

## Life Group Notes 11/12/2023

### Pastor Bill Pelletier OT Heroes of Faith Week 2 Hannah

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[No doctrine is a given unless it has been found in the Word given by the Holy Spirit and received by you. If you have observations or questions, feel free to send me an email with your comment or observations at [tbeachhead@comcast.net](mailto:tbeachhead@comcast.net). Thank you for taking the time—Pete Mehegan, the Scribe.]

Remember: Be good to one another. Be sensitive and kind. Let God heal our hearts...and guide our discussions. **PLEASE PRE-READ THESE NOTES AND CHOOSE THE DIRECTION THAT IS APPROPRIATE FOR YOUR GROUP.** BE COGNIZANT OF YOUR GROUP'S TIME AND BE SENSITIVE! **Some groups would like to dwell on a single idea. Let the Spirit be your guide. Never feel obligated to complete this study.**

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Note: I have highlighted suggested discussion questions that Pastor Bill has raised this week, 11/12. Let's allow the Holy Spirit to guide all our discussions, using the highlights as trail blazes. **The purpose is to minister to one another.** I include each of the passages mentioned in full, to facilitate the enjoyment of these notes. Footnotes are not meant to distract. This week's footnotes include:

1. [On Hannah's day and the times.](#)
2. [On sacrifice and eating and the significance of the double portion.](#)
3. [On the Old Testament and bigamy.](#)
4. [On negotiation in prayer.](#)

\*\*\***Important:** At the very [end of these notes](#), I've included passages that were mentioned in this week's message for deeper study using SOAP journaling to help further your study during the week. \*\*\*

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Pastor Bill began his message by looking at Hannah's prayer. He laid the background with the story of Samuel's parents in 1 Samuel 1: *1Now there was a man named Elkanah who was from Ramathaim-zophim in the hill country of Ephraim. He was the son of Jeroham, the son of Elihu, the son of Tohu, the son of Zuph, an Ephraimite. 2He had two wives, one named Hannah and the other Peninnah. And Peninnah had children, but Hannah had none.*

*3Year after year Elkanah would go up from his city to worship and sacrifice to the LORD of Hosts at Shiloh, where Eli's two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, were priests to the LORD. 4And whenever the day came for Elkanah to present his sacrifice, he would give portions to his wife Peninnah and to all her sons and daughters. 5But to Hannah he would give a double portion, for he loved her even though the LORD had closed her womb. 6Because the LORD had closed Hannah's womb, her rival would provoke her and taunt her viciously. 7And this went on year after year. Whenever Hannah went up to the house of the LORD, her rival taunted her until she wept and would not eat. 8"Hannah, why are you crying?" her husband Elkanah asked. "Why won't you eat? Why is your heart so grieved? Am I not better to you than ten sons?"*

*9* So after they had finished eating and drinking in Shiloh, Hannah stood up. Now Eli the priest was sitting on a chair by the doorpost of the temple of the LORD. *10* In her bitter distress, Hannah prayed to the LORD and wept with many tears. *11* And she made a vow, pleading, "O LORD of Hosts, if only You will look upon the affliction of Your maidservant and remember me, not forgetting Your maidservant but giving her a son, then I will dedicate him to the LORD all the days of his life, and no razor shall ever come over his head." *12* As Hannah kept on praying before the LORD, Eli watched her mouth. *13* Hannah was praying in her heart, and though her lips were moving, her voice could not be heard. So Eli thought she was drunk *14* and said to her, "How long will you be drunk? Put away your wine!" *15* "No, my lord," Hannah replied. "I am a woman oppressed in spirit. I have not had any wine or strong drink, but I have poured out my soul before the LORD. *16* Do not take your servant for a wicked woman; for all this time I have been praying out of the depth of my anguish and grief."

