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**Hannah: Praying in Pain**

(1 Sam 1)

There are common characteristics in those who choose to pray when life turns painful…

1. They may be weathered by life but they choose to worship anyway (1:3f).

 Divinely orchestrated struggles are a testing of our faith (1 Thes. 3:1-5; Jas. 1:2-4)

 The enemy piles on every willing dupe possible to weaken your hold on what you believe.

 Worship is a gauge of how well we are weathering the test - it keeps our problems and “Lord Almighty” right-sized - chases fear; fear eats faith for lunch (Psm 34:4; 56:3-; Prov 3:24-25

2. They have confident hope that prayer matters (1:10, 12-16).

 Hannah’s husband had long ago given up on her “fortunes” - but hard times drove Hannah to hope (Rom 5:3-5; 1 Sam. 1:18)

 Either become selfish, self-sufficient, bitter or you will throw yourself at the mercy of God (1:10, 15-16)

3. They seek to fashion their “ask” in a way that advances God’s will (1:11, 22, 26-28).

 It’s not just why you’re asking, but what you’re asking that matters to the Lord (Jas. 4:2,3; 1 Jn. 5:14-15).

 “Because I asked the Lord” and everyone else was “doing what was right in their own eyes”

 Appealing to God’s promises, purpose and public platform in perplexing times, rightly honours a prayer - answering God. The God, who goes to extremes to be gracious on behalf of those fully committed to him, “lifted high her horn” (1 Sam 2:1,21; 2 Chron. 16:9).