

Sample of Hannah's Story....

Saul-David-Samuel Story
A lifted story, from the scripture of 1st Samuel
Draft 1
Chelsea LeValley

Setting: A desert near a forest. Foliage and terrain is reminiscent of Joshua Tree National Park.

Time: The distant future and also the distant past.

Characters:

In this world:

It's really hot. Desert like. There are wars. They add droplets of water

At top:

There might be a large set of stairs made out of boxes of wood that can be stacked and unstacked in different configurations. There might be rocks pinning the corners of the stage. There might be dirt or sand on the floor surface, a Joshua tree-like sculpture, perhaps its dead. The backdrop or light plot might be dessert like, a setting sun. It's warm, earthy, and ethereal. We're in a world that is in the future but reminds us much more of the past.

(We hear muffled shouts and what sounds like a nearby airstrike. A woman, approaching her middle age and a bit bedraggled though beautiful in form and spirit, Hannah, hurries in searching for privacy. Despondent, she collapses on the steps.)

Hannah is on the steps of Abba's house. Eli tells her she's a drunk and encourages her to go away. Abba comes out playing with the boy, and hears her praying and brings her inside and they talk.

What's cool about Saul is that he is with Abba but is pulling away from him. Saul and Abba have solo conversations. "Spirit of the Lord" appears only in connection with Saul and David. God equipped Saul. Abba is trying to get Saul back to him to love him and follow him again.

PRIEST

You, woman! Get up from there!

HANNAH

Please no, sir, I mean no harm.

PRIEST

Shoo! Wine-bibbler.

HANNAH

Please I'm here to pray.

PRIEST

(he laughs) Pray somewhere else. You're dirtying up the temple steps. Go on.

HANNAH

Please, I need to see Abba.

PRIEST

He doesn't talk to luses.

(he begins to physically force her, she)

HANNAH

No please, (she stumbles over her words, in nervousness) I'mmm.. not drunks.

PRIEST

(beat, then, he whistles and another man comes on, they begin to drag her out)

HANNAH

Elohime. Eluhanu melachalome. Abba, please. I need to speak with you.

PRIEST

She's babbling

HANNAH

Adoni Elohime, Eluhanue melachalome. Please, hear me. Hear my anguish.

PRIEST

Get gone! (they throw her onto the street, laugh and leave. She lays there a moment)

HANNAH

Whispering quietly, crying, praying.

(Eli, a friend of Abba enters)

ELI

(enters and watches her) It's not quite becoming of any of us to be two sheets to the wind and wine-ing about the streets, is it?

HANNAH

(seeing Eli)

My lord, I'm not drunk. I'm a woman who is deeply troubled.

ELI

I'm not a lord.

HANNAH
And I'm not drunk.

ELI
(playfully) I concede.

HANNAH
Those priests...they're...

ELI
Confused at best, evil at worse? I know.

HANNAH
Yes! I've been pouring out my soul to Abba. Asking him that he might look kindly on me and grant me my petition.

ELI
A woman of Abba? (nods, pleased) Why did you go to that temple?

HANNAH
Cuz that's his house?

ELI
(laughs!) Yeah, he got evicted.

HANNAH
What? By who?

ELI
Some guy named, Greed. Lusty guy, going after power in the guise of religion. Its pretty stuffy in there these days. I take it you haven't been in a while?

HANNAH
My husband and I live too far away. We usually spend time with Abba when He visits.

ELI
Me too. In here? Would you like to come inside?

HANNAH
Is He there?

ELI
He's here.

HANNAH

YES. I mean, I don't know. No. Will I see him? Do I look...okay? What am I saying. Yes.

ELI

Come on in.

(We enter a room with a giant hearth. Abba is rolling around on the floor wrestling playfully with a small kid and they're both laughing)

ABBA

Hannah!

HANNAH

Abba! You remember me.

ABBA

I never forget you.

KID

Hey, Abba! Jake invited me over for dinner! Jets-

ABBA

Have fun. Tell Jake I said hi.

KID

Okay will do!

ABBA

And Patty, you know where to find me.

(they do gesture they both know for farewell. Patty exits)

ELI

I'm gonna pick up. Hannah, nice to meet you.

ABBA

Your hair. It's beautiful, Hannah.

