

Discovering God: Part 4- He Knows  
1 Samuel 1 and 2

**I. ME**

- A. Welcome/Online/So What About?
- B. Discovering God
  - 1. Usually what you might encounter/hear...
  - 2. A study on why the Bible is important
  - 3. God is... Eternal, Unchanging, Sovereign, Holy, Trinity, Creator,
  - 4. Omnipotent, Omniscient, Omnipresent... All true and important but makes him seem so distant and unknowable... scary. **Like your friends' dad.**
- C. It's those last two that always got me
  - 1. He knows everything and he sees everything... scary thought isn't it?
  - 2. Often used as a warning, making us scared, inducing guilt.

**II. WE**

- A. Ever feel that?
  - 1. The way a lot of people talk about God's attributes make him out to be a scary/creepy figure who's very interested in watching you and making sure you obey his rules.
  - 2. "He sees everything, you know." "He knows what you're thinking."
  - 3. He knows if you've been bad or good for so be good for goodness sake.
  - 4. **God is often seen as a distant and judgmental Santa Claus.**

- 5. They use his attributes a way of making sure you know you're a sinner and won't get away with it.
  - 6. "What you did in secret is going to be known someday and then you'll get it."
  - 7. "He saw what you did. How can you call yourself a Jesus-Follower?"
  - 8. "He knows your choices, he sees your selfish/hypocritical thoughts, how could he ever bless you let alone LIKE you?"
  - 9. Distant, cold, angry, demanding
  - 10. Why many people reject the idea of a God that loves
  - 11. **A God who doesn't know you is a God who can't love you.**
- B. But when we truly discover God, we discover nothing could be further from the truth...
    - 1. God is not distant, judging from on high, aloof and ready to smite.
    - 2. **God is personal and relational**
    - 3. Nothing shows this clearer than how he interacted with a little known peasant women in ancient Israel named Hannah.

### III. GOD (1 Samuel 1)

#### A. Historical Background

1. Abraham's promise
2. Exodus
3. Conquer/divide land/no king just judges, elders, priests
4. World where women were not seen as equals, but property, few rights... Jewish women a bit better off.
5. In this world is a man named Elkanah

#### B. V. 2

1. **STOP**- "See the Bible condones polygamy!!"
2. No. The biblical account describes the practice of polygamy that occurred during the time... whenever it is described it never works out well.
3. Description not prescription

#### C. Two wives- Hannah and Peninnah

1. Hannah was probably first and he loved her... but she couldn't have kids
  - a. Ultimate tragedy for a woman of that time.
  - b. Husband's hopes and dreams depended on her providing a son for him to pass on his name and inheritance.
  - c. Kids were seen as a blessing from God while infertility was seen as a lack of God's favor or even judgment.
2. Since Hannah couldn't have kids, Elkanah probably found another wife in order to produce offspring.
3. So here you have one woman, loved by her husband, but can't have kids and so is replaced.
4. And another woman, basically being used for her birthing ability.
5. The makings of a happy family.

#### D. V. 3-7

1. Year after year... constant.
2. "Mommy, why doesn't Ms. Hannah have kids?"
3. "Oh she can't. God must be mad at her. That's why he won't let her be a real woman."
4. **Sometimes people know us just enough to hurt us.**
5. I'm sure Elkanah's mom wasn't too thrilled about having Hannah as a daughter-in-law... not to mention Peninnah's mom...
6. You thought you had in-law issues.
7. Hey, but at least Hannah had Elkanah, right?

#### E. V. 8

1. "You got me, baby. What else do you need?"
2. You ever feel like the people you rely on, care about/for the most just don't understand you or get what's going on?
3. They offer advice or tell you why that what you feel is not how you should feel?
4. Not a new thing.
5. Our usual response is to fix and critique instead of understand and support.
6. **Trying to fix without trying to understand is not love.**
7. Fixing and critiquing w/o understanding and support only creates more isolation and separation.
8. So Hannah is constantly tormented by a rival bent on proving she's better and her feelings are brushed aside and ignored by the only person who loves her.
9. It gets better...

