

In our previous lessons we have studied how fear, worry, despair and depression can keep us from living with hope. In Lesson Five we studied how living in sorrow can also keep us from living with hope. Let's now review our lesson on sorrow. First, we will review what sorrow is, what it does to us, and how we can deal with it biblically. Then we will review our examples from the Word of God.

1. **Living with sorrow** is something we have all experienced to some degree throughout our life. Just like fear, worry, despair and depression, we sorrow because we live in a fallen world. Sorrow came with the curse; when Adam sinned. We learned from the experiences of these three saints:
 - A. **Hannah**, who sorrowed over not having something she desperately wanted, and yet didn't have.
 - B. **David**, who sorrowed over the consequences of his sin with Bathsheba.
 - C. **Jeremiah**, who sorrowed over the sin and coming destruction of his homeland.

- D. We are not unique in our sorrow, although sometimes that may be how we feel.

For example,

We have each at some time **wanted something desperately** yet we didn't receive it. A few examples are: (1) Material things such as a home, car, etc. (2) Education, job, traveling (3) Harmony within family relationships, (4) children or grandchildren, and (5) Good health.

And we have all sorrowed...

- a. Over the **consequences of our sin**. For all of us this sorrow led us to believe by faith in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of our sin. We understand that we need a Savior and we believe by faith that Jesus is the only way to have peace with God and be saved. We trust in Him alone. Also, in our Christian walk it is good to sorrow over our sin because it leads us to godly changes. Paul is writing to the carnal saints in Corinth whom he addresses over their sinful behavior. *Notice that Paul mentions godly and worldly sorrow:*

"Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing. For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death" (2Corinthians 7:9-10).

- i. **Godly sorrow** leads to a change of thinking and behavior.
- ii. **Worldly sorrow** does not. Worldly sorrow is when you're sorry you did it but you do it again. You haven't really changed your thinking about it in your heart. What you're really sorry about is that you got caught.

Also...

- b. Many of us have sorrowed over the **loss of a loved one** and have found the Word of God to be our true comfort. We have found that our 4 step plan from Philippians 4:6-7, which we use to confront fear, worry, despair and depression, helps us in our sorrow over our loss. We understand as well that in our sorrow we will be in constant prayer as we grieve and adjust to our new life.

"The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit" (Psalm 34:18).

"Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:6-7).

- Step 1. **Recognize** that you are in sorrow. **Realize** God will lead you out of your sorrow.
 Step 2. **Take** your sorrow to God. Ask him for comfort, and the strength to move out of your sorrow and adjust to a new life without your loved one.
 Step 3. Be **thankful**. Thank God for all the good things he has already done for you.
 Step 4. **Trust God** that he will lead you out of your sorrow. You have taken your sorrow to the only One who can truly help you and believe; now believe that he will. Receive His peace.

We have each sorrowed over...

- c. The **sin in our Country, our homeland, America**. We sorrow over the ever increasing immorality and violence. We sorrow that our Lord and Savior has lost honor in the places of governmental leadership. We sorrow too because we sense the coming persecution of those who love the Lord and for the looming destruction of our homeland. We are reminded of Proverbs 6:16-19 of these things the LORD hates:

"These six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren."

Let's more closely examine what it is to sorrow...

2. **How does sorrow effect you?**

- A. The state of being sorrowful happens when you have suffered the loss of something good in your life. Your mind is **uneasy** or **in pain** as you grieve and miss what you have lost. You may even feel sorrowful to the point that you are **overwhelmed** by your loss. There are many reasons for sorrow and a few of them are: (1) **loss** of a loved one, (2) the loss of a job and finances, (3) the loss of health, and (4) the growing uncertainty in life.
- B. We need to consider and **be mindful** that if we don't handle our sorrow **biblically** we leave ourselves open to becoming **bitter or angry**. To keep from doing this we need to accept the following biblical truths:
- **God allows** things into our lives at his timing and for his purpose and it is for our good. "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose" (Romans 8:28).
 - We must remember that **God is always at work** in our lives: "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ" (Philippians 1:6).
 - God is always at work **transforming us** into the image of his Son Jesus: "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, the he might be the firstborn among many brethren" (Romans 8:29).

- **God loves you.** And he always will.

"And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour" (Ephesians 5:2).

And we know that...

- C. **This past year** in particular has been a rough year for most people everywhere.
 - a. Some have **suffered** from the COVID virus and have even lost a loved one to COVID and to other diseases. Some have lost a **job** and **finances**
 - b. 2020 has turned our way of life upside down! We sorrow over the growing idolatry and corruption in our society. We miss the "old" America that we loved.
 - c. Being sorrowful can **rob us** of our peace and make being hopeful difficult.

