

Hannah's Sacrifice

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Preacher: Rev Andrew Coghill

[0 : 0 0] 1 Samuel chapter 1 we read at verse 11 she heard a vow and said O Lord of hosts if thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of thine handmaid and remember me and not forget thine handmaid but will give unto thine handmaid a man child then I will give him unto the Lord all the days of his life and there shall no razor come upon his head. We have here the cry of the heart of Hannah in the time of her childlessness pleading with the Lord that he would give her a son and promising and this is a big promise here that if he grants it to her then she will give that son back to the Lord by way of a sort of permanent loan to the Lord he would be a Nazarite from the womb no razor would come upon his head he would be set apart dedicated to the Lord such is her longing to have this prayer answered that she gives the object of her desire back again to the Lord even before she has received it.

I want us to recognize a number of things here in this petition that Hannah makes apart from the most important thing which is her in asking her willingness to give it all to the Lord and see how the Lord responds to that and answers her prayer but the first thing we need to see he asks as always the context and the context of this prayer is extremely dark days in Israel.

If you think of the end of the book of Judges and of course Ruth intervenes between the end of the book of Judges and the beginning of Samuel it says at the end of that in those days there was no king in Israel every man did that which was right in his own eyes and these are dark days so much so that even the worship of God whilst the religious practices are being maintained by some have decayed to the extent that even the priests at the tabernacle not Eli himself but his sons Hophni and Phinehas when we read it in verse 3 and we would read in chapter 2 if we went on what kind of men they were but also the very fact that in our reading this morning Eli said you know this woman must be drunk why would he think that here she is in church you know in the tabernacle praying why assume she's drunk clearly drunkenness and licentiousness and theft and so on was commonplace even in and around the tabernacle such had things decayed to such an extent in these days of Israel's history and even with this man

Elkanah who is comparatively devout we see that a measure of sin has entered in as well and its consequences here he is a man of Ramathayim Zophim of Mount Ephraim his name was Elkanah now we're not told that he is a Levite here he just says he's at Mount Ephraim we might assume he's at Ephraim but if we look elsewhere in scripture then we know that he is in fact a Levite which means Samuel is himself a Levite whose business would be around the tabernacle around the temple working in it anyway if you were to turn to chapter 8 of 1 Samuel you'd see the names of his own sons which are verses 1 and 2 he made his sons judges over Israel the name of his firstborn was Joel and the name of his second Abiyah they were judges in Beersheba his sons walked not in his ways but turned aside after Lucan and took bribes and perverted judgment so this was a problem in every generation at this time but if we were to turn you don't have to turn with me if you look at 1 Chronicles in chapter 6 verses 33 to 38 we see the genealogy of these men here the sons of the

Cothats Hemanah the son of Joel the son of Shemuel that is Samuel the son of Elkanah the son of Jehoam the son of Eliel the son of Toah or Tohu which is exactly the ancestry that's listed in verses 1 and 2 of 1 Samuel for Elkanah the son of Zuth the son of Elkanah the son of Mehat the son of Amessai the son of Elkanah the son of Joel the son of Azariah the son of Zephaniah the son of Tehah the son of Asha the son of Epiasah the son of Korah the son of Isar, the son of Goat, the son of Levi, the son of Israel.

[4 : 41] So he is a Levite by descent. He's living in one of the cities of Israel. And normally his practice would be that he would be working and waiting on the things of the Lord in the tabernacle, like the other Levites.

But clearly that practice too has fallen into obeisance. It's no longer happening. But Elkanah, for the best part, he's seeking to maintain the worship of God, going up once a year to the house of the Lord, almost certainly at the Passover of that one time.

But he has, like everybody else, he has done what is right in his own eyes. He has been afflicted with childlessness in his marriage. And so the implication is that he has taken his second wife, Peninnah.

It's not stated explicitly, but the way the names are listed, the name of the one was Hannah, the name of the other, Peninnah. That implies that Peninnah was the second wife and Hannah was the first.

That it was because of Hannah's childlessness and Elkanah's feeling of the need for children and for a son to carry on after him, that he took the second wife.

[5 : 48] He sort of took matters into his own hands, like Abraham did with Ishmael. And of course, the resultant unhappiness and friction, where polygamy is practiced, is a grief in the home.

Just as Rachel and Leah were sort of at odds with each other, competing for their husband's affections, and one was blessed with children and the other wasn't, but the one that wasn't was the more beloved.

And so likewise, we've got this situation here. Friction in the home because of his decision to take a second wife here in order to obtain children.

