

"Great Women"

Hannah

1 Samuel 1

Introduction: Today as we celebrate Mother's Day, we are going to go back to the Old Testament to take a close look at one of the women who made a difference in history. Her name is Hannah, and she was the mother of Samuel.

Since God has blessed my wife and I with grandchildren, I have developed a higher level of appreciation for mothers. It has only taken a couple of times of babysitting the boys and the girl to help me to appreciate much more what a mom has to deal with.

Illustration: Mother in a department store.

Hannah was one of the great women of the Old Testament. Let us therefore consider a few points from the life of a great woman.

I. Great Women often Experience Great Problems.

Notice 1 Samuel 1:1-2

Here we see that one of the problems that Hannah faced was that she was barren. She was unable to have children. In Hannah's day this very serious for several reasons. First of all when a woman was unable to have children she could be viewed as a murderer. It was believed that she would take the seed of her husband and kill it. There was never any thought given that the problem was with the man but always with the woman. This was also viewed as a reason for the husband to marry a second wife which was the case with Hannah's husband. This was never in the plan of God for God said the family would exist of one man and one woman for one lifetime. Only death would open the door to marry another. When a woman was barren, she was also viewed as being afflicted.

Notice 1 Samuel 1:11

Here we see that Hannah saw herself as being afflicted.

There was yet another great problem that Hannah faced.

Notice 1 Samuel 1:3-7

Here we see that Peninnah provoked her sore. Peninnah had children but Hannah had none and Peninnah was always there to point that out to Hannah. Hannah was loved by her husband greatly and this most likely caused Peninnah to be jealous and therefore there was always tension and strife within the family.

Let me just say that Hannah in her barrenness was in good company. Let me show you what I mean.

Genesis 11:29-30

²⁹ *And Abram and Nahor took them wives: the name of Abram's wife was Sarai; and the name of Nahor's wife, Milcah, the daughter of Haran, the father of Milcah, and the father of Iscah.*

³⁰ *But Sarai was barren; she had no child.*

Genesis 25:20-21

²⁰ *And Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah to wife, the daughter of Bethuel the Syrian of Padanaram, the sister to Laban the Syrian.*

²¹ *And Isaac intreated the LORD for his wife, because she was barren: and the LORD was intreated of him, and Rebekah his wife conceived.*

Genesis 29:30-31

³⁰ *And he went in also unto Rachel, and he loved also Rachel more than Leah, and served with him yet seven other years.*

³¹ *And when the LORD saw that Leah was hated, he opened her womb: but Rachel was barren.*

Luke 1:5-7

⁵ *There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judaea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the course of Abia: and his wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elisabeth.*

⁶ *And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.*

⁷ *And they had no child, because that Elisabeth was barren, and they both were now well stricken in years.*

We can see Hannah was not the only woman who was barren. These ladies were all great women of the Old Testament who also were barren.

Application:

Ladies, I show you this because there has developed a belief in our minds and somehow, we have come to believe that if you are going to be great for God that you must have it altogether. We have come to believe that our families must be perfect, our bodies must be perfect, and that we must be the model example in our perfection. an or

But that is not reality. We live in a world full of sin and sinners. There is no perfect man or woman and there is no perfect family. You may be like Hannah, and you are facing a great problem. Let me just remind you that the problem does not define you. We all have problems.

Maybe your problem is absence of harmony/peace in the home. Maybe it is a son or daughter that has made the choice to rebel against God and you. This does not mean that you cannot accomplish great things for God. He is not looking for perfect people and he is not looking for someone who comes from a perfect family. He is looking to use someone who longs to live for Him. Someone who is obedient and available.

Let me show you something about Hannah's problem.

Notice 1 Samuel 1:5

The Lord had shut up her womb. This tells me that God was in complete control of her problem.

It is also the same for you who are dealing with problems. God is in control, and it is there for a purpose.

