

Hannah's Prayer

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Preacher: Andrew Wingfield

[0:00] . .

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Thank you.

Thank you.

[3:56] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

[6:56] Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

And...

for, that you want to praise God for, and that's brilliant. And our time together this morning is all about that. It's about praising God and thanking him together. And what a privilege we have to be able to come together and praise God together. That's so special.

I'm just going to pray now and thank God for that. And while I do that, can the musicians come up, please? Thank you so much. So let's pray. Father God, we thank you so much that we have many, many things to be grateful for, to praise you for. And I really pray that this morning as we spend time together, worshipping you, that we wouldn't be able to stop ourselves from praising you and thanking you. Lord, you are truth, you are good, and you love us, and we're so grateful. In Jesus' name, amen. Brilliant. We're just going to sing our first song together now.

[9:49] Thank you.

And we pray.

God bless you.

God bless you.

God bless you.

[12:15] God bless you.

God bless you.

God bless you. God bless you.

God bless you. God bless you. Jesus, Jesus, Jesus, Lord, we love you. Jesus, Jesus, Lord, we love you.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Father, Father, there is not a single word in the English language that can do justice to the amount of praise that you were owed.

[14:17] When we were so far from you, when we were so far from us, when we were so far from you, when we were in darkness, you saw us and you loved us and you came down to us. And on that cross, as you hung there for the sins that we committed, we were made right with you.

You took those sins upon your shoulders. And all we can do is try our very best in our limited vocabulary to sing your praises. Lord, I pray that this morning our worship would be good, that you would be among us, that your spirit would be among us.

Amen. Amen. Let me have a singing. Thank you.

Amen. I'm a friend of all the brothers I'm a friend of all the brothers You know we can You know we can feel that you are mine That you are mine for all of me That you hear me when I'm gone You

know we can feel that you are mine That you are mine for all of me That you are mine for all of me
That you are mine for all of me I'm a friend of all the brothers I'm a friend of all the brothers And I'm
a friend of all the brothers

And I'm a friend of all the brothers I do it with me when I come.

[16:43] When you want me to call me, how you love me? You're amazing.

I am a great doctor. I am a great doctor. I am a great doctor. I am a great doctor.

I am a great doctor.

God Almighty, Lord of glory, you have won me now.

God Almighty, Lord of glory, you have won me now.

[17:54] God Almighty, Lord of glory, you have won me now.

God Almighty, Lord of glory, you have won me now. God Almighty, Lord of glory, you have won me
now. God Almighty, Lord of glory, you have won me now.

Okay, brilliant.

Now then, we've got a game to play. You know how a swing feels like our games. So, I need five
people, please, to come and help me play my game.

Okay, I've got two people who don't even know what the game is. Fantastic. Right, come on then,
Jameson and Samuel. Okay, Oriana. Okay, now maybe I can tell you a bit more about my game,
see if I can get...

[19:18] Oh, and Toby, you come in as well. Okay, perfect. That's four.

Oh, okay. Yes, Elliot. Five. Brilliant. Okay. It looks like there's food
inside.

Right. So, I don't know if you can see. Maybe, I don't know if I've got this in the right place for the
camera. But on my tray here, I have some presents. I don't know.

Did you know this game involved presents when you agreed to do it? Okay, anyway. Right, the
rules are, you have to do what I say. Is that okay? Everyone, everyone all right with that?

Okay, brilliant. So, first of all, I think you all need to come over to this side of the stage. You stay
there, Jameson? Yeah. Brilliant. Okay, okay. So, we have our five presents here.

I think we should have ladies first, don't you? So, Oriana, without touching them, you get to choose
one present and open it. And you're allowed to keep it if you want to. Anyway, go for it.

[20:16] Which one would you like? Go on, pick one. I'm not promising
they're all perfect. Yeah, go on then. Yeah, open it. Perfect. Yeah. It's
not a trick. It's okay. She's looking really worried.

It's okay. It's all right. Okay. I'm very impressed you didn't, you know, try and feel. That's good. Ooh.
Pick it up. Show everyone what it is. Do you know what that is?

Press the button. This one. Squeeze it in. Ooh, what's that then? Yeah, it might be quite nice today,
mightn't it? So, you can stand and fan yourself. Perfect.

Okay. So, Oriana's got this lovely front. Let me just hold. Could you all see that? It's fan. It's a fan
itself. Keep it nice and cool. Okay. Brilliant. Right. You keep that for now. For now. Okay.

Right. Next person. Who was next? Let's go Samuel. Okay. So, you get to choose one. But what
happens is you open your present.

[21:12] You decide whether you want your present or whether you want what
Oriana's got. And then if you would rather, you can swap with Oriana.
Sadly, Oriana has to agree to it. I'm sorry. Okay.