But still, this man went up out of the city yearly to worship and to sacrifice unto the Lord of hosts in Shiloh. And the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, the priests of the Lord, were there.

And he gave to Peninnah, his wife, and to all her sons and her daughters, portions. That means that when they offered their sacrifice, the bit that came back to them that they made the feast with, he would give dutifully portions out to his second wife and all her children.

[6 : 48] But to Hannah, he gave a worthy portion. That means he gave her the biggest and the best in order to show his love for her. He knew that she was afflicted. He knew that she was childless and sorrowing and grieving because of it.

And more sadly, we read about Peninnah, her adversary, she described as, provoked her sore to make her fret because the Lord had shut up her womb.

And the name Hannah means grace. And we can see that Hannah is acting with grace. And we don't read that she gives railing for railing. She doesn't bite back at Peninnah. She doesn't attempt to say, well, I've got the seniority of being a first wife.

And, you know, you're no better than me. She could have said so many nasty things back. She doesn't. She just takes it to herself. She just absorbs all the pain. The name Peninnah, we don't have it elsewhere in Scripture.

It's only ever mentioned elsewhere in Scripture as a plural in the Hebrew. And the plural of this name is a word that is translated in the English Bible as rubies.

[7 : 53] So I suppose we could say that Peninnah means ruby. But, ironically, you could say that it means one of these things, the gems, precious things of this world. But Hannah is grace and that which is blessed for eternity.

And so here we have her suffering in the midst of her childlessness. And Elkanah, her husband, says to her, Hannah, why weepest thou? Some people take this as being evidence of his sensitivity and kindness.

And, you know, don't I look after you better than ten sons would sort of things? And others take it as being, well, how insensitive and stupid can you be? Of course, you know what's afflicting her. How can you say I'm better to you than ten sons?

You know, nothing makes up for the absence of children when you've got an adversary who's constantly getting at you and constantly chastising you for not having what she has got.

I'm the lad better to the end of ten sons. It's meant to be indicating to us that Elkanah lavishes his love on her. He's concerned for her. He is an affectionate husband.

[8 : 57] But he cannot replace, he cannot give her what she doesn't have. He cannot solve the problem. So Hannah rose up after they had eaten in Shiloh.

Now, it's not clear whether she herself has eaten anything at all at this stage. Probably not. Because then it says, later on, when the woman went her way, verse 18, and her countenance was no more sad, she did eat men.

Her countenance was no more sad. It implies that she hasn't up to this point. So she comes with this burden of grief. Where to take it? Well, we know the best place to take it.

The only place to take it. There they are. They brought their offerings to the Lord, their peace offerings, and their sacrificing to the Lord. They're gathered at the tabernacle. Where better to bring your petition?

And who better to bring it to than the Lord? She could have a go at her husband, but she doesn't. She could have a go at her adversary, her fellow wife of Elkanah, but she doesn't.

[9 : 58] She brings her burden to the Lord. Psalm 55 tells us, verse 22, Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee.

He shall never suffer the righteous to be moved. Likewise, of course, like 1 Peter chapter 5 and verse 7 says, you know, Cast thy burden on the Lord, you know, and let him take your burden, for he careth for you.

Casting all your cares upon it, for he careth for you. That is what the Lord desires us to do. And whatever our burden may be, whatever our request may be, the Lord is the only place we can bring it.

He's the only one who actually has the power to answer our prayers and to do as we ask. Now, you might think, oh, well, if only it was that simple. But, you know, supposing the Lord were to say to you, as he said to Solomon, you know, 1 Kings chapter 3, verse 5, when Solomon sat before the Lord at Gibeon, and the Lord said, he appeared in my dream by night, and God said, ask what I shall give thee.

In other words, you've got one request, one request, and I'll grant it to you. Now, you might think, oh, well, that's easy, you know, I can ask for this. But as soon as you've got anything you can ask, but you've only got one shot at it, and you know that it's going to be as simple.

[11 : 24] I imagine if you reminds anyone, it might go a blank. Because it's like, you know, if you're coming into the town and it's busy and the car parks up, well, are you at one space? That's great. That's where you're going to park, because there's nowhere else to go.

But if you come in early in the morning and it's a completely empty car, you go, oh, well, where should I park? That space or no. I want to get the best space, but, oh, I just don't know where I should park, because there's so much choice.

If the Lord said, ask me one thing, one thing, and I will grant you it, like he did to Solomon. So, what on earth would you ask? What is the one thing that is the greatest burden of your heart or the greatest anxiety of your soul?

