

May 16/17, 2026
"Hannah's Prayer"
Pastor Aaron Buer



SPEND DAILY TIME WITH GOD AS YOU READ, THINK, PRAY, + ACT.

2026 Focus: 12 Months of Prayer | May: Prayers of Intercession

Each month, journey through a different biblical model of prayer.

Day 1 [1 Samuel 1:1-8](#) | Hannah's Sorrow

Because the LORD had closed Hannah's womb, her rival kept provoking her in order to irritate her. This went on year after year. Whenever Hannah went up to the house of the LORD, her rival provoked her till she wept and would not eat. 1 Samuel 1:6-7

God's vision for marriage in [Genesis 2:24](#) is a lifelong covenant between one man and one woman, yet by the time of 1 Samuel, that vision had long been compromised. In the ancient world, many men married multiple wives. Such is the case with a man named Elkanah and his two wives, Hannah and Peninnah. Peninnah is able to have children, while Hannah remains unable to conceive. Peninnah uses that advantage as a weapon, mocking and taunting Hannah year after year. Hannah is full of grief—weeping so deeply she cannot eat. And layered on top of her personal anguish is the weight of cultural shame, since infertility in that world carries public humiliation. Her sorrow is raw and visible.

We likely know something of that weight in our own lives. Our circumstances may look different: the loss of a loved one, a shattering diagnosis, or a career suddenly gone, but the temptation to hide our pain rather than express it is universal among humans. Spiritual maturity, though, is not about composing ourselves before we approach God. It is about bringing our unfiltered grief to him, trusting that he can hold what we cannot. Hannah doesn't clean herself up before she prays. We don't have to either.

PRAYER DAY #8: Hannah doesn't hide her grief or compose herself before coming to God—she brings it raw and unfiltered. Today, follow her example. Before you pray, take a moment to honestly name the pain or struggle you have been carrying. Don't clean it up. Then bring it to God exactly as it is, trusting that he is big enough to hold what feels too heavy for you.

Day 2 [1 Samuel 1:9-11](#) | Hannah's Response

Once when they had finished eating and drinking in Shiloh, Hannah stood up. 1 Samuel 1:9a

Hannah is in a painful spot and has an important decision to make. She can remain in her grief while it consumes her, or she can turn to God in her anguish. Rather than handling this on her own, she takes action. "Hannah stood up" ([1 Samuel 1:9](#)). This is an idiom or expression of speech that conveyed something like Hannah "put her foot down" and took a stand. Hannah makes the courageous decision to trust God amidst her suffering. The Psalmist calls us to do the same: "Trust in him at all times, you people; pour out your hearts to him, for God is our refuge" ([Psalm 62:8](#)).

We face the same choice in our pain. We can remain in our suffering and let it consume us, or we can courageously turn toward God—pouring out our hearts honestly before him. Our posture in pain matters. We

can turn from him and numb out, or we can trust that he sees us, that he cares for us, and that he can do what we cannot. It takes courage to be that vulnerable. But God meets us there—and it is only in him we find lasting peace.

PRAYER DAY #9: Like Hannah, we all face moments where we must decide whether to carry our pain alone or bring it to God. Read [Psalm 62:8](#) and let it guide your prayer today. As you pray, choose to trust that God is your refuge. Tell him you believe he sees you, that he cares for you, and that he can do what you cannot. Rest in that—not because your circumstances have changed, but because he is faithful.

Day 3 [1 Samuel 1:10](#) | Hannah's Lament

In her deep anguish Hannah prayed to the LORD, weeping bitterly. 1 Samuel 1:10

Hannah's pain runs deep, and she does not wait until she feels better to pray. She does not search for the right words or steady her emotions before approaching God. In her deep anguish—broken, weeping, and without answers—she turns toward God anyway. What Hannah is doing has a name: lament. Lament is bringing your pain to God in prayer, and it is one of the most courageous acts of faith a person can take.

Across the Psalms, we see lament modeled again and again. The full spectrum of human emotion—grief, confusion, anger, despair—is poured out honestly before God. In fact, more than a third of the Psalms are laments. This is not a lack of faith. It is faith. God does not ask us to pretend our pain is not real. He invites us to bring it to him. To lament is to declare that God is trustworthy with your deepest pain, that he is big enough to hold what you cannot. We do not need composed hearts or polished words. We simply need to show up, just as Hannah did.