But this is the only chance you get, Samuel, to choose what you have. Okay. Off you go. You're
going to go for that one. Okay. This is a long, thin present. Have you got any idea what it might be?
No? It's okay. Keep going. It's fine. It's fine. Oh, disappointment. Tissue paper. Tried to trick you a
bit. I'm sorry. Right. What's inside the tissue paper?

There might be something in there. What is it? Oh. Oh, lucky you. A pen. Woo. Okay. Maybe not.
I'm not getting much woo from you guys. Okay. Samuel, would you like to keep the pen, which is a
very nice, in fact, it's from here.

Sorry. I did. A Baptist, a Union Baptist Church pen. Or would you like the fan? Ooh. Sorry, Oriana.
Oriana's got the pen.

[22:11] Okay. Right. Who's next? Toba. Pick a present without touching.
Okay. Any ideas what you think it might be? No? Hard? Soft?

Yeah. Feels soft. Feels soft. Oh. What? Oh, your mum will be pleased with that. There you go. I think Titi's quite happy you've got that.

Okay. So, did everyone see? Is it washing up sponge? Sorry. I'm moving it for the camera. Sorry. Okay. There you go. Toba. Would you like to keep your washing up sponge? Or would you like a Union Baptist Church biro?

Or would you like the fan? You can choose and you can swap. What are you going to do? You're going to keep the sponge. Wow.

What a good boy. He's going to be doing your dishes later, Titi. Okay. Brilliant. Right. Two more. Jameson, you're next in the line. Which one are you going to pick? Oh, okay. What do you think it might be? A chocolate bar.

[23:09] Ooh. He thinks it might be a chocolate bar. Let's see. Wait and see. Let's see. Rapper. Rapper. Rapper. That's the chocolate bar.

That's the chocolate bar. Oh. Yes. Okay. Okay. Let's ask the question. Jameson, would you like to swap your chocolate bar either for the washing up sponge?

Show it to him. Show it. Maybe he'll like it if you show it to him, Toba. Try and show it. Yeah. Would you like the washing up sponge? Would you like the pen? Would you like the fan? I think that's a no.

Okay. Right then. Last one. Elliot, what do you think it might be? A ball. Let's find out. A hard ball. Just rip it.

Yeah. Just rip it. What is it? It's a potato. Potato. Potato. Hold it up for everyone to see a potato. There you go.

[24:09] Lunch is sorted. Lucy has got a potato. It's all right. Would you like to swap your potato for something else, Elliot? Yes. What would you like to swap it for? The chocolate bar? Show us the chocolate bar.

Would you like to swap it for the dish sponge? Would you like to swap it for the pen? Or would you like to swap it for the fan? Spongey. You were the sponge, right? There you go. Looks like you're having potato for lunch, NTT.

Brilliant. Okay. Right. I need the microphone now. Thank you. Okay. Right then. I've got some questions for you. Who do you think ended up with the best present?

Oriana, who do you think got the best present? Maybe Jameson. You think maybe Jameson with the chocolate. Okay. Any other opinions? You obviously, do you think you got the best present?

Okay.

Samuel thinks he got the best present in the fan. Elliot, who do you think got the best present? Fan. You could have swapped. Oh, never mind. Okay. Brilliant. So, some people were quite keen to give up what they got, weren't they?

[25:13] Who was keen to swap? I think Samuel, you were very keen to swap. Can you tell us? You were. You got the pen. And you swapped it. Why were you so keen to swap? Because it's better.

It's better. Yeah. It's quite useful in the sunshine. Okay. And then, Jameson, you really didn't want to swap, did you? Why not? Because I like it. Because you like it.

Fair enough. Simple answer. Okay. Brilliant. Well, there may be some of us here in this room that can resonate with this. Maybe there's something that you've always wanted that you didn't get.

That happens in life, doesn't it? Sadly, sometimes there are things that we really want that we don't get. And today, our story from the Bible is about a lady who really, really wanted something for a really long time.

And do you know what? She was willing to give up something really great in order to get it. So, let's listen to the rest of the service to find out more about that. Thank you very much for your help.

[26:08] Let's give up. Oh, actually, sorry. I have to be kind because I don't know whether you really want to take this home, Elliot. But for those of you who didn't get to keep what you wanted, you can swap what you have for something in here instead.

And do you want to do it?

Thank you.

Okay, so we're going to have a look at the first part of that story that I mentioned about a lady who really wanted something. It is found in 1 Samuel, chapter 1, starting at verse 1, which in the church

Bibles is on page 271.

So it's 1 Samuel, chapter 1, starting at verse 1. That's page 271, if you want to follow it in the church Bibles, or obviously it's on the screen.

[27:30] Apologies in advance if I say any of the words incorrectly. There's some tricky ones. We'll go with it. There was a certain man from Ramathim, a Zulfite from the hill country of Ephraim, whose name was Elkanah, son of Jeroham, son of Elihu, the son of Tohu, the son of Zufa, an Ephraimite.