That if the Lord was going to grant that one prayer, such that you would never regret the whole of your life, that that was the thing you had asked for. Mindful that if he grants that, there are various other things you might wish you'd asked for otherwise.

But if there was one thing, now God in his mercy grants us so many things. He doesn't just say, oh, you had your one, that's it. He gives us other things as well. But the one key thing, the greatest burden of your heart, the greatest concern for your entire life, what would you ask?

[12 : 41] And how would you ask it? What is it that you desire it for? You see, Hannah, yes, she has this burden. She feels incomplete.

She is being constantly needled by her adversely, by Elkanah's second wife, by Peninnah. She's been given a hard time. She feels like she's dying inside because of the misery and sorrow of her heart.

Year after year after year, this happens. And this woman, who's had loads of children from Hannah's own husband. So again, even though they tended to blame the woman anyway, if he's got children with a second wife, clearly the medical problem or the barrenness or whatever is not with him.

It's hard. She's got the shame. She's got the problem to have to live with. So, but what does she do with it? She says, if you will grant me this, take away my shame, in other words, I'll give him back to the Lord.

Now, I don't know what is the thing that you would most ask for from the Lord. I don't know what would be the greatest burden of your heart. What would be the thing if you had that one request like Solomon, who asked for wisdom at the end of the day?

[13 : 56] God was pleased with his request and he gave him so much else. Just like the Lord clearly is pleased with Hannah's request and her response to it. And if we were to go on to chapter 2, we would see how Eli says to her, Eli blessed Elkanah, verse 20 of chapter 2, and his wife and said, The Lord give thee seed of this woman for the loan which is lent to the Lord.

And they went to their own home and the Lord visited Hannah so that she conceived and bare three sons and two daughters. And the child Samuel grew before the Lord. So at the end of the day, she had six children.

A worthy harvest by anybody's reckoning of somebody who had been childless. The Lord gives and gives and gives abundantly. But what do you want to do with the one thing you would ask of the Lord?

Is it just so that, hey, I've always wanted to do this. I've always wanted to have this. I've always wanted to have this for myself. So, yes, that's the thing I want. And is it the right thing that we're asking for?

Is it something that we can ask for without shame before the Lord? That it's not just something to gratify my own indulgence or my own desire? You know, James says in chapter four, it says he, verse three, ask and receive not because he ask amiss that he may consume it upon your lusts.

[15 : 17] In other words, if I were to say that one thing, the Lord said, I said, oh, but I really want a Ferrari. I would love to have that and drive it around the parish and that would be great. And everyone would say, wow, what a fantastic car.

If that was my one desire, what would I be wanting that for? It would be for my own pride, my own vanity, my own stupidity. I couldn't possibly afford it.

I couldn't possibly keep it up. It wouldn't be any good for me. Why would I ask that of the Lord when no good could be done for the Lord or for his cause or for his kingdom that way?

It would just be me, my pride, my stupidity. And sometimes some of the things we want, that is our pride, our stupidity, our foolishness, our short-sightedness.

If something is going to be a worthy request, if in the midst of these dark days, and, you know, there were dark days in Israel, dark days in the tabernacle.

[16:13] If we were to read on into chapter 2, see the kind of men that Hophni and Phinehas, Eli's sons were. Men who committed fornication around the tabernacle.

Men who took brides. Men who gladdened themselves on the sacrifices. They didn't set up other gods and worship them right enough because they had a really good line and a really good racket going on around the tabernacle.

They wanted people to come. They wanted people to come to worship the true God, Jehovah, because they had a very good living out of it. They wanted to do well out of the sacrifices. They got to live the kind of life they chose and they abused everything.

Right down to the last detail. And it was the death of Eli in the end. It was the death of his house. It was the destruction of all that they had. But, hey, what are we looking for today?

And that's sometimes so often people's attitude. Yeah, let's have a good time now. But what about what will last? See, other than the fact that she gave her husband so many children, Peninnah doesn't occur anywhere else in Scripture.

[17:20] There's one chapter, but that's it. These couple of verses, and all that we're told about her is that she was unkind and that she was cruel to Hannah, who was afflicted at that time.

And in the end, she lost everything that she did have. She was probably the second one. She was the one that had children. Yes, but that was the only thing she had over Hannah.

She could have been kind to Hannah. She could have been generous. She could have been sharing of her family blessings with Hannah and trying to include her in and make her this of revered.