1. What do you see?
2. What is the context of this prayer? What caused her grief?
3. Pastor Bill explained the importance of childbearing to the Israelite in the days of the judges. Do you remember? Explain. ([Footnote 1](#) and [Footnote 3](#) below.)
4. How did Peninnah make it worse? How often? (vv. 6 & 7) Pastor Bill described this in detail. What do you remember?
5. [See footnote 3](#) below, how stable were the relationships in a house with two wives?
6. Who had closed Hannah's womb? (V. 6) Why? What is your reaction to this?
7. What was Hannah's response to her struggles? Who actually benefitted from Hannah's struggles? Explain. (How does Hannah's eventual child, Samuel, prepare the way for Jesus?)
8. Look at verse 9. Bill pointed out the significance of Hannah standing up. Bill quotes a principle of Celebrate Recovery, "When you pain outweighs your fear than you're ready." Explain. Why does Hannah make a spectacle of herself by standing up where Eli can see her?
9. What different requests are in Hannah's prayer?
10. Pastor points out the five stages of grief: anger, denial, negotiation, depression and finally acceptance. How much of this do you see in Hannah's prayer?
11. He refers to the 1978 Burt Reynolds movie *The End* to illustrate negotiation. See [footnote 4 below](#). How do Burt's prayers compare to Hannah's? to yours? Where is the difference based?
12. Look at Hannah's motivation. How much emotion was in her prayer? How did even Peninnah serve to motivate Hannah? Did the degree of emotion help or hinder her prayer? Look up Romans 8:[23](#) *Not only that, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.* [24](#) *For in this*

hope we were saved; but hope that is seen is no hope at all. **Who hopes for what he can already see?** **25**But if we hope for what we do not yet see, we wait for it patiently. **26**In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know how we ought to pray, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groans too deep for words. **27**And He who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. Answer Paul's question in verse 24, in bold type.

13. Answer this: Who prays for what he already has? Compare what Paul says with Hannah's experience. Is this type of prayer a New Testament phenomenon? Could it be a biblical phenomenon borne of a relationship and hope? Do you know another OT prayer where God moved in answer to intense desire? Who is praying with the one who prays?
14. Look at verse 12 above. Look up 1 Corinthians 14: **14**For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my mind is unfruitful. **15**What then shall I do? I will pray with my spirit, but I will also pray with my mind. I will sing with my spirit, but I will also sing with my mind. **16**Otherwise, if you speak a blessing in spirit, how can someone who is uninstructed say "Amen" to your thanksgiving, since he does not know what you are saying?**17**You may be giving thanks well enough, but the other one is not edified. How is Paul's praying like Hannah's prayer? What does it mean to "pray in the Spirit?" Who hears a prayer if it's in the Spirit?
15. How did Hannah respond to Eli's accusation of drunkenness?

Look at the result of Hannah's honest, humble response in verses 17 and 18: **17**"Go in peace," Eli replied, "and may the God of Israel grant the petition you have asked of Him."

**18**"May your maidservant find favor with you," said Hannah. Then she went on her way, and she began eating again, and her face was no longer downcast. **19**The next morning Elkanah and Hannah got up early to bow in worship before the LORD, and then returned home to Ramah. And Elkanah had relations with his wife Hannah, and the LORD remembered her. **20**So in the course of time, Hannah conceived and gave birth to a son. She named him Samuel, saying, "Because I have asked for him from the LORD."

1. How did Eli respond to Hannah's response? How did he correct his first impression?
2. How did Hannah's fasting contribute to the favor she received?
3. What impact did Eli's words of encouragement, as judge and prophet of Israel, have on Hannah? Why did Hannah's countenance change?
4. Before they leave, what does the family do? How have things changed?
5. Pastor Bill points out that Hannah's pregnancy finally came "...in the course of time." Why is that significant? Did she immediately become pregnant? Again, what exactly has changed in Hannah's heart?

6. The name “Samuel” means “Heard of God.” Explain why Hannah chose this name.
7. Pastor Bill points out the normal course of events in prayer: Hannah suffered. Hannah prayed. Hannah conceived. Hannah worshipped. How is the history actually different? Why did Hannah worship before she conceived? What impact does the promise of God have on faith? (How is the Word a seed?) How is her faith like Mary’s faith at the annunciation of Jesus’ birth?
8. Bill says Hannah’s prayer returned her from being a childless child-bearer to being God’s child. Explain. Do you have a testimony?

