

1 Samuel 1:23

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And Elkanah her husband said unto her, Do what seemeth thee good; tarry until thou have weaned him; only the LORD establish his word. So the woman abode, and gave her son suck until she weaned him.

Analysis

Elkanah's response demonstrates supportive headship that honors his wife's spiritual convictions. His words 'Do what seemeth thee good' affirm Hannah's judgment while maintaining family order. The phrase 'only the LORD establish his word' invokes divine faithfulness to accomplish what has been promised. The term 'his word' (devaro) may refer to either the prophetic word spoken through Eli or the broader divine purpose Hannah discerned. Hannah's nursing period becomes a time of preparation - both physical nurturing for Samuel and spiritual preparation for separation.

Historical Context

Elkanah's deference to Hannah's spiritual judgment represents an unusual but not unprecedented pattern in Scripture (compare Manoah's wife in Judges 13). His invocation of divine faithfulness echoes covenant language throughout the Old Testament.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How can spouses support each other's spiritual callings even when it requires sacrifice?
2. What seasons of preparation has God given you before major life transitions?

Interlinear Text

בְּעֵינֵי יְהֹוָה בְּטַבְוֹן
said H0 And Elkanah her husband unto her Do thee good what seemeth
H559 H511 H376 H6213 H2896 H5869

וְיִהְיֶה הַמְּלֵל הַזֶּה עַד יְמֵי שָׁבָת
abode H5704 until she weaned H853 H389 H6965 H3068
H3427 H1580 establish him only the LORD

עַד בְּנֵי הַמְּלֵל הַזֶּה אֲתָּה יְהֹוָה
his word abode So the woman suck H853 H853 H1121 H5704
H853 H1697 H3427 H802 H3243 and gave her son
H1580 H853

Additional Cross-References

2 Samuel 7:25 (Word): And now, O LORD God, the word that thou hast spoken concerning thy servant, and concerning his house, establish it for ever, and do as thou hast said.