

Hannah

Read 1 Samuel 1:1 – 2:11, 18-21

I read the story of Hannah, and I am struck by the similarities between her and Mary, the mother of Jesus.

- Both bore deep, personal shame regarding child-bearing. Child-bearing was considered the most precious privilege of womanhood. But for each woman, this privilege had turned to utter disgrace. Hannah was childless, and Mary was pregnant outside of marriage.
- In the community and culture in which they lived, their shame was very public and oppressive. Many no doubt considered them cursed by God.
- In reality, their conditions were God's doing, and they bore their suffering in His service. Both women were godly and righteous. Out of their deep, personal shame grew a deep, personal relationship with the Living God.
- Both women were supported by godly husbands.
- When their shame was broken by the gift of a son, each woman expressed her praise to God in exuberant song. Hannah's song (1 Samuel 2:1-10) seems to have inspired Mary's Magnificat (Luke 1:46-55). Each exulted in the truth that our loving and just God is wonderfully sovereign in all human affairs.
- Both women knew that their treasured sons, born through such suffering and public shame, actually belonged to God. Each mother consecrated her son back to the Lord.
- Even as children, Samuel and Jesus shared an affinity for God's house, one that shaped their entire lives.

I am moved as I read of Hannah's pain. When praying for a son, she was so distraught that the priest thought she was drunk (1 Samuel 1:12-18). Then as soon as her son was weaned, she left him in Shiloh with the priest Eli, only to see him briefly once a year from then on. We can only imagine the feelings that were flooding this mother's heart.

Such humble godliness is the womb in which each of these great men was nurtured. Seeing Hannah, we get a glimpse of Mary. And seeing the mighty things God did through Samuel, we catch a dim foreshadowing of Jesus Christ.

Hymn: [I Am Your Servant](#)

