



DISCUSSION GUIDE

'OVERWHELMED' - Lessons from Hannah

GETTING STARTED

What similar social "stigma" (if any) do you think we attach in a similar way to being a "woman without a child" in the OT?

What "constant" reminder do you or someone you know struggles with but wish they didn't? (e.g. broken dream of what could've, should've been, but isn't? How does this relate to Hannah's struggle?

QUICK REACTIONS FROM THE MESSAGE

How would you summarize/paraphrase the message in your own words?

What point/idea resonated most with you? Why?

How have you heard that people (or "the churches) poor responses to people's hurt, disappointments, etc...impacted their lives?

What do you make of Peninnah's actions, Elkanah and Eli's words to Hannah?

In what way did Hannah have every right to be angry, resentful, vengeful and bitter in how others responded to her?

In what way does her response look like Jesus?

In what way, when you are overwhelmed, would it look like for you to take to heart that "People won't always understand you, but God never forgets you? How could this change your attitude, expectations and behavior?

EXPLORE THE PASSAGE [1 Samuel 1:1-20]

(Yes, these questions can seem silly, however, good discussion and interpretation of the Bible begins with having a proper understanding of the basic facts; who, what, when, and where in the text.) Work through this quickly, the answers are fairly obvious.

What was a primary difference between the two wives of Elkanah? (1:2)

Where did the family go yearly to worship God? (1:3)

Who were the priests at this time? (1:3)

How did the husband treat Hannah on the occasion of feasts? Why? (1:5, 8)

How was Hannah treated? (1:6)

Who observed Hannah in the temple? (1:9, 13)

What was Hannah's emotional state when the feasting ended? (1:10)

What was Hannah's vow before the Lord? (1:11)

What did Eli assume about Hannah? (1:13-14)

How did Hannah explain her behavior? (1:15-16)

What was Eli's response to Hannah's situation? (1:17)

How did Hannah's mood change after she had prayed? (1:18)

How was Hannah's prayer answered? (1:19-20)

QUESTIONS THAT HELP US UNDERSTAND THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE TEXT

What reactions, good and bad, can we have to cruel taunts?

Why did Hannah's demeanor change so dramatically after she prayed?

What other responses to her predicament could Hannah have chosen?

Why is it important to take our requests to God?

In what ways do we try to ease the pain of someone's obvious loss or lack?

Why does the account in 1 Samuel say that God "remembered" Hannah?

What does it mean for you that God does not forget you?

APPLY THE PASSAGE

What do we learn about God and about ourselves in these passages?

What do you need to stop, start or do differently as a result of reading this passage?

How can we pray for each other?