

# PRAYER COUPLED WITH A VOW



*Hannah's name meant grace and favor. She was favored to become the mother of the 13<sup>th</sup> judge and 1<sup>st</sup> prophet of Israel*

*Hannah: Grace & Favor*

*Then said Elkanah her husband to her, Hannah, why weepest thou? And why eatest thou not, and why is thy heart grieved. Am I not better to thee than 10 sons? (1 Samuel 1:8) KJV*

Unto Hannah he [Hannah's Husband] gave a worthy or double portion; for he loved Hannah. **But the LORD had shut up her womb.**

And her adversary [Peninnah] also provoked her sore, to make her fret, **because the LORD had shut up her womb.**

**Question:**

**Why was Hannah's womb shut by the LORD?**

**Answer:**

Throughout biblical history, several women who were barren for many years, gave birth to divinely appointed men e.g. Sarah wife of Abraham bore Isaac; Rebekah wife of Isaac bore twins, one of which was Jacob, who was later renamed Israel; Rachel wife of Jacob bore Joseph who became viceroy of Egypt; Manoah the Danite whose wife's name is not mentioned was barren and eventually bore Samson who had superhuman strength and was one of the judges of Israel. These and other women waited years before giving birth.

Hannah's womb had been shut until the proper time for Samuel the Prophet to enter the world. Samuel would need to be trained by Eli the Priest and eventually set the LORD's house in order. The LORD's house and services thereof were being ruthlessly

**mishandled by Eli the Priest's sons** (1 Samuel 2:12-17) KJV **Much later Samuel would be instrumental with preparing a weak and embattled country for another Philistine siege.**

**Note:** The story of Hannah portrays much more than maternal needs. It is a story that will eventually unfold to heal the emotional health of Hannah, and present to Israel their first divinely appointed prophet.

**Question:**

**What was Hannah's main concerns regarding the customs of her time and era?**

**Answer:**

**Hannah's main concern was removing the barren stigma from her life. Women did not have malls, therapy centers, fertility clinics or other vices to keep them from overwhelming despair. It was emotionally difficult for Hannah to be a wife and not be able to bear children. Barren women were frowned upon, and in Hannah's case constantly provoked by a member of her household.**

## TOO MUCH GRIEF

It appears that Hannah and her husband loved the LORD. Elkanah made yearly visits to Shiloh where the tabernacle had been erected to offer sacrifices to the LORD. However there was heated turmoil within his home. Peninnah,

Elkanah's other wife was fertile and had several children, and Hannah's womb was closed, but was loved and favored by her husband.

**Note:** Be reminded that Hannah's story involves a different culture and a different time frame. Children were highly valued and male children even more. Healthy and strong male children assisted their father with farming and provided protection for the family. Elkanah needed sons, and that is possibly why Peninnah had been included within the family, but Elkanah's *heart* remained with Hannah.

The blatant aggravation stemming from Peninnah had become too much for Hannah to endure. In other words, Hannah's burdensome grief was too large for her to handle. The scriptures within I Samuel 1 emphasized Hannah's dilemma at home and at the tabernacle. Peninnah treated Hannah with contemptuous behavior at home and during the holy feasts.

Peninnah's harassment towards Hannah became so horrific, that Hannah could not enjoy the family's annual visits to the tabernacle. This is it! Hannah's life had to change. Hannah left the family gathering to find solace in prayer. **So Hannah rose up after they had eaten in Shiloh, and after they had drunk. Now Eli the priest sat upon a seat by a post of the temple of the LORD.**

**And she was in bitterness of soul, and prayed unto the LORD and wept sore.**

**And she vowed a vow, and said, O LORD of Host, if thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of thine handmaid, and remember me, and not forget thine handmaid, but wilt give unto thine handmaid a male child, then I will give him unto the LORD all the days of his life, and there shall no razor come upon his head**

### ***PURPOSE DISTURBANCE***

**Hannah decided to take her prayers to another level by coupling her prayers with a vow.** Hannah elevated her prayers to a maternally challenging level.

