

Buried Prayers

By Erin Davis

Reflect on the power and meaning of prayer from the Old Testament, and then as a family you are invited to write prayers and bury them in the earth.

For

Teen Family

Season

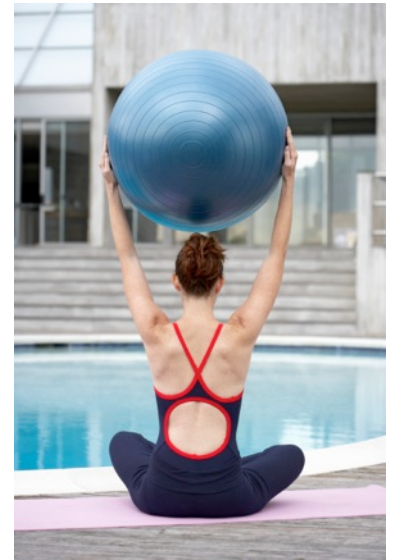
Spring

Needed

Compostable dinner plates, markers or pens, dowel or small shovel, empty garden or other area of dirt

Prepare in advance

Make sure there are enough plates for each member of your family to have one or two.



Activity Plan

1. Say this short prayer together as a family:

Holy God, We want to pray to you. Even when we don't know what to say, we want you to show us the way. Give us the words to pray to you today. Amen.

2. Begin by talking with each other about these questions:
 - What kinds of prayer do you know?
 - What stories about prayer have you heard from the Bible?
3. Read the story of Hannah praying for a child in 1 Samuel 1:9-27 together. Use your Bible or see the next page. Discuss these questions:
 - How was Hannah praying in the story?
 - What would it feel like to “pour out your soul” before God?
 - What kinds of things do you pray for?
4. Pass a compostable plate and marker or pen to each person. Encourage each person to write down or draw a prayer on the plate. Make sure each person knows that he or she is the only one who will see this prayer. Allow time for each member to fill his or her plate with words or drawings. Take a moment for everyone to silently read and pray the prayers on their plate.
5. Go outside to a place where you can dig a hole. Give everyone the opportunity to dig a hole large enough to fit the compostable plate prayer. Bury each prayer.
6. Say this prayer together:

God, We give these prayers back to you through the earth you created. We know that you hear us. Amen.

7. Snap a picture of your hole and your buried plates and upload them to **Vibrant Faith @ Home**.

Hannah's Prayer

1 Samuel 1:9-27

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."

Eli answered, "Go in peace, and may the God of Israel grant you what you have asked of him."

She said, "May your servant find favor in your eyes. "Then she went her way and ate something, and her face was no longer downcast.

Early the next morning they arose and worshiped before the Lord and then went back to their home at Ramah. Elkanah made love to his wife Hannah, and the Lord remembered her. So in the course of time Hannah became pregnant and gave birth to a son. She named him Samuel, saying, "Because I asked the Lord for him."

When her husband Elkanah went up with all his family to offer the annual sacrifice to the Lord and to fulfill his vow, Hannah did not go. She said to her husband, "After the boy is weaned, I will take him and present him before the Lord, and he will live there always."

"Do what seems best to you," her husband Elkanah told her. "Stay here until you have weaned him; only may the Lord make good his word." So the woman stayed at home and nursed her son until she had weaned him.

After he was weaned, she took the boy with her, young as he was, along with a three-year-old bull, an ephah of flour and a skin of wine, and brought him to the house of the Lord at Shiloh. When the bull had been sacrificed, they brought the boy to Eli, and she said to him, "Pardon me, my lord. As surely as you live, I am the woman who stood here beside you praying to the Lord. I prayed for this child, and the Lord has granted me what I asked of him.

