

LESSON 6: A MOTHER WHO GIVES HER SON TO GOD

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Background Scripture: I Samuel 1, 2

Lesson Passage: 1 Samuel 1:9-19b, 20-22, 24a-28 (NLT)

Introduction: Our Lesson about [Hannah](#) and [Samuel](#) is found in [1 Samuel 1](#) and [2](#). Hannah was one of two wives of a Jewish man named [Elkanah](#). The other wife, Peninnah, had children, but Hannah was unable to have children. Hannah was a very religious woman. She spent her days praying and trying to serve God by being a good woman and good wife. She wanted to be a good mother, too, but she did not have children. This made her very unhappy. One day, she went to the temple, her house of worship, to pray to God for a son. She sat outside the temple, crying and praying. She prayed to God, reminding God that she was God's servant and wanted but one thing only. Note that Hannah didn't just pray, "Lord, give me a son." So, God would give her a son and she would live happily ever after. No, Hannah prayed something radical: "Lord of hosts, if you will give your maidservant a son, then I'll give him to the Lord all the days of his life and a razor shall never come on his head" (1:11). That meant that she was dedicating her son to God as a Nazirite, one separated to serve God (Numbers 6:1-21). This tells us that not only should we pray about our problems, but, also, we should pray according to God's purpose.

Scripture Reference: 1 Samuel 1:9-19b, 20-22, 24a-28 (NLT)

9 Once after a sacrificial meal at Shiloh, Hannah got up and went to pray. Eli the priest was sitting at his customary place beside the entrance of the Tabernacle. 10 Hannah was in deep anguish, crying bitterly as she prayed to the Lord. 11 And she made this vow: "O Lord of Heaven's Armies, if you will look upon my sorrow and answer my prayer and give me a son, then I will give him back to you. He will be yours for his entire lifetime, and as a sign that he has been dedicated to the Lord, his hair will never be cut." 12 As she was praying to the Lord, Eli watched her. 13 Seeing her lips moving but hearing no sound, he thought she had been drinking. 14 "Must you come here drunk?" he demanded. "Throw away your wine!" 15 "Oh no, sir!" she replied. "I haven't been drinking wine or anything stronger. But I am very discouraged, and I was pouring out my heart to the Lord. 16 Don't think I am a wicked woman! For I have been praying out of great anguish and sorrow." 17 "In that case," Eli said, "go in peace! May the God of Israel grant the request you have asked of him." 18 "Oh, thank you, sir!" she exclaimed. Then she went back and began to eat again, and she was no longer sad. 19b When Elkanah slept with Hannah, the Lord remembered her plea, 20 and in due time she gave birth to a son. She named him Samuel, for she said, "I asked the Lord for him." 21 The next year Elkanah and his family went on their annual trip to offer a sacrifice to the Lord and to keep his vow. 22 But Hannah did not go. She told her husband, "Wait until the boy is weaned. Then I will take him to the Tabernacle and leave him there with the Lord permanently." 24a When the child was weaned, Hannah took him to the Tabernacle in Shiloh. 25 After sacrificing the bull, they brought the boy to Eli. 26 "Sir, do you remember me?" Hannah asked. "I am the very woman who stood here several years ago praying to the Lord. 27 I asked the Lord to give me this boy, and he has granted my request. 28 Now I am giving him to the Lord, and he will belong to the Lord his whole life." And they worshiped the Lord there.

Memory Verse: *28 Now I am giving him to the Lord, and he will belong to the Lord his whole life.* And they worshiped the Lord there (1 Samuel 28). NLT

Topic Explored: *“Hannah: A Mother who Gives her Son to God”* ~ Hannah was just one woman out of thousands in Israel in her day. Yet the whole nation was blessed because this godly woman had a problem and prayed according to God’s purpose, unto His praise. Everyone benefited from her son, Samuel’s ministry—the Son she gave back to God. God is still looking for men and women like Hannah: People with problems, who will take their problems to God in prayer according to His purpose so that He gets the praise. We need to apply this both to our personal problems and to our problems as a church. This mother who gave away her son teaches us that God gives us problems so that we will pray according to His purpose, resulting in praise to Him.

Lesson Focus: 1 Samuel 1:9-19b, 20-22, 24a-28 (NLT)

Verses 9-18 ~ The Bible’s account of Hannah starts before Samuel was born. One year, Hannah traveled to Shiloh where the tabernacle was. At the entrance of the tabernacle, she prayed for a child. She made a vow, saying, “Lord Almighty, if you will only look on your servant’s misery and remember me, and not forget your servant but give her a son, then I will give him to the Lord for all the days of his life, and no razor will ever be used on his head” (1 Samuel 1:11).