PRAYER DAY #10: Today, pray a prayer of lament. Name your pain specifically and honestly before God, trusting that he is not troubled by your honesty—he welcomes it.

God, sometimes life is not what I hoped. I don't understand, and it hurts. I don't have answers—only you. So I bring you what I cannot carry. Sustain me here. Even now, I trust you. Amen.

Day 4 [1 Samuel 2:1–11](#) | Hannah's Hope

There is no one holy like the LORD; there is no one besides you; there is no Rock like our God. 1 Samuel 2:2

Something remarkable happens in Hannah's prayer in [1 Samuel 2](#). After years of grief, shame, and unanswered longing, her prayer does not simply express relief—it erupts into praise. She declares, “there is no Rock like our God” ([1 Samuel 2:2](#)). Hannah's prayer centers on God's power to lift the lowly and bring down the proud; a reversal of how society functions. She has experienced God meeting her in her weakness and acting on her behalf. Hannah's song becomes a declaration of hope rooted not in her own strength, but in the God who provides.

Hannah's prayer points forward to something—and someone—greater. In [Luke 1:46–55](#), Mary sings a remarkably similar song when she learns she will carry the long-awaited Savior. Both women had experienced God acting on behalf of the lowly, and both responded with praise. Jesus is the fulfillment of every desperate prayer, the very thing Hannah and Mary longed for, even when they could not yet put into words what that longing meant. He came as the “prince of peace” ([Isaiah 9:6](#)), to take away our sin and give us hope. Those who recognize they are weak and in need of rescue can find true life in him. As we honestly bring our pain before God, we can remember that Jesus Christ alone is our hope and our salvation.

PRAYER DAY #11: If you have not yet placed your trust in Jesus, today is a good day to do that. He is the fulfillment of every desperate prayer—the prince of peace, your hope and salvation. If you already know him as Savior, take time to praise him today. Thank him specifically for the ways he has met you in your own weakness and pain.



Day 5 [Ephesians 3:14–21](#) | Paul Intercedes for Believers

This year in Beyond the Weekend, journey through different biblical models of prayer—one each month. May's focus is Intercession.

I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. Ephesians 3:16–17a

Paul sits in prison when he writes to the believers in Ephesus. He can't visit or teach them in person. So he does what he can—he kneels before the Father ([Ephesians 3:14](#)). In a culture where standing was the normal posture for prayer, kneeling signals deep urgency and humility. Paul doesn't pray for their comfort or safety. He prays for something deeper—that they would be strengthened in their inner life, that Christ would be at home in the deepest part of them, and that they would grasp just how wide and long and high and deep the love of Jesus truly is. This is a pastoral prayer for people he loves.

Just as Paul interceded for the Ephesians, we too can pray beyond the surface needs of those around us. It's easy to pray for someone's health, job, or hard situation—and those prayers matter. But intercession can go deeper. We can pray for a friend's faith to grow strong. We can ask God to help someone know they are truly loved by God. We can pray that Christ would be more and more at home in the hearts of the people we care about. This is the kind of prayer that can change people from the inside out, even when their external situations don't change.

PRAYER DAY #12: This week, we have followed Hannah through her pain and watched her turn toward God in honest, courageous prayer. Today, Paul models something complementary—praying for others. Think of someone in your life who is walking through a difficult season. Rather than praying only for their circumstances to change, go deeper. Ask God to strengthen them in their inner life, that they would know just how wide and long and high and deep the love of Jesus truly is ([Ephesians 3:18](#)). Sometimes the most powerful thing we can do for someone we love is to bring them before God in prayer.

Day 6

PRAYER DAY #13: Today, return to the Lord's Prayer ([Matthew 6:9–13](#)). As you pray, slow down when you reach the words “your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.” Jesus himself prayed these words in the garden before going to the cross—in his darkest and most painful moment, he surrendered to the Father's will. Like Hannah, who turned toward God in her anguish, and like Jesus, who trusted the Father in his, we too can bring our pain before God and pray, “your will be done.” Take a moment to name honestly what you are walking through and then offer it to God with those words. It is not a prayer of defeat—it is a prayer of deep trust.

Day 7

PRAYER DAY #14: This week, we have seen what it looks like to bring our grief, our lament, and our surrender honestly before God. As a closing prayer for the week, listen to '[This Is Our God](#)' by Phil Wickham. Listen without distraction, letting the words wash over you. Praise God for being the God who hears every word, every whisper—including yours.