He had two wives. One was called Hannah and the other Penina. Penina had children, but Hannah had none. Year after year, this man went up from his town to worship and sacrifice to the Lord Almighty at Shiloh, where Hophni and Phinehas, the two sons of Eli, were priests of the Lord. Whenever the day came for Elkanah to sacrifice, he would give portions of the meat to his wife, Penina, and to all her sons and daughters. But to Hannah, he gave a double portion because he loved her, and the Lord had closed her womb.

Because the Lord had closed Hannah's womb, her rival kept provoking her in order to irritate her. This went on year after year. Whenever Hannah went up to the house of the Lord, her rival provoked her till she wept and would not eat.

Her husband, Elkanah, would say to her, Hannah, why are you weeping? Why don't you eat? Why are you downhearted? Don't I mean more to you than ten sons?

[29:10] Okay, we're going to be looking at that and the rest of that story just now. Thanks, Miriam. Good morning, everyone. My name is Andrew.

For those that don't know me, I'm pastor here. And we're starting a new series today called Extraordinary Prayer. And as we build up towards next month, we've got a special week of prayer, which the theme of it is Extraordinary Prayer.

And today, we're going to be looking at some extraordinary prayers in the Bible and some people who made extraordinary prayers in the Bible. And today, as we've heard, it's the story of Hannah. Now, each one of you children, hopefully you picked up one of these. It's a little handout. And what we're going to do, there's some spaces in here. And we're going to do a little comic strip, which we can draw as we go through.

There's enough for adults who want one of these as well. So if you didn't get one of these, maybe you could wave a hand now and one of our stewards will get one to you. There's a hand waving at the back there. Thanks. Thank you so much, Helen and Jenny.

[30:11] So we're going to do a little comic strip because it's good to help us, to remind us the story. But also, it helps us to be able to tell other people the story as well. Because we believe that God wants to use each one of us to share his word with other people.

So hopefully, this will help us to do that with a little comic strip. Now, there's quite a lot of names, as Miriam discovered, in that Bible story. Some of them were tricky names. So we're going to do a little bit of a who's who.

Because there was a bit of a family tree involved in this story. And the family tree was actually contributing to a problem that Hannah had. So the first part of our comic strip, all the parts begin with P.

And the first one, number one, is Hannah's problem. So you can fill that in on the first page of your comic strip. It's Hannah's problem. And I'm going to draw a little picture.

Now, unfortunately, we haven't got Sketch today. Some of you met Sketch during the holiday. He's not here today. So we're going to have to have my very dodgy stick man drawings. And you'll probably be able to do much better drawings on your comic strip.

[31:16] But I'm going to draw a little family tree. So hopefully, you can see this. So there was a man, and his name was Elkanah. So I'll just do an E for Elkanah.

And Elkanah was married to a lady called Penina. And he was married to a lady called Hannah. So Elkanah had two wives. Now, I feel like I need to say something about this, because it's not an ideal situation. And the Bible actually makes clear it's not an ideal situation.

There are a number of people in the Old Testament who had more than one wife. But it wasn't God's original intention of how people should live.

It says in Genesis, which is the very first book of the Bible, that God's plan for marriage is that it should be between one man and one woman. But we see through the Old Testament that there were people who had more than one wife.

[32:25] And it always led to problems. And this was especially true in this story, because one of the problems here was that Penina had children.

We don't know how many she had, but she had a few. So we can draw on her a few children here. You can draw these on yours as well.

So Penina had children, but Hannah didn't have any children. And that made life difficult for her. But we're told that Elkanah loved Hannah.

And we see in the story that actually he loved her more than he loved Penina. And that actually made a problem for Penina. Now we learn that this family, there's something that they did every year.

Every year they went from where they lived, in a place called Ephraim, to a place called Shiloh, which is a place of worship, and a place where they could make sacrifices. Part of their worship involved making this sacrifice.

[33:35] And the head of the family would divide up some meat, give it to each member of the family, and they would eat some of that meat, and they would sacrifice some of that meat. Now Elkanah, I think he was a kind man.

Looking at what happened in the story, I think Elkanah was a kind man. I think he meant well. But I would say he wasn't particularly wise. Now we might say nowadays that he wasn't very emotionally intelligent.

Because what he did to show Hannah that he loved her, is that he gave her a double portion of meat. I'm just going to draw it like a burger, because it's easier to draw.

So two portions of meat for Hannah, but only one portion of meat for Penina. So you can imagine how this made Penina feel. It made her feel a little bit angry, and a little bit jealous, because she could see from this that Elkanah loved Hannah more than he loved her.

I think Elkanah did this because he wanted to comfort Hannah, that she didn't have children. But it wasn't the wisest thing to do, was it? Because it made Penina jealous. Not just jealous for the meat, but she was jealous for the love that Elkanah loved Hannah with.

