

1 Samuel 1:16

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Count not thine handmaid for a daughter of Belial: for out of the abundance of my complaint and grief have I spoken hitherto.

Analysis

Hannah's reference to 'daughter of Belial' uses strong language requiring explanation. Belial (beli-ya'al, worthlessness or wickedness) later becomes a name for Satan in intertestamental literature. Hannah essentially asks Eli not to count her among worthless, wicked people. Her explanation attributes her unusual prayer to 'abundance of complaint and grief' rather than wine. The Hebrew words (siach and ka'as) describe both the inner experience of troubled meditation and the outward expression of anguish. Hannah's transparent self-disclosure models honest communication even under unjust criticism.

Historical Context

'Sons/daughters of Belial' appears throughout the Old Testament to describe thoroughly wicked persons (Deuteronomy 13:13; Judges 19:22; 1 Samuel 2:12). The term's later evolution into a proper name for Satan (2 Corinthians 6:15) shows its progression in Jewish thought.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. How does Hannah's respectful correction of Eli model appropriate responses to spiritual authority?
2. What role does transparent self-disclosure play in resolving misunderstandings?

Interlinear Text

אֵל	תִּתֵּן	אֶת	אִמְּךָ תִּבְרָךְ	לְפָנַי י	בֵּת	בְּלִי עַל	כִּי
H408	Count	H853	not thine handmaid	for	a daughter	of Belial	H3588
	H5414		H519	H6440	H1323	H1100	
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מֵרַב	שִׁיחִי י	וְכַעֲסִי	דִּבַּר רָתִי	עַד	הִנֵּה:		
for out of the abundance	of my complaint	and grief	have I spoken	H5704	H2008		
H7230	H7879	H3708	H1696				

Additional Cross-References

1 Samuel 2:12 (Parallel theme): Now the sons of Eli were sons of Belial; they knew not the LORD.