

## Laying up *Treasure in Heaven*

by Marli Spieker,  
Project Hannah awareness advocate and founder



Powerless. That's how I felt as I traveled throughout Southeast Asia 10 years ago and learned about the unspoken conspiracy raging against women in that part of the world. Behind their graceful manners, shy smiles and gentle eyes lay broken dreams and hearts in great need of love and acceptance. I kept asking myself: "Is there hope? What can I do?" There were millions of them and only one of me.

Concentrating on my own resources, all I was left with was powerlessness. But God reminded me of the one thing that could liberate women from oppression and brokenness: the love and power of God revealed in Jesus. His blood can buy back women's dignity; His love heals their wounded hearts. That's when faith took center stage, and my feelings of powerlessness were blown away.

By God's grace, that fire in my heart ignited hundreds of dear Christians in Asia who are fighting back with intentional prayer, strategic hard work and God's power. Project Hannah's (PH) ministry throughout Southeast Asia is the result of their faithfulness, and their courage and commitment inspire me to continue. God is using them to bring hope and dignity back into Asian women's lives.

I am blessed to see them pouring their talents in sacrificial service to Jesus, and am reminded of several biblical women: Hannah, daring to give back to God the son she had not yet received; Mary, with lavish love, anointing Jesus' feet; the widow giving all she had to the temple—and Jesus pointing out that her gift was greater than that of the rich. And I'm reminded of a Burmese lady I met in Myanmar.

She worked eight to 10 hours in road construction. At the end of the day, she received eight four-ounce cans of rice. "Is this enough to feed your family?" I asked. "No," she replied. "There are 13 of us." My heart sank. Later on, my interpreter told me that this lady takes one can out of her daily portion and sets that rice aside. At the end of the week, she sells that extra bowl of rice and gives the money to the ministry.

Mary, the widow at the temple and Hannah were treated as lesser persons simply for being females and for circumstances they had no choice in or couldn't change. In God's eyes, however, they stand a head above the rest. They—and the Burmese woman—gave sacrificially and loved lavishly. In their poverty, they found wisdom to discern the temporal from the eternal, and they invested in the latter.

I thank God that PH's ministry in Asia and around the world is carried out by passionate people. People who understand the value of giving sacrificially on earth and laying up treasure in heaven, all while restoring hope in countless women's lives! Are you one of them?

# Hannah's Heartbeat

touching hearts, instilling hope

A ministry publication of Trans World Radio's Project Hannah

## Hope Blossoms in Asia

Ten years ago, Project Hannah (PH) founder Marli Spieker and several other women, including Trans World Radio missionaries, were moved by God to begin an outreach to women in Asia, since many in the region were living hopeless, unloved, forgotten lives. And so, undergirded by prayer, Project Hannah was born to proclaim Christ's hope to them and help them live above their circumstances.

Since radio isn't hindered by geography, religious barriers or cultural traditions, it is an ideal method to meet women where they are. In 1998, PH's 30-minute *Women of Hope* (WoH) broadcast, created by women for women, began airing in English from the island of Guam. The popular program blossomed, and new languages were quickly added in the ensuing years. Today, WoH airs in nearly 40 languages worldwide, 10 in Southeast Asia alone. And the Lord is at work in the region, bringing women to Himself through PH.

PH's Vietnamese ministry includes producing programs, overseeing and forming prayer and listening groups, and distributing prayer calendars, radios and tapes of the programs. Because many women are illiterate, are persecuted by local officials or by their non-Christian husbands, the PH team often does not hear much response. Some listeners live in remote locations, far from those who are in charge of taking care of listeners and are rarely visited. And still others simply cannot listen to the program since they have to work most of the time just to meet their basic needs.

But many women have become Christians through the witness of listeners or by listening to TWR's programs, including *Women of Hope*. They testify that they have been transformed, focusing on worshiping Christ and ridding themselves of bad habits like lying and gambling. They also are learning how to bring up their children in a way that honors God.

Mrs. V. is the mother of a large family with several school-aged children. They live in desperate circumstances, and she often worries about the family's living situation. Then she listened to the *Women of Hope* program about money. Mrs. V. was comforted, and recognized that when God's children rely on Him, He will guide them and give them wisdom to live.

