

Towers ministry – short reads

“Short reads” look at specific parts of the intercessory life within the towers. They are just a few pages long designed to cover one issue.

Hannah – pouring out her heart of intercession. (1 Samuel 1:1-20)

Hannah the mother of Samuel gives a powerful insight into the emotional side of intercession. Here is the text -

She was married to Elkanah, who also had another wife - Penninah. This was Hannah's problem and heartache. Penninah had children, but Hannah had none. As is sometimes the way, Penninah made fun of Hannah's barrenness, and Hannah had no answer except to be broken in spirit. Elkanah was a caring man. He said "Hannah why do you cry? Am I not worth more to you than ten sons?" It was a nice thing to say, but he did not understand the depth of Hannah's sadness.

Hannah, however, was a woman of determination. She needed an answer to her situation and so she went to the Temple to pray. Her prayers are an insight into entychano intercession. Here is the text -

“Remember me!”

Once when they had finished eating and drinking in Shiloh, Hannah stood up. Now Eli the priest was sitting on his chair by the doorpost of the Lord's house. In her deep anguish Hannah prayed to the Lord, weeping bitterly. 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."

As she kept on praying to the Lord, Eli observed her mouth. Hannah was praying in her heart, and her lips were moving but her voice was not heard. Eli thought she was drunk and said to her, "How long are you going to stay drunk? Put away your wine." "Not so, my lord," Hannah replied, "I am a woman who is deeply troubled. I have not been drinking wine or beer; I was pouring out my soul to the Lord. Do not take your servant for a wicked woman; I have been praying here out of my great anguish and grief." (1 Samuel 1:9-18)

*** In her deep anguish Hannah prayed to the Lord, weeping bitterly**

Hannah was weeping from deep within her suffering. From such a deep place, her prayer flowed with a great intensity. As she prayed, she would have found the same agony in the heart of the Lord. He does not stand above the sufferings of his intercessors but joins them.

I saw this picture once, and it helped me understand that the suffering of intercessors and the sufferings of the Lord are the same I think this is what Hannah is trying to teach us.

I was standing at Calvary, in the dust and the spite and the pain. I heard a voice above him crying in agony - "Oh my people. Oh my beloved people, what have you become?" I saw the Lord's broken hands, and saw that he grieved with all his heart that his people did not see them, or want them, or reach for them. For the people had hands full of the possessions they had trusted in and their hearts were full of greed and arrogance. There was no place in them for the Lord's broken hands - no place for those hands to touch and heal.

Hannah's prayer was pressed forward by her suffering. The Lord is asking the towers intercessors to do the same - to enter into and weep from within his sorrow and sufferings. Strangely, the most effective intercessors are those who have suffered. Then they can easily identify with the Lord's suffering. Hannah wept bitter tears. Praying within the Towers will be a bitter experience. Bitter tears are needed.

*** "I am a woman who is deeply troubled. I have not been drinking wine or beer."**

Hannah was disturbed very deeply in her heart at what was happening to her. The Lord is also deeply troubled by what is happening to his creation. Mostly, people do not seem to care too much for the world. Intercessors inside the towers must be deeply troubled by what they see around them just as Hannah was deeply troubled by her inability to conceive a child. Intercession in the towers is far from being a "happy clappy" experience. It is better described as "deeply troubled."

*** I was pouring out my soul to the Lord.**

This was the heart of Hannah's prayer. She was giving her very life to move the heart of God. There is no shallowness here. She was giving everything. This was her - **"I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint."** (Psalm 22:14)

Hannah's outpouring of tears flowed out from her broken heart. A broken heart gives entry into a spring, a river, an ocean of tears – tears which can be used to cry in intercession. I had this vision once.

I saw a man in the desert dying of thirst. He found a jar of water on the ground, but instead of drinking it he poured it on the ground.

This I think is how Hannah was behaving - pouring out her most precious gift - her soul - onto the ground as a sign to the Lord of how serious she was. It's very challenging to read and it will be very challenging to do. That's why I have been so clear about the cost of towers intercession in the original towers document. The towers are dangerous and costly places to enter and even more costly as places of intercession.