

THE CHILDLESS CHURCH #1 THE DESPERATE CHURCH

There is nothing worse than when a man or woman has been married for some time and cannot have children. They see old friends who ask the question, "How many kids do you have?" They answer the question with, "none yet". Wanting perhaps to adopt and can't. Doctors can offer no help. They long for a baby.

Is there help for them?

1Sa. 1 ⁴ Whenever 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. ⁵ But to Hannah he gave a double portion because he loved her, and the Lord had closed her womb. ⁶ And because the Lord had closed her womb, her rival kept provoking her in order to irritate her. ⁷ This 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. ⁸ Elkanah her husband 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?" (He was saying, "I love you isn't that enough? You have me." No that isn't enough) ⁹ Once when they had finished eating and drinking in Shiloh, Hannah stood up. Now Eli the priest was sitting on a chair by the doorpost of the Lord's temple. ¹⁰ In bitterness of soul Hannah wept much and prayed to the Lord. ¹¹ And she made a vow, saying, "O Lord Almighty, if you will only look upon 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."

¹² As she kept on praying to the Lord, Eli observed her mouth. ¹³ Hannah was praying in her heart, and her lips were

moving but her voice was not heard. Eli thought she was drunk ¹⁴ and said to her, “How long will you keep on getting drunk? Get rid of your wine.”

¹⁵ “Not so, my lord,” Hannah replied, “**I am a woman who is deeply troubled.** I have not been drinking wine or beer; I was pouring out my soul to the Lord. ¹⁶ Do not take your servant for a wicked woman; **I have been praying here out of my great anguish and grief.**”

¹⁷ Eli answered, “Go in peace, and may the God of Israel grant you what you have asked of him.”

¹⁸ She said, “May your servant find favor in your eyes.” Then she went her way and ate something, and her face was no longer downcast.

¹⁹ Early the next morning they arose and worshiped before the Lord and then went back to their home at Ramah. Elkanah lay with Hannah his wife, and the Lord remembered her. NIV

Let’s think of Hannah as the church or our individual life.

I. **Elkanah’s love for Hannah**

A. Elkanah- means “God created”

B. Elkanah represents Jesus.-

C. Elkanah blessed Rachel with a double portion of what he gave his other wife. (he showed his love with gifts and portions.)

II. **Hannah’s Barrenness**

A. Barrenness was viewed by people as a curse-

B. Reproach- it was expected of her to have children. “What is wrong with me?”

C. The barrenness is because God had closed the womb.

V5..... and the Lord had closed her womb.

III. Hannah's Mocker- The other wife, Peninnah

⁶ And because the Lord had closed her womb, her rival kept provoking her in order to irritate her. ⁷ This 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.

A. Peninnah had children and used them to **provoke** Rachel's barrenness.

Does it bother you that other churches or nations have a move of God and we don't.

B. Peninnah's **provoking lasted for a long time**.

v-7 This went on year after year.....

C. Peninnah's **timing** tells us something.

V7 Whenever Hannah went up to the house of the Lord, her rival provoked her.....

D. Peninnah's mocking **took its toll on Hannah**.

V7... provoked her till she wept and would not eat. ⁸ Elkanah her husband would say to her, "Hannah, why are you weeping? Why don't you eat? Why are you downhearted?"

IV. Hannah's desperate intercession

A. Prayers of anguish and grief

¹⁰ In bitterness of soul Hannah wept much and prayed to the Lord.

V16... **I have been praying here out of my great anguish and grief**

B. Her intercession includes a vow.

V 11...if you will give me a son I will give him to you all the days of his life.

V. Hannah's prayer is answered.

V 24 they brought the boy to Eli, ²⁶ and she said to him, "As surely as you live, my lord, I am the woman who stood here beside you praying to the Lord. ²⁷ **I prayed for this child**, and the Lord has granted me what I asked of him. ²⁸ So now I give him to the Lord. **For his whole life he will be given over to the Lord.**" And he worshiped the Lord there.
NIV

We must answer the following questions,
Why did God close the womb of Hannah for years?
Why was the woman Elkanah loved not permitted children?
Why did God permit another woman to mock her barrenness?

The move of God that is produced through desperation and prayer will produce "a voice" for the times. Samuel became THE prophet in Israel.

We have prayed for God to raise up a voice in these last days. It will happen but only when we are disgruntled about our barrenness.

Hannah asked for one and had four. When God answers you will get more than what you asked for.