

ST. ANDREW'S PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

FLAWED MASTERPIECE



wisdom from
ancient voices

WEEK 13



FLAWED MASTERPIECE WEEK THIRTEEN

This week, Bryan is focusing on the Flawed Masterpiece that is Hannah. However, the woman we know as Hannah in the Bible is found only in 1 Samuel, yet her story is anything but insignificant.

Hannah's story deals with infertility, bullying, answered prayer and reaches prophetically into the New Testament. Primarily seen in how we see her character and actions foreshadow the nature of God. Hannah gave her firstborn in love and honor, and because of God the Father's love for us, he gave his first and only son's life to restore our integrity.

- Where do you see parallels from Hannah's character and God's character?
- Read 1 Samuel 1:1-28 - Why is this happening in the text and what does it mean?
- What verses stand out to you?



Prayer of Hannah

"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."

What is the importance of her prayer in light of the entire story of Hannah?

THOUGHTS ON FAITHFULNESS



In this crisis, Hannah models a faithful response. She weeps. She rejects her share of sacrifices that have been handled by the sons of Eli. And she silently refuses her husband's attempts to console her. Hannah will not accept the half-comforts of the present order. She goes instead to present herself "before the LORD" (7-9).

Hannah weeps, prays, and makes a vow (11). She prays for God to see her. And she prays for God to remember her — as Israel might pray for God to remember the covenant. She prays within the frames of the old order of the judges, promising, like Samson's mother, that she will dedicate the boy as a nazirite. But her prayer also reaches beyond the present order. Hannah asks God to do a new thing.

Samuel is the fruit of Hannah's faithful refusal to be comforted by anything less than a gift from God. He serves as a bridge between the old and the new. He is a culmination of the old order: from a distinguished family, blessed by Eli, all but conceived at the cultic center of Shiloh, and dedicated as a nazirite. But the author of the books of Samuel also wants to stress that Samuel represents a new thing that God is doing. Samuel's birth is clearly a work of God, a fresh kindling of the spark of Hannah's faithfulness. God has remembered the covenant, just as Hannah prayed, but not simply reestablished the old religious and political orders. Samuel will go on to play the decisive role in legitimating the new order that will culminate in David's kingship, the defeat of the Philistines, and the concentration of religious, political, and economic authority in Jerusalem.

Walter Brueggemann, *First and Second Samuel, Interpretation*, ed. James Luther Mays, et al. (Louisville: John Knox Press, 1990), 1-15.

Carol Meyers, "Hannah and Her Sacrifice: Reclaiming Female Agency," in *A Feminist Companion to Samuel and Kings*, ed. Athalya Brenner (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994), 93-104.



DISCUSS WITH YOUR GROUP

- What stood out to you about Bryan's sermon?
- In looking at the commentary, do you have any new perspectives of the passage?
- Does Hannah's story reflect that of the relationship between Israel and God?
- Why does this text matter or how does it relate to your life?

24 After he was weaned, she took the boy with her, young as he was, along with a three-year-old bull, [e] an ephah [f] of flour and a skin of wine, and brought him to the house of the Lord at Shiloh. 25 When the bull had been sacrificed, they brought the boy to Eli. 26 and she said to him, "Pardon me, my lord. As surely as you live, I am the woman who stood here beside you praying to the Lord. 27 I prayed for this child, and the Lord has granted me what I asked of him. 28 So now I give him to the Lord. For his whole life he will be given over to the Lord." And he worshiped the Lord there

