

**Text: 1 Samuel 1:1-20**

**Theme: Prevailing Prayer**

**Sermon delivered by Revd Canon Dele Agbelusi during Healing & Anointing Service on 30/08/2015 at 10:30 am**

The Old Testament contains many role models for us today... Great men like Noah, Abraham, Joseph, Moses, Joshua, David, Daniel... Great women like Sarah, Ruth, Esther... A wonderful role model for women and men of faith today is that of Hannah...the mother of Samuel, one of the greatest prophets of Israel whose story is told in the first two chapters of 1 Samuel.

We can glean several lessons from "**Hannah - A Woman of Prayer and Faith**" as we read 1 Samuel 1:1-8.

It's business as usual for the High Priest Eli at the house of God. He looked up from his seat, and saw a family approaching ... his eyes focused upon Hannah. Why? Perhaps he had never seen anyone come to the house of God in such a manner!

**Hannah came to the house of God barren.** She had no children, and she desperately wanted to conceive. **Have you come to the house of God barren? Perhaps in a different sense from Hannah. Perhaps you're running on empty. Living in this world of never ending challenges has got you down.**

Hannah could have used her misfortune and mistreatment as an excuse not to join others in worship. Yet year after year Hannah continued to worship the Lord (v.7).

**Women of faith have problems just like other women. What distinguishes them as women of faith is what they do when faced with their problems.**

Read v.10. Look at Hannah- she came to the house of God burdened, with bitterness in her soul. The word "bitterness" can also be translated "heavy". Are you heavy-hearted this morning?

### **Hannah's Problems**

Barrenness and Provocation by her rival – **1 Samuel 1:6-8**

### **Hannah's Response**

Hannah came to the house of God believing. She prayed.

**She prayed weeping in anguish, with bitterness of soul – 1 Sa 1:10**

**She prayed with persistence – 1 Sa 1:12.** She continued praying. To use an old terminology... she prayed through. She poured out her soul. 1 Samuel 1:15 "...I am a woman who is deeply troubled. I am not drunk."

**She prayed with her heart – 1 Sa 1:13**\_her lips moved, but no words were heard...it was between her, and the Lord. The way prayers should be.

**She prayed with all her soul – 1 Sa 1:15-16**

**She prayed with faith in God's promise – 1 Sa 1:18**

The psalmist says in Psalms 42:4 When I remember these things, I pour out my soul in me for I had gone with the multitude, I went with them to the house of God... And Lamentations 2:19 Arise, cry out in the night ... pour out your heart like water before the face of the Lord.

That is what we need to do when we carry a very heavy burden in our hearts.

### **What We Can Learn from Hannah?**

1. Pray fervently - she put her soul in her prayers - **Col 4:2a** (Devote yourself to prayer being watchful and thankful.
2. Pray persistently - she continued steadfastly in prayers - **Col 4:2b**
3. Pray faithfully - she believed that God would answer her prayers – **1 John 5:14-15**

Women of faith believe in the efficacy of prayer. God takes notice of such faith (**2 Ch 16:9**), so we should not be surprised to see the intervention of God.

### **Hannah sacrificed and prayed to the Lord, using His powerful name, “Lord Almighty or Lord of Hosts” (I Sam. 1:3).**

When she recognized that God was a powerful God, she could expect a powerful answer to prayer. When you call God “The Lord of Hosts” God Almighty, you are really calling Him the “God of the Fighting Angel.” The God who can do whatever He decides to do.

**Remember the basic premise in prayer: The size of your God, determines the size of your prayer request. The size of your prayer request, determines the size of your answers.**

The name, “God Almighty, or Lord of Hosts” is a powerful and effective name by which to pray.

### **Hannah knew the place of prayer.**

Notice that she came up to the Tabernacle, that is the same as God’s place. It was there she prayed. Hannah came into the Tabernacle to pray because that was where the presence of the Lord was located. Israel recognized the “**Lord dwells in the praises of His people**” (**Psalms 22:3**). Again, “**The Lord dwells between the cherubim (I Samuel 4:4)**” which means that God dwells in the Tabernacle.

Obviously, God dwells in the heart of every believer and God is everywhere present, which we call His omnipresence. But in the Old Testament the presence of God was the Tabernacle. Today, the church is the Body of Christ. I believe God is here today. He is present.

I don’t believe that praying in church is the only place to pray. Every once in a while, you see a movie where someone stumbles into a cathedral to pray and the movie producers will tell you that they got their answer because they were in a church. God can answer prayers anywhere!

- Moses prayed in the wilderness.
- Elijah prayed on the mountain top.
- Daniel prayed in his house.
- Nehemiah prayed in the king’s presence.
- Jesus prayed in the garden.
- The disciples prayed in the upper room.
- Paul prayed in prison.
- Peter prayed on the roof top.

But Hannah prayed in the Tabernacle.

### **Hannah knew the work of prayer.**

Every time you pray, it costs you something. Effective prayer cost Hannah something. Hannah was intense, childless, and completely committed.

**There are some enemies to prayer. Watch for these enemies:**

1. Stress
2. Concern for the world
3. Anxiety
4. Physical weariness
5. Busyness

**We must form habits when we pray. Apparently, Hannah had a time, a place, and a commitment to prayer. I would challenge you to form a habit concerning:**

1. A specific time each day.
2. A specific place each day.
3. A prayer list to follow each day.
4. A regular Bible reading pattern.

**Hannah knew the openness of prayer.**

**When you pray, expose yourself to God. Notice that Hannah “poured out her heart before the Lord” (1 Samuel 1:15 ). Hannah was completely open toward God.**

**1. Forgive your debtors as you ask God to forgive you.**

The Lord’s Prayer tells us to ask God to forgive our debts as we forgive our debtors.

**2. Be open to God for answers.**

Six Word Promise - “Call unto me, I will answer” (Jer. 33:3).

**3. Hannah knew the inner position of prayer.**

Many people pray in many different positions. Some stand, some walk, some kneel, and some lie prostrate on the floor. Some sit on a chair. Some kneel by a chair, some kneel by a bed, or some like to come to a church altar.

The best position to pray is an inner position. In that position, your heart kneels, even when the body cannot kneel. God saw Hannah’s inner position, and it has been said on numerous occasions, “God saw . . . God heard . . . God answered.”

**4. Hannah knew the right motives in prayer.**

You will remember that Hannah wanted a child because of two reasons. First, she wanted to please her husband, yet she was barren. Second, her husband had another wife, Peninnah, who taunted her and made fun of her daily. It drove Hannah to tears. Because of these two reasons, she agonized with God.

Sometimes there are outward reasons that make us pray more fervently than ever before. I don’t care whatever the reason; the answer is are you a fervent prayer warrior?

Remember when you come to prayer, it is not how much time you spend praying, it is how effective you are in attitude and desire. When you really want God to answer your prayer, and you’re willing to do anything; then God can.

**Hannah knew how to continue praying, by giving thanks**

1. She went back home in full confidence.
2. Hannah worshipped the Lord which was her way of thanking the Lord for an answer before she got it. “So the woman (Hannah) went her way . . . and worshipped before the Lord” (v.18,19).

**God may sometimes give us what we want.**

- It must be according to His will – **1 John 5:14**
- We must abide in His words - **John 15:7**
- Selfish prayers will not be answered as we wish - **James 4:3**

- God will always provide what we need
- It may not be what we want or expect, but it will meet our needs, and be for our good  
- cf. **Matthew. 6:33; Rom 8:28.**