

Getting Started

Can you share a story of a prayer answered? How about a prayer *not* answered? How about a prayer answered in a way that you never anticipated?

Into the Bible

1 Samuel 1 echoes the birth of John the Baptizer in some ways, and it has a lot to say about prayer. Read verses 1-20 and answer these questions.

What is Hannah’s prayer? What lends it urgency?

How long do you think Hannah prayed this prayer? Do you think she was a young woman when the Lord answered? Explain your answer?

Did she ever get a promise about her prayer?

Go forward in Israel’s history, and read 2 Kings 4:8-37. What made the loss of her son particularly difficult?

Mt. Carmel is 30 miles from Shunem. How long was the boy dead before Elisha got there?

Given the previous answer, how likely did it seem that Elisha’s prayer would be answered?

Should we pray for the impossible? What potential blessing comes of it? What potential harm comes of it?

This time go backward again: 1 Kings 3:5-15. What did Solomon ask for? What did the Lord give?

Finally: 2 Corinthians 12:7b-9. What happened to Paul’s thorn in the flesh?

Digging Deeper

What should we ask for in prayer? What limitations should we place on our prayers? (Consider Abba Macarius’ prayer, which Pastor quoted: “Lord, as you know and as you will, have mercy.”)