



LIFE GROUP STUDY GUIDE

15 APRIL

EXPECTANT PRAYER: HANNAH

This study guide should be used the week following the sermon it supplements.

MAIN TEXT: 1 Samuel 1:1-20

1 There was a certain man from Ramathaim, a Zuphite from the hill country of Ephraim, whose name was Elkanah son of Jeroham, the son of Elihu, the son of Tohu, the son of Zuph, an Ephraimite. 2 He had two wives; one was called Hannah and the other Peninnah. Peninnah had children, but Hannah had none.

3 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. 4 Whenever the day came for Elkanah to sacrifice, he would give portions of the meat to his wife Peninnah and to all her sons and daughters. 5 But to Hannah he gave a double portion because he loved her, and the Lord had closed her womb. 6 Because the Lord had closed Hannah's womb, her rival kept provoking her in order to irritate her. 7 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. 8 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?"

9 Once when they had 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. 10 In her deep anguish Hannah prayed to the Lord, weeping bitterly. 11 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."

12 As she kept on praying to the Lord, Eli observed her mouth. 13 Hannah was praying in her heart, and her lips were moving but her voice was not heard. Eli thought she was drunk 14 and said to her, "How long are you going to stay drunk? Put away your wine."

15 "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. 16 Do not take your servant for a wicked woman; I have been praying here out of my great anguish and grief."

17 Eli answered, "Go in peace, and may the God of Israel grant you what you have asked of him."

18 She said, "May your servant find favor in your eyes." Then she went her way and ate something, and her face was no longer downcast.

19 Early the next morning they arose and worshiped before the Lord and then went back to their home at Ramah. Elkanah made love to his wife Hannah, and the Lord remembered her. 20 So in the course of time Hannah became pregnant and gave birth to a son. She named him Samuel, saying, "Because I asked the Lord for him."

GETTING STARTED

Last week we began a new sermon series on Expectant Prayer. Start your session by praying that God will use this series and today's Life Group meeting to turn our hearts towards Him and speak to us powerfully.

DIGGING DEEPER

1. Read 1 Samuel 1:1-20. Discuss how Hannah must have felt as she went to the temple to pray.

2. Rather than pray, what other things do people sometimes do in order to deal with their grief? Why is prayer so important?

3. Do you agree that we're perhaps not very good expressing our grief to God in prayer? Why might that be?

4. How can we improve our ability to lament? *Hint:* perhaps learn from the Psalms.

5. What signs are there in Hannah that she knew her prayer had been answered? Have you had experiences like this?

6. Read 1 Samuel 2:1-10. What are the main themes that Hannah is thinking about in this prayer? How might we keep these themes in our daily prayers?

NEXT STEPS & PRAYER

In pairs, share something that you long to see happen: it could be for yourself, your family, our church, or our city and world. Write a prayer that reflects Hannah's and then, if you're happy to, pray it with the whole group.

COMING UP

Women's Breakfast | 21 April
RT Kendall | 22 April
Newcomers Breakfast | 6 May
Equip Academy | 6 May
Prayer Meeting | 16 May
Belonging | 3 June

SECONDARY TEXT: 1 Samuel 2:1-10

2 Then Hannah prayed and said:

“My heart rejoices in the Lord;
in the Lord my horn[a] is lifted high.
My mouth boasts over my enemies,
for I delight in your deliverance.

2 “There is no one holy like the Lord;
there is no one besides you;
there is no Rock like our God.

3 “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.

4 “The bows of the warriors are broken,
but those who stumbled are armed with strength.

5 Those who were full hire themselves out for food,
but those who were hungry are hungry no more.
She who was barren has borne seven children,
but she who has had many sons pines away.

6 “The Lord brings death and makes alive;
he brings down to the grave and raises up.

7 The Lord sends poverty and wealth;
he humbles and he exalts.

8 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 honor.

“For the foundations of the earth are the Lord’s;
on them he has set the world.

9 He will guard the feet of his faithful servants,
but the wicked will be silenced in the place of
darkness.

“It is not by strength that one prevails;
10 those who oppose the Lord will be broken.
The Most High will thunder 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.”