Hannah had purposed within her heart that if the LORD gave her a man child, then she would give the child back to the service of the LORD [this was the devine plan]. So, off to the tabernacle she went, and was there earnestly and sorrowfully pouring out her soul unto the LORD of Host.

**And it came to pass, as she continued praying before the LORD, that Eli [priest] marked her mouth. Now Hannah she spake in her heart; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard. Therefore, Eli thought she had been drunken. And Eli said unto her, how long wilt thou be drunken? Put away thy wine from thee. (I Samuel 1:12-14) KJV**

*Then said Elkanah her husband to her, Hannah, why weepest thou? And why eatest thou not, and why is thy heart grieved. Am I not better to thee than 10 sons (I Samuel 1:8) KJV*

In the midst of fervent prayers, Hannah is now being accused of drunkenness. Hannah had been within a state of oblivion, in other words she was immersed within her grief, and she was probably moving her lips so fast with no sound being emitted. This method of praying was not the norm. Nevertheless, Hannah was having a personalized grief session with the LORD of Host.

**Questions:**

**What was Hannah's prayer?**

**Answer:**

**O LORD of Host, if thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of thine handmaid, and remember me, and not forget thine handmaid, but wilt give unto thine handmaid a male child, then will I give him unto the LORD all the days of his life, and there shall no razor [requirement for a nazarite] come upon his head.**

**What did Hannah add to her prayer?**

**Answer:**

**Hannah vowed a vow. If granted a male child, she would give the child back to the LORD's service. Her son would be trained at the tabernacle and would serve in same.**

**Where could she have possibly gotten the idea regarding a vow?**

**Answer:**

Hannah's husband, Elkanah was obedient regarding offerings to the LORD God. **And this man went up yearly out of his city to worship and to sacrifice unto the LORD of Hosts in Shiloh.** (I Samuel 1: 3) KJV

**And the man Elkanah, and all his house went up to offer unto the LORD the yearly sacrifice, and his vow** (I Samuel 1:21) KJV

Hannah had observed her husband and his obedience to the LORD. It may be possible that she had remembered her husband quote from the Torah regarding sacrifices, offerings, and vows.

**Consider the following scripture:**

**Three times in a year shall all thy males appear before before the LORD thy God in the place which He shall choose; in the feast of unleavened bread, and the feast of weeks, and in the feast of**

**tabernacles; and they shall not appear before the LORD empty.**

**Every man shall give as he is able according to the blessing of the LORD thy God which He hath given thee.** (Deuteronomy 16: 16-17) KJV

Hannah had often seen her husband's faithfulness to the Law, and now she was going to add a vow to her request unto the LORD of Hosts.

**Question:**

**Who is the LORD of Hosts and what is the meaning of the Name.**

**Answer:**

The LORD of Hosts [Name] first appears in I Samuel 1:3. The Hebrew Name of God is Jehovah Sabaoth and is a Name utilized when there is conflict and wars, and when the odds of survival are overwhelming insurmountable. This Name appears in I Samuel to combat the evil forces stacked against Hannah and Israel as a nation.

Hannah's life was being torn apart by cultural norms and the ever increasing and menacing behavior of Penninah. Hannah was overly oppressed, depressed and stressed out!! When there was no other recourse, Hannah turned to the LORD of Hosts. What comprises the Hosts. The Name Sabaoth means mass, which are a mass of heavenly angels. The LORD God

has an infinite army of angels who are ready on His command to do battle for those who honor and reverence Him. The LORD of Hosts is a powerful Name, and a Name which causes evil spirits **TREMBLE!!!!**

When Hannah's troubles were too much for her to overcome, she found solace in the Name of the LORD. This was a Name that the Israelites trusted when situations were beyond their control. The Philistines ruthlessly terrorized and plundered the Israelites. They had a large army, which was significantly greater than the Israelite army. Of course, the Philistines' army was no match for the LORD of Hosts.

In the meantime, Hannah was in the right place at the right time. She was in the House of Prayer and pouring out her very soul unto the LORD of Hosts. During her fervent prayers, Hannah had decided that if the LORD blessed her with a male child, she would give him back to the service of the LORD; the child would remain in the service of the LORD all his life. **Watch out Hannah!** Will you be able to keep this vow? You are giving up something that you have desired all your married life.