However, God desires for us to have peace and to have hope in Him, not in the world. Let's review the examples of sorrow in the lives of Hannah, David, and Jeremiah and learn from how they each dealt with their sorrow biblically. **God's Word has the answer for our sorrow...**

3. Who was Hannah?
 - A. She was born around 1100 BC and may have been contemporary with Samson the judge.
 - B. She lived during the time of the Judges when Israel had no king...it will be her son Samuel who will later anoint Israel's first king, who is King Saul.
 - C. Hannah is only found in 1Samuel 1:2-2:21. She is not mentioned elsewhere in the Bible.
 - D. Hannah is one of two wives of Elkanah. His second wife was Peninnah.
 - a. Hannah's husband Elkanah was a descendant of the tribe of Levi (1Chronicles 6:26, 33) and was called an "Ephraimite" because he lived in the hill country around mount Ephraim, northeast of Jerusalem.
 - E. Hannah's name means "grace, favor". Peninnah's name means "precious stone or pearl".
4. **Hannah's sorrow**
 - A. She was barren, which was a source of shame because children were considered a blessing.
 - B. Elkanah's second wife Peninnah continually provoked and made fun of her for being barren. Peninnah had sons and daughters and she held it over Hannah.
5. The **annual sacrifice.**
 - A. Elkanah and his two wives Hannah and Elkanah traveled 30 miles to the tabernacle in Shiloh to make their annual sacrifice.
 - a. The tabernacle was centrally located in Shiloh. Later the tabernacle was moved to Jerusalem; following a time when the ark was lost to the Philistines in a war. However, when David recaptured the ark he then took it to Jerusalem. Later David's son Solomon built a temple to house the ark.
 - B. Elkanah gave portions to sacrifice to Peninnah and her children, but he gave a larger portion to Hannah. He had a special love for Hannah and tried to comfort her for coming each year to Shiloh childless. He knew she was desperate to have a son.

6. Hannah's **plan**
 - A. After the family meal she left and sat on a seat by the post of the tabernacle of the LORD. There she **wept** and **prayed**. She took her sorrow for being childless to the LORD. She poured out her heart to the LORD in prayer.
 - B. Hannah made a vow that if the LORD would give her a son she would give him to the LORD for service unto the LORD.
7. Someone was **watching** Hannah...
 - A. Eli the priest saw her as she was pouring out her heart in prayer to the LORD. However, as she was praying her lips were moving but her voice was silent. Hannah was praying in her heart. But Eli thought she must be drunk so he confronted her telling her to stop drinking the wine.
8. Hannah's **response** to Eli the priest...
 - A. Hannah told him she was not drunk and she hasn't even had any strong drink. She was full of sorrow and was pouring her heart out before the LORD.
9. Eli the priest's **promise** to Hannah
 - A. He told her that she would receive from the God of Israel what she had prayed about.
 - B. After Eli told her this she wasn't sad or sorrowful anymore. Previously she had no appetite but now her appetite returned and she went and ate.

Perhaps this is a good time for you to recall a time when you shared a dilemma with someone seeking godly counsel... Remember how your spirit was lifted up after they spoke to you about the LORD and the true hope you have in Him?

This must have been the way Hannah felt after Eli talked to her about the LORD's promise to her.

Eli's promise from the LORD fulfilled...

- C. The **LORD** heard Hannah's prayer and she conceived and **had a son**. Eli's promise came to pass. She named her son "Samuel" saying "Because I have asked him of the LORD".
10. Hannah keeps her **vow** to the LORD
 - A. When Samuel was **weaned** she and her husband Elkanah took him to Eli the priest and gave him to serve the LORD.
 - a. According to Jewish custom a child was weaned anywhere between 18 months and 5 years old. It's suggested that Samuel was likely between 2 and 4 year old because of 1Samuel 1: 24: "and the child was young".
 - b. When a child was weaned it was a big event. For example, Abraham had a feast when Isaac was weaned: "And the child grew, and was weaned: and Abraham made a great feast the same day that Isaac was weaned" (Genesis 21:8). Due to the high infant mortality rate in ancient cultures a child was expected to live into adulthood when they were old enough to be weaned.
 - B. Hannah took with her an **offering** of 3 bullocks, one ephah of flour, and a bottle of wine. She told Eli that she had brought the son that she had prayed about. He is lent to the LORD for as long as he lives. She left him with Eli and Samuel worshipped the LORD there.

