

Character Study: Hannah

Part 1 – Hannah's Promise

I Samuel 1:1-18

What's happening?

- Elkanah was a man from Ephraim who had two wives, Hannah and Peninnah (although polygamy was a custom, it was not approved by the Lord). He had several children with Peninnah, but none with Hannah because Hannah was unable to have children. (1:1-2)
- Elkanah went to Shiloh as he did every year to worship and sacrifice to the Lord. He gave his entire family offerings to give to the Lord. Hannah was given twice as much because Elkanah greatly loved her. (1:3-5)
- Peninnah made Hannah feel miserable because she was unable to have children, thus a bitter rivalry developed between them. (1:6-7)
- One day Hannah made a vow to the Lord saying that if He would give her a son, she would dedicate him to the Lord. (1:8-11)
- Eli the priest saw Hannah's lips moving as she prayed in her heart, and he assumed that she was drunk. After he understood her dilemma, he blessed her. Hannah had great peace and was no longer sad. (1:12-18)

What's God doing?

- > God was teaching Hannah to focus on His will rather than the opinions and comments of others.
- > God had great plans in store for Hannah, but He wanted Hannah to be submissive to His will first.

What's to learn?

→ Hannah was able to take cruel remarks from Peninnah without reacting in a way that would ruin her testimony. This was because her focus was on pleasing God, not people. People may give their opinions of how they think we should be, but if we keep our focus simply on pleasing God (not people!), we will remove a lot of drama from our lives.

→ Hannah found peace and joy only after she put her concerns in God's hands. What concerns are troubling you that you need to give over to God and let Him handle?