

# WEEK 4: HANNAH

*“Hannah was in deep anguish, crying bitterly as she prayed to the Lord.” – 1 Samuel 1:10*

## **1 Samuel 1 & 3**

Therapists who work with children often use a feeling chart to help a child name the emotion they are experiencing. Some charts are simple with just a few feelings listed: mad, sad, glad. Others list more than 50 emotions for a child to choose from! That is a whole lot of feelings!

We often fall into the trap of defining some of our feelings as okay or acceptable and others as not. Then we try to hide or stuff the feelings that we think are not okay. We might think, “It’s okay to be sad, but I can’t be angry.” The problem with doing that is that the feelings don’t go away; they fester and can become destructive. Feelings need to be identified and acknowledged before we can deal with them.

Hannah knew this. And she knew what to do with all of her feelings – the good, the bad, and the ugly. She brought them to God and she poured her heart out. She hid nothing from God. She expressed her sorrow and her anguish and cried bitter tears over not being able to have a child. In fact, she was so distraught that the priest thought she was drunk! But from what we can tell in the passage, after she poured her heart out, she felt better. No matter what is happening, we can talk to God about it.

Are you experiencing tough emotions today? Do you have deep desires in your heart that have yet to be met? Are you angry, sad, afraid? When was the last time you poured your heart out to God? He already knows your feelings, but he loves to hear you share them with him. You may have felt judged or shamed by others for having certain feelings, but God will never make you feel that way. The safest place to pour your heart out is at his feet.

### **QUESTIONS TO THINK ABOUT:**

1. What’s the greatest burden you are facing right now? Have you brought it to God?
2. How do you feel when a prayer goes unanswered?

3. How do those unanswered prayers or suppressed emotions affect your relationship with God?
4. Think about Hannah laying it all out before the Lord. Take some time to do that now and rest in the love your Heavenly Father has for you. What are some qualities of God that bring you comfort and make you feel loved?