In Thailand, *Women of Hope* airs on more than 20 local radio stations. PH's Thai outreach also includes a prison ministry, where at one jail, 200 inmates regularly attend a special Bible study. And early last year, the WoH producer taught a seminar to women affected by 2004's tsunami. After one year, more than 50 believers sincerely followed Christ because He saved them from death.

## Project Hannah Southeast Asian Languages

- Burmese
- Khmer
- Indonesian
- Sgaw Karen
- Thai
- Cebuano
- Ilocano
- Javanese
- Tagalog
- Vietnamese



### MISSION STATEMENT

Project Hannah's purpose is:

- to raise awareness of and empathy for the plight of women worldwide.
- to pray for women who are being abused emotionally, physically or spiritually.
- to broadcast the gospel of Jesus Christ to women around the world, encouraging them to:
  - experience God's love, freedom, and power as they face life's daily challenges.
  - embrace their God-given destiny and glorious inheritance in Christ Jesus, whatever their cultural, social or economic situation.
  - pass on to their children a legacy of faith, wisdom, and godly character.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT PROJECT HANNAH:

**Trans World Radio**  
P.O. Box 8700  
Cary, NC 27512 • USA  
1-800-456-7TWR  
www.projecthannah.org  
hannah@twr.org

**TWR-Australia**  
PO Box 658  
Heathmont VIC 3135  
Email: infoaus@twr.org  
Phone: (03) 9870 3195  
Fax: (03) 9870 4146

**TWR-Asia Singapore**  
Blk 750C Chai Chee Road,  
#02-16/17,  
Technopark @ Chai Chee,  
Singapore 469003  
Tel: (65) 6444 8661  
Fax: (65) 6444 3053

**TWR-Canada**  
Box 25324, London, ON  
N6C 6B1  
1-888-672-6510  
hannah@twrcanada.org

**TWR-Austria**  
Postfach 141  
A - 1235 Vienna  
AUSTRIA

# Praise God Through the Storm

Project Hannah staff in Myanmar received the following letter in the fall of 2006.

Dear Project Hannah,

I am so thankful you send Project Hannah's prayer calendar to me every month, and that TWR-Myanmar does not forget me. By listening to sermons and teachings every night, I am able to forget all exhaustion of the day.

One night, I heard a HIV patient on one of TWR-Myanmar's radio programs. Although we did not let anybody know about our family's sorrows, allow me to open my heart to you. By God's grace, I was able to give birth to my second child, a daughter. But she lived only four months with us. She was admitted to the hospital due to bad health. The result of my daughter's blood test was HIV-positive. My blood is also HIV antibody positive. Doctors and nurses then had low opinions of us after learning that my family had contracted this terrible disease.

Tears rolled down my cheeks whenever I looked at my little girl. When I heard her laughing, I could not bear the pain in my heart. I became crazy knowing that she would depart from us very soon. When the oxygen was taken away on August 31, she rested in peace with Christ. Due to economic hardship, we could not shoulder the expenses of a funeral. We had to leave her body at the mortuary. But we were able to praise God for delivering my little girl who was suffering for a full 11 days.

I have never thought that my family, who loves each other so much, would have to grieve like this. I am so afraid. I do not dare open my heart to anyone about this. If my neighbors knew that we have contracted this disease, we will be mocked and become untouchables.

We are seriously in need of your prayers. There are many sleepless nights. But I trust with all my heart that God is able to heal this disease which humans cannot. There will be a day when God's glory will manifest in our house. Pray that my son will be HIV-negative and that we will be able to buy medicines for treatment. Pray for our family to be filled with spiritual strength, to be revived, to have a life which can praise God in any circumstances, to submit to His will.

My heart felt much lighter for unburdening my feelings through this letter. I pray daily for the points in the prayer calendar. I am also praying for your mission, that many will listen to TWR-Myanmar broadcasts, and for the believers to have revival.

Signed,  
Mrs. A



## For the Life of a Child

"I have killed my child because I did not know if a fetus is a human being. Would God forgive my sin?"

Because of this question, and others like it, Project Hannah's team in Indonesia considers it crucial to hold health seminars for its listeners. Abortion is a serious problem in the country, and is commonly used as a form of birth control. According to BKKBN, a government institution dealing with family planning, 2 million babies are aborted in Indonesia each year.