HANNAH

Thank you. So is yours. How it falls like that...

ABBA

Thank you.

(beat, they take each-other in)

ABBA

I've missed you.

HANNAH

I've missed you! But I've written to you, many times.

ABBA

I have them.

ABBA

Why did you come today?

HANNAH

I'm so miserable. I haven't eaten in weeks. I'm afraid I can't have children. It's all I've ever wanted really. And my husband too, and now I can't? My body won't let me? Why? Did I do something to offend God? Why is he withholding from me? My sister, Kayla is horrible to me about it. Mocking me. Saying I'm worthless. And Ryan, he's-

ABBA

He's so sweet, I know!

HANNAH

He is. But it's just...not enough.

ABBA

It's not.

HANNAH

Will you? Ask God for me? Please, ask Him to give me a child. Ask Him if there's something I did that's preventing it. And if He does give me a child, tell Him, I'll give him back to God. He can live here with you. Like Patty. And learn the ways of Love and be a soldier for it.

ABBA

(he takes her hands in his) God has his plans and trust me, they're so good. Better, than what you imagine.

HANNAH

I know. I just...feel forgotten.

ABBA

You're not.

HANNAH

How long do I have to wait? What if the answer is no?

ABBA

Do you want to know?

HANNAH

Know what?

ABBA

The answer, if you're able to have children?

HANNAH

Yes. NO. I don't know if I'm ready to hear it.

ABBA

Father, God. Give Hannah peace to know You are in control and you are bringing all things together for her good because she loves you. Thank you for helping her find the right address today to us. We've missed her. Let fear not rule in her heart, but love and a profound knowing that she is loved. And God, if it seems good to you, Give her a child.

HANNAH

Yes, please, God. Thank you.

ELI

(calling out the backyard) Hey everybody, let's eat!

(we hear the sound of lots of feet running as if heading to table for dinner)

HANNAH

(smiling, at peace) Let's eat.

Scene 2

Scene-song where Hannah is carrying a baby, praising God, baby grows up and is a boy and is given to Eli and plays with Abba and becomes an older man, Samuel who is spending time with ABBA (who is now played by a different actress) and is good friends with him and is spending time praying.

Scene 3

We're back in a house that resembles the Abba House but it has aged and is slightly updated. Samuel sits quietly in his chair singing the melody of the song that just played. Abba is also there. Reading. (Or in a heated discussion)

ABBA

The Israelites want a king.

SAMUEL

They already have a king.

ABBA

They don't know Him.

SAMUEL

That's just the problem. If you could just introduce yourself to them.

ABBA

I have. They like me for a day and then they...reject me. (or get bored of me)

SAMUEL

Sounds about right.

(We hear a commotion outside. Abba and People are yelling. There's a hard knock on the door. Abba and Samuel look at each other.)

MOBBER 1

Samuel! We're doing waiting on you to hear from Elohim. We're done waiting on Him to give us a king.

GROUP

YEAH, we're done!, give us a king, etc.

MOBBER 1

We're here to make a deal with you. Peacefully.

GROUP

Laughter

SAMUEL

(looks at Abba, then) Uh, I can't come to the door right now...you'll have to come back.

(There's banging on the door.)

MOBBER 1

Open up!

(Samuel jumps, hides)

ABBA

(laughs) Samuel.

SAMUEL

Well I don't know. They might have... pitchforks-you don't know! (off his look) Okay you know.

MOBBER 2

You can't hide in there forever.

MOBBER 1

We're gonna break down the door if you don't answer it.

ABBA

(sighs) Samuel, its not you they're rejecting. It's me. Its Elohim. Listen to them and give them what they want, but warn them... what he'll be like...

MOBBER 1

Samuel, open up or we're gonna break down the door!!

(Samuel opens the door, the people rush into his house)

SAMUEL

Welcome to my home.

MOBBER 1

This place is tiny.

SAMUEL

Its enough.

MOBBER 2

Look Samuel, we're tired of waiting.

SAMUEL

I've gathered that.

MOBBER 1

Don't be smart with me. You told us Elohim would bring us a king.

SAMUEL

He will.

MOBBER 1

We're tired of waiting on Elohim!

SAMUEL

Well this is a rather extreme display of impatience, all around.

