

## WoH 426

### Story Script – Hannah

**Tammy:** Hello, my friend! Welcome to *Women of Hope*. I'm Tammy and Carol is here too. Today we have another special story time planned. Our story-teller Nancy is here.

**Nancy:** Hi there...

**Tammy:** Nancy's going to tell us a true story from God's Word. It's a favorite story of many women throughout history...a story about deep disappointment and grief...about rivalry and jealousy. And it has an amazing surprise ending!

**Carol:** We all have disappointments in life don't we?

**Tammy:** Oh yes...and sometimes we feel jealous!

**Carol:** I can understand why there was jealousy in *this* family. It's a story of one man and his two wives – one of his wives had children, while the other one didn't!

And then there was jealousy of the husband's love!

**Tammy:** You might have experienced a situation in your family that's caused rivalry and jealousy... it's not easy is it? But one woman in this story showed great courage in her situation...let's find out what happened! Welcome Nancy!

**Nancy:** Thank you Tammy and Carol...and hello to *you*. I *love* to tell stories – especially true stories from God's word, the Bible. You know, the people in God's Word are all real people and they had real hurts. So are you ready to listen?

**Nancy:** God...who created heaven and earth...had called Abraham and his family to go to the land he would give them. You may have heard some of our stories about Abraham already. His descendants, the Israelites, grew and became 12 tribes. They were living in the land that God had promised to them long before...but they had no

king. The central place of worship was in a town called Shiloh. Eli was the priest serving there at the house of worship.

Every Israelite male was expected to go to Shiloh to offer sacrifices to God each year. Their families went with them to a special festival where they would remember how God had cared for them during their journey to this promised land... and celebrate God's blessing on the year's crops. So the sacrifices became part of a great feast...a very special, happy time for the people in the community.

This story takes place in the hill country where Elkanah lived with his two wives, Hannah, the first wife and Peninnah. Peninnah had children, but Hannah didn't. Here is the story from God's word, the Bible...(1 Samuel Ch 1)

Year after year Elkanah and his family went up from their town to the place of worship in Shiloh. They went there to worship and sacrifice to the Lord who rules over heaven and earth.

Every year when Elkanah offered a sacrifice, he gave a share of the meat to his wife Peninnah and her children. But he gave a double share of meat to Hannah because he loved her and the Lord had not given her children.

Peninnah teased Hannah and made fun of her because the Lord had not given her children. Peninnah cruelly teased Hannah year after year...until Hannah cried and wouldn't eat.

Her husband Elkanah said, "Hannah, why are you crying? Why don't you eat? Why are you so unhappy? Don't I mean more to you than ten sons?"

One time when they finished eating and drinking at the festival, Hannah stood up and went to the place of worship. Eli, the priest, was sitting on a chair by the door of the Lord's house. Hannah cried bitterly as she prayed to the Lord.

She made a promise to the Lord and said, "Lord, you rule over all. I am just your maidservant. If you will look upon my sorrow and answer my prayer and give me a son, then I will give him back to you. He will be yours for his entire lifetime."

Hannah was praying in her heart and wasn't making a sound but her lips were moving.

The priest, who was watching her, thought Hannah was drunk. He said to her, "How long will you keep on getting drunk? Get rid of your wine!"

"That's not true, sir," Hannah replied. "I am deeply troubled. I'm not drunk but was telling the Lord all of my troubles. Don't think of me as an evil woman. I've been praying here because I'm very sad. My pain is so great."

The priest answered, "Go in peace. May the God of Heaven give you what you have asked of him."

She said, "Oh thank you sir!" Then she left and had something to eat. She wasn't sad any longer.

**Tammy:** Here on *Women of Hope* we're listening to the story of Hannah who was sad and full of pain because she did not have a child. She did not feel like celebrating at the feast. Instead she felt bitterness, and disappointment.

**Carol:** But she prayed to God and told him everything that was in her heart. Do you remember what Eli the priest said to her? That's right, he said, "Go in peace. May the God of Heaven give you what you have asked of him."

**Tammy:** So she didn't feel sad anymore. Let's hear what happened in the rest of the story!

**Nancy:** OK... Early the next morning Elkanah and his family went back to their home. God remembered Hannah and answered her prayer and she became pregnant!

In time she had a baby boy. She named him Samuel which means, "I asked the Lord for him."

The next year, Elkanah and his family got ready to go to the place of worship to offer the annual sacrifice to the Lord. But Hannah didn't want to go. She said to her husband, "When the boy doesn't need me to nurse him anymore, I'll take him to the Lord's house. I'll give him to the Lord and he'll stay there for the rest of his life."