[34:44] And we're told that Penina, because of this, provoked Hannah in order to irritate her. Now hands up if you've ever done or said something to irritate somebody. Be honest now, be honest.

Now I'm almost certain that if you're a sibling, if you have a sibling, then the answer will be yes. Because, especially with siblings, and other people as well, we know exactly how to irritate them, to push their buttons.

Now we don't know exactly what Penina said to Hannah, but it was something hurtful. It was something that hurt her. And it caused Hannah to cry and to put her off her food.

And this happened every time that they went to this place, that they went to Shiloh. I don't know if you've ever been in a situation where you've dreaded going somewhere, or dreaded a regular thing that you have to do, or dreaded seeing a particular person, and you just, the thought of that, of doing that, just maybe puts you off your food, like Hannah.

Maybe it makes you feel a bit sick. Maybe it stops you sleeping. Maybe it made you cry. Hannah would have had this feeling every time the family went to Shiloh.

[35:54] Because she knew that when she went there, she would be taunted and provoked by Penina, and she would have this feeling. And what was going on here was actually a kind of bullying.

And Elkanah, unfortunately, didn't understand. And in some ways, that made Hannah's pain even worse. So the next part of our comic strip is Hannah's pain.

Because we've seen there was a problem, and this caused Hannah pain. So I'm going to draw Hannah here. And she's not very happy. And she would cry every time her family went to Shiloh.

And here is Elkanah. And Elkanah kind of didn't really understand what was going on, and why Hannah was so sad.

So I'll give him a question mark in his speech bubble. Okay, that's Elkanah. That's Hannah. And he said to Hannah, why are you weeping?

[37:09] Why don't you eat? Why are you sad? And he said to her, don't I mean more to you than ten sons? Now, sometimes men just don't get it.

And we see that, especially in this story, that the men don't really do so well in understanding the women. Now, I think, you know, to give him the benefit of the doubt, I think he meant well.

But this comment showed that he wasn't really thinking about what Hannah was going through. He wasn't really trying to understand things from Hannah's perspective. He was actually being a bit self-centered.

And he was thinking that Hannah should be so happy to be married to such an awesome man as him. That's a bit arrogant, isn't it? But us men are like that sometimes. Now, he could have said, which would have been a better thing to say, he could have said, don't you mean more to me than ten sons?

Or you do mean more to me than ten sons. That would have been a little bit better. Now, maybe you've been in a situation of difficulty, a situation of pain, a situation of despair, and you felt that people around you just don't understand.

[38:13] That was Hannah's problem, and that was the cause of her pain. But we'll see later that Hannah turned her pain into a prayer.

But before we come on to that part of the story, we're going to sing again. So I'm going to invite the musicians to come up, and we're going to sing a song about God's love, that it is higher than anything, and better for us than any difficulty that we might face that might seem like a mountain to us.

So let's praise God now. And it is higher than anything, Stronger than the power of the brave
Constantly the trial and the change One thing remains One thing remains
Your love never fails and never gives up And never runs out on me And never runs out on me Your
love Oh, Lord.

Oh, Lord.

[41:08] Oh, Lord. Oh, Lord.

Oh, Lord. Oh, Lord. Oh, Lord. Oh, Lord. Oh, Lord.

Oh, Lord. Oh, Lord. Oh, Lord. Oh, Lord. Oh, Lord. Oh, Lord.

Oh, Lord. Oh, Lord. Oh, Lord. Oh, Lord. Oh, Lord. Oh, Lord.

Oh, Lord. Oh, Lord. Thank you.

[42:50] Thank you.

We're going to have our second reading now, which Caleb's going to bring to us. It's from 1 Samuel, chapter 1, starting at verse 9 through to verse 18.

If you've still got your Bibles, it's the same page, page 271. So it's 1 Samuel, chapter 1, verses 9 to 18. Thanks, Caleb. When they finished eating and drinking in Shiloh, Hannah stood up.

Now Eli, the priest, was sitting on his chair by the doorpost of the Lord's house. In her deep anguish, Hannah prayed to the Lord, weeping bitterly. And she made a vow, saying, Lord Almighty, if you will only look on your servant's misery and remember me, and not forget your servant, but give her a son, then I will give him to the Lord for all the days of his life.

And no razor will ever be used on his head. As she kept praying to the Lord, Eli observed her mouth.

[44:27] Hannah was praying in her heart, and her lips were moving, but her voice was not heard. Eli thought she was drunk, and she said to her, How long are you going to stay drunk? Put away your wine.

Not so, my lord, Hannah replied. I am a woman who is deeply troubled. I have not been drinking wine or beer. I was pouring out my soul to the Lord.

I do not take your servant for a wicked woman. I have been praying here out of my great anguish and grief. Eli answered, Go in peace, and may the Lord of Israel grant you with what you have asked of him.

