

Hannah's Prayer

A barren woman prays desperately for a child, promising to dedicate him to God. God answers, and Samuel is born.

1 Samuel 1:1-28

CHARACTERS: Hannah, Elkanah, Eli, Samuel

THEMES: Prayer, Faithfulness, Dedication to God

THERE WAS A man named Elkanah who had two wives: Hannah and Peninnah. Peninnah had children, but Hannah had none. Year after year, when the family went up to worship at Shiloh, Peninnah would provoke Hannah and irritate her because of her barrenness. Hannah wept and would not eat.

One year at Shiloh, Hannah rose after they had eaten and stood before the Lord in bitterness of soul, weeping much. She made a vow: 'Lord Almighty, if you will only look on your servant's misery and remember me, if you will give me a son, I will give him to the Lord for all the days of his life.'

As she kept praying, her lips moved but no sound came out. Eli the priest, watching from his seat by the doorpost, thought she was drunk. 'How long will you keep getting drunk? Get rid of your wine.'

'Not so, my lord,' Hannah replied. 'I am a woman deeply troubled. I have not been drinking. I was pouring out my soul to the Lord. I have been praying out of my great anguish and grief.'

Eli answered, 'Go in peace, and may the God of Israel grant what you have asked.'

Hannah went her way, ate something, and her face was no longer downcast. She believed.

In the course of time, Hannah conceived and gave birth to a son. She named him Samuel, saying, 'Because I asked the Lord for him.'

When the boy was weaned, Hannah took him to the house of the Lord at Shiloh. 'I prayed for this child,' she told Eli, 'and the Lord has granted what I asked. So now I give him to the Lord. For his whole life he will be given over to the Lord.'

Hannah worshipped the Lord there, then went home, leaving her precious son to serve in the temple. Her prayer of dedication became one of the most beautiful songs in Scripture, later echoed by Mary the mother of Jesus.

From KJV Study • kjevstudy.org