LORD. As long as he lives, he shall be given to the LORD.' And he worshiped the LORD there" (vs 24-28).

That's the background of the story. Now we'll go back and look at this amazing story. At first glance it just a story of something that happened that God wanted recorded there as far as how Samuel was born.

We're going to dissect these things, because this is a very powerful story. Then we will go into 1-Sam. 2 and see what happens there.

vs 1-2—this man Elkanah has two wives—Peninnah and Hannah.

v 3—this verse almost seems out of place. They went to worship and the two priests, the sons of Eli—Hophni and Phinehas—were there. In the rest of the chapter that really has nothing to do with anything. Eli is only mentioned when he's in the tabernacle.

But we're going to see later on why these verse are here talking about Hophni and Phinehas being in the temple also. They did something and then God did something very important with Samuel. But this verse seems a little bit out of place, but it's very important that we think about this.

v 5—Elkanah had two wives, but he always gave Hannah a double portion for he loved Hannah. But the Lord had shut up her womb; it was clear that the Lord had done this. She didn't have any children, and the Bible many times gives us the real story in what's going on behind the scenes and the origins of things.

Verse 6: "And her foe also provoked her grievously, in order to frustrate her because the LORD had shut up her womb."

It's interesting that in v 5 that Elkanah gave Hannah a double portion, just like He did for Jacob, similar story with Jacob and Rachel, whom Jacob loved and also had no children.

It's very interesting to see patterns and the things that God sometimes does. Like Sarah had no children, and Rachel had not children, and Hannah had no children. It's not just the fact that they didn't have children, but what did God do with them? Think about it. In the case of Sarah and that the 'child of promise' came through her, and all of the nations of the earth are blessed through her. Same thing with Rachel, through Joseph the name of Jacob was placed.

Here it's very interesting what happens with Hannah and the child that God eventually gave her Samuel. But what God does with these women, and the power... Everything that God does is for a purpose, for a reason. If we take just a moment and reflect on what God does and how He acts powerfully through these women. Not only shutting down their wombs, then giving them children, some

of them in their very old age when they weren't supposed to be having children.

What happens in their life, and this is a powerful story, which is reflected better than Sarah or Rachel, what's going on. Not that it didn't happen with them also, and all things that God worked with them, but in the case of Hannah it gives us a lot more of what's going on.

Sarah went through a similar thing with Hagar who was afflicting her because they didn't have children. Here it's Peninnah, Elkanah's other wife who was also provoking Hannah grievously and frustrating her because the Lord had shut up her womb.

So many times we also have a lot of things, a lot of challenges or things that we don't seem to know why they're happening, or where they're coming from. Sometimes it's from God to do something great later in our lives. But it will depend upon what we do.

We're going to see what Hannah actually did. Who knows that this whole story would have developed this way had Hannah not made the choice that she made. Again, the lesson is:

- Do we sometimes have things that come from the Lord that we don't know?
- But what are we going to do about it?
- Are we going to come to God?
- Are we going to let God use those tools to work in our heart and mind to transform us the way that He wants to change us?

God has great plans for every single one of us! He wants to change our heart and mind. But we're going to see through out this story that we also have a part play. It's amazing when we let God do that and we put ourselves in His hands.

This powerful story of Hannah, this is what happened. She was provoked to frustrate her because the Lord has shut up her womb. So, this was from God! This was not just by chance! The Lord had done this!

v 7—Year after year she was afflicted and she "...wept and did not eat." She was afflicted and troubled.

v 8: "And Elkanah her husband said to her, 'Hannah, why do you weep?....'" We could assume that this happened year after year, whether Elkanah knew or didn't know, this is the instance where he actually does something about it. It says it was year by year, so it wasn't just this one time.

Sometimes we deal with problems in our lives and they keep coming back. We don't know if they're from the Lord, or the Lord is just allowing

those things to happen. But in either case, he definitely wants to use that, because He wants to change us.

“...so she [Peninnah] provoked her [Hannah]. And she wept and did not eat. And Elkanah her husband said to her, ‘Hannah, why do you weep? And why do you not eat? And why is your heart grieved? *Am* I not better to you than ten sons?’” (vs 7-8).