She said, May your servant find favour in your eyes. Then she went away and ate something, and her face was no longer downcast. Great.

Well, thank you so much, Caleb, for that reading. So, we talked before about Hannah's problem. Hannah's problem. She felt the deep pain of wanting to have children, and she was also being bullied by Penina.

[45:37] The people around her didn't understand what she was going through, and she was almost in a state of despairing. Now, despairing is when you don't know what to do.

But Hannah did know one thing that she could do in this situation. She knew that she could pray to her Father in Heaven. So, she stood up and started praying right where she was in Shiloh.

So, this is the third part of our comic strip. It's Hannah's prayer. So, Hannah stood where she was in Shiloh, and she prayed.

And as she prayed, you read that she was weeping and crying. She was sobbing because she was telling God how she was feeling.

And that's the great thing about prayer, that we can express exactly how we feel to God. We don't have to pretend when we're talking to God.

[46:54] If we're anxious or hurting or disturbed or troubled or angry, we can tell God that. We can pour out our soul to God. We can cry and we can shout, and we can pour our heart out to God.

And this is what Hannah was doing. So, I'm going to draw her heart there. And she was pouring out her heart.

Hopefully, we can see what's going on there. Pouring out her heart to God for what she was feeling. Because God wants to hear what's on our heart. And, you know, when we pour out what's in our heart, He can then fill our heart.

Once we've poured it out, He can fill our heart with peace and with love and with goodness. But very often, we have to get to that point, first of all, of pouring out what's in there to make space for God to fill it.

Now, we're told in the story that Hannah was praying in silence. Now, we can pray in silence or out loud to God. It doesn't matter because He hears us. And He loves to hear us.

[47:56] And as Hannah prayed, she made a promise to God. So, this is another P, which I don't have a separate box for. Well, this is Hannah's promise that she made.

I'm going to just draw the promise as a big tick. And this is... This is a promise, which was part of her prayer.

Now, she made a very special promise. It wasn't that she was trying to make a deal with God by saying, if I do this, then you do this. But as she poured out her heart to God, her thoughts turned from her own pain and situation.

And she started getting a bigger perspective. And she started thinking about how her situation could be turned around in a way that would put God first and give Him glory. And she made an incredible promise.

We read... We heard in the story that Hannah promised that if she was given a son, she would give Him over for the rest of his life as a special servant of God. Someone who would serve God in a special way.

[49:08] That was the promise that she made. Now, when we pray, people around us won't necessarily understand what we're doing when we're praying. Even, sometimes, church leaders. Where Hannah was praying at the place of worship in Shiloh, one of the priests, Eli, he was a leader there, and he sat and he saw her praying.

So this is the next part of the story we're going to draw. This is about Hannah's priest. So we can draw this on number four. Because Hannah met a priest.

So I'm going to draw the priest. He was called Eli. And I'm just going to assume he had a beard. And he was quite old. So we're going to give him a walking stick.

Okay. But unfortunately, when the priest, Eli, saw Hannah praying, he didn't realize that she was praying.

He thought that Hannah had been drinking. He was thinking maybe she'd been on the wine.

[50:22] Now, I don't know if you're any good at lip reading. We're going to play a little game here, which Miriam's going to come and help me

with. This is a game called Read My Lips. So I'm going to get Miriam to come and stand here.

Now, if possible, if we can get this... Sorry, I didn't warn David about this. If Miriam stands in front of the flip chart, if you can get Miriam on the camera so that you can see... Miriam's going to mouth some phrase without using her voice.

And you're going to watch her mouth and see if you can work out what it is that she's saying. So look very carefully. So, Miriam, can you say... Okay.

So can you give us the first phrase, please? Okay. Okay. Would anyone like to guess what she was saying?

Hands up. Okay. Yeah. Caleb, you're first. Hands up. My name's Miriam. Was that what you were saying? Okay. Well done. Okay. Round of applause there. It's getting harder. It does get harder. Okay.

[51:17] Okay. Can you say the next one, please? Okay. Hands up. Anyone like to guess what Miriam said there?

Okay. Elliot. It's a good guess, but it's not quite right. Well done. Another guess. Anyone? Kim? Is that what you said?

Well done, Kim. Okay. Brilliant. Okay. Let's have one more. Miriam. Okay. Okay. Okay.

This is a hard one. Anyone got any idea what she was saying there? Hands up. Can I say it's very hard not to use my hands? Should I try it again?

Yeah. Okay. Can you hand it that way? Sorry. Okay. Anyone like to guess what she might be saying there?

[52:19] Yeah. Elliot again? It is something ending in wall. Very well done. It's something ending in wall. Anyone else want to piece it together from that?

Elliot, do you want to guess? Yeah. That's correct. Okay. I something, something, something wall. Anyone else?