Elkanah told her, "Do what you think is best. Stay at home for now and may the Lord help you to keep your promise."

So Hannah stayed home. She nursed her son until he was weaned.

Sometime after that she took Samuel with her to the place of worship in Shiloh. She also brought along gifts for a special offering to show her appreciation to God.

After making the offering, Elkanah and Hannah brought the boy to the priest. Hannah said to the priest, "Sir, I'm the woman who stood here beside you praying to the Lord for this child. The Lord has given me what I asked him for. So now, as I promised, I'm giving him to the Lord for as long as he lives." And they worshiped the Lord there.

Let's stop here for a moment and think about Hannah's feelings. How do you think you would feel? ...But Hannah had made the promise to God, so she kept it...no matter how she felt! So instead of crying and feeling very sorry for herself, Hannah prayed a long and beautiful prayer. Let's listen to her prayer from God's word:

*She said, "The Lord has filled my heart with joy. He has made me strong and I can laugh at my enemies. I'm so glad he saved me. There isn't anyone holy like the Lord.*

*The Lord makes some poor and others rich; he brings some down and lifts others up. He lifts the poor from the dust and the needy from the garbage dump. He gives them places of honor, for all the earth is the Lord's and he has set the world in order.*

*The Lord protects his faithful ones but the wicked will disappear. No one succeeds by strength alone. Those who fight against the Lord will be shattered, for the Lord judges throughout the earth.”*

Then Elkanah and his family went home. But Samuel stayed and served the Lord in the place of worship with the priest.

Each year Hannah made him a little robe and took it to him when she went up to Shiloh with her husband.

The Lord was good to Hannah and she became pregnant and had three more sons and two daughters!

And that’s the end of the story from God’s Word.

**Carol:** Welcome back to *Women of Hope*. We’ve been listening to Nancy tell us the story of Hannah and her son Samuel. Let’s see what we can remember...

**Tammy:** Elkanah had 2 wives, Hannah and Penninah. Which one didn’t have any children?

**Carol:** Yes...Hannah. And that was very shameful in her culture...it seemed God had shown favor to Penninah but not to Hannah.

**Tammy:** We can only imagine how hard it was for Hannah!

**Carol:** And Penninah would tease Hannah mercilessly year after year about not having children until Hannah cried and did not feel like eating.

**Nancy:** That's right. Finally one year when Hannah went to the place of worship she took her sorrow and grief to God. She told him exactly how she felt. Do you remember what Eli, the priest thought about her?

**Carol:** ...Yes, he thought she was drunk because while she was praying her lips were moving but no sound was coming out.

**Tammy:** I think you're right. So then Hannah told Eli she was not drunk...that she was praying to God because she was so sad. He blessed her and said, "May the Lord give you what you asked of him."

**Carol:** And when Hannah went home...she got pregnant and had a baby boy! God heard the cries of sorrow from her heart and answered her prayer. And she named her son...that's right, she named him Samuel. Do you remember what that means?

**Nancy:** It means, "I asked the Lord for him," doesn't it? And Hannah stayed at home and nursed Samuel until he was weaned.

**Tammy:** She really loved and treasured her son Samuel, didn't she? But she had made a promise to God...and she kept it!

**Carol:** She did! ...She took Samuel to Eli the priest when he was a young boy along with some special offerings. It must have been so hard for her, but she left Samuel with the priest so her boy could serve the Lord forever, just like she had promised she would do.

**Nancy:** I think we can *all* imagine how she felt...yet amazingly she praised the Lord joyfully with that beautiful prayer. She said that there is only one true God; there is no one like him. He gives us strength and victory over our enemies. Hannah said she was so glad God had saved her. She also praised God because he is holy.

**Tammy:** ...and God rewarded her with 3 more sons and 2 daughters!

**Nancy:** And when Samuel was older he became a very important servant of the Lord. God had a special plan for him. Samuel called God's people to revive their worship for the one true God. Samuel was also given the task of appointing the first king of Israel.

**Tammy:** While we listen to this music think about what you've heard in this story. What does it mean to you?

**Tammy:** Welcome back to *Women of Hope*. Now let's think about what this story means to us. God has a message for us, even today, through this story.

**Carol:** This story reminds *me* how much God cares about my heartaches. He not only *heard* Hannah's prayers but he also *answered* her!

