

## 9. HANNAH

### UPSIDE DOWN

#### 1 Samuel 1:15

**“I was pouring out my soul to the LORD”**

The books of Samuel tell how the feuding tribes of Israel became a great a nation. It is the story of fighting men, fiery-eyed prophets and true grit. It's a man's story.

However, if it wasn't for a woman called Hannah, there would be no story. It all begins with her.

Hannah was at the end of herself. Her husband had another wife and the other wife was producing lots of babies. Hannah, on the other hand had no children and her rival rubbed her nose in it. Hannah's nerves were stretched. She couldn't eat and she couldn't stop crying.

She was such a mess that when the priest spotted her at the temple he thought she was just another babbling drunk. But he was wrong. Hannah was praying.

She was not praying neat prayers. She was not praying happy prayers. Hannah did not know what to pray. Her soul was full of bitterness and she wept. But her gut-wrenching tears and confused mumblings were a prayer. They were the kind of prayer that God understands. Hannah was pouring her heart out to God.

And he heard her.

God is not interested in how we look. He wants our hearts. And sometimes our hearts are raw and the things we feel are ugly. But whatever is there, God wants it. He wants the truth. Because once we give him the truth he's got something to work with.

When things go really bad, some people ask God 'why?' Why is this happening? That question is OK, but there's never really an answer. A more helpful question is 'how?' How are you going to get me through this, God? That question can be asked with all the anger and desperation you like.

God can work with that kind of prayer.

***Run to God when you're down and he'll lift you up***