

LIFEGROUPS

HANNAH & THE BIRTH OF SAMUEL — 1 Samuel 1

Read 1 Samuel 1:1-26

1. Why do you think there was so much tension and conflict in Elkanah's family, especially between himself and his two wives?
2. How do you deal with your own jealousy, or when someone else is jealous of you? How do you deal with someone provoking you?
3. Why was Hannah so distraught? Have you ever had a long-standing struggle or disappointment? How did you deal with it? Or how would you have dealt with it.
4. What can we learn from verse 6, when it says, "the Lord had closed her womb." Is it okay to blame God?
5. Elkanah tries to soothe his wife with his words in v8. Do you think it was effective? Why or why not?
6. Verses 10, 11, 15, 16 capture the heart and essence of Hannah's prayer. What does it mean to "pour out" your soul before the Lord? What does Hannah mean when she says that she has been "speaking out of my great anxiety and vexation"? (v16)
7. Have you ever poured out your soul to God? Why or why not? What would it take for you to get to the point to pour your soul out to God?
8. Eli thinks Hannah is drunk. Have you ever misjudged someone? Do you think this (misjudging) happens in our church?
9. Hannah conceives, and then brings her son up to the temple for the Lord. Even though this child is what she has been longing for her whole life, why is she able to do this? Do you have any dreams that you hold on to and refuse to give up to God?

LEADER'S NOTES

These notes are here as guidelines or commentary notes to help the leader.

Infertility is a common plight which is talked about in the Bible. It happens in different circumstances, but there is always a reflection that God is aware and has compassion for those who cannot conceive. As we know, for a woman in that time, their identity and self-worth was often tied up very closely with their ability to bear children, and in particular, bear a son.

When we think about our identity and self-worth today, sometimes those preconceptions are put onto us based on society or the surrounding culture - be successful in the workplace, be a loving and caring parent at home whilst moving up in work, raise well behaved and well mannered children, cook your own meals. God seems to be in the business of helping us to realign our identity and self worth away from the world around us, and onto him. It is in that process that we find our true identity and true freedom.