Okay. Carrie-Anne. I saw a cat on the wall. Woo! Well done. I saw a cat on the wall. Very well done. Thank you very much, Miriam. Well done, everybody. So, that was a hard game.

It's not always easy. That was a game which Eli, the priest, would have been really rubbish at, okay, because Hannah was there. She was praying. Her lips were moving. She wasn't making a sound, but he didn't realize that she was praying.

He thought she was drunk. He told her to put her wine away. And this just shows that sometimes church leaders can also get it very, very wrong. Now, Hannah then explained to him what was going on.

[53:22] So, she shared with him. She spoke to him. And she told him that she hadn't been drinking, that she was praying, that she was pouring out her soul to God. And Eli listened.

Now, it's really helpful to share what's on our heart with other people as well as with God. Sometimes other people won't understand everything that we're going through, but God always does.

Now, after that, in verse 18, from that Bible passage, Hannah received something from God. So, this is the next thing that we're going to draw. Because what Hannah received was not an immediate answer to her prayer, but what she received was peace.

So, we can write that in number five. And I'm going to try and draw Hannah feeling peaceful. Because we're told that she was able then to eat at this point.

She wasn't put off her food anymore. So, Hannah received peace from God. She was no longer deeply troubled. She poured out her heart to God and then God had filled her heart with peace.

[54:31] She was now able to eat something. Even though she hadn't received the thing that she'd asked for, she was at peace with God. And that is a wonderful thing. Now, we're going to find out what happened next in a little while.

But before that, we're going to sing another song. So, I'm going to invite the musicians to come up and they're going to lead us as we sing about the goodness of God. And I'm going to stand.

We have sung this song really once or twice in a youth service, but I imagine for most of you, you might not have heard the song before. So, we're actually going to sing verse one and then the

And we thank you for the progress so far. But you know now that we need planning approval for installing the new windows. And, Lord, we pray that the permission that we seek will shortly come through.

And we thank you, Lord, that we can bring so many more things to you. But there isn't time. But we thank you, Lord, that you know about them and you will know what's on our hearts. But, Lord, we thank you for Andrew and Miriam, for what they've done with us so far and for those that have been leading us.

[64:30] But we thank you, Lord, for what we've learned so far in this service. But we ask you to bless them as they lead us through the remaining time that we have together.

And help us to understand more of what Hannah will say to us. Because we ask it in the name of Jesus. Amen. Before I bring the final reading to you, I would like to say what a joy it is for us to welcome Lorna McCann this morning.

Those of you who have been in the fellowship for a long time like me would be so happy to see her today. And we ask that the Lord will bless you, Lorna, as you travel and visit friends and family and then return to New Zealand.

Will you turn with me now as we continue our story in 1 Samuel in the first chapter. And we pick the story up at verse 19 and go through chapter 12, chapter 2, rather, to verse 11.

The reading's long enough without going. Verse 19. Early the next morning they arose and worshipped before the Lord.

[66:11] And then went back to their home at Ramah. When the man Elkanah went up with all his family to offer an annual sacrifice to the Lord and to fulfil his vow, Hannah did not go.

She said to her husband, After the boy is weaned, I will take him and present him before the Lord, and he will live there always. Do what is best to you, her husband told her.

Stay here until you have weaned him. Only may the Lord make good his word. So the woman stayed at home and nursed her son until she had weaned him.

After he was weaned, she took the boy with her, young as he was, along with a three-year-old bull, an ephar of flour, and a skin of wine, and brought him to the house of the Lord at Shiloh.

When they had slaughtered the bull, they brought the boy to Eli, 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.

[67:48] 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 shall be given over to the Lord, and he worshipped the Lord there.

Then Hannah prayed and said, My heart rejoices in the Lord. In the Lord my horn is lifted high. My mouth boasts over my enemies, for I delight in your deliverance.

There is no one holy like the Lord. There is no one besides you. There is no rock like our God. Do not keep talking so proudly, or let your mouth speak such arrogance, for the Lord is a God who knows, and by him deeds are weighed.

The bows of the arrows of the warriors are broken, but those who stumbled are armed with strength. Those who were full hire themselves out for food, but those who were hungry hunger no more.

She who was barren has born seven children, but she who has had many sons pines away. The Lord brings death and makes alive.

[69:12] He brings down to the grave and raises up. The Lord sends poverty and wealth. He humbles and exalts.

He raises the poor from the dust and lifts the needy from the ash heap. He seats them with princes and has them inherit a throne of honour.

For the foundations of the earth are the Lord's. Upon them he has set the world. He will guard the feet of his saints, but the wicked will be silenced in darkness.

It is not by strength that one prevails. Those who oppose the Lord will be shattered. He will thunder against them from heaven. The Lord will judge the ends of the earth.

He will give strength to his king and exalt the horn of his anointed. Then Alcanna went home to Ramah, but the boy ministered before the Lord under Eli the priest.

