VERSE 1. AND HANNAH PRAYED. A late medieval tradition observed: "This teaches that women are obligated to pray, for Hannah used to pray eighteen brakhot" (Yalkut Shimoni, 1 Samuel 2:80). The Hebrew word for "eighteen" (sh'moneh esreih) designates the weekday Amidah.

VERSE 6. SHEOL. In the biblical age, most Israelis believed that the dead continued to exist in the netherworld called Sheol.

VERSE 10. AND TRIUMPH TO THE ONE WHOM [GOD] ANOINTS. Literally, "raise the horn of God's anointed one." The song opens and closes on this specific image of triumph. In context, it anticipates Samuel's anointing David with a horn of oil (1Samuel 16:13). As the Rosh Hashanah Haftarah reading, these concluding references to spiritual victory, divine judgment, and God's anointed one take on a messianic tone of promise.

Michael Fishbane (commenting in Etz Hayim)

points out other Rosh Hashanah themes that are present in this Haftarah. The birth of a child is a microcosmic allusion to the birth of all of creation, which we celebrate on this day. In verse 3 of Hannah's prayer, she describes God as all-knowing. In verse 6, she refers to God as the One who determines our birth and death. And in verse 8, she speaks of the One who raises up and brings low.

Byrakhot that follow the Haftarah may be found on page 114.