

Brave

WEEK 3 • GROUP GUIDE • MESSAGE BY CHAD BRUEGMAN

START

To get things started, go around the circle and answer this question:

Pick one:

If you could only watch one TV show for life, what would it be and why?

What would you say was the best movie ever made, and why?

SHARE

Welcome to the teaching series called “Brave.”

We are going to take a serious look at what biblical and boundless bravery looks like. All of us face challenges. Some feel small and others feel insurmountable. Each one of us needs strength and courage to be able to face those head on.

In this series, we are going to look at some of the bravest exploits that we find in the scriptures, and what makes this series so unique is that we will look at the brave exploits of women in the Bible and what we all can learn from them.

This week we will be looking at the life of Hannah, who very publicly had to deal with failure and social embarrassment, yet in her weakness was heard by God and made strong and brave. Hannah lived in a culture where the inability to have a child was looked down upon and socially damaging for the husband. Despite the social criticism and taunting, her husband stood by her. In all of her pain, Hannah brought it to God and poured out her soul to the Lord. In her greatest moment of weakness and amidst what she felt to be an overwhelming failure, God responded.

Read 1 Samuel 1:9-15

Bergen writes about the social implications of Hannah’s story in The New American Commentary:

Here the Lord gives barren and humiliated Hannah a son in answer to her prayer. The story of Hannah presents a sharp contrast with that of Deborah, another significant woman of Ephraim from

the period of the Judges. Deborah's career impacted Israelite society through political clout, judicial leadership, and prophetic activity; Hannah's effect on Israelite society came through the gentle forces of faith and motherhood. Through Hannah the point is made that women of faith played a legitimate and even formative role in shaping Israel's history. Hannah's faith turned the tide of the period of the Judges by producing the transitional figure Samuel.

Hannah's rivals were taunting her, Elkanah was unable to comfort her, and the high priest misunderstood her anguish, yet Hannah still brought her problem to God with sincerity. With so many apparent reasons to shake her fist at God, she chose to lean into God instead.

Can you relate to the mental battle of wanting to lean into God or wanting to retaliate and blame God and others? If so, how?

Over time, what damage can blaming God or others do to our heart condition?

How can leaning into God, trusting and pouring out our emotions to God bring healing?

GROW

God hears and responds. God responds to Hannah's desperate soul-wrenching prayers and grants her a child; the very thing she had prayed for and desired most she receives. She then remembers her promise to God and dedicates the child to God's service. Hannah was not just giving her boy Samuel to God, but actually returning him to God, for God is the giver in the first place. Hannah boldly praised God for his answer and in thanksgiving she prays.

Let's read 1 Samuel 2: 1-11

The New American Commentary elaborates on Hannah's prayer:

Hannah's prayer begins on an exuberant and highly personal note, employing four first-person references that express unbridled delight in the Lord. Even as Peninnah had taunted Hannah, so now Hannah "boasts" (v. 1; lit., "my mouth is enlarged"; cf. also Ps 35:21; Isa 57:4) over her enemies because of the Lord's "deliverance" (Hb. *yěšû'â*, "salvation"). The object of Hannah's delight is neither herself—that she has overcome the disgrace of barrenness—nor her son; instead it is the Lord, who is the source of both her son and her happy circumstance.

In verse 3, Hannah was referring to those who taunted her and hurt her before, but clearly trusts in God's sovereignty and that it is God who will ultimately judge rightly. Why is this important for us to remember?

In verse 10, we see that the truth is God is in control and all those who oppose the LORD will eventually be brought down. Why is it important for Christians today to remember this and be hopeful, in light of world events around us?

MOVE

Hannah's story helps us all remember that all that we have is on loan from God. We are all just stewards of the blessings we have, so that we might be a blessing to others and continually point back to God, for despite what we might endure, we serve a loving and good God who has a purpose for everything under the sun.

What Hannah wanted most, she gave up and dedicated to the Lord. Hannah dedicated her life in service to God, along with her child. Hannah presented her whole life to God and not just parts of it. Her story should inspire us to trust God in the midst of storms and to know that God hears, responds and can be trusted. As Chad said in the message this week, "God is not only the King of the feast, but also the King of the floods." In good times and barren and difficult times, God can be trusted.

Let's read one of the key verses in Hannah's story:

1 Samuel 1:26-28

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. I prayed for this child, and the LORD has granted me what I asked of him. So now I give him to the LORD. For his whole life he will be given over to the LORD."

Is there any area of life that you would say is difficult to lay down before the Lord or dedicate to God?

Do any of you have a story where you can relate to Hannah? Perhaps you saw God move in a difficult situation that you thought was hopeless?

Think of the people around you, those you can influence. Is there someone this week that you know is going through a difficult time and you could just encourage them this week?

PRAY

As a group, spend some time praying for each other and the struggles that we all face. If you are in a co-ed group, consider breaking up into men and women's groups to talk more freely.

TO GO

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.