And for her children, she could have done all these things. She could have been generous and gracious and kind and nice. But she wasn't. She was bitter and cruel. And in the end, when Hannah was blessed with so many children, Peninnah would lose even that status.

Because then she's nothing special compared to Hannah. It doesn't pay us to be so short-sighted and so jealous of the little things we have here.

[18:19] The Lord desires of what we would ask of Him. Our one request. Our one great thing that we might ask. And of course, we can ask lots of things of the Lord.

But if there is one thing we seek and ask more than anything else, then I would suggest to you that if it is only to the Lord and we are prepared to honour our vow to Him, then He will grant it.

He will give as He gave to Hannah. But why are we asking? For whom are we asking? She was asking, yes, for herself. No bones about it.

But she was being prepared to give that which was most precious, the greatest gift the Lord would ever give her in her life, to give it back to the Lord.

Now, whatever the gifts may be, the Lord has given to us. Whatever abilities, whatever strengths, whatever wealth in terms of the kind of person the Lord has made us.

[19:22] We lay it at the Lord's feet and we give it back to the Lord, then He will bless it beyond our greatest imaginings. If we seek to hoard it to ourselves.

Somebody once said long ago about, you know, the loaf of bread that is shared out amongst loads of people who are hungry, whilst it is fresh, it's a blessing to so many, and they enjoy it and they get the good of it, and it's a benefit to them.

The loaf that is hugged away and jealously guarded, it goes cold, it gets mouldy, and eventually it can't be eaten by anyone. So we might as well share it out.

You might as well do good with it while you've got it. You might as well invest in eternity with the blessings the Lord gives us in time. But what are the things you would ask?

What if you had the one thing? It's the one thing you would ask. And why do you want it? And what would you do with it? Now I'm not saying, oh, you must be a bad person if you secretly want this or that or the next thing.

[20 : 27] That's not what I'm saying at all. What I'm saying is, search your heart and seek why you want this thing, and if it is something that can likewise be turned back to honour the Lord and to be given for his kingdom, for his good, then you can serve the Lord with.

That is a worthy request. That is a good and honourable thing. As Hannah asks here, and the Lord glances to her. Despite the fact that before he glances to her, she has to get even more grief.

She gets hassle from her rival wife, second wife, Alcanna's second wife. She gets rebuked by her husband. Oh, why are you sad? Cheat up, come on. And then she gets accused by Eli of being drunk.

And she's getting grief from every angle here, but she just bears with it patiently. She defends herself. You know, when the apostles were filled with the Holy Ghost at Pentecost, that's exactly the same accusation people made against them.

They said, oh, these men are full of new wine. These men are drunk. You know, if you're that filled up with something otherworldly, you must be drunk. So likewise, Eli thinks she's drunk.

[21 : 39] But Hannah defends herself. No, my Lord, I'm a woman of a sorrowful spirit. I drunk that a wine of strong drink. I pour out my soul before the Lord. Eli doesn't ask what she has petitioned the Lord for.

He doesn't snoop into her business. But he knows that because she is there, and because she is pouring out her soul to the Lord, that that is where she has brought her burden.

And that is where she has brought her petition. There is something of God's holiness and grace in this woman. And as high priest, he is moved to say, go in peace.

And the God of Israel grant thee that petition that thou hast asked of him. And she takes this as a word not just from an old man. She takes this as being the solemn pronouncement of God's high priest.

And God does invest his high priest with certain categories of prophecy or blessing. Even if you think of what it says about Caiaphas in John 11, where he says, you know, you don't know anything, you fellow Pharisees and chief priests.

[22 : 43] Don't you know what is expedient? That one man should die on behalf of the whole people, and not that the whole people should perish. And it says, this he spake not of himself.

But being high priest that year, he prophesied that Christ should die, not only for himself, not only for his own people, but for the sins of all who would trust in him across the world.

And he is given that prophecy. God honors the office of high priest, just as God honors his priest here, Eli, by giving him what is effectively a gift of prophecy.

God, the God of Israel grant thee thy petition that thou hast asked of him. Let thine handmaid, she said, find grace in thy sight. So the woman who went away to eat, and her countenance was no more sad.

Now what has changed? She hasn't suddenly, miraculously conceived in that time. Eli doesn't have magic powers. He is endowed with the God's grace as the priest of God.

[23 : 44] But, you know, he is given this pronouncement. She takes it as a prophecy. But such is her faith that she is effectively lifted in spirit and thankful to the Lord before she has even received what she has asked for.