**Hannah Erroneously Accused by Eli the Priest. Why?**

While at the tabernacle praying, Hannah appeared as if drunken by Eli the Priest. Eli was very old and could hardly see

and made an erroneous judgment call upon Hannah. **Hannah did not need the horrid news of drunkenness to be added to her life.** She was no drunkard. She would need to explain to the priest regarding her over whelming sorrows.

Hannah explained her sorrows to the priest, and was graceful with her approach and explanation to Eli. **Hannah answered, I am a woman of a sorrowful spirit, I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but have poured out my soul to the LORD. Count not thy handmaid for a daughter of Belial [wickedness, trouble, worthlessness], for out of the abundance of my complaint and grief have I spoken hitherto.**

**Then Eli answered and said go in peace, and the God of Israel grant thee thy petition that thou hast asked of him. And she said, let thine handmaid find grace in thy sight. So the woman went her way, and did eat [earlier, Hannah could not participate in the feast] and her countenance was no more sad (I Samuel 1:15-18) KJV**

Hannah elected to remain graceful to the priest in spite of the fact, that Eli's sons were wreaking havoc within the tabernacle with their sinful ways. The scriptures actually declare that Eli's sons were sons of Belial. They were worthless, troublesome and wicked men. (I Samuel 2:12-17) KJV

As the story continues, after the annual feast, Hannah and her family journeyed home, and before the next feast, Hannah gave birth to a son, and called his name Samuel, meaning because I have asked him of God.

#### *Get the Book*

*For an in depth study on the life of Hannah, customs, drama, scriptural patterns and the Devine Plan get the book entitled "Right Kind of Prayer Gets Things Done."*

*There may be some available at Barnes & Noble, Amazon.com or Alibris.com*

After the birth of Samuel, Hannah waited until her baby was completely weaned before taking him to the tabernacle. Hannah had purposed within her heart to pay her vow unto the LORD. The LORD had answered her prayers by allowing her to give birth, thus removing the sting of criticism.

Also she had the opportunity to nurse her son for about three years. However she did not allow any sort of maternal clinging to impede upon her purpose to pay her vow. As a result of Hannah's obedience, the LORD gave her three sons and two daughters (I Samuel 2:21). Hannah may not have known at the time, but Samuel was a divine

appointment and vitally needed for the plight of Israel. Samuel became learned in the ways of the LORD, did not judge having respect of persons, did not defile the LORD's sacrifices, and led the children of Israel with calls to amend their ways and for prayer. Samuel proved to be quite different from Eli's sons who were eventually killed by the Philistine army [Samuel was young and yet in training when Eli's sons were killed].

After Eli's accidental death, Samuel assumed his appointed position as the 13<sup>th</sup> judge, 1<sup>st</sup> prophet of Israel.

## *Scriptures to Ponder*

The Psalmist stated: ***I will go into thy house with burnt offerings: I will pay thee my vows. Which my lips have uttered and my mouth hath spoken, when I was in trouble.*** (Psalm 66:13) KJV

***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. Better is it that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay.*** (Ecclesiastes 5:4-5) KJV

Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time. Casting all your care upon Him, for He careth for you. Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour. Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.

But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered for a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you. To Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen (I Peter 5:6-11) KJV

## Quiz

Too much grief steals \_\_\_\_\_ what from the LORD?

What were all of the components of Hannah's prayer? \_\_\_\_\_

Who was the long awaited son of Elkanah and Hannah \_\_\_\_\_?

What would be their son's destined vocation? \_\_\_\_\_ and for how long? \_\_\_\_\_

Did Hannah know her adversary? \_\_\_\_\_

What does the Bible say about the characteristics of the adversary \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ (see Job 1 & I Peter 5:7 )

Did Hannah's adversary fit the description within the verse above? \_\_\_\_\_

What did Israel need the most during the time of Hannah and Elkanah \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_?

What can be accomplished with extreme worry and fretfulness? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



House of Prayer by Faith – Stone Soup Ministries  
Prayer and Faith Online Studies  
[info@theprayerclinic.org](mailto:info@theprayerclinic.org)

