

HANNAH – A WOMAN OF FAITH

(1 Samuel 1:1-2:10)

(Borrowed and Adapted)

INTRODUCTION

1. A few weeks ago, I began talking about O.T. shadows of Jesus in hopes of helping us see the amazing hand of God displayed in these shadows being brought to fruition in human history.
 - A. Most of these shadows are men, or males, of course, because Jesus lived here on this earth as a man, although certain types are objects, like the Manna God provided to feed Israel.
 - B. Because of that, there are a class of people presented in the Bible that could easily be overlooked, which I do not want to do.
 - C. So today I want to begin looking at some people in the Bible who although they are not shadows of the Christ “**cast a tall shadow**” for us to see and learn from today.
- 2. The people I want to talk about are the **women of faith** and courage who by their life and example present very valuable role models for us today.
- 3. The woman of faith and courage I want to address today is **Hannah**, whose name means **grace**, and who was the mother of Samuel, one of the greatest prophets of Israel.
 - A. The story of her life is told in the first two chapters of 1 Samuel.
 - B. From the events of her life revealed in those chapters there are many lessons for women of faith today (and men) to consider and learn from that we might all be better servants of God (Rom. 15:4 – “For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our **instruction**, so that through perseverance and **the encouragement of the Scriptures** we might have **hope**.”).
 - C. And that is what God wants—for all to learn from individuals like Hannah so as to live in such a way that we have true hope of eternal life!

BODY:

- **I. Women of faith endure real problems:**
 - A. Hannah had to deal with physical and emotional problems (1 Sam. 1:1-8).
 1. Hannah and Peninnah were both **wives of Elkanah**. But unlike Peninnah, Hannah faced the **physical issue of having no children** because “the Lord had closed her womb” (1:1-5).
 - a. This was a significant problem because Hannah had a strong desire to have children, as do most women.
 - b. Because of this there was nothing her well-intentioned husband could do to comfort her, though he tried.
 2. Hannah’s condition also meant she faced **emotional pain**.
 - a. This pain only grew worse because of Elkanah’s actions.
 - b. For, his actions showed Hannah to be his favorite which caused jealousy and hostility between the two wives resulting in her rival, Peninnah provoking her year after year (1 Sam. 1:6-8).
 - B. What we learn from Hannah that the faithful:
 - 1. Do not live trouble-free lives.
 - a. In other words, faithfulness to God does not promise a life without problems!
 - b. Righteousness can save you from many of the problems sin causes!
 - c. The righteous often suffer in this wicked world, and often at the hands of the worldly.
 - 2. But we also learn that the faithful trust the Lord despite life’s problems.
 - a. Hannah could have used her misfortune and mistreatment as an excuse to question God’s love and to walk away from her faith.
 - b. Instead, year after year Hannah continued to worship the Lord despite knowing that Peninnah was going to provoke her (1 Sam. 1:6-7).
 - c. So, the difference in the life of people of faith is not that they have no problems, but their willingness to endure in faithfulness to God despite their problems.
- **II. Women of faith believe in prayer:**