[70:17] Amen. Amen. Well, thank you so much, Shirley, for bringing the third part of that reading.

When we pray to God, he always hears us and he always answers. Sometimes his answer is no, maybe like a red light on the traffic lights.

Sometimes his answer is yes, like a green light on the traffic lights. And sometimes his answer is not yet, like an amber light on the traffic lights. Many of us will have prayers that God has answered no to or that God has answered not yet to so far.

And that's a real struggle. God's answer to Hannah for a long time was not yet. But at the right time, she became pregnant.

So this is the sixth part of our comic strip, Hannah's pregnancy. So I'm going to attempt to draw a pregnant Hannah.

[71:28] And she gave birth to a little boy called Samuel.

I'll draw Samuel on the next one. The thing that she had most longed for, she had been granted. But she remembered, all through her pregnancy and after the birth, she remembered that she had made a promise to God.

She was willing to put God first above what she wanted and she was willing to give what was most precious to her to God. So the next part of the story is Hannah's precious gift.

So I'm going to draw Hannah. And her little baby Samuel. And what was her precious gift?

The thing that she most longed for, to have a baby, to have a child. She went back to Shiloh and she gave the child, handed him over to be used by God in the temple and handed him over to, remember this guy?

[72:46] With the beard? It's Eli. So she handed over her precious gift, little Samuel. She handed him over to Eli.

And Samuel served there at the place of the Lord and he was used by God as a prophet to do amazing things. So the thing that Hannah most wanted to have a child, she gave back to God because she longed for God's will to be done above all.

Now I think even though she had made that promise and God gave her peace, I think it must have still been just really hard, the hardest thing for her to give Samuel, this precious child that she'd longed for, over to God.

But do you know what she did after she'd handed him over? We heard from the reading there that she praised God and she praised this wonderful prayer of praise that we read in chapter 2, verse 1 to 11 of 1 Samuel.

So this is the final part of our story. It's Hannah's praise. So we can put that on our last box and I'm going to draw Hannah praising.

[74:01] We'll give her a smile now because if you read what she praised, she was happy as she was praising. Now, when she prays to God, there's several things that I just want to mention that she mentions in her prayer of praise.

She calls God a rock. So I'm going to try and draw some kind of rock here. Why does she call God a rock?

Because he's like a place of shade, a place of protection, a place of strength that we can go to. And we can call on him whatever we're going through as Hannah discovered.

And in verse 3, she says, the Lord is a God who knows. He knows what we go through. He understands. But he loves to hear us pour out our heart to him.

Now, amazingly, her prayer of praise isn't so much about her own circumstances. It's about the bigger purposes of God. She says, he will give strength to his king and exalt the horn of his anointed.

[75:02] So I'm going to draw a crown for a king. King and a horn. And we're going to think about what these things mean.

A hollow horn was used as a container for oil, which would be used to put on the forehead of a king, to anoint that king. That is to mark that person as a special one chosen by God.

Now, God used her son Samuel years later to anoint a very special king over Israel, King David. But hundreds of years later, a greater king was born into David's family line.

That king was Jesus. And we can see a bit of similarity. As Hannah gave up what was most precious to her to be used for God's purposes, her precious son, God gave up his precious son in

order to fulfil his purposes, to rescue each one of us, to make it possible for each one of us to have a relationship with God where we can call out to him as father and where we can know him as our friend.

We're going to have some time to be quiet now and listen to what God might be saying to us through this. Let's just have a moment of quiet and then I'll pray. Lord God, we thank you for your word to us.

[76:41] We thank you for this true story and what it teaches us about you and about us. And as we read this story, maybe we put ourselves in the position of Hannah.

Maybe our heart is full of pain and God says we can pour out our heart to him and he can give us peace. Maybe God is inviting us to stop pretending right now.

Maybe people that we know around us are struggling with pain and we simply need to listen. Maybe we need to trust that God has bigger purposes and he can use our difficult situation for his purposes.

Maybe God is prompting us to make a promise to him. It's important for us not to make promises that we can't keep but it's helpful to start small.

We have a week of prayer coming up. Maybe we could make a promise to pray for one hour during that week or maybe to pray for one hour every day during that week. Maybe to prayer walk in our neighbourhood or maybe to fast for a meal or two or for something else, to give up something else so that we can devote our time to pray during that time.

[77:54] Lord, we turn to you and we thank you that you are a God who knows and we thank you that you're a God who invites us to pour out our heart to you. I pray that you would help us to do that.

Even now in this place as we spend some time in worship just to pour out our hearts and share with you the pain, the difficulties, the hard things that we're struggling with.

Thank you that we can pour it out to you. Help us to know that we don't need to pretend with you, that we can tell you exactly how we're feeling and I pray that as we pour out our heart to you, you would give us peace by your Holy Spirit.

