



Part 7: Persisting through Pain

INTRODUCTION — A Law unto themselves

Judges 21:25

LOOK TO THE BOOK – A Woman Named “Grace”

1 Samuel 1:1-20

TAKE OUTS – I’ll Have That to Go Please

TAKE OUT #1: Grace under Fire

Hannah serves as a model for us today of someone who responds honestly and proactively in difficult circumstances – demonstrating a humble submission to God. This stands in contrast to Peninnah, who deals with her own pain in a destructive and unhealthy manner. **When the pressure comes, do you find yourself responding more like Hannah or Peninnah?**

Romans 4:3-4; Galatians 5:22-23

TAKE OUT #2: Let’s Make a Deal?

We may be tempted to think that Hannah’s promised dedication of her unborn child may imply that God is difficult to please, and only willing to help us when we are willing to help Him. **Remember that God’s heart is positioned towards us. The sacrifice that God is looking for is the gift of our lives – being in loving relationship with Him and with others. He is eager to help!**

Psalms 103:8; Isaiah 1:13-17; Romans 12:1; Hebrews 4:15-16

TAKE OUT #3: Seeing Beyond our Own Pain

Some would argue that, in asking for a son and dedicating him to God’s service, Hannah is asking for justice – not only for herself, but also for a nation that was suffering from a lack of spiritual leadership. Though we don’t completely understand her motives, Hannah is willing for her answered prayer to be a blessing to God and to others, not just herself. **Consider ways that God can use your struggles, desires and prayer requests as greater opportunity to serve others.**

Mark 10:42-45; Philippians 2:3-11

TAKE OUT #4: When Comforting Misses the Mark

Though well intentioned, Elkanah’s comfort of Hannah through gifts and words falls short of what Hannah truly needs from him. **Is there a greater level of discernment, wisdom and action that you could bring to someone you know who is suffering?**

Job 16:2-5; James 3:17-18

CONCLUSION – What happens when God says “No”?

Matthew 5:4; Mark 14:32-36; 2 Corinthians 12:7-9; Philippians 4:5-7

HOME CHURCH QUESTIONS...

WARMING UP...

1. Take time to review this week’s message. Talk about what most challenged, puzzled, or encouraged you.

LOOK TO THE BOOK...

2. Take some time to read Hannah’s prayer of celebration in **1 Samuel 2:1-10**. A) Work your way through the entire text, making special note of all the images of “reversals” - that is to say, places where positions are reversed and powers are displaced. What do these dramatic reversals tell us about God’s power and justice? Can you think of any specific examples from scripture where “reversals” are demonstrated through the life and teaching of Jesus?
3. Now that you have processed Hannah’s Prayer, read the prayer of an expecting mother in **Luke 1:39-55**. A) Can you identify any parallels between Mary’s and Hannah’s prayer? B) Take a look again at **1 Samuel 2:10**. C) Recognizing that the word “anointed” here also means “Messiah”, in what ways does this royal imagery tie into the stories of the first born sons of both Hannah and Mary? D) Are there any qualities and characteristics in these two prayers that could help inform the way that we express ourselves to God in our own personal and communal worship?

SO WHAT?...

4. Is there a place where you are looking/ hoping/ praying for a “reversal” of sorts in your own life? Consider sharing this issue or desire with your prayer group. As you do, allow Hannah’s example of bold faith and submission to God inform your heart attitude. Pray for one another in these areas – remembering the Apostle Paul’s words in **Galatians 6:2**.
5. Remembering again how both Hannah and Mary celebrate God’s attributes and character, spend some time thanking God and celebrating what He has been doing in our lives and in our community (even in the midst of struggles you may be facing).

Paul Morris @ THE MEETING HOUSE – Sunday, August 16, 2009