I think about myself as a husband, and sometimes trials that my wife may have, and sometimes I think about some of the things that I do, it’s almost like with Hannah, ‘Am I not better...’ Trying from our own effort to help out somebody else with things that are just either practical, specific or from a point of view that seems right. Sometimes the pain still doesn’t go away, the suffering doesn’t go away. We may think of some things, but the only one—and this is another lesson—that really knows the source of our heart are ourselves.

The only ones that know what’s really going on is just us and God! Even our spouse, friend, neighbor—the people closest to us—still don’t know. It’s interesting that that’s what Elkanah says, “...*Am* I not better to you than ten sons?”

It’s almost, ‘You shouldn’t be like this. Don’t be like this. I love you and...’ *Who knows what else he said!* But from a human standpoint sometimes that’s what we try to do. Sometimes we try to help and encourage others, but unless we live through some of the trials and the things, we really don’t know what it’s like.

I can say for myself, as a man, we don’t know what it’s like to want children and not be able to have them. We really don’t know. But God certainly knows. He knows because He knows everybody’s heart, and can really discern to the very marrow of our bones as to what our emotions are, and the pain and suffering. Jesus Christ knows what it is to be in the flesh. But unless we go through certain situations, we really don’t know.

Sometimes when we counsel others, let’s keep that in mind, and let’s pray, because the prayers will really help the person more than anything else. God knows! God can actually intervene! But sometimes our perspective is skewed. When Elkanah says these things and tries to encourage her, it comes from a good heart and attitude. But this is what happens:

Verse 9: “And Hannah rose up after they had eaten in Shiloh and after they had drunk. And Eli the priest sat upon the seat by the side post of the temple of the LORD.”

It’s interesting that in v 7 it says that she wept and did not eat. So, Hannah had not eaten and

had not drunk. This was after the eating and drinking part, but Hannah did not do this.

Verse 10: “And she *was* in bitterness of soul, and prayed to the LORD, and wept sorely.”

This is another lesson, when she comes to the Lord. This is the very first thing that she does. She gets up and prays to the Lord and wept sorely. It doesn’t say that she just wept or wept bitterly. She wept with sorrow in her heart.

She was praying, and it doesn’t say everything that she prayed. She prayed to the Lord and she said what happened. She probably shared with God what was going on, that Peninnah was afflicting her. She was probably laying out her heart before God and telling God how she felt what she wanted, and expressing the desires of her heart.

Verse 11: “And she vowed a vow and said, ‘O, LORD of hosts, if You will indeed look upon the affliction of Your handmaid and remember me, and not forget Your handmaid, but will give to Your handmaid a man-child, then I will give him to the LORD all the days of his life, and there shall no razor come upon his head.’” *That was a Nazarite vow!* It was a vow of not only being a Nazarite, it was giving him to the Lord.

Psalm 76:11: “Vow, and bring gifts to the LORD your God; let all that are around Him bring presents to Him Who ought to be feared.”

He likes that; He wants that vow, that instruction of bringing presents to the Lord. He says to keep them. When we make a vow, a promise to God—such as the one we made at baptism—that even our own life that we are willing to put on the line for Him, we have to keep that vow. We have to keep that promise. We’ve all made that vow. Those of us who are married made vows in marriage. God wants these vows to be kept.

It’s interesting that this is what Hannah did. She first prayed to the Lord and then she made this vow. She said: “...if You will indeed look upon the affliction of Your handmaid and remember me, and not forget Your handmaid...”

We think that sometimes God may forget. But God is always listening!

Verse 12: “And it came to pass as she continued praying before the LORD, Eli noticed her mouth. Now Hannah spoke in her heart...” (vs 12-13).

She wasn’t speaking to herself. We see sometimes that others spoke to themselves and the result is bad. ‘when they speak to the Lord that’s good, when they try to connect with God. That’s what Hannah was doing. She was praying, connecting with God, but she spoke from her heart.

“...only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard. And Eli thought she had become drunk” (v 13).

Her lips were moving, but her voice was not heard. So, everything was just between her and God. So many lessons from this in the sense that it's our relationship with God, and it's not the outward thing. She certainly was not praying just to be heard of men like the Pharisees did.