Pastor Bill points out significant lessons from Hannah’s prayer:

- a. God is pleasurable. You please Him by obeying His word, and when you make a mistake, by turning back to Him and repenting to find grace, love and mercy. He never changes. Your peace comes from orienting your life to pleasing God.
  - b. God has purpose. God closed Hannah’s womb so that He could shape her to make history. Explain. How would things have changed if Hannah, like Peninnah, had children from a young age?
  - c. Hannah had a purpose in her suffering.
1. How was Samuel’s fate sealed in Hannah’s prayer? How significant is it that Hannah weaned Samuel before dropping him off at the tabernacle?
  2. How was David’s anointing sealed in Hannah’s prayer?
  3. How was Jesus’ lineage sealed in Hannah’s prayer?
  4. Look up Romans 8: [28](#) *And we know that God works all things together for the good of those who love Him, who are called according to His purpose.* [29](#) *For those God foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brothers.* [30](#) *And those He predestined, He also called; those He called, He also justified; those He justified, He also glorified.* [31](#) *What then shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?* Pastor Bill says, “God is going to turn every tear, every bit of suffering into something glorious.” Explain. What assurance do we have that this is true? What assurance did Hannah have?

Bill points out the end of the story. Look up 1 Samuel 2: [18](#) *Now Samuel was ministering before the LORD—a boy wearing a linen ephod.* [19](#) *Each year his mother would make him a little robe and bring it to him when she went with her husband to offer the annual sacrifice.* [20](#) *And Eli would bless Elkanah and his wife, saying, “May the LORD give you children by this woman in place of the one she dedicated to the LORD.” Then they would go home.* [21](#) *So the LORD attended to Hannah, and she conceived and gave birth to three sons and two daughters.*

1. Did Hannah pray to have extra children? What was the impact of Eli’s blessing?

2. Was Hannah's wait manageable? If you said, "Yes," explain why. How does hope serve to anchor faith? What is the third element that serves to anchor both? (1 Corinthians 13:13)

3. Why do you think Peninnah is no longer even mentioned?

Look at Hannah's song in chapter two:

**1**At that time Hannah prayed:

"My heart rejoices in the LORD  
in whom my horn is exalted.

My mouth speaks boldly against my enemies,  
for I rejoice in Your salvation.

**2**There is no one holy like the LORD.  
Indeed, there is no one besides You!  
And there is no Rock like our God.

**3**Do not boast so proudly,  
or let arrogance come from your mouth,  
for the LORD is a God who knows,  
and by Him actions are weighed.

**4**The bows of the mighty are broken,  
but the feeble are equipped with strength.

**5**The well-fed hire themselves out for food,  
but the starving hunger no more.  
The barren woman gives birth to seven,  
but she who has many sons pines away.

**6**The LORD brings death and gives life;  
He brings down to Sheol and raises up.

**7**The LORD sends poverty and wealth;  
He humbles and He exalts.

**8**He raises the poor from the dust  
and lifts the needy from the ash heap.

He seats them among princes  
and bestows on them a throne of honor.

For the foundations of the earth are the LORD's,  
and upon them He has set the world.

**9**He guards the steps of His faithful ones,  
but the wicked perish in darkness;  
for by his own strength shall no man prevail.

**10**Those who oppose the LORD will be shattered.  
He will thunder from heaven against them.

The LORD will judge the ends of the earth  
and will give power to His king.  
He will exalt the horn of His anointed."

**11**Then Elkanah went home to Ramah, but the boy began ministering to the LORD before Eli the priest.

1. What do you see in Hannah's song?

2. Describe the suffering Hannah speaks of. Who ends up last?
3. Who ends up first?
4. Who is the “anointed” Hannah sings of in verse 10?
5. Look at verse 2. Why do we never give up?

Bill ends with questions:

1. Are you going through trials today?
2. Are you suffering today?
3. Are you bitter? Miserable? Deeply troubled?
4. Forgotten by God?
5. Do you want His peace and joy?
6. Does your pain outweigh your fear?