MOBBER 2

Look around you! We have nothing. We're still the poorest nation and we have no one to lead us into battle like the others do, we need a king. The Philistines to the north are getting aggressive. We need a king. Now.

SAMUEL

[This is what the king who will reign over you will do. He will take your sons and make them serve with his chariots and horses, and they will run in front of his chariots. Some he will assign to be commanders of thousands and commanders of fifties and others to plow his ground and reap his harvest, and still others to make weapons of war and equipment for his chariots. He will take your daughters to be perfumers and cooks and bakers. He will take the best of your fields and vineyards and olive groves and give them to his attendants. He will take a tenth of your grain and of your vintage and give it to his officials and attendants...and you yourselves will become his slaves. When that day comes you will cry out for relief from the king you have chosen. And Elohim will not answer you in that day.]

MOBBER 3

(beat) Well, when you put it that way-

MOBBER 2

[No! we want a king over us. Then we will be like all the other nations, with a king to lead us and to go out before us and fight our battles."]

SAMUEL

Wait a little while longer, and you'll have a king. Other than Elohim. A king you can see. Who will go out before you, fight your battles for you. She'll be called a person after Elohim's heart and it'll be well for you and your sons and your daughters and wives. She'll serve you.

MOBBER 2

That does sound better.

MOBBER 3

When will that be, another 40 years? We're done. Samuel. Its time to make our own decisions.

(General crowd cheers, they start to advance on Samuel)

SAMUEL

Its not worth it. Was it not Elohim that sent you a prince, from the other side, to lead you out of captivity and into freedom? So that you have your clans now, each having his own land to harvest?

MOBBER 2

How long did we have to wait for that! Look, Sammuel. You're getting old. And your sons are...worthless. They can't help with the disputes like you can and I know you can hardly You can hardly handle judging all of our villages as it is. The people are tired of waiting in line to get your help settling matters Elohim's way.

MOBBER 2

...and pretty soon, you're going to die. And then what?

SAMUEL

Elohim will provide. Abba, tell them. He has good plans.

ABBA

He has good plans, if you'll wait. You'll have a king. A king on earth. One you can see.

MOBBER 3

It's embarrassing. We are always the bastard stepchild of the nations. No king. No flag. No army. We're going to be attacked someday when we least expect it. We need to protect ourselves, fund an army regularly. It's time for Islan to be at its rise!

(Abba and Samuel look at each other. Abba nods.)

SAMUEL

This is not what Elohim says is best for you. And you know-

ABBA

He loves you.

SAMUEL

Yes. He loves you.

MOBBER 3

Give us a king.

SAMUEL

But, a king. Okay. (they look around proud) Eventually.

MOBBER 2

No, now. Tell Him, now. (they advance as if to beat him)

SAMUEL

OKAY! Okay. Ohhkay.

MOBBER 1

There's gonna be a choosing at the end of this week at the Charidum. All the clans will be there. We'll wait for you to choose. (to others) Let's go.

MOBBER 3

(to Abba)...bye.

ABBA

Bye, Jade.

SAMUEL

Bye.

(Samuels falls onto the furniture.)

SAMUEL

Well that was, fun.

(there's another knock on the door)

SAMUEL

Now whose that?

ABBA

The king.

SAMUEL

What?

(Abba nods. Samuel opens the door. He's a teenager who is really tall, really attractive, and has a nervous energy.)

SAUL

Excuse me. Sorry to intrude. I'm missing my donkeys. I heard if I come to Abba's house I'd meet you, Samuel, and you might be able to help me find them. Cuz you talk to Elohim and stuff.

(Samuel looks at Abba as if to say, "this kid is the king?!")

SAMUEL

Come on in, your highness.

SAUL

What?

Scene 4- This scene can be a song. Nervous energy, ala "is it worth the waiting for, if we live till 84..." and the working song in prince of Egypt.

At Mizpah- a big open field with some tents pitched. Its hot. People are grouped off into clans and we are in desert attire and are watching Samuel on a higher plane (maybe a boulder) speaking to the crowd.

SAMUEL

“This is what Elohim says, I brought you out of captivity and delivered you from the kingdoms oppressing you. But you’ve now rejected me who saved you from all your calamities and distresses. And you have said, “No, set a king over us.’ So, now present yourselves by your tribes and clans.”