The Pharisees went to the temple and said long prayers, probably as loud as they could so that everybody could hear them. We can remember the one about the publican and the Pharisee, and the publican being repentant, and the Pharisee saying, 'I'm not like this publican here.'

But here Hannah spoke in her heart, and this is a lesson also for us, we are to speak in our heart. Christ quote from the Old Testament in Isaiah.

Isaiah 29:13: “And the LORD said, ‘Because this people draws near *Me* with their mouth, and with their lips honor Me, **but their worship of Me is made up of the traditions of men learned by rote, and their fear toward Me is taught by the commandments of men.**”

Hannah's lips were moving, but there was no sound. She was speaking in her heart. That's the lesson of what God really wants. He wants our heart, the substance. He's not concerned so much about the form, but the substance and what's really inside of us. It's not so much the actual words, but what is in our heart, our feelings, our emotions. God wants to know that, because He wants a deep close relationship with us.

This is like the contrast: “...**Because this people draws near *Me* with their mouth, and with their lips honor Me, but their worship of Me is made up of the traditions of men learned by rote, and their fear toward Me is taught by the commandments of men.**”

- it's not made out the heart
- it's not made out of a relationship
- it's not made out of what's really going on in our lives

It's interesting what Hannah was saying. It was in the very innermost part of her being! That's what she was doing. Even though she was moving her lips, what a contrast. With her lips she was honoring Him, it was a worship from the heart. It was not only a worship, it was a connection, it was a vulnerability, it really came down to that 'this is who I am, and this is everything that there is in my heart.'

Deut. 5 is where God also said what He would love. This was about the people of Israel.

Deuteronomy 5:29: “**Oh, that there were such a heart in them that they would fear Me and keep all My commandments always** so that it might be well with them and with their children forever!”

So that they wouldn't worship from the lips out, paying lip service to Him. But do what Hannah did.

This is who I am, Lord; this is what afflicts me; this is what I'm struggling with. If You remember Your servant, this is my vow.

It's almost like putting God to the test, but not from a place of self-gain, but really from a place that 'I've got nothing more.'

This is a very important lesson for us to remember, to pour our heart into everything. God wants to know our heart's desire, and the root of those desires. He basically has to change our heart and completely. To tear everything down and build up a heart that is according to His will.

That's what He's doing here with Hannah. He's tearing everything down and bringing the biggest thing that she has to Him in making a promise.

1-Samuel 1:14: “And Eli said to her, ‘How long will you be drunken?... [he thought she was drunk] ...Put away your wine from you!’”

This is how much feeling, how much strength, how much emphasis she put into that prayer. This is how much heart and love that she put into this prayer.

Because she was moving her lips, Eli thought that she was drunk and just babbling and not making any sense.

Verse 15: “And Hannah answered, ‘No, my lord, I *am* a woman of a sorrowful spirit. I have neither drunk wine nor strong drink, **but have poured out my soul before the LORD.**”

We know that our soul is 'nephesh' a living being. It's how we are, our person! She poured out her person before the Lord. We know that for her it was very, very important to have a child. Not only because she was afflicted, but that's what she really desired, the biggest desire of her heart.

It's interesting how the Word of God connects with the exact same things. This is David, Psa. 62, and this Psalm is talking about how God is David's Rock, and his salvation and he's waiting in silence for God.

Psalm 62:1: “Only for God does my soul wait in silence; from Him comes my salvation. He only is my Rock and my salvation; He is my

fortress; I shall not be greatly moved” (vs 1-2).

David was encouraging himself in the Lord. Then he complains about the challenges. This is part of what Hannah was doing, pouring out her soul and her complaint; being honest with God about everything that is going on. He wants to hear from us, and He knows us.

Verse 8—David’s conclusion: “Trust in Him at all times, you people; pour out your heart before Him... [which is exactly the wording in 1-Sam. about Hannah] ...**God is a refuge for us.** Selah.”

1-Samuel 1:15: “...but have poured out my soul before the LORD.” This is what it looks like: with sorrow, pain, being real. She hadn’t eaten or drunk. She had a big challenge, something that was really bringing her down.

We all have that! We all have afflictions from time-to-time. Sometimes more, sometimes less. We all have afflictions, and this is exactly what God wants us to do. He wants us to pour out our heart before Him. Remember that He is our Rock, that He is our Refuge, that He is going to change us. But we have to come to Him, and we have to come to Him on His terms, really laying it all before the altar.