Now Jesus said, of course, this is exactly what we're meant to be like. And Jesus himself sets that example. Mark 11, verse 24, the Lord says, Therefore I say unto you, what things so ever ye desire when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.

Now do we do that? Or do we pray and say, Oh, well, I'm asking this of the Lord, but I don't think he's really going to give me it because God doesn't really answer my prayers, does he? You know, he always says no.

He doesn't let me have what I want. He doesn't do as I ask. If you are asking in faith, asking for that which will honour the Lord as well as be a blessing to you, something that you can actually praise God with, as Hannah did with hers, what things so ever ye desire when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.

You've got to have faith. That is what Jesus does himself. Remember when he makes that big statement in front of the tomb of Lazarus. He says, Take away the stone, your brother will rise again, and the resurrection, and the life.

[25 : 06] They took away the stone from the place where the dead was laid, and Jesus lifted up his eyes and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. And I knew that thou hearest me always, but because of the people which stand by, I said it that they may believe that thou hast sent me.

And when he had thus spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. And we all know what happens then. The point is that Jesus gives thanks to his father before Lazarus actually comes out of the tomb, before he actually has the thing that he asks.

He gives thanks to his father already as though he has received it. Likewise, in the midst of the storm, in Acts 27, where Paul is on a ship, and he says, There stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am and whom I serve, saying, Fear not, Paul.

Thou must be brought before Caesar, and lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee. Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer, for I believe God that it shall be even as it was told me.

This concept of giving thanks before we've actually received because we believe, we trust that God will do as we have asked.

[26 : 18] This is something that Jesus says we need to develop. But so often we hesitate, we like to hedge our bets, and, Well, I don't want to say thank you, but maybe it wasn't God's will to give me it.

So, you know, maybe I'd better not end up looking stupid. You don't look at how to look stupid between yourself and God. He's not in the business of trying to make his children look foolish. He wants to encourage faith in that.

He wants to encourage them to look within and seek what it is that they truly desire and why they truly desire it. And he wants them to ask that they should receive.

Jesus says, Ask, and it shall be given. Seek, and ye shall find. Knock, and it shall be opened unto you. But remember that everything God does is ultimately going to be done for his glory.

And we show ourselves to be the children of God when that is what we ourselves likewise desire. This is what Hannah desires. Hannah, whose name means grace, is prepared, if she be given her petition, to give it back to the Lord, to set this precious child into the Lord's tabernacle and to loan him permanently to the Lord.

[27 : 38] You might think, Ah, well that's okay because she ended up with another five kids after that. Yeah, but each one is unique. No one is replaceable. If you can imagine, supposing you had 30 children of your own and you lost one.

You're not going to say, Ah, it's okay, I've got another 29. Because they're not the same. Each one is unique. Each one is special in itself. And to take this, her firstborn, at that time, her only child, to have weaned him, to have laid him in her arms, to have changed him and fed him and looked after him until he was old enough to be able to be taken as a toddler to the tabernacle and then let him go.

That takes some doing. And it takes some doing to be able to say, I'm not going up to the tabernacle this year. I'm going to wait until the child is weaned. Then I'll bring him and then I'll leave him there before the Lord.

And Elkanah, her husband, wanting to make sure that she did, said, Do what seemeth thee good, verse 23. Tally until thou have weaned him. Only the Lord establishes work. Now I'm sure if you have children of your own, you'll know there's times when either you take them to the nursery for the first time or to school for the first time and it's not easy to let them go and wave bye-bye and it's okay if they're fine and happy about it but if they're a wee bit distressed or they're looking a wee bit fearful and they don't want their mummy or whatever to go, then it's a painful thing to have to do and that's when you're just picking them up again at four o'clock.

So if you are leaving a child there with this old man that he doesn't know and with these ill-behaved, vice-ridden sons of his and with all the iniquity that's going on around the tabernacle at the time, this little toddler, you are well and truly entrusting him to the Lord.

[29 : 34] You've got to walk away and let him watch big-eyed as mummy goes off into the distance. You've got to break your heart all over again and you would think, oh, surely God doesn't want that and oh, God's not going to hold you to that.

God expects us to be held to the vows that we make to him and it's no use us saying, oh, God doesn't want me to be sad. God doesn't want you to break your heart in that way.

God broke his heart over us. He wants to know if we love him enough to be prepared for our hearts to break in the fulfillment of doing what we have come and had and promised with him.

It's not because he delights in our suffering. He doesn't. But he makes it up to us abundantly. He blesses what we give to him. But he needs to know, do you love me as I love you?

