

Hannah & Lydia

1 Samuel 1-2:11
Acts 16:11-40

Note from Kathy

This week we will look at two very unique women. Their lives were lived many, many years apart, and yet, they shared one very important trait: they were women of prayer. God heard their prayers and met their needs. I believe it will be very easy for us to relate to their trials and difficulties. They will serve as beautiful examples for us to follow.

1 Samuel 1:9-11

"Once when they had finished eating and drinking I Shiloh, Hannah stood up. Now Eli the priest was sitting on his chair by the doorpost of the Lord's house. ¹⁰In her deep anguish Hannah prayed to the LORD, weeping bitterly. ¹¹And she made a vow, saying, 'LORD Almighty, if you will only look on your servant's misery and remember me, and not forget your servant but give her a son, then I will give him to the LORD for all the days of his life, and no razor will ever be used on his head.'"

Study of Hannah

Before starting this study guide, please take a few minutes to read 1 Samuel 1-2:11 and Acts 16:11-40. Read these two sections of Scripture at least twice to become familiar with the people and the events. Ask the Lord to open your heart to all he has for you to know.

Observation - 1 Samuel 1-2:11

1. In verses 1 Samuel 1:1-5, we are introduced to the four main characters. What were their names?
2. Scripture was very clear as to why Hannah has no children. What was the reason given?
3. Normally, each member of the family would be given a share of the offering to take to sacrifice each year. 1 Samuel 1:5 said Elkanah loved Hannah and treated her very generously for all to see. What specific difference did Elkanah make in the way he treated his two wives?

How was Hannah treated by Peninnah?

What affect did this have on Hannah?

4. In 1 Samuel 1:9-11 we saw Hannah's focus was fixed on the unfulfilled desire of her heart. What is her two-part prayer?
 - a. If
 - b. Then
5. While Hannah prayed in her heart, who saw her and misunderstood her? _____
6. How did Hannah describe her feelings in verses 15-16.

1 Samuel 1:19

"Early the next morning they arose and worshiped before the LORD and then went back to their home at Ramah. Elkanah made love to his wife Hannah, and the LORD remembered her."

7. Eli the priest encouraged Hannah with his prayer. Did she leave the tabernacle the same as when she arrived?
8. 1 Samuel 1:19 said they worshiped together as a family and then went home to Ramah. When Elkanah slept with his wife Hannah, what did the text tell us happened?
9. What did Hannah name this beautiful answer to her prayer?
10. The next year Hannah did not go up with Elkanah and the family to offer their annual sacrifice. How long did she plan to remain home?
11. What was Hannah's plan for this precious, long-awaited child?

Did her husband agree?

12. After Samuel was weaned, his parents took him to Eli the priest and left him there to be raised in the house of God. What sacrifice did they bring with them?
13. Now, let's take a few minutes to really study Hannah's prayer in 1 Samuel 2:1-10. How would you describe this prayer?

Where does Hannah say her joy is centered?

1 Samuel 2:2

"There is no one holy like the LORD; there is no one besides you; there is no Rock like our God."

In 1 Samuel 2:2, how does she describe the God she serves?

14. In Hannah's prayer she describes the character of God. What qualities does Hannah make mention of in verses 3-10?
15. In verse 11, we see Samuel living with and being raised by Eli. What was he busy doing while growing up in the temple?

Application - 1 Samuel 1-2:11



1 Samuel 1:5

"But to Hannah he gave a double portion because he loved her."

1. In 1 Samuel 1 we learned Elkanah had two wives. Verse 5 tells us that Elkanah loved Hannah. She was probably his first wife, but because she could not have children, Elkanah took another wife, Peninnah. We see this disrupted the peace of their happy home. Why would Peninnah make Hannah so miserable, when all she wanted was a child? Has anyone ever caused you pain over something that was out of your control?

2. It is understandable that Elkanah would want children, but the Lord had closed Hannah's womb. Elkanah could have avoided all this discord in his home had he not tried to fix his own problem. It was never God's plan for a man to have two wives. Do you see this as an area where Elkanah lacked the faith to leave things in God's hands?

Why is this important for us to realize?

When we have a need, what do we need to practice doing?

3. Hannah's prayer was heartfelt and sincere. She made a promise to God that would require total dedication to the Lord. Have you ever prayed a prayer that would require you to love obedience more than your own desires?

4. On one occasion, while Hannah prayed, Eli the priest saw her praying and misunderstood her sorrow. Have your prayers ever been misunderstood?

Even though the man of God was mistaken in his assumption of her, what was Hannah's attitude toward him? When misjudged can you answer back with gentleness?