- C. Hannah **loved Samuel** and thought about him and his needs. Every year when Hannah came to offer a sacrifice at Shiloh she brought with her a coat for Samuel. As he grew he would need a new coat and she provided for his needs.

11. **Hannah's prayer of joy** in the LORD is recorded in 1Samuel 2:1-10. Hanna had personally experienced God's grace in her life by God's answer to her prayer for a son. God even gave her more sons and daughters. Hannah's dilemma was no more!

- A. This prayer shows she was a woman who knew who God was and trusted in him. She took her sorrow of being childless to him in prayer. As soon as Eli told her that God was going to give her a son she was no longer sad. She trusted in the LORD and the promise He God gave her through Eli the priest.

Let's examine this beautiful prayer to the LORD from Hannah...

"And Hannah prayed, and said, My heart rejoiceth in the LORD, mine horn is exalted in the LORD: my mouth is enlarged over mine enemies; because I rejoice in thy salvation" (1Sameul 2:1).

Hannah's prayer begins with her praising God for what he has personally done for her

1. She finds her greatest joy and strength in the LORD. She praises him for being the source of her joy and strength.
2. She praises the LORD with all that is in her heart. God has caused her to prevail over her enemies. Perhaps her enemy was Peninnah who used to shame and mock her for being childless. Peninnah brought her low but the LORD lifted her up.
3. She rejoices because the LORD removed her humiliation and gave her a son. God has saved her from the shame of being childless.

"There is none holy as the LORD: for there is none beside thee: neither is there any rock like our God" (1Samuel 2:2).

1. She praises the power, strength, faithfulness, and holiness of the LORD. He is unique, there is no god like him.
2. She leaned upon God as her rock during her sorrow of being childless. God has made her life stable by giving her a son.

"Talk no more so exceeding proudly; let not arrogancy come out of your mouth: for the LORD is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed. The bows of mighty men are broken, and they that stumble are girded with strength. They that were full have hired out themselves for bread; and they that were hungry ceased: so that the barren hath born seven; and she that hath many children is waxed feeble" (1Samuel 2:3-5)

Hannah's prayer broadens to include the world and mankind

1. She cautions others not to be arrogant and think they control the outcome of their actions. Hannah may have been thinking of how prideful Peninnah was toward her since Peninnah had children when Hannah was childless.
2. God knows the thoughts of every person and God sees everything that we do
3. God is the judge of all our actions and everything that we do

"The LORD killeth, and maketh alive: he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up. The LORD maketh poor, and maketh rich: he bringeth low, and lifteth up. He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifeth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory: for the pillars of the earth are the LORD's and he hath set the world upon them. He will keep the feet of his saints, and the wicked shall be silent in darkness; for by strength shall no man prevail. The adversaries of the LORD shall be broken to pieces; out of heaven shall he thunder upon them: the LORD shall judge the ends of the earth; and he shall give strength unto his king, and exalt the horn of his anointed" (1Samuel 2:6-10)

Hannah's prayer now describes how God deals with mankind

1. God is sovereign over all things; God controls life and death
2. God controls poverty and wealth; God humbles and exalts
3. God had made the earth and it belongs to him; God is the judge over the earth
4. God will destroy those who oppose him; God will protect his saints
5. A prophecy of God's actions in the lives of Samuel, David, and the nation Israel. The ultimate "anointed one" would be Jesus Christ, who is Lord over all.

Our Observation...

Hannah was a woman who had a great faith and a strong relationship with God. In her sorrow of being childless Hannah's faith in the LORD led her to take her request to him in prayer.

Next we will look at David, known as a man after God's heart (Acts 13:22)...

12. **David** was used by God in many ways, yet David was no stranger to sin and sorrow. In this Lesson we read about David's sin that resulted in his sorrow over the death of his child. First, a few facts about David.
- A. David lived between 1040 – 970 BC (70 years)
 - a. He was the youngest of Jesse's sons and as a child he was a **shepherd**. He had musical talent and could play the lyre, which is similar to a small harp. He played the lyre to sooth king Saul, which is how David became one of Saul's armour bearers.
 - b. David slew a lion and a bear to defend his father's flocks and he slew the giant **Goliath** when no one else would face the challenge.
 - c. When King Saul died David replaced him as king. He **organized Israel** and **subdued** their neighboring nations. He was a strong warrior and won many battles for the LORD.
 - d. Much has been written about David's character, talents, and his strength as a warrior, but it is the **LORD who best describes David:**
Samuel speaking to King Saul...

"But now thy kingdom shall not continue: the LORD hath sought him a man after his own heart, and the LORD hath commanded him to be captain over his people because thou haust not kept that which the LORD commanded thee (1Samuel 13: 14).

