**Hannah**

**Bible passage:** 1 Samuel 1:1 – 1 Samuel 2:10

Hannah’s story can be found in the first book of Samuel, chapter 1. Whether or not you know the story of Hannah, I encourage you to read her story. Here are some highlights:

Elkanah lives in the country of Ephraim with his two wives – Peninnah and Hannah. This already raises alarm bells for many of us, we already see a problem brewing. Add to this that Peninnah has children, but Hannah does not.

Elkanah loves Hannah and shows his affection, but Peninnah uses the situation to taunt Hannah and make her feel worthless. Eventually Hannah is so upset, she stops eating.

Than Hannah prays to God from her pain and despair, promising her child to God if God would only bless her with one. The priest at the temple, Eli, judges her as drunk and speaks to her, but when he hears her story, blesses her.

Hannah is then blessed with her son, Samuel, and from the moment of birth tells others that she is dedicating him to God – as soon as he is weaned, he will go to live in the temple. This is exactly what she does.

Can we even imagine how she must have been feeling?

She has finally been blessed with her own child, but as soon as he is weaned, she will take him to the temple and leave him there, as she had promised him to God.

How many of us would have been that brave? How many of us could have gone through with such a promise?

Perhaps the most surprising thing about Hannah is her response, which we find in 1 Samuel 2:1-10:

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 he Lord is a God who knows, and by him deeds are weighed.

The bows 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 are hungry no more.

She who was barren has borne seven children, but she who has had many sons pines away.

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

The Lord sends poverty and wealth; he humbles and he 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; on them he has set the world. 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; those who oppose the Lordwill be broken.
The Most High will thunder from heaven; the Lordwill judge the ends of the earth. He will give strength to his king and exalt the horn of his anointed.”

Hannah gives thanks to God and praises God for all the wonders he has done.

Read the verses of Hannah’s prayer of thanks to God:

What do you find interesting?

What questions does it raise for you?

How does it compare to Mary’s song (Luke 1:46-55)?

How can we be more thankful, even when things seem hopeless or difficult?

**A lesson from Hannah for today:**

Hannah kept faithful and kept praying, even in her darkest hour and fear. We are living in uncertain times, let us hold on to God and keep praying, as Hannah did. Let us keep faith and be thankful for the many blessings God has given us.