

### Hannah: Infertile and Unhappy

(1 Samuel 1:1 - 2:11)

## I. **THE PRACTICE OF POLYGAMY**—*having more than one wife at a time*

### A. **Reasons for it**

1. **For Children**—*resource and legacy*
2. **For Attraction**—*if first wife wasn't satisfying*
3. **For Status**—*required wealth, promoted alliances*
4. **Female Dependence**—*needed identity, provision and protection*
5. **Male Privilege**—*because they could*

### B. **Problems with it**—*Scripture never portrays it as a good situation.*

1. **Not God's Design** (Gen 2:24; Mat 19:3-6)—*demeans women, marriage*
2. **Rivalry between wives** (1:6; Gen 30:8)—*Peninnah's bullying*
3. **Conflict within the family**—*children drawn into it*

## II. **THE ANGUISH OF INFERTILITY** ()

### A. **A Woman's Worth** (Luke 1:28)—*respect for producing male children*

### B. **A Woman's Desire** (1:7-8)—*both husband and children*

1. A husband can never be **everything**.
2. You can't **shame** someone into being happy.
3. **Sadness is part of life**.

### C. **God's Sovereignty** (1:5; Gen 30:2; Ps 139:13-16)

1. **God's Plan** (Ps 127:3-5)—*No human life except by decree of God*
2. **God's Power** (Gen 4:1; 1 Sam 1:27)—*God's assistance is necessary for us to fulfill our destiny/calling/desire.*
3. **God's Attention** (1:19-20)—*even when He says no*

### III. **THE WORSHIP OF GOD**

- A. Community Obligation** (Deut 12:5-7; Heb 10:25)—It's *not about you*.
- B. Family Worship** (Mat 5:23-24; Lev 25:17; 1 Pet 3:7)—*The way we treat one another in the family either honors or offends God.*
- C. Individual Prayer**—*We may go directly to God in prayer.*
- 1. Hannah's Fervency** (1:10-11, 13, 16)
    - a. Pouring out her heart** (Job 16:20; Ps 10:17; 62:8; 142:2)  
*Bitterness of heart poured out to the LORD is an act of worship.*
    - b. Making a vow**—*evidence that God had purified her motive*
  - 2. Eli's Assumption** (1:12-16)—*that she was drunk*
  - 3. Eli's Blessing** (1:17-18)—*God's notice and favor comforts Hannah*

### IV. **THE COMFORT OF JESUS**

- A. He is our Great High Priest.** (Heb 4:15-16 & 7:25; 2 Cor 1:20; Rom 8:32)  
*Ultimate proof/assurance of God's attention and favor*
- B. He Has Established Our Value.**
- 1. Set by the price Jesus paid for each woman** (Gal 3:26-28; 1 Pet 1:18-19)
  - 2. Affirmed by the way Jesus treated women** (Lk Lk 1:34-35 & 10:39, 42; John 4:27; Rom 16:1; Phil 4:3)
- C. He Makes Us Supernaturally Fruitful** (Isa 54:1; 56:3-5; Jn 1:12-13, 3:3-6, 15:5; Rom 9:8)
- 1. Regeneration, not procreation, is the emphasis of the NT.**  
*Every generation of the church needs to be converted.*
  - 2. Christianity recognizes and honors singleness.** (Mat 19:10-12; Acts 21:8-9; 1 Cor 7:1, 7)—*a special gift of grace to the church*
  - 3. Fruitfulness is not limited to the bearing and nurture of children.** (Gen 1:27-28; Jud 5:7)

Listen to "In Need" (Acappella/Praise and Harmony)

<https://youtu.be/smm1cFRiz3I>

## Lesson 7: Hannah

Read 1 Samuel 1:1 – 2:11, 18-21; Psalm 62:1-8

1. What would motivate a righteous man and loving husband like Elkanah to take more than one wife?
2. How does his choice to have two wives set his family up for a climate of on-going conflict?
3. Why is infertility such an emotionally painful affliction?
4. How does Elkanah try to comfort Hannah? Does it work? Why or why not?
5. What *does* bring comfort to Hannah?
6. In the Old Testament, infertility was considered a curse and a great personal disgrace. Are people who are unable to bear children second rate in the sight of God? (Consider the following passages: Isaiah 54:1; 56:3-5; and Matthew 19:11-12.)
7. Does God approve of Polygamy?
8. How does Jesus comfort us and bring us hope when we are criticized and insulted by others for our inadequacies? (Psalm 56:8; Hebrews 3:17-18; 4:15-16; 5:7-10)
9. If you are willing, please share a time when Jesus has either dramatically answered your prayer or ministered to you in the midst of an unmet desire.