Clans step forward. Samuel doesn’t find Saul in any of those clans. We can meet each clan in the song. Some have higher power than others. The lowest status clan is the Benjamites.

SAMUEL

(to himself, or Abba who is possibly also there) Is Saul a Benjamite?

Abba points over to a bunch of baggage where Saul is literally hiding behind it.

SAMUEL

Our king seems to elude us.

PEOPLE

What king? There, hiding! There he is! Why him? Etc.

SAMUEL

Saul, come out from hiding.

(Saul refuses until people come and help him out. He is a head taller than everyone else and so beautiful the crowd gasps. Beat. Then the triumphant shouts return.)

MOBBER 1

Long live the king!

OTHERS

Continue the chant

Song continues as a counter point with the people singing long live the king and parading Saul while Samuel is giving the rules of the kingship, writing them down on the scroll and depositing it in the central place of the square. There are some people who may start a dissenting countermelody whose lyrics suggest, “how can this fellow save us?” They are the troublemakers. Saul might get nervous hearing that, but ultimately say nothing about it. We can also wed this with the confirmation ceremony. So there might be fellowship offerings and a great celebration as they did when confirming the kingship at Gilgal. Also in Samuel’s lyrics he might sing 1 Sam 12: 12-18. I’ve done what you asked, but see what an evil thing this is ultimately. Elohim, send rain and thunder that they might know your power and that you’re here and displeased.

Scene 5

Rain and Thunder. 42 years later (Saul is now 72) or 2 years later (we don’t know) Was Saul a teenager or was he 30 years old? Did he already have sons? Then why was he searching for his father’s donkeys and his father was worried about him.

The land is war-torn. People are bedraggled. We meet up with them on the scene of the battlefield. The soldiers are quaking in fear.

SOLDIER 1

We need to make an offering. Now. Give something to Elohim.

SAUL

I will. We have to wait for Samuel.

SOLDIER 1

HE's too old, he probably died on the way here!

SOLDIER 2

The Phillistines could be on us at any moment again and we have no real defense. Our last resort is to ask Elohim to spare us! Ask him for us!

SOLDIER 3

I'll ask him!

SOLDIER 2

Yeah, I'll ask him!

SOLDIER 4

He'd be a better king than Saul.

SOLDIER 2

Prepare the offerings.

SAUL

No! We do it when I say, so, damnnit! (he pulls out a sword to kill his own men)

SOLDIER 2

Go ahead, kill me. If you don't the philistines will since you're too scared. You cant lead us. You can't even set up the offering so we might have a chance at surviving this. You'll just let us die for you. I'm done serving someone who gives me nothing back.

(Saul is embarrassed. He puts down the sword.)

SAUL

Set up the offerings. (everyone is still. Saul shouts rather embarrassingly stressed) YOU HEARD ME!

(They do. Some leave. Some stay. They burn the offering. There's a chant. This can be musicalized)

Samuel enters hearing the music. Seeing him, they begin to stop...This section of dialogue could continue, sung (les mis Javert/JVJ at the bedside style):

SAUL
Samuel.

SAMUEL
What have you done.

SAUL
I waited for you.

SAMUEL
Until you were done waiting. I told you I would come.

SAUL
You were late.

SAMUEL
On whose watch? On whose time, Saul? Elohim delivers in his timing not in ours.

SAUL
I waited the number of days you said to wait but the Philistines...they're here. We have to be ready. My men- (the men are silent and watching. He sees them.) It was time to make the sacrifice. Like we planned.

SAMUEL
And defy the rules of the sacrifice? Because you were afraid you were abandoned? You hold the power to walk away. Choose to stay the course, Saul.

SAUL
I can't keep being at your mercy. Obeying rules from a God I cannot see! I have to do what I have to do for my people.

SAMUEL
Your people will desert you. Your God will not, if you do not desert him.

SAUL
Enough! (beat as they take in the harshness) Enough. On with you all. We attack at nightfall. Prepare yourselves.

(As the soldiers leave. One of them spits. Was it at Saul? They're gone. Saul sinks or sits, despondent. Samuel comforts.)

SAMUEL

Saul. Why do I hear the bleating of sheep?