This is what Hannah did. “...but have poured out my soul before the LORD.” *That’s exactly what God wants!*

God wants a people who are not just doing lip service or praising Him with things just commandments of men. That’s not what He’s after. God is after our heart! This is very precious in the sight of the Lord.

Then Hannah continues to explain to Eli what is happening here; v 16: “Do not count your handmaid for a daughter of wickedness, for out of the abundance of my anxiety and grief I have spoken until now.”

How many of us have anxiety and grief? *I think we all do to one degree or another!* Sometimes more than at others. But really we all have anxiety and grief.

Out of the abundance of Hannah’s anxiety and grief, she spoke until then. It’s interesting that she uses this wording, because we can take it from a couple of different angles. It says: “...for out of the abundance of my anxiety and grief I have spoken **until now.**” We can take as:

I rest my case. I’m done with what I said. I’m telling you what I did, but I’m done. I’m not going to speak about this anymore. I have made my vow, and I’m not going to be concerned. I have spoken until now and I’m stopping.

Or the other way we can take it is:

I have now spoken about this thing, I have now brought it out, I have now brought it to the table. Now it’s all out there, and having done this until now. Now I did all this stuff. I was accumulating this anxiety and grief within me that was weighing me, like afflicting me constantly.

We all have anxiety and grief, and this is a lesson that we have to speak about it. We are not to keep it. We have to bring it before God, because God wants to hear that.

In order to have a real connection a real tight relationship with God and a strong relationship with Him, we have to be vulnerable. If we cannot be vulnerable with Him, who can we be vulnerable with? In silence! In our heart!

It’s also good share, to the extent that we want and we think it’s wise with our brethren. We do that with prayer requests and things like that. But the grief and how it’s really affecting our heart, mind and soul, and what really goes on.

There’s a whole load of story that God want us to bring to Him. That’s what He really wants, because that’s how our relationship with God is going to grow, exponentially. Where we have that connection, where we have that vulnerability with Him. We’re vulnerable when we acknowledge our condition and problems before Him. ***This is what Hannah was doing!***

Verse 17: “And Eli answered and said, ‘Go in peace, and the God of Israel grant *to you* your petition that you have asked of Him.’”

Eli didn’t know what she asked. Remember, the lips moved, but she was only speaking in her heart. He didn’t know what she asked. We can speculate that he saw her anxiety, he saw the fervor with which she prayed. He saw that she was afflicted.

Verse 18: “And she said, ‘Let your handmaid find grace in your sight.’...”—*the same thing that she told God!*

Then the next part of this verse is critical in what we do, and there’s a big lesson here:

“...So, the woman [Hannah] went her way and ate, and her face was no longer *sad*” (v 18).

It’s amazing! She prays, pours out her heart before God, and then she says to Eli, ‘I have spoken until now’ and then went away and ate, and her face was no longer sad.

She really put it in God’s hands! That’s what this is saying. She could have gone away in with sorrow, the anguish and all of that stuff, still being sad, but she didn’t. She went and her face was no

longer sad. *She totally trusted God and put it in His hands!*

That's another lesson for us. When we call and pour our heart out before God, *we have to trust Him! We have to trust that He will give us the answer!* One thing is for sure, God always answers; *always!*

- maybe not always in the time that we expect
- maybe not in the way that we expect
- maybe not in the way that we wanted

But He always answers! Maybe it's later, but He always answers!

- when we bring our complaint before Him
- when we pour out our heart before Him
- when we are vulnerable with Him
- when we are sure ourselves—like David did—that God is our Rock

Then we can really go and put it in His hands!

Psalm 55:22—another instruction: “**Cast your burden upon the LORD**, and He will sustain you; He will never allow the righteous to be moved.”

We have to understand from what perspective this is coming from, and what perspective that God wants us to have. You leave it in His hands, and this is exactly what Hannah did. She poured out her heart before the Lord, she talked to the priest and she put it there and forgot about it. She wasn't sad and she ate. She left it in God's hands!

