

1 Samuel 1:13

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Now Hannah, she spake in her heart; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard: therefore Eli thought she had been drunken.

Analysis

Hannah's silent prayer - moving lips without audible voice - was unusual enough that Eli assumed intoxication. The phrase 'spake in her heart' describes internal dialogue directed toward God. This intimate form of prayer bypassed public performance for private communion. The Spirit-inspired narrator validates Hannah's approach, contrasting it with Eli's superficial judgment based on appearances. God, who knows the heart, received Hannah's prayer while His priest completely misread the situation.

Historical Context

Silent prayer was uncommon in ancient worship, which typically involved audible proclamations. The Talmud later codified Hannah's example as the basis for the requirement that prayers be spoken but not loudly enough for others to hear (Berakhot 31a).

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Study Questions

1. How does God's ability to hear silent prayers comfort you in circumstances where you cannot pray aloud?
2. What does this passage teach about God's knowledge of our hearts versus human judgment of appearances?

Interlinear Text

נָע וְתִ	שִׁפְתֵי יָהּ	בִּקְ	לִבָּהּ	עַל	מִדְבַּר רֶת	הָ יָא	וְחַנָּהּ
moved	only her lips		in her heart		she spake		Now Hannah
H5128	H8193	H7535	H3820	H5921	H1696	H1931	H2584
עַל י	וְחִשְׁבָּהּ	יִשְׁמַע ע	ל א	וְקוֹלָהּ			
therefore Eli	thought	was not heard		but her voice			
H5941	H2803	H8085	H3808	H6963			
							לְשֹׁכְרָהּ:
							she had been drunken
							H7910

Additional Cross-References

Romans 8:26 (Parallel theme): Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

Acts 2:13 (Parallel theme): Others mocking said, These men are full of new wine.

Psalms 25:1 (Parallel theme): Unto thee, O LORD, do I lift up my soul.

Zechariah 9:15 (Parallel theme): The LORD of hosts shall defend them; and they shall devour, and subdue with sling stones; and they shall drink, and make a noise as through wine; and they shall be filled like bowls, and as the corners of the altar.