**Tammy:** Yes and that shows *me* how much God loves us and is involved in our everyday lives.

**Nancy:** When I first heard this story I thought about how hard it would be to have two wives in one family. That's probably why God's plan from the beginning was for only one man and one woman to marry each other. (laugh)

**Carol:** I think you're right Nancy. I guess Penninah knew that Elkanah loved Hannah more than he loved her. Penninah and Hannah would have been jealous of each other. But did you notice how Hannah did not take revenge by doing something bad to Penninah? Many times when someone hurts us we think of a way to hurt them back, don't we?

**Tammy:** Yes, unfortunately that's true. But I like how Hannah took her problem directly to God. She poured out her whole heart to God and told him exactly how she felt, didn't she?

**Nancy:** Yes...she knew she didn't have to say the prayer a certain way or use special words...or even ask the priest Eli to pray to God for her! She could just talk directly to God from her own heart!

**Carol:** She had an honest relationship with God. She didn't pretend to be happy or satisfied with her life. She told him exactly how miserable she felt.

**Tammy:** You know, we can be completely honest with God too, just like Hannah was. Sometimes we think we have to be holy or perfect to talk to God. But all we have to do is be honest. He already knows what's in our hearts so we can't hide our feelings from him anyway!

**Carol:** And do you remember we said at the beginning that one woman showed a lot of courage? Hannah made a brave promise to God didn't she?...

**Nancy:** She sure did, and she kept that promise. She gave her son back to God even though it must have been very hard for her. But Hannah was very wise. She knew that Samuel was a gift from God which didn't truly belong to her.

**Carol:** Yes, sometimes we think our children just belong to us...but really they are God's gift to us, to raise and take care of. They belong to God, don't they?

**Tammy:** That's very true Carol, even though it's hard to really see it that way.

**Nancy:** And another thing...I'm so impressed by Hannah's gratefulness. She prayed with such joy and thankfulness. Sometimes we take things for granted, don't we?

**Carol:** Yes...we can be so focused on our *problems* that we forget to thank God for all the many *blessings* in our lives...



**Tammy:** ...and for the times when he gives us what we ask for...and what we need.

**Nancy:** I often think about that brave promise that Hannah made. She made the choice to give back to God what was most precious to her...the son she had asked for. She wanted her son to be taught about God and to learn how to serve him.

And God blessed Samuel and used him in so many ways...which we can learn about from other Bible stories. Maybe I can come and tell you some more another day.

**Carol:** Please do Nancy, and thank you for being our story-teller today. Thank **you** for listening to the story today. I hope you'll remember this story and tell it to someone else.

**Nancy:** And remember what we've learned about God in this story: God hears and answers our heartfelt prayers. He is a trustworthy God who comforts us when we are experiencing our deepest sorrows! He lifts us up when we are down. This story is filled with lots of hope.

**Tammy:** This story reminds me again of how much we can trust God with *all* our problems and all that's important to us...even our children!

**Carol:** That's really true, Tammy. I want to be like Hannah and dedicate all of my loved ones to God.

**Carol:** Here on *Women of Hope* we've enjoyed hearing the story of Hannah haven't we. And we heard how Hannah prayed to God when her heart was broken, but also how she said a very special 'thank you' to God when he answered her prayer.

Mornette has come back again today to talk to us about saying 'thank you' as we pray to God. Welcome back Mornette...

**Mornette:** Thank you Carol! Did your mother, or someone else who cared for you, teach you to say 'thank you' when someone does something nice for you? Do you still do that now? 'Thank you' should be more than polite words; it should come from a grateful heart.

And don't we have a lot to thank God for? ...our homes, our families, our food...the air we breathe – even the fact that we're alive! Thanksgiving is a kind of prayer, where we tell God that we are grateful for all that he's done for us...for blessings, like his kindness, his forgiveness and his mercy...and for giving us eternal life.

And we can say thank you for the *daily* blessings that come our way. This is how we recognize God's constant goodness in life. And it does *us* good too as we think about all the good things that we can thank God for...the little things as well as the big things. As we learn to say thank you to God every day, it lifts up our own spirit and gives us joy in our hearts.

(Developed from *Prayer: talking with God* - Stonecroft Ministries, 2006)

**Carol:** We should never lose hope that God hears our prayers. He's waiting for us to come and talk to him just as Hannah did. Maybe your heart is aching and you need to bring your heartache to God and trust him with it. Could you do that?

**Tammy:** We would love to hear from you – you can contact us at...  
Goodbye.

**Carol:** Goodbye, and may God comfort you in all your troubles!