

I. Introduction and review: Does God care?

II. God brings deliverance to His distressed people.

- A. We are introduced to an ordinary, yet extraordinary, family in Israel. v. 1-5a**
1. This is a godly family living in a dark age. v. 3,7,19,21,24
 2. The Lord chooses to do great things through an obscure, but faithful, family.
 3. What was Elkanah doing with two wives? v. 2 Ge. 16:4 30:1
This was not God's design from the beginning. Ge. 2:18-24 Mt. 19:5,8 Mal. 2:15
- B. Hannah's barrenness is a great personal tragedy. v. 5b-8**
1. God alone opens and closes the womb. 1:5b Gen. 30:2
 2. While all godly women value children, there was a particular significance in the Old Testament era to bearing sons. 1:11 Gen. 3:15
 3. A religious feast, which should be a time of great joy, becomes sorrowful. v. 3,7b
 4. Hannah's grief is compounded by the taunts of her rival. v. 6
 5. Hannah's husband cannot comfort her. v. 8, 5
 6. She is not the first barren woman to yearn for a child. Gen. 11:30 25:20-21,26 30:1 Judges 13 II Kings 4:13-17 Luke 1
- C. Hannah cries out to the Lord. v. 9-18**
1. Hannah's deep distress moves her to earnest prayer. v. 9-10 Ex. 2:23ff
 2. She approaches God with reverence acknowledging His powerful majesty. v. 11a
 3. She vows to devote her son to God as a Nazarite. v. 11b Nu. 6:2ff Jg. 13:7 Pr. 31:2
 4. She is terribly misunderstood and misjudged by Eli the Priest. v. 12
 5. Eli blesses Hannah who leaves with hope. v. 17-18
- D. God answers Hannah's prayer for a son. v. 19-20 Gen. 26:21 Ps. 113:9**
1. Samuel's name is a reminder of God's answer.
 2. The birth of this child is a great turning point in the history of Israel.
- E. Hannah keeps her vows. v. 21-28**
1. What vow is Elkanah paying? v. 21 Num. 30:13ff
 2. Hannah waits until Samuel is ready. v. 22-23
 3. Hannah gives Samuel to the LORD through Eli. v. 24-28
 4. Hannah gives praise to the LORD. 2:1-10
 5. Hannah is blessed with many more children. 2:21

III. What practical lessons can we learn from the examples set in this chapter?

- A. Is it valid to use Old Testament narrative as a moral example? I Co. 10:8-10**
1. Some say our sole focus should be to show Christ in the Old Testament and that making other applications is 'moralistic'.
 2. The Bible explicitly teaches that Old Testament narrative was written as an example for us in this age. (We need to be careful as we do so.)
- B. We see biblical principles of the family exemplified.**
1. We place a high value on children. Ps. 127:1ff
 2. Our families worship the LORD together. 1:3ff,21ff
 3. A husband should love and respect his wife. 1:8,21,23-24 Pr. 31:11a I Pe. 3:7
 4. We also see the consequences of violating God's ideal for marriage. 1:2,6

- C. God uses trials to make us seek Him more earnestly.
 1. Our trials are from His sovereign hand. 1:5 Eph. 1:11 Ro. 8:28
 2. It is in the time of hardship and misery that we recognize our dependence upon Him. Js. 1:2ff I Pe. 1:6ff John 15:5
 3. Cry out to God in your distress, pouring out your soul. v10-11,15 Ps. 142:2
 4. Faithful prayer brings peace. v. 18b Phil. 4:6-7 Ps. 46:10 I Pe. 5:6
 5. God delights to hear and answer the prayers of His people. Gen. 26:21 30:22 Ex, 2:23-25
 6. God uses 'ordinary' means to provide extraordinary answers to prayer. v. 19b
 7. God uses ordinary people to accomplish His extraordinary purposes.
 8. This example does not imply that you will immediately and miraculously receive whatever you ask in this life. II Co. 12:7
 9. Our ultimate hope is in the Christ and His kingdom. John 16:33

D. Should we make vows? Judges 11:30-31,34

E. Should we dedicate our children to God? Luke 2:23

All our children belong to God. Someday we will have to give them up. Ge. 2:24

F. Be careful before you judge the apparent sins of others. v. 12-16 I Co. 13:7

Pr. 18:13,17 Mt. 7:1ff I Th. 5:14

IV. What is God doing here?

A. Hannah's story contains much more than a moral example.

1. Hannah's barrenness and distress mirrors the condition of Israel. Dt. 7:14
2. This chapter isn't primarily about Hannah, it is about God, Whose care for Hannah is His care for Israel. Ex. 3:7 4:31 Dt. 26:7 Neh. 9:9
3. God is beginning the process by which He will provide a great deliverer (David) for His people.
4. Samuel is the key figure of transition - the prophet and kingmaker.

B. Hannah's story points to God's final and decisive deliverance of His people through Jesus Christ. Isa. 9:6-7 7:14

C. Samuel's role is like that of John the Baptist - the forerunner of God's chosen King. Luke 1:5ff John 1:19-23

V. Concluding applications.

Discussion questions

1. What features of I Samuel 1 make you think it is history and not myth?
2. Is it justified to derive moral examples from Old Testament narratives? Why or why not?
3. What are some dangers of using Old Testament narratives as moral examples?
4. How is Hannah's story unique?
5. What are some exemplary aspects of Elkanah's family?
6. Was it acceptable for Elkanah to take a second wife?
7. In what ways does Hannah exemplify how we should pray?
8. Is there any place for vows today?
9. What could counselors learn from Eli's mistake? 1:14
10. How does God use ordinary means to provide extraordinary answers to prayer?
11. How is Hannah's situation like that of Israel in the days of the Judges?
12. What is God doing in the history of Israel through Hannah?
13. How does this passage point to Christ?