“...and He will sustain you; He will **never allow the righteous to be moved.**” *What does that mean?* It doesn't necessarily mean that He will grant your every wish for everything. He's not going to that, but what He is going to do is *work His purpose in us! He will develop that mind in us!*

Even if he uses those tools to teach us a lesson, to show us something, to move us to action, He will do that, He will do those things. He will **never allow the righteous to be moved**—*from the purpose!*

We have one purpose and one goal that the Kingdom of God! That's becoming like Christ, being children in His Kingdom! *He will never allow us to be moved from that, IF we put things in His hands and we trust Him!* Like in the case of Hannah:

Whether He gives me a child or He doesn't, it's in His hands. He will have His purpose for me: He will fulfill His purpose, He will change me, He will do whatever He wants with me, but I've done what I can do. There's nothing more that I can do.

That's a lesson for us, as well. When we're dealing with trials, dealing with affliction, to cast our burden upon the Lord, to trust that He will sustain us. He will never allow us to be moved, even if the answer is no—or no for now—or yes, but this...

It doesn't matter, He is sustaining us, and will sustain us, because He has a purpose for all of us. There are so many lessons, but the heart and core of what Hannah did in humbling herself before God in praying and asking, and then really trusting God and moving on. Her face was no longer sad.

1-Samuel 1:19: “And they rose up early in the morning, and worshiped before the LORD, and returned...”

Verse 20: “And it came to pass when the time had come, Hannah conceived and bore a son and called his name Samuel, *saying*, ‘Because I have asked him of the LORD.’”

She obviously remembered that she made this promise. She knew that God was the One Who had brought these things to pass. When we pray for something and it happens, we should always remember that it was from God, that we asked Him do that. Sometimes we come a realization that ‘this is how God answered my prayer.’ *or* ‘this is why this happened.’ Sometimes we just see the end result, then we can praise God!

Verse 21: “Hannah named the child *Samuel* and she wasn't going to let him go until he was weaned. Elkanah said that was fine, do that. “...Only may the LORD establish His Word...” (v 21-23): “

Verse 24: “And **when she had weaned him**, she took him up with her, with three bulls and one ephah of flour, and a skin of wine, **and brought him to the house of the LORD in Shiloh. And the child was young.**”

Palm 76:11: “Vow, and bring gifts to the LORD your God; let all that are around Him bring presents to Him Who ought to be feared.”

She is bringing her child as promised, but she's also bringing gifts, the offering of “...three bulls and one ephah of flour, and a skin of wine...”

It's almost like ‘Here, Lord, I'm bringing the child, the most precious gift that you have given me in life.’ That's what she really wanted. She is bringing according to what she spoke and promised. She fulfilled it! She vowed a vow and she paid it. She brought it with an offering, because it says to ‘bring gifts to the Lord.’

1-Samuel 1:24: “...and brought him to the house of the LORD in Shiloh. And the child *was young.*”

For a moment let's just think about what this

would mean. Imagine if you haven't been able to have a child, and all of a sudden God gives you a child, a gift from the Lord, He has answered your prayer. You've poured out your heart and soul before Him. Then you put it in His hands; you trusted Him and He brings it pass. You have this precious child. You know how much your children mean to you; you would give your life for them.

But to bring the child to the temple in Shiloh and say, here he is and give him up, *that's a tall order!* That requires faith, and it's difficult, very, very difficult to do.

Verse 25: "And they killed a bull, and brought the child to Eli. And she said, 'O, my lord, as your soul lives, my lord, I *am* the woman who stood by you here, praying to the LORD'" (vs 25-26). *Can you imagine the emotion in her heart as she was telling Eli those things?*

Verse 27: "For this boy I prayed, and the LORD has given me my petition, which I asked of Him. And I have returned him to the LORD. As long as he lives, he shall be given to the LORD.' And he worshiped the LORD there" (vs 27-28).

There's a tremendous lesson here! It's really understanding; she understood so many things about God. She really understood that when we vow and pour out our heart, it has to be genuine and from the heart. *God listens!*

It's interesting that when she brings the child, she says, "...I have returned him to the LORD. As long as he lives, he shall be given to the LORD..."