5. Eli stopped and prayed for Hannah. His words were a great comfort to her. Eli told her to return in peace to her family, and he assured her that God had heard her prayer. There is nothing like speaking to a spiritual leader and getting a word of assurance that God hears and answers our prayers. Do you have the kind of friends who will come alongside you and pray with you and for you?

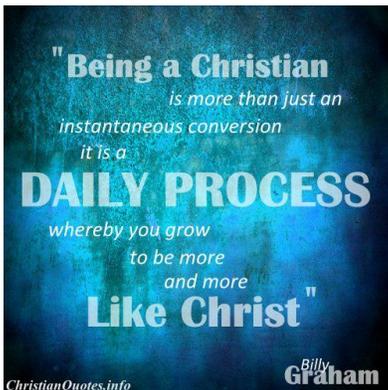
More on "Vows"

Deuteronomy 23:21

"If you make a vow to the LORD your God, do not be slow to pay it, for the LORD your God will certainly demand it of you and you will be guilty of sin."

Numbers 30:2

"When a man makes a vow to the LORD or takes an oath to obligate himself by a pledge, he must not break his word but must do everything he said."



Ecclesiastes 5:2, 4-5

"Do not be quick with your mouth, do not be hasty in your heart to utter anything before God. God is in heaven and you are on earth, so let your words be few. ⁴When you make a vow to God, do not delay to fulfill it. He has no pleasure in fools; fulfill your vow. ⁵ It is better not to make a vow than to make one and not fulfill it."

Matthew 12:36

"But I tell you that everyone will have to give account on the day of judgment for every empty word they have spoken."

Do you have friends who speak words of encouragement to you when you are hurting?

Are you the kind of friend who speaks words of life when someone is hurting?

6. When you have a tremendous burden, do you take it to God as Hannah did, believing that he will hear and will meet your need? When you pray are you transparent and honest with God about what is on your heart?
7. Hannah wanted Samuel to know that he was an answer to her prayer. The name Samuel means "asked" or "lent." Names can be a source of great encouragement. What does your name mean?

Are you living up to the name you have been given as a child of the King?

The name Christian means Christ-follower. Is that the truth about your life? Are you truly following Christ?

8. Hannah poured out her heart to the Lord in prayer. She made some promises in verse 11, "if you will only look on your servant's misery and remember me...and give me a son, then I will give him the Lord for all his days..." Have you ever prayed earnestly for something?

Did you make some promises in your prayer? If so, have you been faithful to do what you promised God?

Scripture teaches we are not to make vows lightly. What we have vowed we are to do. Are there any promises you have made that you have not fulfilled? What is keeping you from being faithful to your word?

9. Hannah took time to pray and express her joy for God's goodness to her. She praised his holiness and acknowledged that there is no one like our God. When God answers your prayers are you quick to thank him?

Are your prayers filled with praise for his character and his faithfulness?

10. Hannah is a beautiful example of a woman who prayed believing. Every good gift comes to us from God and is merely on loan from him. We must never hold tightly that which God has given us. Our greatest joy should come from serving our Lord with open hands. Do you view your children as a gift on loan from God? Are you raising them to know him, love him, and serve him?

Study of Lydia

Observation – Acts 16:11-40

Acts 16:13-15

“On the Sabbath we went outside the city gate to the river, where we expected to find a place of prayer. We sat down and began to speak to the women who had gathered there. ¹⁴One of those listening was a woman from the city of Thyatira named Lydia, a dealer in purple cloth. She was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to respond to Paul’s message. ¹⁵When she and the members of her household were baptized, she invited us to her home. ‘If you consider me a believer in the Lord,’ she said, ‘come and stay at my house.’ And she persuaded us.”

1. The time setting was the Apostle Paul’s second missionary journey. He was traveling from place to place sharing the gospel—leading people to Christ and encouraging the brethren along the way. It was the Sabbath, and Paul went outside the city to find a quiet place to pray. He began to teach a small group who had gathered by the river outside the city of Philippi. What was unique about this group? Who was specifically mentioned as being in that group?
2. Whether Lydia was a Jew or a Gentile is not seen in the text. What are some facts you read about this woman in Acts 16:13-15?
3. What was Lydia’s first act of obedience after salvation?
4. Acts 16 told us that Paul and Silas were thrown into prison for casting a demon out of a young woman. Those who made money off of her were angry and brought charges against these two godly men. God miraculously delivered them from their prison chains. According to Acts 16:40, when they were finally escorted from prison, where did they go? Who was gathered there?