Fill us with your peace, that we'll be able to have peace, to know that you are good, to know that we can trust you, know that we can trust you for the times you've answered no and know that we can trust you for the times when you answer not yet.

And we want to put you first, Lord, as we pray to you, show us what that means for us, Lord, as we turn to you in prayer. I pray that in Jesus' name.

[78:59] Amen. Now at this point, before we sing again, we're going to say the special prayer that Jesus taught us, which incorporates a number of the things about God's will being done as we've already touched on today.

So we're going to say these words together as we pray to God. Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen. Amen. Going to invite the musicians to come up, they're going to lead us in our last song.

It's called Take My Life and Let It Be, as we think about that decision that Hannah made to God to take what she had for it to be used by him. May this be our prayer as we respond to him now.

[80:00] Take my life and let it be. Amen. Amen. Amen. Take my life and let it be.

Take my life and let it be. Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

[83:00] Thank you. Amen. Amen. Amen. Do please sit down.

Amen. Do please sit down. Amen. Do please sit down.

Amen. Thank you. Thank you. Church members here meet together regularly to discern God's will for the church and to appoint people who will serve in various areas and lead in various areas in the church.

And we recently appointed a new deacon at our church members meeting. We'd like to pray for her as she takes up her role. And we should have done this earlier, but it didn't quite work out. So I'd like to invite Carrie-Anne, who's our new deacon for youth and young adults.

Not just a champion lip reader, but she has this new role as well. And I'd just like to welcome Carrie-Anne so that we can pray for her. Sorry, I should have let the musicians go down. Please do please feel free, musicians, to go and take your seats.

[84:13] So we're delighted that Carrie-Anne has sent God's call to serve God in this way as a deacon at this time. And we'd just like to pray for her as a church as she starts in this role, serving our young people and young adults.

So I'd like to pray for you, if I may. Father God, we thank you so much for Carrie-Anne. We thank you for the gifts and experience and the heart for you that you've given her. And I pray that you would equip her and fill her with your Holy Spirit as she steps into this new role as deacon for youth and young adults.

I pray that she will know your leading, know your guiding. And I pray that you will use her in powerful ways and bless her as she serves us, your church. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Amen. Thank you so much, Carrie-Anne. Bless you. We have a few notices. So I mentioned church meetings. We've got one coming up on the 21st of May. This church meeting, a week on Tuesday, is going to incorporate a special church meeting because there's something we need to decide about the manse.

So that will be sent out to church members. This Tuesday, we have Fit for Life. It started last week. People who went to it said it was awesome. I heard really good things about it. You can come along and do chair-based exercises led by Kim from 1 o'clock on Tuesday.

[85:26] Do welcome you. It's for all ages, all abilities. You can do the exercises from your chair or you can be a bit more energetic, whatever suits you. So that's a wonderful opportunity, Tuesday at 1 o'clock.

We mentioned in the prayers, we've got a new job club course, Steps to Employment, starting on the 22nd of May. But this week, we have a drop-in. If you'd like to find out about the course, if you know anyone who's looking for work who this could be a benefit to, please bring them along 10.30 this Wednesday, the 15th.

And do please speak to Rachel. She can give you more details about that. And then coming up, week of prayer is coming up. And I'm going to ask Judith just to share a little bit briefly about what we've got in store in our week of prayer.

So I kept my promise. I said I'd be back this week. You did. I'm back. Well done. I'm back. So a week of prayer, very important. We need to pray because we demand, we depend so much on our Father God.

And how we show our dependence is by speaking and listening to him. So we want us to commit. And Andrew's prayer really covered everything I wanted to say.

[86:39] So he's made my thing shorter. So I'm just going to smile at you. No. We need to pray as a people to strengthen our life, our faith in God.

And as Hannah said, we'll be speaking to the God who not only hears, but the God who knows. And we want to speak from our hearts.

So I encourage you. Sign up for a slot or two or three or the whole week and give intentional time. Set that time aside.

Set that time aside. I pray all day. I pray for all sorts of things. I pray for parking spaces. And I'm sure you do. I pray for cashiers to open. But let us intentionally sit at his feet and pray.

We'll be giving you resources to do it. There'll be music to help us. And there'll be guidance. And we also encourage family prayer. That's how our children will learn to pray.

[87:43] So please join us on the 2nd of June to the 8th of June in prayer. Thank you. Wonderful. Thank you so much, Judith. I'm going to finish with a prayer of blessing now.

You might like to just hold your hands up to receive this blessing. May you leave here knowing that the Lord who loves you, knows you, delights to hear you and to answer your prayers.

And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be among you and remain with you always. Amen. Amen. Thank you for joining us. Do please join us downstairs for

coffee, tea, other drinks.

And we would love to pray with you. Myself, any of our leadership team, anyone with a praying hands badge, please come and find us afterwards. God bless you. God bless you. Thank you.