

HANNAH

Making The Bible Come Alive

The perseverant

WHO WAS THIS PERSON?

- Hannah means "grace or favour".
- Hannah and her husband Elkanah could not have children.
- Hannah confided in God.
- Hannah made a promise, a vow to God.
- Hannah was the mother of the prophet Samuel, the last judge of Israel.



WHAT IS THIS PERSON KNOWN FOR?

- Elkanah had two wives: Hannah and Peninnah. Every year they went to Shiloh with his family to offer sacrifices to God. Elkanah treated Hannah with great respect and preferred her to Peninna. Peninnah had children and intimidated Hannah until she cried and became angry with God because she was barren (1 Samuel 1:6). Hannah's heart was truly broken. When she prayed, Eli the priest thought she was drunk. Hannah then answered him, "Oh no, sir!" she replied. "I haven't been drinking wine or anything stronger. But I am very discouraged, and I was pouring out my heart to the Lord." (1 Samuel 1:15)
- Hannah never stopped praying. She had faith in God. The Bible does not tell us how long she prayed, but we know that she remained barren for several years. One day her prayer was answered. God gave her a son. She gave him the name Samuel, which means "God has heard". After Samuel was born, Hannah prayed and praised God for his blessings.
- Hannah did not forget the promise she had made to God. When Samuel was weaned, she took him to be presented to Eli the priest. She said to him, "I prayed for this child, and the Lord has granted me what I asked of him. Now I want to dedicate him to the LORD for his whole life. (1 Samuel 1:27, 28) Hannah took care of Samuel after she took him to the temple. Every year when they went for the annual sacrifice, she brought him a new garment that she had made for him.
- God blessed Hannah because she honoured her promise. Hannah and Elkanah had three sons and two daughters. (1 Samuel 2:21)





WHY DO YOU THINK THIS PERSON HAS BEEN INCLUDED IN GOD'S STORY?

- **To remind us that we can bring our worries, disappointments and tears to God.** There may have been times when Hannah wanted to give up, run away or be mean to Pennina. But Hannah understood the power of prayer. When we face a problem or a difficult relationship and there seems to be no solution, we can talk to God, ask him to help us, give us confidence, self-control and respect for others (Isaiah 41:10; 1 Timothy 1:7)
- **To remind us to keep our promises to God.** Hannah gave God what mattered most to her: her long-awaited son. It was a huge promise because she had longed for a child for so many years. To wait for something for so long and then give it away is hard to understand. It can be so easy to make a promise especially when we think it might get us what we want, but it is not so easy to honour it. God honours the one who keeps his promises.
- **To remind us of perseverance in prayer.** No matter what the situation, God wants us to pray to him with persistence and confidence. He wants us to trust in him and believe him. God hears and answers our prayers. When we have no answer or when it takes time to be answered, when we are discouraged, trusting God deepens our relationship and our faith in him (Psalm 10:17; Luke 18:1).

LIFE APPLICATION QUESTIONS:

Pose the following two questions to your children, one at a time. Allow for interaction and discussion, letting them share their thoughts while you guide the conversation.

- What life lessons can I learn from this Bible character about how I should and should not live?
- Based on what I have learned from this Bible character, how can I live in a way that is pleasing to God.

MORE IN GOD'S WORD

Challenge yourself to find five minutes each day for a week, to quiet your spirit, finding a spot where you are not distracted, and practice just listening to God and being in tune with Him. Take your Bible to that quiet place. Use some of that time to pray, and some time to just meditate on His Word. Keep your ears and your heart open to what God is wanting to say to you. It's not a matter of IF He wants

to talk to you. He does want to speak. But, He also wants you to be ready and positioned for listening, so you can actually hear in your heart what He is saying. Then, respond in obedience with a heart that is open to what God would have you to do. God called Samuel three times. How many times is He calling you? The more you spend time in His presence, the less He will have to try calling you over and over again. Maybe you will hear His voice the very first time He calls!