(beat)

SAMUEL

Why, Saul? There was to be no spoil taken. None.

SAUL

Because we kept the best of the spoil. To make sacrifices with, for Elohim.

SAMUEL

Saul. Elohim delights in mercy not sacrifice.

SAUL

Get away from me! (he is possessed or distressed, and Samuel sees it and backs away) GO!

SAMUEL

You've made the kingship about you and forgotten the one who brings low the proud and honors the humble in spirit. I spoke with Abba. Its time. He's chosen a king for his people. One through whom the One True King will eventually come. But for now, this king, will be an example. He's lowly and humble of heart. A man after the heart of God.

SAUL

I can be after the heart of God.

SAMUEL

Yes, you can be. But you're after the hearts of men. And they'll spit on you, every time. (beat)
Goodbye, Saul.

Samuel exits.

SAUL

I didn't dismiss you!

Samuel is gone. Saul is alone. He lets out a loud sound. Lights out.

Scene 6

There's cheering and dancing in the streets. People are laughing. There's fanfare and trumpets in the background. Women race by laughing. They're chanting, "SAUL HAS SLAIN THOUSANDS AND DAVID HIS TENS OF THOUSANDS" Its sing-songy and a bit eerie despite the cheerful soundscape otherwise.

WOMAN 1

Did you hear!?! David, the little shepherd boy, with one stone! He took down the Philistine army. Abba was with him he says.

MICHAL
He had no armor!

WOMAN 1
Is he cute?

MICHAL
Stop! (blushes)

WOMAN 3
Yes.

MICHAL
(embarrassed) Stop. He's a man after Elohim's heart. Anything my father asks him to do, he does to, excellence, and my brother trusts him. Abba is with Him.

WOMAN 2
Well, I want to be with him too!

MICHAL
You two stop it. He's too busy. He'll probably become an armorbearer. Or a unich.

WOMEN
Ugh. So sad.

WOMAN 1
Girl. I know.

MICHAL
Or honorable.

(they look at her)

WOMAN 1
Okay who gave her the drunk punch.

(they laugh as they exit together)

SAUL in his chamber, coming away from his window.

SAUL
Saul has slain his thousands and David his tens of thousands. What's next. He'll have my whole kingdom. Jonathan!

JONATHAN

Father. What do people say of my servant David?

JONATHAN

Just what you and I say, Father. That he is a loyal servant to the king and a man after the heart of Elohim. They say Abba is with him.

SAUL

Ugh. I know all that. But do people...people seem to like him. Why?

JONATHAN

You like him, Father. You chose him to be your right hand man. Why do you like him?

SAUL

I'm asking you, now.

JONATHAN

Well. When I first saw David. He was nothing but a boy. That day he, trusted Elohim, like a fool, hopeless trusting in one he cannot see, to help him win the battle against the Philistine Giant. And when he did, he wasn't shocked and he wasn't afraid. And when we stood there and told I'm he'd be the cup bearer for you, he just looked like the kind of person I wanted to be like. Valiant, humble, a servant and yet a leader. And we were only kids then.

SAUL

That was a long time ago.

JONATHAN

Why do you ask, Father.

SAUL

(beat) Never mind.

JONATHAN

Father.

(Saul is silent and looking out the window)

JONATHAN

Why do you love David?

SAUL

Because his heart is good. And I trust him. (laughs sweetly remembering) And he's a brave and fiery thing. That boy –(he laughs, Jonathan joins him)

JONATHAN

He is.

(beat)

Father, and me? Why do you love me.

SAUL

(coldly) Because you're my son.

JONATHAN

I love David too.

(We hear the women chanting again in the street that same song. Saul has an angry disposition come over him, remembering the chants of the women.)

JONATHAN

Have you heard? The battle you sent them on? David and the men were victorious. He said, Elohim was with him and our men survived and came home. Everyone's happy. Its good for the kingdom.

SAUL

(harsher than intended) Yes. (gentler) Send David to me.

JONATHAN

(Jonathan nods, exits)

Saul is alone. The womens' chant gets louder and louder and maybe if choreographic convention allows it, they dance around him, maybe there's reverb on their mics and its general cacophony. Saul lets out a loud sound that reminds us of the first one. Lights out)

continues from here...