- A. Hannah took her problems to the Lord (1:9-11 – “Then Hannah rose after eating and drinking in Shiloh. Now Eli the priest was sitting on the seat by the doorpost of the temple of the LORD. ¹⁰ She, greatly distressed, prayed to the LORD and wept bitterly. ¹¹ **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 son**, then **I will give him to the LORD all the days of his life**, and a razor shall never come on his head.””).
 1. In her bitterness of soul and anguish she turned to God, not away from Him.
 - a. Yet sometimes the opposite is true, with hardships and pain causing God’s people to become bitter against the Lord resulting in faithlessness.
 - b. She, however, knew that Jehovah was the only possible solution to her problems. Nothing in this world was going to remedy her condition! So, why turn to it?!
 2. Hannah also **made a vow** to God to show her **thankfulness** by giving that son back to God for His service all the days of his life.
 - a. Of course, many seek God in times of distress.
 - b. And, like Hannah, many vow to God in hopes of receiving relief from Him.
 - c. But, as we shall see, what one does with their vow makes a difference before God.
- B. Hannah’s example teaches us:
 1. That the faithful:
 - a. **Pray with persistence.**
 - i. Hannah did this (1 Sam. 1:12 – “Now it came about, as she **continued praying** before the LORD, that Eli was watching her mouth”).
 - 1) Her prayer did not last just a few seconds and end upon making known to God her desire for a son and her vow of thankfulness.
 - 2) She continued her prayer, showing great persistence in seeking God’s help.
 - ii. Christians are to approach God with the same devotion (Col. 4:2 – “**Devote yourselves to prayer**, keeping alert in it with an attitude of **thanksgiving**”).
 - b. **Pray for God ears to hear**, not for a show of piety before others. (1 Sam. 1:13a – “As for Hannah, she was **speaking in her heart**, only her lips were moving, but **her voice was not heard.**”).
 - i. Hannah had faith that God could and would hear the words expressed in her heart.
 - ii. Christians are to pray with the same purpose (for God’s ears) and faith (Matt. 6:5-6 – “When you pray, you are not to be like the hypocrites; for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and on the street corners **so that they may be seen by men**. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full. ⁶ But you, when you pray, **go into your inner room**, close your door and pray to **your Father** who is in secret, and **your Father who sees what is done in secret will reward you.**”).
 - c. **Pour their soul out** before God’s throne in prayer (1 Sam. 1:13b-16 – “So Eli thought she was drunk. ¹⁴ Then Eli said to her, “How long will you make yourself drunk? Put away your wine from you.” ¹⁵ But Hannah replied, “No, my lord, I am a woman **oppressed in spirit**; I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but I have **poured out my soul before the LORD**. ¹⁶ Do not consider your maidservant as a worthless woman, for **I have spoken until now out of my great concern and provocation** [vexation].”).
 - i. We, too, are to pour out our hearts seeking His care (1 Pet. 5:6-7 – “Therefore **humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God**, that **He may exalt you** at the proper time, ⁷ **casting all your anxiety on Him**, because **He cares for you.**”).
 - 2. The faithful gain confidence and comfort through prayer (1 Sam. 1:17-18 – “Then Eli answered and said, “Go in peace; and may the God of Israel grant your petition that you have asked of Him.” ¹⁸ 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.**”).
 - a. The prayer of faith and commitment she offered **made a difference** in her life and attitude.

- b. God wants the prayers of His faithful today to have the same results.
 - i. God offers us peace in prayer (Phil. 4:6-7 – “**Be anxious for nothing**, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ⁷ **And the peace of God**, which surpasses all comprehension, **will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.**”).
 - ii. For, prayers asked according to His will **are heard** (1 Jn. 5:14-15 – “This is the **confidence** which we have before Him, that, **if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us.** ¹⁵ **And if we know that He hears us** in whatever we ask, **we know that we have the requests** which we have asked from Him.”).
- 3. Hannah is a shining example of believing in the power of prayer!

- **III. Women of faith receive God’s blessings:**

- A. Hannah’s faith in God’s power to change her life brought great blessings (1 Sam. 1:19-20 – “Then they arose early in the morning and **worshiped before the LORD**, and returned again to their house in Ramah. And Elkanah had relations with Hannah his wife, and **the LORD remembered her.** ²⁰ It came about in due time, after **Hannah had conceived**, that **she gave birth to a son**; and she named him Samuel, saying, “Because I have asked him of the LORD.”).
 - 1. Note how Hannah **continued to worship God** though she do not know what God’s answer to her prayer would be.
 - 2. Her show of great faith resulted in the Lord remembering her and acting on her behalf to give her a son.
 - 3. This is important. When the Lord gave her a son as she had asked, Hannah **acknowledge her son** as a **blessing from God** and named him **Samuel**, or “**heard of God**,” because, she said, “I have asked him of the LORD” (1:20).
- B. What can we learn from this great event in Hannah’s life?
 - 1. God has the power to bestow great blessings upon His people.
 - a. We must believe that God can do this! For, as James says when one asks of God “...he **must ask in faith** without any doubting, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind. ⁷ For that man ought not to expect that he will receive anything from the Lord” (Jas. 1:6-7).
 - b. This does not mean, however, that God will **always** give us **what we want**.
 - i. What we pray for must be according to His will (cf. 1 Jn. 5:14).
 - ii. God has **not** promised to hear selfish prayers (Jas. 4:3 – “You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, so that you may spend it on your pleasures.”).
 - 2. God will provide what His people need.
 - a. Hannah needed a child to remove her shame and give her an avenue to express her dedication to the Lord, and it was provided.
 - b. God provides what is needed for those who put Him first (Mt. 6:31-33 – “Do not worry then, saying, ‘What will we eat?’ or ‘What will we drink?’ or ‘What will we wear for clothing?’” ³² For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. ³³ But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.”).
 - c. It may not be what we want or expect, but it will meet our needs.
 - 3. And as we seek these things and receive them from Him, like Hannah we are to acknowledge God’s providing hand (Phil. 4:6 – “Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication **with thanksgiving** let your requests be made known to God.”).
- **IV. Women of faith do what they say:**
 - A. Hannah had made a vow/promise to give her son back to God (1:11 – “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 son, then I will give him to the LORD all the days of his life, and a razor shall never come on his head.”).

