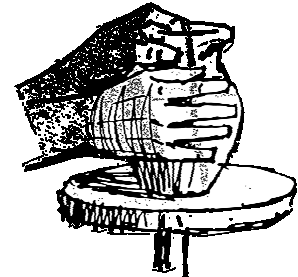


# His Workmanship Westside

*"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works."  
—Ephesians 2:10*



Vol. XXIII

May 11, 2014

No. 19

Isaiah 64:8

## Hannah's Prayer: Changing History by God's Power, by Kenn Gividen

Hannah prayed. God responded. And the course of world history was changed. The time when judges ruled over Israel was almost over and the kings were coming. Hannah lived right before this transition occurred; in fact, her prayer helped to usher it in. All of Hannah's thoughts centered on being childless, such grief that her husband could not comfort her. She endured great provocation and ridicule from Peninnah for her barrenness, so she continually sought the Lord to remove her reproach and give her a male child. Each year Elkanah took his family up to Shiloh to worship God and offer sacrifices because priests and the Lord's tabernacle were there. One year during this trip Hannah had a divine appointment with her God.

### How Hannah Prayed.

A. Hannah prayed fervently. In 1 Samuel 1 we meet a heartbroken woman who teaches us the secret of powerful praying. She approached the door of the Lord's tabernacle to pray once again for her deepest need. Tears of sorrow flowed from her embittered soul as she cried out to God. This was not merely an emotional outburst—it was a cry from her deepest

emotions, truly, and it was also a praise to God and a plea for His greatness to come down and help her. *"And she was in bitterness of soul, and prayed to the LORD and wept in anguish. Then she made a vow and said, "O LORD of hosts, if You will indeed look on the affliction of Your maidservant and remember me, and not forget Your maidservant, but will give Your maidservant a male child, then I will give him to the LORD all the days of his life, and no razor shall come upon his head," vs. 10-11.*

B. Hannah prayed persistently. She continued to pray, v. 12. Does repeating a prayer show a lack of faith or does it show commitment and earnest desire? Jesus prayed three times in the garden, Mt 26:39, 42, 44. Paul prayed three times, 2 Cor 12:7-8. God desires persistency in prayer, Lk 11:5-13; 18:1-8. When you pray, how much do you desire an answer to your prayer? What are you willing to do to show it?

C. Hannah prayed sincerely, v. 13. Hannah's sincerity was evident. Her prayers were not to impress others. Her deepest desires were spoken between her and God; cf. Mt 6:5-6. Her sincerity was like Paul's in his personal prayer, Rm 10:1. Like Hannah's prayer, his came from his grief,

Rm 9:1-3. Are you praying what you really want to happen? Or are you praying what you think other people want you to say? See Ps 20.

D. Hannah prayed confidently. She was confident that God would answer her, vs. 17-18. Eli didn't really know that God would answer her prayer. He didn't even know what she was praying about. He simply offered his hope that God would answer her prayer. Nevertheless, his assurance bolstered her—someone else believed God was listening and would answer. And more important, when Hannah left, she began acting as if her prayer was already answered, v. 17. Hers was a prayer of faith, without any doubts, Jas 1:5-8. She didn't know the answer God would give, but she was confident that God cares. God knows our needs better than we do ourselves, Mt 6:8. Ultimately, God's purpose will be done, and it is His will that good results from our lives, Rm 8:28. Even though it might not happen the way we expect, the answer will be beyond our largest dreams—better than we could imagine, Eph 3:20.

When you pray, are you confident that there will be an answer? Are you

continued on p. 2

**“Because he has set his love upon Me, therefore I will deliver him; I will set him on high, because he has known My name. He shall call upon Me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him and honor him.”**

**—Psalm 91:14-15**

assured that no matter how it is answered, it will be better than you planned? See 1 Tim 2:8; Mk 11:24. **Giving Back to God.** Did you see it? Hannah asked God specifically for a son, but not for herself. In essence Hannah prayed, "Lord, give me a son so I can give him back to you. Let the world see that you are God, indeed." God answered that simple prayer. What God did for Hannah 3,000 years ago, He desires to do for us today.