Often, mothers become infected after the procedure and die; those who survive must live with the physical, psychological and spiritual consequences of their decision.

Even many Christian women are unaware of the biblical view of abortion.

That's why, for the past several years, PH in Indonesia has hosted seminars, focusing primarily on abortion and women's reproductive health, in conjunction with local churches. Leaders and women's groups from some of the churches attend in

addition to listeners. After an area doctor speaks on the health topic, a pastor or church leader gives a brief overview on what the Bible says about it.

More than 100 women were present at most of the events, where they learn further insight on health issues discussed in previous WoH programs and have the opportunity to discuss their personal issues with a medical professional. At some of these functions, women receive medical care, enabling their physical needs to be met as well.

## Prayer & PRAISE

- Praise the Lord for the Project Hannah/women's ministry training that occurred in Europe with TWR partners from Bulgaria, Denmark, Portugal, Romania, Finland, Norway, Slovakia and Sweden. Pray as they seek God's timing to produce culturally relevant and Spirit-filled programs in the language of listeners' hearts.
- Praise the Lord for the new *Women of Hope* (WoH) programs now airing in the Indian languages of Bengali and Punjabi as well as in Central Asian Russian. Please continue to pray for the 37 WoH production teams worldwide and the preparations for future broadcasts in Roma (Albania), Makhuwa (Mozambique) and French (West Africa).
- Please pray for WoH listeners and Project Hannah prayer group members to reach out with Christ's love and hope to those around them struggling with the realities of prison, domestic violence, rape, AIDS, abandonment and other hardships.
- Continue to pray for God to enable women and girls to escape from sexual slavery, abusive employers and violent homes. Pray for ministries that provide refuge in safe homes and job training to help them have a better life and provide a better future for their children.

## There is Still Hope

"My life is lost in the dark. I thought nobody was interested in listening to my struggles, and was afraid to share about them for fear people would laugh at me. But when I heard the program *Raniag ti Namnama*, I knew that there was still hope left for me."

After listening to *Women of Hope* in her native Filipino dialect, 25-year-old Leah was prompted to text message the producers of the program and seek their advice. Leah has a 3-year-old son and isn't married to the father, Rico, whom she met four years ago. They had tried to marry, but Rico's family would not accept her. So Leah agreed to live with Rico in hopes that he would one day marry her, but that day never came.

Rico's drinking problem added more pain to Leah's already wounded dignity, and he verbally abused her as well. At one point, she wanted to take her life, but never followed through because of her son. But with the help of the *Women of Hope* staff and a local pastor, Leah's hope was restored. She discovered the missing piece in her life: a relationship with Jesus Christ. With the help of the pastor, she committed herself to Christ, and admitted the pain she was

carrying that day was lessened.

Leah doesn't know what to do next. She's not at peace with Rico's attitude toward her and she doesn't love him. She wants to take her son and leave him, but she doesn't have any place to go. But she does have the assurance that she's no longer living in darkness. She has found a family in Project Hannah's ministry, and she knows that God has a good plan for her, for Rico and their son, believing that His guidance and protection will always be with them.

Leah was just one of several listeners who have accepted Jesus recently after listening to *Women of Hope* and requesting counseling. Because text messaging has become an increasingly popular method of response to Trans World Radio programming, especially in Asia, a conference on telephone and text counseling was held last summer. The seminar was conducted by a local pastor who is also the manager of counseling center in the Philippines.



## LISTENERS RESPOND

"Sin embittered my life and destroyed me physically, socially and spiritually. But now that I am a Christian, I hate sin. I follow Christ, who loved and brought me to Himself through the PH ministry." (Angola)

"I'm always with you during the broadcasting of WoH. The lessons that you share are a light and a guide for my home, and through them I have overcome some faults as wife and mother. I promise to always pray for you and for the other sisters that work with this project in other countries." (Ecuador)

"My parents forced me to marry an unbeliever. I feel very alone. I cannot go to church and do not have any friends who are believers. Thank you for the radio programs; WoH always has something for my heart. I invite my husband to listen with me. He liked it when you gave advice for men, too. He thinks this is good education, but I'm praying that God will soften his heart. It's a miracle God gave me a friend like WoH." (Albania)