And Paul speaking to the men of Israel...

"And when he had removed him, he raised up unto them David to be their king; to whom also he gave testimony, and said I HAVE FOUND DAVID The son of Jesse, A MAN AFTER MINE OWN HEART, which shall fulfill all my will" (Acts 13:22).

Now will learn about...

13. **David's sin** with Bathsheba and his resulting **sorrow**. Summary of 2Samuel 11: 1-24 and 2Samuel 12: 1-23

- A. Instead of **going off to war** with his men **David stayed home**. He spent time on his rooftop watching Bathsheba as she bathed. He then learned that she was the wife of Uriah, an officer in his army. Now Uriah was not home because he was off at war. In spite of this, David sent for Bathsheba and she conceived a child with David.
- a. After she told David she had conceived, he sent word to Joab, his general, to **send Uriah back home**. David was hoping to cover up his adultery by providing Uriah an opportunity to lay with his wife Bathsheba so Uriah would think the child was his. However, Uriah would not indulge this privilege since all the other men were off fighting a war. He was an honorable man and did not want to have privileges the other men didn't have.
 - b. Since David's **plan didn't work**, he sent Uriah back with a letter to General Joab. In the letter he told Joab to put Uriah in the very front of the hottest battle so he will be hit and will die. As a result Uriah was killed in battle. As soon as Bathsheba's time of mourning was over she became David's wife.

However...

- B. The LORD was **displeased** with what David had done so he sent **Nathan the prophet** to confront David about his sin.
- a. Nathan **exposed David's sin** to him by telling him **a story** about a rich man and a poor man. The rich man had many flocks and herds but the poor man had only one little ewe lamb (young female sheep). The poor man loved his little lamb and it was his constant companion; he fed it and it laid in his lap. When the rich man showed up, instead of taking a lamb from his many flocks, he took the poor man's ewe lamb and killed it to eat.
 - b. **David** was very angry against this rich man and said that he deserved to die for doing this.
 - c. The prophet **Nathan** then told David that he was **just like that rich man** because he had taken Uriah's one wife and then had Uriah killed to cover up his adultery with his wife.
 - d. David had done this in spite of all the LORD had allowed him to have. Because of this, **evil would rise up in his household**.
"Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thine house; because thou hast despised me, and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife" (2Samuel 12:10).

Because of David's sin the child he would have with Bathsheba would die.

- e. After Nathan left David, **the child** of David and Bathsheba became **sick**. David prayed, laid on the earth, and would not eat. Yet, seven days later the child died.
- f. All his servants were afraid to tell him that **his child had died** fearing he would become even more sorrowful. However, when **David was told** he got up, washed and changed his clothes, and went to eat. His servants didn't expect this and when they asked David about it and he told them:

"And he said, While the child was yet alive, I fasted and wept: for I said, Who can tell whether GOD will be gracious to me, that the child may live? But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me" (2Samuel 12: 22-23).

We see how...

14. David's hope that sustained him during his sorrow
- When he learned his child was sick **he sought the LORD's mercy in prayer.**
 - When the child died **David accepted the LORD's will.**
 - David's **hope sustained** him in his sorrow. He knew he would see his child again. "...I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me." (2Samuel 12:23)
 - David had **peace.** With this peace he stopped fasting, got up from the ground and ate bread.

Our Observation...

Do you see how David's response to his sorrow actually followed "our plan" from Philippians 4:6-7?

"Be careful for nothing but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus (Philippians 4:6-7).

Now we will look at the life of the prophet Jeremiah, a man who sorrowed over the sin of Judah...

15. Jeremiah's life as a prophet of the LORD
- Jeremiah was born in Judah 650 – 570 BC (80 years). He grew up during the reign of righteous **King Josiah** of Judah who reigned from 640 to 609 BC. Some accounts say Jeremiah was 17 years old when he began to prophesy, others say he was closer to 23 years old. In either case, Jeremiah was a young man when he began to prophesy. Jeremiah's was a prophet for **40 years:** from the 13th year of King Josiah's reign until the fall of Jerusalem in 586 BC. He prophesied during the reign of three kings of Judah: Josiah, Jehoiakim, and Zedekiah, ending with the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar.
 - Jeremiah is called the **weeping** prophet because he sorrowed over Judah, which was the Southern Kingdom of Israel consisting of two tribes. The Northern Kingdom of 10 tribes had previously fell to the Assyrians in 722 BC.
16. Jeremiah's calling of the LORD
- Jeremiah** was a prophet of the LORD **before** he was born. The word of the LORD came to Jeremiah saying:
"Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations" (Jeremiah 1:5).
 - Jeremiah **didn't think** he could speak as a prophet because he was still a child. But the LORD encouraged Jeremiah when **He touched Jeremiah's mouth** and told him that He had put the words in his mouth. The LORD also encouraged Jeremiah to not be afraid:

"Be not afraid of their faces: for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the LORD" (Jeremiah 1:8).