Acts 16:40

“After Paul and Silas came out of the prison, they went to Lydia’s house, where they met with the brothers and sisters and encouraged them. They they left.”

Application – Acts 16:11-40

1. God led the Apostle Paul to that exact place at that exact time. All the while, he had been leading Lydia to travel from Thyatira and to be in Philippi carrying out her business. In what way have you seen God providentially moving in your own life lately?

2. Philippi did not have a synagogue. Jewish law required at least 10 male heads of household to establish a synagogue. Since they did not have a formal meeting place, what did the people in this community do when they desired to worship God? How about you? How dedicated are you to worshipping the Lord when a church is not convenient?
3. Lydia was in the right place at the right time with the right heart-attitude. She was in a place of prayer. Lydia was away from the distractions and hustle and bustle of the city. Do you have a quiet place where you can pray? A place where you can give God your full attention and hear from him?
4. Being in a place where truth is being shared can be just the opportunity a person needs to have their destiny changed. Knowing this, can you think of someone you would like to invite to church and Bible study with you?
5. Scripture tells us Lydia was a worshiper of God. She had heard about the God of the Israelites and all that he had done for his people. This was the God that she had chosen to serve. To worship, simply means to revere or esteem highly, to place a great value and importance. Would you say your worship could be categorized as highly esteeming and revering God?
6. Lydia was a good listener. Her heart was humble. She listened as Paul shared the gospel. Are you a good listener? Can you sit and take in truth and very quickly apply it to your own life and heart?
7. Lydia was a woman of faith and a seeker of truth. She had not heard the gospel, but longed for a deeper and more meaningful relationship with God. Have you ever felt like Lydia? Have you ever wished you had a real relationship with the sovereign God of creation?

1 Timothy 2:3-4

"This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth."

Romans 10:9-10

"If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved."

What did the Lord do for Lydia?

Are you a truth seeker? Have you heard the gospel?

Why not take a few minutes to talk to God; ask him to forgive your sins. Tell him that you would like to accept him as your Lord and Savior. The gospel of Jesus Christ is truly good news. Jesus came to pay the price for our sin and to offer us salvation as a free gift. There is no other way to be right with God. There is no other way to have your sins forgiven.

Life is too short to wait, and eternity is too long to be wrong. Salvation is our free gift. We must simply place our trust in Jesus.

8. After hearing the gospel message Lydia immediately was baptized. This instant obedience is a beautiful indication of the sincerity of her decision. Have you been baptized? If not, what is hindering you?
9. After her baptism, Lydia does something to show the gratitude of her heart. Notice she did not stop with merely asking. The Scripture says she persuaded them. Do your actions reveal a heart of love for the Lord and gratitude for his gift of mercy and grace?

Are you quick to meet the needs of those around you?

If God has blessed you, why not share that blessing with others? Try to find a need today and meet it in the name of Jesus. Then share it in your small group discussion time.

10. We read in Acts 16:16-39 that Paul and Silas were arrested for casting a demon out of a young girl. They angered those who were making money by her fortune telling. While in prison God caused a great earthquake and soon the jailer himself was asking Paul and Silas, "What must I do to be saved?" When they were escorted out they returned to Lydia's house. What was going on at Lydia's when they arrived? What does this tell you about this woman Lydia?

Hebrews 13:2

"Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels."

Hebrews 13:16

"Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God,"

Romans 12:13

"Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality."

Colossians 3:23-24

"Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ."

11. Notice the effect the gospel had on Lydia. What effect did the gospel (the good news of Jesus Christ) have on you?

What is different now that you are a follower of Christ?

Do others see a change in you?

If others follow you, will they find Jesus?

12. Hospitality is not merely something nice to extend from time to time; it is required of believers. Highlight or underline what you see concerning hospitality in Hebrews 13:2 and 13:16, Romans 12:13 and Colossians 3:23-24.

13. Satan's efforts to disrupt the believer's of Philippi were of no consequence. The Lord had ruled against him. Having Paul and Silas beaten and arrested only served to add to the Kingdom of God, with the jailer's conversion. Lydia and the other believer's had seen God deliver Paul and Silas, and they were ready to face persecution if need be. Does the thought of persecution stop you in your tracks, or are you like Lydia, spurred on to help fellow believers by whatever means God has provided?
14. *The Life Application Bible* explains practicing hospitality as "generously and cordially throwing open the door of our home to care for others. In hospitality, we nurture, strengthen, and serve. The result is that others find physical, spiritual and emotional help." Are people better off after being with you? Are you practicing true hospitality?