**Answer him and take the time to pray.**

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### **The Follow-up Application**

1. Use the [SOAP journal studies](#) below throughout the week.
2. Re-read Hannah’s song at the beginning of 1 Samuel 2. Make a list of God’s attributes that you forgot.
3. Look to see where you find your greatest joy and peace.

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### **Scribe’s Notes:**

1. **On Hannah’s day and the times.** The story of 1 Samuel marks the end of the days of the Judges. Eli, the high priest, and in all respects, Samuel are considered the last of the judges. Due to the evil nature of Eli’s two sons, he is also the last in this line of descendants from Aaron. As the end of judges points out, “There was no king in Israel. Everyone did what seemed right in his own eyes.” It’s a period where, “The Word of the Lord was rare in those days” and lawlessness was rife. Eli, now a fat, old, indolent man was in a position to make up rules...and his sons were worse. To complicate things, Samuel’s sons were no better. Everything has been quietly positioned in history and destiny, as prior to this, the story of Ruth traced the line of Jesse so that David would be born. Samuel is the catalyst to bring the Kingdom to light, and Hannah played her role.
2. **On sacrifice and eating and the significance of the double portion.** It is very clear that most sacrifices were not the whole offering of the animal to the Lord. Only a portion, the best portion, went to the priests for food while the family ate the rest. Our Thanksgiving feast is reminiscent of the festive nature of a “sacrifice.” When receiving portions, a double portion was given to the firstborn of the house, signifying his place in the birth right. When Elkanah gave Hannah the portion of the firstborn, it was in direct conflict with Peninnah’s troubling behavior, and an acknowledgement of Elkanah’s priorities and intentions.

3. **On the Old Testament and bigamy.** Pastor Bill points out quite rightly that there is no example in the Old Testament of the equitable apportionment of the husband's affairs or attentions in a house with two wives. Strife and conflict and worse followed every example. Bigamy as a cultural norm was practiced throughout the known world, and the conflict between wives is often legend. Paul insists that elders have but one wife for this reason, not merely because they had been divorced. The recent classic by Mariama Ba, *So Long a Letter*, [https://www.amazon.com/So-Long-Letter-Mariama-Ba/dp/1577668065/ref=sr\\_1\\_1?crid=3KWYPHJPI90KB&keywords=so+long+a+letter&qid=1699809925&prefix=Such+a+long+letter%2Caps%2C105&sr=8-1](https://www.amazon.com/So-Long-Letter-Mariama-Ba/dp/1577668065/ref=sr_1_1?crid=3KWYPHJPI90KB&keywords=so+long+a+letter&qid=1699809925&prefix=Such+a+long+letter%2Caps%2C105&sr=8-1) details in poignant, painful prose the suffering of the first wife when the husband takes on a second wife. In a seminar on this book, a friend from Côte d'Ivoire explained the reasons for bigamy, especially in underdeveloped countries. He said, "Your property in Côte d'Ivoire is not measured by boundaries, but in tillable land. A man with many sons is enriched by the fields his sons can farm with him. More wives means more sons and therefore more fields and more wares." It was a simple concept, and applicable to Israel in the days of the judges, when the population wasn't adequate to hold the land that had been taken. As the people prospered, Solomon became the best argument against bigamy anyone would need.
4. **On negotiation in prayer.** Pastor Bill mentioned Burt Reynolds negotiating with God as he swam for his life in the 1978 movie *The End*. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wzqbbqDW9z6E> You might enjoy watching this clip.

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**For further study:**

Take a moment each day this week to apply the **SOAP**... (Scripture—Copy the scripture. / Observation—Write what you see. / Application—What is God saying? / Prayer—What is your response?) ...method to some of the scripture we looked at this week:

Monday: 1 Samuel 1:10-13
Tuesday: 1 Samuel 2:1-2
Wednesday: 1 Samuel 2:3-5
Thursday: 1 Samuel 2:6-8
Friday: 1 Samuel 2:9-10
Saturday: Judg 21:25 1 Sam 3:1-4
Sunday: 1 Corinthians 14:14-19