Romans 8:28

²⁸ And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

II. Great Women surrender to a Great Lord all their Problems.

Notice 1 Samuel 1:7-11

Hannah went to the One who could fix the problem and that was the Lord. She poured out her heart to the Lord and committed the entire matter to Him.

Application:

Where do you go with your problems? Let me share a few verses with you. Notice the invitation.

Matthew 11:28-29

²⁸ *Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*

²⁹ *Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.*

Let us notice the words of the Psalmist.

Psalm 34:17-19

¹⁷ *The righteous cry, and the LORD heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles.*

¹⁸ *The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit.*

¹⁹ *Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the LORD delivereth him out of them all.*

Notice 1 Samuel 1:12-18

I want you to notice that her countenance was no more sad. What happened? She trusted the Lord with the entire situation.

Philippians 4:4-9

⁴ *Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice.*

⁵ *Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand.*

⁶ *Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.*

⁷ **And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.**

⁸ *Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.*

⁹ **Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.**

Listen! God will give to you His peace, but you have a responsibility and that is to surrender the matter over to Him.

Please allow me to go a different direction. Are you faced with a problem, and you do not know exactly what to do?

Proverbs 3:5-6

⁵ *Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.*

⁶ *In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.*

There is a promise here that God will direct our paths, but we have a responsibility of trusting Him, leaning on His understanding and not ours, and acknowledge Him in all our ways. Then He will direct our paths.

III. Great Women make Great Investments.

Notice 1 Samuel 1:19-23

God gave her a son and she would not take him to Shiloh until he was weaned. Now when we think of weaning a child, we think of the child nursing from the mother no more. But there was more.

Listen to the history on weaning:

"There has been some misunderstanding as to how old Samuel was when Hannah brought him to the Temple. In reading the record, we gather that his mother brought him to the Temple after he was weaned. That is true, but there are two meanings for weaning.

The first meaning is the time a baby finishes drinking his mother's breast milk. Today, that meaning is the most common understanding of weaning. But in Bible culture there was another meaning.

A child was considered weaned when he not only stopped drinking his mother's milk, but after his mother taught him the milk of the Word of God. The mother would spend much time teaching her child the basics about God. Isn't that beautiful? She would feed her child both physical food and spiritual food.

Weaning from the breast milk varied and it was generally around eight months to a year. Weaning from the milk of the Word lasted until around five or six years old. Scientists have discovered the incredible development of a child in ages 2 to 5. It is a very important time in a child's life. No wonder they put forth the effort to instill the basic understanding of God in their children."

I share this with you to help you to see that Hannah did not just feed Samuel physically, but she fed him spiritually for probably six years before she would take him to Shiloh.

Application:

As a mom the greatest investment you can make is to invest in the spiritual well being of your children. It is not easy. It will require you to give up much of your time and your personal desires. But there is no better investment that you can make.

Deuteronomy 6:4-9

⁴ *Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD:*

⁵ *And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.*

⁶ *And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart:*

⁷ *And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.*

⁸ *And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes.*

⁹ *And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.*

Proverbs 22:6

⁶ *Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.*

Notice what Paul said about Timothy.

2 Timothy 3:13-15

¹³ *But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.*

¹⁴ *But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them;*

¹⁵ *And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.*

IV. Great Women have Great Faith

Notice 1 Samuel 1:11, 24-28

Hannah had made a vow to the Lord, and she kept the vow. This was not easy because the priesthood at Shiloh was corrupt.

Notice 1 Samuel 2:12-17

How easy would it have been to use this as an excuse to keep Samuel with her? But she had made a commitment and she would be true to the vow. She had faith that God would honor her commitment.

Ecclesiastes 5:4-6

⁴ *When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed.*

⁵ *Better is it that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay.*

⁶ *Suffer not thy mouth to cause thy flesh to sin; neither say thou before the angel, that it was an error: wherefore should God be angry at thy voice, and destroy the work of thine hands?*

Conclusion:

God wants to use you in a great way. Be available and trust in Him.