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1 and 2 Samuel

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1 SAMUEL

Hannah's Vow

1 There was a man from Ramathaim-zophim in the hill country of Ephraim. His name was Elkanah son of Jeroham, son of Elihu, son of Tohu, son of Zuph, an Ephraimite. ²He had two wives, the first named Hannah and the second Peninnah. Peninnah had children, but Hannah was childless. ³This man would go up from his town every year to worship and to sacrifice to the LORD of Armies at Shiloh, where Eli's two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, were the LORD's priests.

⁴Whenever Elkanah offered a sacrifice, he always gave portions of the meat to his wife Peninnah and to each of her sons and daughters. ⁵But he gave a double portion to Hannah, for he loved her even though the LORD had kept her from conceiving. ⁶Her rival would taunt her severely just to provoke her, because the LORD had kept Hannah from conceiving. ⁷Year after year, when she went up to the LORD's house, her rival taunted her in this way. Hannah would weep and would not eat. ⁸"Hannah, why are you crying?" her husband, Elkanah, would ask. "Why won't you eat? Why are you troubled? Am I not better to you than ten sons?"

⁹On one occasion, Hannah got up after they ate and drank at Shiloh. The priest Eli was sitting on a chair by the doorpost of the LORD's temple. ¹⁰Deeply hurt, Hannah prayed to the LORD and wept with many tears. ¹¹Making a vow, she pleaded, "LORD of Armies, if you will take notice of your servant's affliction, remember and not forget me, and give your servant a son, I will give him to the LORD all the days of his life, and his hair will never be cut."

¹²While she continued praying in the LORD's presence, Eli watched her mouth. ¹³Hannah was praying silently, and though her lips were moving, her voice could not be heard. Eli thought she was drunk ¹⁴and said to her, "How long are you going to be drunk? Get rid of your wine!"



¹⁵ “No, my lord,” Hannah replied. “I am a woman with a broken heart. I haven’t had any wine or beer; I’ve been pouring out my heart before the LORD. ¹⁶ Don’t think of me as a wicked woman; I’ve been praying from the depth of my anguish and resentment.”

¹⁷ Eli responded, “Go in peace, and may the God of Israel grant the request you’ve made of him.”

¹⁸ “May your servant find favor with you,” she replied. Then Hannah went on her way; she ate and no longer looked despondent.

Samuel's Birth and Dedication

¹⁹ The next morning Elkanah and Hannah got up early to worship before the LORD. Afterward, they returned home to Ramah. Then Elkanah was intimate with his wife Hannah, and the LORD remembered her. ²⁰ After some time, Hannah conceived and gave birth to a son. She named him Samuel, because she said, “I requested him from the LORD.”

²¹ When Elkanah and all his household went up to make the annual sacrifice and his vow offering to the LORD, ²² Hannah did not go and explained to her husband, “After the child is weaned, I’ll take him to appear in the LORD’s presence and to stay there permanently.”

²³ Her husband, Elkanah, replied, “Do what you think is best, and stay here until you’ve weaned him. May the LORD confirm your word.” So Hannah stayed there and nursed her son until she weaned him. ²⁴ When she had weaned him, she took him with her to Shiloh, as well as a three-year-old bull, half a bushel of flour, and a clay jar of wine. Though the boy was still young, she took him to the LORD’s house at Shiloh. ²⁵ Then they slaughtered the bull and brought the boy to Eli.

²⁶ “Please, my lord,” she said, “as surely as you live, my lord, I am the woman who stood here beside you praying to the LORD.



²⁷I prayed for this boy, and since the LORD gave me what I asked him for, ²⁸I now give the boy to the LORD. For as long as he lives, he is given to the LORD." Then he worshiped the LORD there.