## F. V. 9-16

1. Even the priest of God doesn't understand Hannah.
  2. He sees a woman in distress and just assumed she had too much to drink at the party.
  3. Have you ever been completely misunderstood?
  4. Either someone mistook your tone, text, wording?
  5. Someone who didn't have the whole story jumped to a conclusion about your motives and choices?
  6. Jumping to conclusions rarely lands you on the truth.
  7. So infuriating b/c..
  8. **We want to be understood because we want to be known** ... b/c we want to be loved.
  9. Remember... You can't love what you don't know.
- G. So Hannah is tormented by her overly-fertile **rival**, brushed aside by her **husband**, and completely misunderstood by her **religious leader**.
1. But there's something else we see about her here too...
- H. Hannah assumes and relies on God caring about her
- I. The Creator and Sustainer of the Universe, God Almighty, the God who delivered Israel out of Egypt, parted the sea, thundered on the mountain with Moses, brought down the walls of Jericho... saw HER and heard the prayers of HER heart.
1. She doesn't use fancy religious language, she doesn't go through some ritual.
  2. In fact she can't even get any words out...
  3. BUT... She assumes a personal relationship with him.

4. She is honest... about her anger, fear, frustrations, disappointments...
5. And it didn't make God uncomfortable or nervous or flustered.

## 6. God can handle the real us.

- J. So they go home...
1. And the writer puts it this way... **and the LORD remembered her.(v. 19b.)**
  2. The LORD... Yahweh... The self-existent eternal God... The name God told Moses to call him by... God's personal name
  3. Remembered= Think about, have compassionate thoughts toward... give attention to.
  4. And she becomes pregnant and has a son that she names Samuel.
- K. Samuel grows and when he is about 3 Hannah and Elkanah keep their vow and give Samuel to the priest to be raised there in the service of God.
1. But there's more... **1 Sam 2:21**
  2. Samuel becomes the final judge of Israel, a prophet who spoke for God, he anoints the 1<sup>st</sup> king, and anoints the greatest king, David.
  3. God used Hannah's child to not just bless her, but all of Israel and the rest of the world through bringing about the dynasty that would bring the savior- Jesus.
  4. God gives us more than we ask for and uses us for more than we can imagine.

- L. God saw and cared about this lowly, infertile, 11<sup>th</sup> century BC Israelite women... paid attention to her... and gave her more than she ever dreamed of.

#### IV. YOU

- A. Who are you?
1. Some 21<sup>st</sup> century Oregonian.
  2. Mom/teacher/occupier of cubicle/ retired/ remarried /single /divorced/ married and trying to hang on/ young /old/broken?
3. **God remembers you.**
- B. **God sees you**... He SEES YOU... the real you.
1. He sees your thoughts, your fears, anxieties, angers, hopes, dreams, heartbreaks, longings...
  2. He sees everything you do and are and everything you wish you didn't do and everything you wish you were.
- C. **God knows you**... He KNOWS YOU... the real you
1. He knows your past, your present circumstances, your future
  2. He knows your secret prayers, he knows who you truly are, and who you CAN be and will be...
  3. He knows why you get frustrated at certain things
  4. He knows what makes you laugh and he knows what makes you hurt.
- D. God sees you. God knows you... and **God loves you**. He LOVES YOU
1. He's not disinterested, distant, or disappointed
  2. He sees and knows everything about you and likes you.

#### E. Choose to trust him

1. Trust that he hears you...
  - a. You don't have to know the right words... Hannah didn't even have words at first.
  - b. You don't have to be polite
  - c. Tell him how you feel... even if you're not sure why you feel that way
  - d. Tell him what you're mad about, sad about, happy about.
2. Trust him with your life
  - a. Family, job, money, choices, future, eternity.

#### V. WE

- A. God is omniscient and omnipresent.
- B. He sees everything and knows everything.
1. Not so he can stand back and judge... but so he can personally and relationally know and love.
- C. God is not a scary Santa keeping tabs on everyone.
1. He is a personal God
  2. He is a loving and perfect Father... supporting, guiding, and giving everything we need.
- D. The God that created and holds together everything knows you and sees you and loves you...
1. What is there to be afraid of?
  2. What is there to hold back from?
  3. What is there to refuse to trust him with?
4. Nothing
5. If someone knows everything about you AND loves you... you can trust them.