Hannah was an ordinary woman who affected world history with a single, unselfish prayer. When God answered her prayer, He provided more than just a son. He gave her a son who would become one of Israel's greatest leaders. He was the last of the judges and the first of the prophets. He anointed kings and delivered his nation from idolatry.

**Total Commitment.** An often overlooked footnote of history is the significance of her son's name. Rather than choose a common name, Hannah selected one taken from two Hebrew terms: *shamma*, meaning "listen to, hear attentively, obediently"; and *el*, "God." When combined, the word essentially means "He hears/obeys/proclaims God, he is heard of the Almighty!" cf. 1 Sam 3:9-10. That word is *Samuel*, v. 20. By naming him Samuel, Hannah was acknowledging her vow. She would give her son to the Lord—down to the last detail—including his name. When someone asked his name, he could reply, "I listen to God! Here I am, for you called me," 3:4-8. No one could call Samuel by name without evoking the effect of Hannah's prayer. Offering a vow showed her commitment, v. 11.

This was not an attempt to bribe God. Hannah wanted to demonstrate the lengths she would go if her prayer was answered. What she vowed was within her ability to keep, Eccl 5:1-5. Notice that in asking for aid from God, Hannah said she would do what she could. She wasn't asking God to do everything while she sat back and enjoyed the benefits. She had something she could offer back to God. Hannah's prayer was powerful because she asked God to give something to *Himself*. Her desire was to be a willing vessel through whom God would be glorified. This is the opposite of how we usually pray. Typically, we ask God to give something to us. What will you do that is truly within your ability to give back to God? As

“May the LORD answer you in the day of trouble; may the name of the God of Jacob defend you; may He send you help...and strengthen you...; may He remember all your offerings, and accept your sacrifice. May He grant you according to your heart's desire, and fulfill all your purpose. We will rejoice in your salvation, and in the name of our God we will set up our banners! May the LORD fulfill all your petitions.” —Psalm 20:1-5

you pray for strength and growth in the church, are you willing to work for it? See Eph 4:15-16. When you pray for strength to resist temptation, do you minimize your exposure to it? See Rm 13:14. When you pray for an opportunity to teach, do you seek those opportunities? See Col 4:2-4.

The dynamic of Hannah's prayer raises serious questions for us: When was the last time we asked God for something specific so we could return

it to Him? When was the last time we asked God to bless us—not for our gain or glory, but so others would see His power? Consider the results of such praying. What if God's answer is "No, I will not give you that which you ask"? You have gained nothing. You have lost nothing. On the other hand, suppose God answers, "Yes, I will give you your request"? Again, you have gained nothing and lost nothing. Because you gain nothing, God alone benefits and thereby gets all the glory. The power of God is demonstrated, and He is honored. Many possibilities arise from this. Why not pray Hannah's prayer daily? Why not prove God's power with the prayer of Hannah? We can decide to do just that: Prove God's power with the prayer of Hannah. We ask God for something specific that we would not otherwise expect to acquire. Upon receiving what He gives, we return it to Him.

**Applying the Principle.** One church had borrowed money to add classrooms to its building. The mortgage placed considerable strain on the church's budget. [Under the leadership of the pastors, the congregation vowed never again to borrow money. That, however, didn't remove the burden of making monthly payments.] The church considered its options. Should it try to sell the building? Asking for more money from the church was not an option. They were already giving sacrificially. How, then, could it meet its obligations? What about Hannah's prayer? The church agreed to ask God for money to give back to Him. "O Lord of hosts," they prayed, "if you will indeed look on the affliction

continued on p. 3



**Let your faith be seen in 2014**  
 "I rejoice to see your good order  
 and the steadfastness of your faith  
 in Christ."  
 —Colossians 2:5

**Hannah's Prayer**, from p. 2  
 of your church, and remember it, and  
 not forsake it, but if you will give us  
 funds from unexpected sources in  
 addition to monies we're already receiv-  
 ing, then we will give those funds unto  
 the LORD." They prayed Hannah's  
 prayer. God responded. The course of  
 that church was changed:

- One man received notice from his long-distance phone carrier that his rates were being reduced. (When was the last time that happened to you?) At first, he thought little of it. The total savings would be only five dollars per week. Then it occurred to him. That's \$60 he would not have received otherwise. Is this an answer to Hannah's prayer? The next Sunday he wrote a check for \$60, marked it "Hannah money," and placed it in the offering plate.
- A young woman, after praying Hannah's prayer, found twenty-five dollars near her pillow. She had no idea how it got there. None of her family knew either. Apparently, she had tucked it away some time ago for safekeeping. She then forgot about it until it fell from its hiding place. Here was money from an unexpected source. She called it "Hannah money" and gave it to the Lord. The mortgage was reduced by exactly twenty-five dollars.
- Another person received a \$1,200 income tax refund unexpectedly. A businessman got a notice from a supplier who had been over-charging him. The supplier sent about \$1,500 to balance the account. That was money unexpected. The mortgage dropped

## Discipleship Here At Home

again. One woman was happy over getting an unexpected discount while shopping. "My first thought was to treat myself to lunch," she said. "But the I thought, 'this is Hannah money.'" The mortgage decreased yet again.

• A boy found \$5 in a grocery store. He gave it to the store manager. The manager gave it back. The mortgage fell another \$5. God responded to prayer.

This is the principle behind Hannah's prayer. Right now, pray Hannah's prayer. Ask God for something specific that will glorify Him. Ask Him for something that you can give back to Him. Always be mindful that you serve a big God. There is no limit to what He can do through you. Consider this prayer: "*O LORD of hosts, if you will indeed look on my affliction and remember me, and not forget me, but provide that which I can give back to you, then I will, indeed, surrender it fully to your glory. Amen.*"

Before you pray, read 1 Samuel 1-2. Note how God honored Hannah. You will discover that Hannah possessed eight important character qualities to make her prayers powerful. These traits allowed God to use her mightily; she had been humbled, vs. 6-7, broken, v. 10, and strengthened, v. 18; she possessed godly desire, vs. 10-13, purity/whole-heartedness, vs. 7-16, and endurance/persistence, vs. 2-22; and she received mercy, vs. 15-19, and peace, vs. 24-28. She received her heart's desire, v. 20. She received more than she expected. Her son became a priest before God, a judge of Israel, a mighty prophet who established kings of Israel. Her story is recorded for us for a reason, Rm 15:4. Let's all pray in faith as she did. The Creator of the Universe is calling right now! He sits in the throne room of heaven, beckoning us to come boldly into His presence. He eagerly anticipates our fellowship and petitions.

### PRAY FOR healing, protection, help, and comfort here and away

**Emma Sangellino**—pneumonia, bronchiolitis, low oxygen, infections in both ears  
**Rocco Jr. and Giada Sangellino**—influenza B  
**Nell Free**—anemic and dehydrated; some valve leakage in her heart her doc is tracking  
**Giles Free**—seizure last month; confined at home  
**Sarah Hadders**—persisting cough  
**Ed Fink**—prostate cancer; current treatment for brain tumors; **PRAISE**: improved blood count  
**Amy Vander Kooi's mother, Sherry Graves**—rehab in TN recovering from broken hip  
**Forrest Corray**, Jordan's brother—addiction  
**Kory Tope's uncle Kurt Schulz**—successful angioplasty, 2 stents; another in near future  
**Randy Reames's mother, Una**, in her 80s—cancerous colon tumor removed recently  
**Sandra Perry's sister, Sharon Rupinen**—upper GI tests; surgery expected; **Sandra's** daughter's boyfriend—complications from foot amputation  
**Josh McDonald**, friend of **Kory Tope**, and his daughter **Casey**—unwanted divorce  
**Mark Campbell**—moving to own apt and needs furniture, kitchen items, dish drainer

### CHRONIC CONDITIONS

**Logan Corray; Rocco Sangellino Jr; Addison Tope; Pat Wilkes**—asthma  
**Bill Dennis**—heart issues  
**Autumn Hadders**—epilepsy; celiac disease  
**Danielle Huelsman**—vertigo, CV syndrome  
**Kirk Johnson**—worsening MS; needs quick meals to heat up, like soup  
**Menards**—aging; **Lloyd**, diabetes, weak;  
**Virginia**, macular degeneration; high BP  
**Sandra Perry**—neuropathy from diabetes  
**Cheryl Reames**—diverticulitis; fibromyalgia  
**Nell Free**—pacemaker, heart; back pain  
**Judy Sartin**—spinal stenosis; arthritis  
**Judy and Mike Strand**—both beginning treatment for hepatitis  
**Lynda Szymanski**—COPD, lung weakness