Hannah's Triumphant Prayer

2 Hannah prayed:

- My heart rejoices in the LORD;
my horn is lifted up by the LORD.
My mouth boasts over my enemies,
because I rejoice in your salvation.
- 2** There is no one holy like the LORD.
There is no one besides you!
And there is no rock like our God.
- 3** Do not boast so proudly,
or let arrogant words come out of your mouth,
for the LORD is a God of knowledge,
and actions are weighed by him.
- 4** The bows of the warriors are broken,
but the feeble are clothed with strength.
- 5** Those who are full hire themselves out for food,
but those who are starving hunger no more.
The woman who is childless gives birth to seven,
but the woman with many sons pines away.
- 6** The LORD brings death and gives life;
he sends some down to Sheol, and he raises others up.
- 7** The LORD brings poverty and gives wealth;
he humbles and he exalts.
- 8** He raises the poor from the dust
and lifts the needy from the trash heap.
He seats them with noblemen
and gives them a throne of honor.
For the foundations of the earth are the LORD'S;
he has set the world on them.



- ⁹ He guards the steps of his faithful ones,
but the wicked perish in darkness,
for a person does not prevail by his own strength.
- ¹⁰ Those who oppose the LORD will be shattered;
he will thunder in the heavens against them.
The LORD will judge the ends of the earth.
He will give power to his king;
he will lift up the horn of his anointed.

¹¹ Elkanah went home to Ramah, but the boy served the LORD in the presence of the priest Eli.

Eli's Family Judged

¹² Eli's sons were wicked men; they did not respect the LORD ¹³or the priests' share of the sacrifices from the people. When anyone offered a sacrifice, the priest's servant would come with a three-pronged meat fork while the meat was boiling ¹⁴and plunge it into the container, kettle, cauldron, or cooking pot. The priest would claim for himself whatever the meat fork brought up. This is the way they treated all the Israelites who came there to Shiloh. ¹⁵Even before the fat was burned, the priest's servant would come and say to the one who was sacrificing, "Give the priest some meat to roast, because he won't accept boiled meat from you — only raw." ¹⁶If that person said to him, "The fat must be burned first; then you can take whatever you want for yourself," the servant would reply, "No, I insist that you hand it over right now. If you don't, I'll take it by force!" ¹⁷So the servants' sin was very severe in the presence of the LORD, because the men treated the LORD's offering with contempt.

¹⁸ Samuel served in the LORD's presence—this mere boy was dressed in the linen ephod. ¹⁹Each year his mother made him a little robe and took it to him when she went with her husband



to offer the annual sacrifice. ²⁰Eli would bless Elkanah and his wife: "May the LORD give you children by this woman in place of the one she has given to the LORD." Then they would go home.

²¹The LORD paid attention to Hannah's need, and she conceived and gave birth to three sons and two daughters. Meanwhile, the boy Samuel grew up in the presence of the LORD.

²²Now Eli was very old. He heard about everything his sons were doing to all Israel and how they were sleeping with the women who served at the entrance to the tent of meeting. ²³He said to them, "Why are you doing these things? I have heard about your evil actions from all these people. ²⁴No, my sons, the news I hear the LORD's people spreading is not good. ²⁵If one person sins against another, God can intercede for him, but if a person sins against the LORD, who can intercede for him?" But they would not listen to their father, since the LORD intended to kill them. ²⁶By contrast, the boy Samuel grew in stature and in favor with the LORD and with people.

²⁷A man of God came to Eli and said to him, "This is what the LORD says: 'Didn't I reveal myself to your forefather's family when they were in Egypt and belonged to Pharaoh's palace? ²⁸Out of all the tribes of Israel, I chose your house to be my priests, to offer sacrifices on my altar, to burn incense, and to wear an ephod in my presence. I also gave your forefather's family all the Israelite food offerings. ²⁹Why, then, do all of you despise my sacrifices and offerings that I require at the place of worship? You have honored your sons more than me, by making yourselves fat with the best part of all of the offerings of my people Israel.'

³⁰"Therefore, this is the declaration of the LORD, the God of Israel: 'I did say that your family and your forefather's family would walk before me forever. But now,' this is the LORD's declaration, 'no longer! For those who honor me I will honor, but those who despise me will be disgraced. ³¹Look, the days are

