

1 Samuel 1:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And she vowed a vow, and said, O LORD of hosts, if thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of thine handmaid, and remember me, and not forget thine handmaid, but wilt give unto thine handmaid a man child, then I will give him unto the LORD all the days of his life, and there shall no razor come upon his head.

Analysis

Hannah's vow contains several significant elements. She addresses God as 'LORD of hosts,' acknowledging His sovereign power over all creation. Her self-designation as 'handmaid' (amah, female servant) three times emphasizes humble submission. The request for a 'man child' (literally 'seed of men') would provide both personal vindication and national blessing. The Nazirite vow ('no razor upon his head') dedicated the child to lifelong sacred service (Numbers 6:1-21). Hannah's promise to 'give him unto the LORD' transformed a personal petition into an offering for God's purposes.

Historical Context

The Nazirite vow typically involved abstaining from wine, avoiding corpses, and not cutting hair. While usually temporary, lifelong Nazirites included Samson (by divine command) and Samuel (by maternal vow). John the Baptist would later follow this pattern (Luke 1:15).

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. What does Hannah's willingness to give back the very thing she prayed for teach about true devotion?
2. How might God be calling you to dedicate something precious to His service?

Interlinear Text

וַתִּשָּׁבַע ה' וְנָדָר וַתֹּאמֶר לַיהוָה צָבָא וְתֵאמֶר אִם תִּרְצֶה ה'
And she vowed a vow and said O LORD of hosts if thou wilt indeed
H5087 H5088 H559 H3068 H6635 H518 H7200

וְאִם תִּרְצֶה ה' וְנָדָר וַתֹּאמֶר לַיהוָה צָבָא וְתֵאמֶר אִם תִּרְצֶה ה'
if thou wilt indeed on the affliction of thine handmaid and remember
H7200 H6040 H519 H2142 H3808

וְאִם תִּרְצֶה ה' וְנָדָר וַתֹּאמֶר לַיהוָה צָבָא וְתֵאמֶר אִם תִּרְצֶה ה'
me and not forget of thine handmaid but wilt give of thine handmaid child
H7911 H853 H519 H5414 H519 H2233

וְאִם תִּרְצֶה ה' וְנָדָר וַתֹּאמֶר לַיהוָה צָבָא וְתֵאמֶר אִם תִּרְצֶה ה'
but wilt give O LORD all the days of his life
H376 H5414 H3068 H3605 H3117 H2416

וְאִם תִּרְצֶה ה' וְנָדָר וַתֹּאמֶר לַיהוָה צָבָא וְתֵאמֶר אִם תִּרְצֶה ה'
and there shall no razor come upon his head
H4177 H3808 H5927 H5921 H7218

Additional Cross-References

Judges 13:5 (Parallel theme): For, lo, thou shalt conceive, and bear a son; and no razor shall come on his head: for the child shall be a Nazarite unto God from the womb: and he shall begin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines.

Numbers 6:5 (References Lord): All the days of the vow of his separation there shall no razor come upon his head: until the days be fulfilled, in the which he separateth himself unto the LORD, he shall be holy, and shall let the locks of the hair of his head grow.

Genesis 29:32 (References Lord): And Leah conceived, and bare a son, and she called his name Reuben: for she said, Surely the LORD hath looked upon my affliction; now therefore my husband will love me.

Ecclesiastes 5:4 (Parallel theme): When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed.

Psalms 25:18 (Parallel theme): Look upon mine affliction and my pain; and forgive all my sins.

Genesis 30:22 (Parallel theme): And God remembered Rachel, and God hearkened to her, and opened her womb.

1 Samuel 1:19 (References Lord): And they rose up in the morning early, and worshipped before the LORD, and returned, and came to their house to Ramah: and Elkanah knew Hannah his wife; and the LORD remembered her.

Genesis 28:20 (Parallel theme): And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on,

Numbers 6:8 (References Lord): All the days of his separation he is holy unto the LORD.

Judges 11:30 (References Lord): And Jephthah vowed a vow unto the LORD, and said, If thou shalt without fail deliver the children of Ammon into mine hands,