- 1. When God gave her a son, **she set her heart on fulfilling her vow** (1 Sam. 1:21-22 – “Then the man Elkanah went up with all his household to offer to the LORD the yearly sacrifice and pay his vow. ²² But Hannah did not go up, for she said to her husband, “I will not go up until the child is weaned; **then I will bring him, that he may appear before the LORD and stay there forever.**”).
 - a. I know the great attachment parents, especially mothers, have to their children.
 - b. Yet, this did not dampen her determination in any way to fulfill her vow!
 - c. This is important because it is easy once things are going well to go back on our vows!
- 2. Because God had done what she asked, Hannah did what she had vowed to God (1 Sam. 1:24-28 – “Now when she had weaned him, she took him up with her, with a three-year-old bull and one ephah of flour and a jug of wine, **and brought him to the house of the LORD in Shiloh, although the child was young.** ²⁵ Then they slaughtered the bull, and brought the boy to Eli. ²⁶ She said, “Oh, my lord! As your soul lives, my lord, I am the woman who stood here beside you, praying to the LORD. ²⁷ For this boy I prayed, **and the LORD has given me my petition which I asked of Him.** ²⁸ **So I have also dedicated him to the LORD;** as long as he lives he is dedicated to the LORD.” And he worshiped the LORD there.”).
 - a. Note how she reminded Eli who she was, the vow she had taken, and how God had responded in blessing her with a son.
 - b. Note how Hannah’s action and words affected Eli, causing him to worship God.
- B. We learn from Hannah that the faithful...
 - 1. Keep their vows.
 - a. That is what Hannah did despite the sacrifice her vow required.
 - b. We must keep our vows today.
 - i. God has never had pleasure in fools who do not keep them (Eccl. 5:4-5 – “When you make a vow to God, do not be late in paying it; for He takes no delight in fools. Pay what you vow! ⁵ It is better that you should not vow than that you should vow and not pay.”).
 - ii. God expects even our “yes” and “no” to be given as solemn vows (Mt. 5:33-37; Jas. 5:12 – “But above all, my brethren, do not swear, either by heaven or by earth or with any other oath; but your **yes is to be yes, and your no, no,** so that you may not fall under judgment.”).
 - 2. Happily, not begrudgingly, fulfill their vows.
 - a. Hannah brought Samuel to God though he was young, and did so with great resolve, with the offering of sacrifices, and with the desire to tell others what God had done for her.
 - b. That is the attitude God desires of us today (Col. 3:17 – “Whatever you do in word or deed, **do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks** through Him to God the Father.”).
- V. Women of faith praise God:
 - A. Hannah’s great sacrifice in fulfilling her vow resulted in praise to God (1 Sam. 2:1-2, 7-10).
 - 1. This praise was given with great **joy** in her heart (1 Sam. 2:1).
 - 2. The Lord was **praised for His help** (1 Sam. 2:2-10).
 - 3. She did this even while she was there giving her son, Samuel, to the Lord (2:11)!
 - B. What learn from Hannah:
 - 1. We should **rejoice** in the blessings we receive from God’s hand (1 Thess. 5:16-18 – “**Rejoice always;** ¹⁷ pray without ceasing; ¹⁸ in everything **give thanks;** for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.”).
 - 2. We should **offer praise** to God for the blessings we have received as our spiritual sacrifices (Heb. 13:15 – “Through Him then, let us continually **offer up a sacrifice of praise to God,** that is, the fruit of lips that **give thanks to His name.**”).
 - 3. We should give God the glory for what we have received and do so with joy, even when His blessings require great sacrifice on our part.

CONCLUSION:

1. Hannah's example as a woman of faith serves to remind us that though the faithful endure real problems, they trust God to provide the blessings they need to endure, always seeking to do what they have vowed, and to praise God for all He does.
2. Today, you can become a person of faith and receive the gift of salvation offered in Christ so that together with Hannah you may say, "My heart rejoices in the Lord; My horn is exalted in the Lord" (1 Sam. 2:1).
3. Will you come to Christ and receive salvation, hope, and joy by F-R-C-BP?