C. Jeremiah's **purpose** was to root out, bring down and destroy nations as well as to build and plant nations. Jeremiah would be the messenger of bad news to the kings so he would continually face opposition and he would be unpopular. His life would not be happy.

D. Jeremiah **rebukes** Jerusalem, remembering the former years, with the word of the LORD:

"GO and CRY in the ears of Jerusalem, saying, Thus saith the LORD; I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, when thou wentest after me in the wilderness, in a land that was not sown" (Jeremiah 2:2).

17. **Jeremiah's treatment** as a prophet of the LORD (**one example**) and his prayer to the LORD.

A. Pashur, who is the son of the priest and chief governor in the temple, heard that Jeremiah was prophesying the destruction of Jerusalem for their idolatry by their enemies. So Pashur beat him and put him in the stocks (used to inflict punishment) near the temple.

B. The next day when Pashur removed him from the stocks Jeremiah began prophesying the word of the LORD again. Speaking the word of the LORD Jeremiah told Pashur that the LORD does not call him Pashur but calls him Magormissabib, which means "fear on every side". This describes the fate to come upon Pashur and his family who would be carried to Babylon to die there. Jeremiah describes how all of Judah would be given to the king of Babylon. Following this...

C. **Jeremiah begins to pray to the LORD** about how he is being treated:

"O LORD, thou hast deceived me, and I was deceived: thou art stronger than I, and hast prevailed: I am in derision daily, every one mocketh me" (Jeremiah 20:7).

D. Jeremiah then laments that **he tried to stay still** and not speak the words of prophecy against Judah but he simply could not.

"But his word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay" (Jeremiah 20:9).

E. Wherever Jeremiah went someone was always looking for an opportunity to **take revenge** against him. However, Jeremiah was comforted and had confidence because the LORD is stronger than his enemies:

"But the LORD is with me as a mighty terrible one: therefore my persecutors shall stumble, and they shall not prevail: they shall be greatly ashamed; for they shall not prosper: their everlasting confusion shall never be forgotten" (Jeremiah 20:11).

F. Jeremiah then **praises the LORD** for delivering him from the evildoers. His focus was on the LORD. "Sing unto the LORD, praise ye the LORD: for he hath delivered the soul of the poor from the hand of evildoers" (Jeremiah 20:13).

18. **Jeremiah's example** to us

A. He is an example to us of **obedience to God** in spite of severe persecution and ridicule. He stood firm for God even when doing so made him unpopular.

B. He is also an example of **taking our concerns to the Lord** in prayer and praising the Lord. *Also...*

- C. When we have **sorrow over the idolatry** in our Country, we can remember how Jeremiah continued to obey God and His truth as he too sorrowed over the idolatry in Judah.

We ended our study of Jeremiah by considering two verses from the book of Lamentations

19. The book of Lamentations

- A. Tradition holds that Jeremiah is the author of Lamentations because its' author had witnessed the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians. Support for this is also found in 2Chronicles 35:25).
- B. Lamentation means someone who grieves, mourns, or weeps to express their deep sorrow. Seeing his beloved Jerusalem destroyed caused Jeremiah to weep and be sorrowful. He wept over Judah's unrepentant idolatry which was the cause of God's judgment upon them. However, in the midst of all the destruction that Jeremiah saw he still saw hope!
- C. "It is of the LORD's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness" (Lamentations 3:22-23). Our lesson asked us to (1) write these verses in our own words, and (2) explain how these verses give you hope.

(1) In my own words:

If it wasn't for God's never-ending mercy I would perish. Life would just be too hard. But God gives me mercy and compassion every day. Great is God's faithfulness.

(2) How these verses give me hope:

I can always rely upon God's mercy every moment of every day. He never fails to provide what I need. I don't have to worry that God will change his mind because He cannot change and he does not lie. He will do what he says he will do. His mercy and compassion are life-saving cushions as I go through my life full of knocks and bumps. Knowing I can count on the faithfulness of God gives me hope.

As interesting note...

- D. The hymn "Great is Thy Faithfulness" is a hymn written by Thomas Chisholm (1866-1960) based on Lamentations 3:23. "It is of the LORD's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness (vs 23)" (Lamentations 3:22-23).