A priest at the temple, Eli, saw her sitting outside. Because she was behaving strangely, he thought she was a vagrant. “Why are you hanging around the temple?” he asked. Hannah replied, “I am a woman who is deeply troubled. I have been praying here out of my great anguish and grief, asking God to grant my prayer.” Eli was moved by how earnestly she was praying and said, “Go in peace, and may the God of Israel grant you what you have asked of him.”

Verses 19b-28 ~ Several months later, Hannah gave birth to a son. She named him Samuel, saying, “Because I asked the Lord for him.” Hannah now had the son that she had so much desired. However, she had promised God that she would give her son to him (1:11). She explained her intentions to her husband. The boy would remain at home with her while he still needed his mother’s milk. In ancient Israel, the time when a child no longer needed his mother’s milk was an opportunity for a special party (Genesis 21:8). However, for young Samuel’s parents, this was a very serious occasion. This was the day when they had promised to hand over their son as a gift to God. Baby Samuel lived with his family and they loved him very much. But when Samuel was old enough, Hannah made good on her promise to dedicate him to God.

The day finally came, they took Samuel to God’s house, the sacred tent at Shiloh. With him, they took some valuable gifts to offer to God. When they had offered their gifts, they handed their son over to Eli, the chief priest. Then they left Samuel there. Now he belonged to God. She took Samuel to the temple to live with the priests and Eli promised to take good care of him.

Every year, Hannah and Samuel’s father visited him at the temple. Eli did not want Samuel’s mother to be lonely, so he blessed her and prayed for her. She had more children and was a good mother to them. Samuel, who had been dedicated to God, became a prophet of his people and a leader of Israel. 1 Samuel chapter 3 explains the nature of Samuel’s work more clearly. Eli looked after the boy; Samuel had to carry out duties as Eli’s servant. Samuel could not become a priest because he did not belong to the families of the priests (1 Chronicles 6:16-28). So, Samuel’s duties were physical tasks, for example to act as a guard, to look after lamps, to carry water or wood. Such was the work that Samuel’s parents probably expected him to do for the rest of his life.

However, they did not yet know about God's plans for their son. When they gave their boy to God, God accepted their gift. God had prepared a great work for Samuel to do for his (God).

Hannah's story ends with an answer to Eli's prayer. First Samuel 2:21 says, "The Lord was gracious to Hannah; she gave birth to three sons and two daughters. Meanwhile, the boy Samuel grew up in the presence of the Lord." Hannah's oldest son, Samuel, would go on to become the spiritual leader of Israel. As the prophet and judge of the nation, Samuel would anoint the nation's first two kings, Saul and David.

Let's talk about it. . .

Making it personal:

- After Hannah gave her precious Samuel to serve God, He graciously gave her three more sons and two daughters. You can never give more to God than He gives back to you, in some form or another!
- It's always easier to make such promises to God than it is to carry them out. Can you imagine Hannah's feelings when she had to leave her little boy (probably between three and five-years-old) at the tabernacle with Eli and return home childless again? God hadn't given her the other children yet. What faith on Hannah's part to keep her promise and give that much-wanted, much-loved little boy back to the Lord! So when God grants your prayer, don't forget to be obedient in yielding the answer back to Him to fulfill His purposes!
- The purpose of prayer is not to solve all our problems so that we can live happy, trouble-free, self-centered lives. The purpose of prayer is to get God's will done, to glorify Him.
- The story of Hannah and Samuel offers many important lessons for today. First, Hannah turned to God in prayer during her time of need. Second, she praised and thanked God when He did answer her prayer. Third, she kept her commitment to the Lord, even though it must have been difficult. Fourth, God blessed Hannah beyond what she had asked. In the end, Hannah was not only the mother of Samuel but of three other sons and two daughters.
- Hannah knew that God's purpose for His people superseded her personal desire for a son. So, while she prayed for a son, she also prayed for God's greater purpose and willingly yielded her son to meet that purpose. That's how God wants us to pray—not just to meet our needs, but for His purpose to be fulfilled through the answers to our prayers.

Closing Prayer: *"Father, teach us how to come to You in prayer in our helplessness, so that You will get all the glory and praise when You deliver us. In Jesus' Name we pray. Amen!"*