

## One Mother's Portrait: Hannah

What kind of home-life did you have as you grew up?  
 Was it peaceful, full of respect of each member of the family?  
 Was it a place to thrive or barely survive?

A little girl who was asked where her home was, said, "*Where mother is.*"

"All that I am or ever hope to be, I owe to my angel mother."

– Abraham Lincoln

"*When God Created Mothers*" [Erma Bombeck]

When the Good Lord was creating mothers, He was into His sixth day of "overtime" when the angel appeared and said. "You're doing a lot of fiddling around on this one."

And God said, "Have you read the specs on this order?"

She has to be completely washable, but not plastic. Have 180 moveable parts...all replaceable. Run on black coffee and leftovers. Have a lap that disappears when she stands up. A kiss that can cure anything from a broken leg to a disappointed love affair. And six pairs of hands."

How did God make mothers? Key insights from their children's words...

### 1 Samuel 1:1—3

#### Setting:

Historically, the country and culture were a mess.

There was a glorious deliverance from Egypt, followed by 40 years of wandering in the dessert. Then a stunning conquest of Canaan, the promised land.

Afterwards the next generation forgot all about what God had done, as chaos and rebellion resulted, giving rise to political and moral anarchy. The book of Judges ends with,

"All the people did what was right in their own eyes" (Judg. 21:25).

Then the scene shifts to two individuals, Ruth and Hannah; as we see God's continued working with His people. Ruth was the mother of Jesse, David's father. Hannah was the mother of Samuel, the prophet who anointed David as king.

Eugene Peterson writes about these women,

"They are similar also in that each woman stubbornly and prayerfully sets herself against "the way things are," the circumstances handed her by society, and before you know it, history is flowing in a different direction, the purposes of God once again discernable. The

spiritualities of these two women – intensely local, insistently personal, defiant of culture, God centered – are, in the providence of God.”<sup>1</sup>

## I. Hannah’s Home Life

Home Life – *Elkanah had two wives...*

Hannah was married to a man named Elkanah, who also had with another wife named Peninnah. This was during the time in Israel’s history just previous to the time of King David. These times would not be considered ‘*the good olé’ days*’.

Hannah, the focus of the story was barren and had an arch rival, named Peninnah. What made things unbearable, was that Peninnah had children and Hannah had none. The rivalry was complicated by jealousy and competition. Hannah was the favorite wife, given special treatment. Peninnah made her life miserable by deliberately reminding her of her barrenness.

**Polygamy is** when the ‘*other woman*’ lives with you.

It might be said that God did not approve of Elkanah having two wives. That fact that certain things are recorded in Scripture does not mean that God sanctions them. The history, events and people are accurately recorded for us. Satan’s lie to Adam and Eve are shown in Genesis 3 but doesn’t mean that God approved of it. Abraham had a child through his wife’s handmaid, Hagar. Jacob had two wives, Leah and Rachael. And many others had multiple wives; but that was never God’s plan and always gave rise to conflicts and struggles as a result. Solomon, no doubt, with 700 wives and 300 concubines, had troubles enough to write books about.

There was also trouble in Elkanah’s household.

### **1 Sam. 1:4-8**

Elkanah sacrificed to the Lord.

Elkanah had a favorite wife - Hannah

Peninnah had many children (est. Eight to ten)

She used her children as a painful reminder that Hannah had none.

Hannah’s barrenness was because of the Lord.

---

<sup>1</sup> Eugene H. Peterson, *First and Second Samuel*, (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1999), pp. 13-14.

“...but the Lord had closed her womb.” (v. 5).

Elkanah was *classically clueless*.

:5 made up for all of Hannah’s struggles with extra food.

:6 Constant irritation

:7 Wept bitterly

:8 Elkanah’s comforting words, “Am I not better to you than ten sons?”

**Point:** Hannah’s home life was a picture of dysfunction and misery.

## II. Hannah’s Faithfulness

### 1 Sam. 1:9-11

Deep poverty of soul became the catalyst for prayer and great faith.

- Hannah’s Prayer - :10
- Hannah’s Vow – dedicated son to the Lord – :11

You cannot out-give God!

Hannah’s prayer before Eli.

12-16 - Gracious Response when misunderstood.

Hannah was accused of drunkenness but humbly explained her grief.

“Do not consider your maidservant as a worthless woman, for I have spoken until now out of my great concern and provocation.” (v. 16).

- Hannah’s peace - :17-18

“...So the woman went her way and ate, and her face was no longer sad.”

:19-20 - Receives answers to her request

Hannah is no longer barren.

**Samuel** means “*Heard of God*” “asked of God” or “he who was asked for.”

Philipp Melanchthon wrote,

“Trouble and perplexity drive us to prayer,

and prayer driveth away trouble and perplexity.”

Jesus said,

Therefore I say to you, all things for which you pray and ask, believe that you have received them, and they shall be granted you.

Mark 11:24

:21-23 Family Faithfulness Continued

“The Lord visited Hannah; and she conceived and gave birth to three sons and two daughters. And the boy Samuel grew before the Lord”

(2:21).

:24-28 Family Faithfulness demonstrated - Vow fulfilled -

Elkanah agrees with Hannah to have their son fully dedicated to the Lord.

She prepared Samuel to be dedicated to the Lord.

- Nurtures him for many years in preparation

Samuel “...worshiped the Lord there.” (v. 28)

### ● 2:1-10 - Hannah’s Worship Song

Hannah’s song is poured out her heart in thanksgiving.

Her words reveal ...

an in-depth knowledge of God, His character, and His deeds.

God’s purposes are accomplished through prayer and faithfulness.

God brought about great victory

in a place of great need

through a woman of great faith.

## III. Hannah’s Heritage

### 1. Hannah’s Example

Environment does not conclude the outcome; God does.

Godly heritage begins with Mothers

- 2 Tim 3:14-15 Grandmother and mother brought Timothy to faith in Christ.

Mothers not only bring children into the world  
but are the key to opening the door for children to enter heaven.

**2. God used Hannah to resolve the spiritual cancer of the time.**

Hophni and Phinehas- the sons of Eli who were priests to the Lord.

Dangerous to go to worship because of these sons of the devil.

1 Sam. 2:12, 17 Defile the offerings

:22

:29, 34

**3. We do not know the last chapter of our lives until it is written.**

It has not been written; and we must not give in to fear, depression or despair.

Continued Blessings: 2:18-19 Son

:20-21

**End Game 2:22-36**

Mystery Prophet rebukes Eli and his sons

End of corruption

“This will be the sign to you which will come concerning your two sons,  
Hophni and Phinehas: on the same day both of them will die.”(2:34).

Beginning of a new age of spiritual integrity

“But I will raise up for myself a faithful priest who will do according to what  
is in My heart and in My soul; and I will build him an enduring  
house, and he will walk before My anointed always.”(2:35).