



Midweek Study Notes

28th March 2022

Prepared by Mervyn

Hannah

During our service we considered the struggles in Hannah's life and thought about how these struggles were the catalyst that took her relationship with God to a deeper level. **Can you relate to that at all?**



Elkanah had two wives; one was called

Hannah and the other Peninnah. Peninnah had children, but Hannah had none. 3Year after year this man went up from his town to worship and sacrifice to the Lord Almighty at Shiloh, where Hophni and Phinehas, the two sons of Eli, were priests of the Lord. 4Whenever the day came for Elkanah to sacrifice, he would give portions of the meat to his wife Peninnah and to all her sons and daughters. 5But to Hannah he gave a double portion because he loved her, and the Lord had closed her womb. 6Because the Lord had closed Hannah's womb, her rival kept provoking her in order to irritate her. 7This went on year after year. Whenever Hannah went up to the house of the Lord, her rival provoked her till she wept and would not eat. 8Her husband Elkanah would say to her, "Hannah, why are you weeping? Why don't you eat? Why are you downhearted? Don't I mean more to you than ten sons?" 1 Samuel Ch1

The relationship between Hannah and Peninnah is clearly complicated and painful.

Can you empathise in any way with either or both of these women? In a way it seems like sibling rivalry, but taken up a gear! **Why do we as human beings have a tendency to gloat when we have the upper hand?**

Have you ever been on either end of gloating?

How did it make you feel?

On a trivial level, how do you feel if you win or lose a simple board game? And why are we wired like that?



Gloating on the whole is horrible, what is the antidote?Compassion?

We finished the service by reading the prayer in 1 Samuel Ch 2 that gives us a window into Hannah's inner landscape. **Read the prayer together...**

What themes jump out for you?

How do the words “My mouth boasts over my enemies” in verse 1 sit with you?

For me this is a reminder that I’m in a spiritual battle and need to resist the powerful enemy words that would define me if left unchecked.

Verse 3 implies that God is watching us carefully and screening our motives.

Does that concept make you peaceful or anxious, or trigger a different reaction?

The last line of the prayer seems to have a prophetic feel to it as there were no kings of Israel in Hannah’s time, yet she looks forward to an anointed king.

How do you think this line may have encouraged Jesus when he was a young man learning the scriptures?

Earlier in the service we reflected on the words of Jesus over his people from Matthew 23:37 *“How often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were not willing.”*



These metaphorical words evoke a great sense of warmth and affection.

How do you react to this concept of intimacy with God?