### Job concerns **Linda Szymanski**

**Travel** **DeWayne Howell** is working in San Francisco this week; Montreal next wk  
**Larry Campbell** is working in FL this week  
**Sarah McMurray** is working another week in Louisiana

**Bereaved** Hold the **Menards** in prayer. Their daughter, **Sharon**, 66, passed away from lung cancer two weeks ago.



## Exposing current thoughts & trends

### SCOTUS Prayer Ruling Chafes Libs, by Tony Perkins

In a 5-4 decision the Supreme Court ruled Monday in favor of the Town of Greece (NY) in a challenge to its legislative prayer practice. With the chisel of political correctness slowly chipping away at the First Amendment, this is a victory for every American standing for the inclusion of faith—not just by means of legislative prayers, but for all religious liberty and the free expression of religion in public places. With this ruling, the justices dealt a blow to the forces of political correctness, who (in zeal without knowledge) continue to demand that we check our faith at the entrance to the public square. The Court noted that specific references to Jesus Christ during legislative prayers have been made throughout U.S. history, and Congress has permitted Jewish, Buddhist, and Muslim prayers. Government-mandated prayer language designed to be “inclusive” of all religions and non-religions would be tantamount to “establishment of religion,” prohibited by the First Amendment. The Court noted that “untutored devotion to the concept of neutrality” must not lead to ‘a brooding and pervasive devotion to the secular.’” It said: “The First Amendment is not a majority rule, and government may not seek to define permissible categories of religious speech. Once it invites prayer into the public sphere, government must permit a prayer giver to address his or her own God or gods as conscience dictates, unfettered by what an administrator or judge considers to be nonsectarian,” so long as the prayer does not “denigrate nonbelievers or religious minorities, threaten damnation, or preach conversion.”

Only a few days after the ruling, liberals were struggling with the decision. The *New York Times* is desperate to find the hidden agenda behind Americans' desire to exercise religion. In a column Thursday, Katherine Stewart suggested that religious groups are advocating for public prayer only to create a stealth theocracy in America: “If you listened to the people who shepherded the case as it ascended the judicial hierarchy, however, the decision represents one of their biggest victories to date. It ‘wasn’t just an answer on prayer—it was an answer to prayer!’ read a statement by the Family Research Council. The Council is one of a host of organizations guided by the religious liberty advocacy group the Alliance Defending Freedom that backed the defendants with legal resources...” The goal, Stewart suggested, “is to get back to a ‘soft’ establishment of religion in America—that is, a system in which...one religion is informally or implicitly acknowledged as the ‘approved’ religion of the majority and a legitimate basis for public policy.” If Stewart, like FRC’s Travis Weber, had read the Court dissents, she would have realized that the ones who want to establish a religion in America are the secularists! “If mandating more religious inclusivity, who decides what steps are needed? What methods are used?” Travis said. “The dissenters promote active government involvement in religious decision making, thus interfering with religion, the very things they claim to be against.”



meets at  
13789 W. 8th Avenue  
Golden, Colorado 80401  
720-295-4530

#### Pastors

Larry Campbell (303) 246-8810  
DeWayne Howell (303) 973-7283

#### Preacher

Jim Reingrover (303) 973-5102

[info@thechurchingolden.com](mailto:info@thechurchingolden.com)

## Assembly Schedule

### Sunday

Bible classes	9:00 am
Morning assembly	10:00 am
Afternoon assembly	1:30 pm

### Wednesday

Bible classes	7:30 pm
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### Sunday morning:

- **Adult Bible class, *Inside Out, Growing a Spirit of Service*, Lesson 5, “A Prayerful Spirit,”** DeWayne Howell

- **Sermon, “Encouragement for Mothers,”** Jim Reingrover

### Sunday afternoon theme for this term:

**HISTORY OF THE LORD’S KINGDOM**

- **Sermon, “Division,”** Larry Campbell

### Wednesday adult class for May-June:

**Jeremiah and Lamentations: Warnings**

This week: Jeremiah 25-29