That's what he's asking, really. I broke my heart over you. I gave my life for you. What is it that you are willing to give for me? Is it your heart's desire?

[30 : 39] Is it that one thing you have asked of me? Just like when the Lord gave Isaac to Abraham and then he said, offer him up for a burnt offering on Mount Moriah.

And he said, take now thy son, my only son, Isaac, whom thou lovest and offer him up for a burnt offering. He knew exactly what he was doing. He was testing Abraham to see, do you love me enough to give up even that which is most precious, that which I have given to you to give it back to me?

Hebrews tells us that Abraham did it because he had the faith that God was able to raise him from the dead. Even if he had to offer up Isaac and put him to death, God was able to raise him up from the dead.

And it says, he received him like back again from the dead as though he had received him from the dead. Now Hannah, of course, will still be seeing Samuel year by year but once a year is not an awful lot of time when it's your only child at that time.

When it's your most prized and precious treasure of your heart. This is what she's giving up. This is what she's asking for and she gets it. And if anything, I would imagine that giving up the one treasure of your heart is even more painful or a different kind of acute pain than not having had that treasure in the first place.

[32 : 05] That's what she asked for and that's what she vowed to the Lord and that's what she gave. Now if you are looking for a pain-free life with the Lord, then you are not going to get it.

You're not going to get a pain-free life in this world regardless. There is going to be suffering and there is going to be pain and there is going to be difficulty because this is a fallen world.

But what the Lord offers us is that if we ask of Him that which we would most desire and we are prepared to put that heart's desire at His disposal and give it back to Him and let it be used for His kingdom and His glory and the furtherance of His holy and good purposes and intentions, the Lord will not only receive that in our hand, but He will bless abundantly with more than we could ever ask for a thing.

Remember what He said to Solomon who with his one prayer, his one request, asked for wisdom that he might rule wisely the people of Israel and the Lord said because you've asked for this thing, you haven't asked for riches or wealth or the lives of your enemies or great political power, I'll give you what you've asked and I'll give you all these other things besides.

And the Lord gives Hannah what she asked and He gives her more children besides to be just hers because she is prepared to give that one most precious thing up to the Lord.

[33 : 33] You see, that's what, that's what the rich young little couldn't do. We're looking at Mark in evenings as you know and Jesus says, you know, go sell what you have to do and go and come and follow me and he couldn't do it because the Lord put His finger on the one thing that He wasn't prepared to part with.

Now Hannah asks this before she has had to part with it, before she's even received it. She trusts and believes that she will receive and is prepared to part with if only the Lord will grant her petition.

What is your petition? What is your one prayer, your one request of the Lord? Maybe you've already asked it. Maybe you've already had it.

And I hope and pray that if that's the case, then you too will devote it likewise to the Lord. It may be that you desire to have the Lord as your Savior. That's fine.

That's a noble, most worthy of all requests. But once you receive that, that then has to be turned and put to the Lord's service. Not just nurture ourselves, warm ourselves at the little glow of being saved in our own privacy.

[34 : 40] It's going to be given to the Lord. It's going to be used for the Lord. Whatever He gives, whatever He blesses us with, is to be laid at His feet and likewise used for His kingdom. That is what man does.

She vows this value to the Lord. If thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of thine handmaid and remember me and not forget thine handmaid that will give unto thine handmaid a man-child, then I will give him unto the Lord all the days of his life and there shall no razor come upon his head.

This is what she's prepared to do as she goes to the right place for the right reasons with this request that is personal to herself. But for this personal request, she is prepared to make the ultimate personal sacrifice and having had it given to her, is then prepared to give it all back.

Now I ask you, it's the thing that you ask of the Lord. Your one treasure desire, are you prepared to give it back to the Lord?

We must not put anything at a higher price than the Lord himself. Give it to the Lord and we will receive abundantly more above and beyond what we can ask or think.

[35 : 59] Cling it to ourselves and it has become our idol and a man who jumps off a ship clutching a couple of bars of gold thinking they will make him rich instead of which they will drag him down to his death.

Now anything can be an idol if we put it before the Lord but likewise anything can be an offering if we give it to the Lord. Ask that ye may receive and that your joy may be full just as Anna's was.

She asked the one thing of the Lord that she most wanted and she gave it back that because she was willing to give it back she received and then received again and again and again.

See what the Lord will do in your life. See how he will bless. See how he will pour out his blessings upon you. If only you will ask in faith and be prepared that having received that the Lord should have all your gifts and should likewise have all the glory.

Bless me.