The lesson is that so many times that we want something so much, something that's so important to us—maybe something physical, maybe something spiritual—that when God gives it to us, **do we give it back to Him?**

We normally acknowledge it, but do we take those things and go on our merry way? **or** Do we bring it back to Him? Do we bring back His investment to Him so that He can reinvest it, so to speak? Whatever growth that He has given us, do we bring it back to Him so He continues to grow it? *Then have the concept of compound interest and to accumulate and continue to grow and grow in grace and knowledge!* He can help us to grow in grace and knowledge exponentially, or in anything that we ask of Him. Once He gives us those lessons:

- What do we do?
- Do we learn the lesson from Hannah?

Here he is God so You can do more, because You heard me that this was what I wanted. Now You can do more with Him, and You can

do more with Your servant, because this child is dedicated to You.

It's amazing that not only what she does in giving her child to the Lord—who stayed and lived at the temple—according to the promise.

1-Sam. 2 reflects a lot of the things that Hannah was doing in her understanding. It's one thing to thank God, to acknowledge Him and do what we promised to do. It's quite another thing to do it with this kind of heart and attitude. This attitude is what God wants. This is what He really desires. Hannah did this. Hannah brings the child and prays; this really shows Hannah's heart and what was going on in her mind.

1-Samuel 2:1: "And Hannah prayed and said, '**My heart rejoices in the LORD**, my horn is exalted in the LORD. My mouth is enlarged over my enemies because I rejoice in Your salvation. *There is none Holy as the LORD, for there is none beside You...*'" (vs 1-2).

She didn't say she was so righteous and am bringing You the gift that I promised You and me. She was focused on herself. She knew that the Lord had fulfilled, she did the promise by turning over her son, her only son, *gladly!*

There's a parallel with what Abraham and Sarah did. They said, 'If the Lord asks for him, give it to Him. Give it without doubting.' This is what Hannah said. It's one thing to give in the service of God, but 'I want to see my child grow, I want him in my house.' **NO!** She said, 'You gave him to me, and he is Yours.' To think about our lives that way:

- You gave me this life
- You gave me this mind
- You taught me Your ways

This is Yours, not mine! "...**My heart rejoices in the LORD**, my horn is exalted in the LORD. My mouth is enlarged over my enemies because I rejoice in Your salvation..." *Her source of joy was not in the child, it was God Himself Who could give her more children!* He did that. This attitude and this mind is exactly what God wants. This is such an amazing example.

"...Neither is there any rock like our God" (v 2). *This inspired one of the Psalms that David wrote, so he knew about this!* I don't know if Samuel told him and wrote it and David had read it. This is the exact prayer.

Verse 3: "Talk no more so very proudly. Remove arrogance out of your mouth, for the LORD is a God of knowledge, and by Him actions are weighed." *She understood what God was doing with her!* She knew how God answered her prayer.

Verse 4: “The bows of the mighty *are* broken, and they that stumbled are girded with strength.” *It’s interesting how she starts to understand and put things in perspective what God is showing her!*

I’m sure God inspired this prayer, to speak about what He is. But He gave it to Hannah because of what Hannah gave to Him. She gave her soul, her heart to the Lord. This is exactly what God is giving to her.

Verse 5: “*They that were full* have hired themselves out for bread, and they that were hungry have ceased *to hunger*; yea, while even the barren has borne seven, and she who had many sons has languished.”

She knew and understood that God is above everybody! That anything that goes on, on the earth He can change in a minute. The strong can fail! All the purposes of our strength, our intelligence, our own things are nothing before God! She really understood what was going on, what it’s really like to be close to God and really understand God and what He does.

Hannah was granted more children, but at this time they had not been born. But she understood the basic principle that God is above all.

- it doesn’t matter if we’re strong, *God can weaken us* it doesn’t matter if we’re weak, *God can strengthen us*
- it doesn’t matter if we’re barren, *God can give us children*
- it doesn’t matter if you have many children, *they can come to nothing*

What matters is that we are with Him! That He is working His purpose in us.

Verse 6: “The LORD kills and makes alive.... [there is nothing that is hard for Him] ...He brings down to the grave and brings up.”

Hannah understood the power of God, and has seen the power of God and lived the power of God. She went through that pregnancy. I wonder if all of these thoughts were accumulating during that pregnancy. Maybe she was writing this prayer before, we don’t know. But certainly she had been building up to this.

