

Tuesday 11 January 2022

Today is Tuesday the 11 January, in the first week of Ordinary Time.

One Hope Project sings, 'My Soul Rests'. As you enter into prayer today, become aware of what you are carrying in your heart...in your mind...in your body...and bring it all to God now.

Today's reading is from the first book of Samuel.

1 Samuel 1:9-20

After they had eaten and drunk at Shiloh, Hannah rose and presented herself before the Lord. Now Eli the priest was sitting on the seat beside the doorpost of the temple of the Lord. She was deeply distressed and prayed to the Lord, and wept bitterly. She made this vow: 'O Lord of hosts, if only you will look on the misery of your servant, and remember me, and not forget your servant, but will give to your servant a male child, then I will set him before you as a nazirite until the day of his death. He shall drink neither wine nor intoxicants, and no razor shall touch his head.'

As she continued praying before the Lord, Eli observed her mouth. Hannah was praying silently; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard; therefore Eli thought she was drunk. So Eli said to her, 'How long will you make a drunken spectacle of yourself? Put away your wine.' But Hannah answered, 'No, my lord, I am a woman deeply troubled; I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but I have been pouring out my soul before the Lord. Do not regard your servant as a worthless woman, for I have been speaking out of my great anxiety and vexation all this time.' Then Eli answered, 'Go in peace; the God of Israel grant the petition you have made to him.' And she said, 'Let your servant find favour in your sight.' Then the woman went to her quarters, ate and drank with her husband, and her countenance was sad no longer.

They rose early in the morning and worshipped before the Lord; then they went back to their house at Ramah. Elkanah knew his wife Hannah, and the Lord remembered her. In due time Hannah conceived and bore a son. She named him Samuel, for she said, 'I have asked him of the Lord.'

In this passage we experience the power of tenacity in prayer. As Hannah presents herself at the Temple, oblivious of Eli, imagine your response to seeing this woman, so distressed and yet so determined.

Eli's first impression of Hannah is clear, that she is making a show of herself. Even he, a temple priest, has rarely seen such emotive prayer, or such a willingness to lay everything before the Lord. Have you ever been able to come before God in this way? How did it feel? What may stand in your way?

'Go in peace.' A blessing we hear many times in scripture. To find peace, notice how Hannah, not only empties her heart before the Lord, but is acknowledged by another. Is there someone that you know as an encourager in faith and prayer?

Hannah directs all her attention towards God. In a time of trustful prayer, open your heart to the Lord.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Today is Tuesday the 11 January, in the first week of Ordinary Time.

One Hope Project sings, 'My Soul Rests'. As you enter into prayer today, become aware of what you are carrying in your heart...in your mind...in your body...and bring it all to God now.

Today's reading is from the first book of Samuel.

1 Samuel 1:9-20

After they had eaten and drunk at Shiloh, Hannah rose and presented herself before the Lord. Now Eli the priest was sitting on the seat beside the doorpost of the temple of the Lord. She was deeply distressed and prayed to the Lord, and wept bitterly. She made this vow: 'O Lord of hosts, if only you will look on the misery of your servant, and remember me, and not forget your servant, but will give to your servant a male child, then I will set him before you as a nazirite until the day of his death. He shall drink neither wine nor intoxicants, and no razor shall touch his head.'

As she continued praying before the Lord, Eli observed her mouth. Hannah was praying silently; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard; therefore Eli thought she was drunk. So Eli said to her, 'How long will you make a drunken spectacle of yourself? Put away your wine.' But Hannah answered, 'No, my lord, I am a woman deeply troubled; I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but I have been pouring out my soul before the Lord. Do not

regard your servant as a worthless woman, for I have been speaking out of my great anxiety and vexation all this time.’ Then Eli answered, ‘Go in peace; the God of Israel grant the petition you have made to him.’ And she said, ‘Let your servant find favour in your sight.’ Then the woman went to her quarters, ate and drank with her husband, and her countenance was sad no longer.

They rose early in the morning and worshipped before the Lord; then they went back to their house at Ramah. Elkanah knew his wife Hannah, and the Lord remembered her. In due time Hannah conceived and bore a son. She named him Samuel, for she said, ‘I have asked him of the Lord.’

In this passage we experience the power of tenacity in prayer. As Hannah presents herself at the Temple, oblivious of Eli, imagine your response to seeing this woman, so distressed and yet so determined.

Eli’s first impression of Hannah is clear, that she is making a show of herself. Even he, a temple priest, has rarely seen such emotive prayer, or such a willingness to lay everything before the Lord. Have you ever been able to come before God in this way? How did it feel? What may stand in your way?

‘Go in peace.’ A blessing we hear many times in scripture. To find peace, notice how Hannah, not only empties her heart before the Lord, but is acknowledged by another. Is there someone that you know as an encourager in faith and prayer?

Hannah directs all her attention towards God. In a time of trustful prayer, open your heart to the Lord.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.