Verse 7: “The LORD takes away, and He gives riches; He brings low; yea, He lifts up high.”

In the eyes of God it doesn’t matter if we’re rich or poor, what matters if we’re *rich toward Him!* What matters is that if we have a heart *that loves him with all our heart, soul, mind and being!* That’s what matters.

To God riches, poverty, healthy, sickness,

children, being barren—all of this stuff-is nothing but tools in His hands. It’s the workmanship! It’s the image of His Son, that’s what really matters. She is acknowledging that the Lord can do anything His wants.

Verse 8: “He raises up the poor out of the dust; He lifts up the needy from the dunghill to set *them* among princes; yea, **He causes them to inherit a throne of honor**, for to the LORD *belong* the pillars of the earth; and He sets the habitable world upon them.”

She understood what He does with the poor and how He has compassion on the needy. “...**He causes them to inherit a throne of honor...**”—*in the Kingdom of God!* He does it in our physical life, as well. Remember, He brought Joseph out from the prison to the throne. And David from the sheepfold to the very throne. God does those things physically, and He will do it spiritually. He can do whatever He wants with any of us at any time. But:

- Are we going to cooperate with Him?
- Are we going to pour out our heart before Him?
- Are we going to do this?

Verse 9: “He keeps the feet of His saints, and the wicked are silenced in darkness; for by strength shall no man prevail.”

Let’s not be arrogant if God has blessed us with children, with riches or with health—whatever. He can bring it down, but He will ‘keep the feet of His saints,’ because He loves us so much, and He knows this life is not worth that much, because everything is going to be wiped out, even heaven and earth. How much more anyone’s life or things. Let’s remember that when we are in our afflictions.

Verse 10: “The foes of the LORD shall be broken to pieces. He thunders in the heavens upon them. The LORD shall judge the ends of the earth.... [Hannah understood prophecy and what God was going to do] ...And He shall give strength to His King [Christ], and exalts the horn of His anointed.”

There is so much in this prayer; just to recap this whole story of Hannah:

- what was going on
- the challenges that she faced
- what she did with it
- how she came to the Lord and poured out her soul before Him
- trusted God in the end

Let’s remember this prayer and what it means. For Hannah to come with that attitude of rejoicing and love, rejoicing in Him. She found something so

much more than a son. She found something so much bigger:

- understanding
- wisdom
- prophecy
- a close relationship with God
- promises fulfilled

She found so much more because of what she did in giving and pouring her heart out to the Lord and trusting in Him!

Those are lessons that for us to know and remember, that God is not concerned with this physical life. That's not the most important thing for Him. He can make it happen. Any minute He can kill anybody, raise the dead, give children and take children away. He can do any of that, but:

- Do we acknowledge the Sovereignty of God over our lives?
- Do we come to Him so that He becomes a refuge?
- Do we come to Him so that He will strengthen us?
- Do we come to Him so that He will teach us?
- Do we come to Him so that He will grow us?
- Do we come to Him so that His investment will keep growing?

The investment that Hannah made, to pour out her whole heart, God then gave to her. Then she turned it back again to God so that He would do great works with Samuel.

We know the story of Samuel and everything that he went on to do. But it's just amazing and we're conscious of the sons of Eli and all of that. But just what Hannah did and what God gave and showed to Hannah.

These are some of the lessons that we can learn from this. Keep these things in our mind and heart, and let's pray to God that He will give us His Spirit, that He would give us that understanding and strength to do that. Praying to do that, pouring out our heart before Him, to trust Him with all of our heart. Then forget about it and go away and understanding and knowing what He will do if we really put it in His hands and trust Him. Then to see the wonders of the Lord and His work in us, which is the most amazing thing that He's doing in each and every one of us!

Scriptural References:

- 1) 1 Samuel 1:1-28
- 2) Psalm 76:11

- 3) Isaiah 29:13
- 4) Deuteronomy 5:29
- 5) 1 Samuel 1:14-15
- 6) Psalm 62:1-2, 8
- 7) 1 Samuel 1:15-18
- 8) Psalm 55:22
- 9) 1 Samuel 1:19-24
- 10) Psalm 76:11
- 11) 1 Samuel 1:24-28
- 12) 1 Samuel 2:1-10

EE:bo
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