



*... Because I asked God for him ...*

### **Part One – The Gift of God**

*<sup>1</sup> Now there was a certain man of Ramathaimzophim, of mount Ephraim, and his name was Elkanah, the son of Jeroham, the son of Elihu, the son of Tohu, the son of Zuph, an Ephrathite: <sup>2</sup> And he had two wives; the name of the one was Hannah, and the name of the other Peninnah: and Peninnah had children, but Hannah had no children. <sup>3</sup> And this man went up out of his city yearly to worship and to sacrifice unto the LORD of hosts in Shiloh. And the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, the priests of the LORD, were there. <sup>4</sup> And when the time was that Elkanah offered, he gave to Peninnah his wife, and to all her sons and her daughters, portions: <sup>5</sup> But unto Hannah he gave a worthy portion; for he loved Hannah: but the LORD had shut up her womb. <sup>6</sup> And her adversary also provoked her sore, for to make her fret, because the LORD had shut up her womb. <sup>7</sup> And as he did so year by year, when she went up to the house of the LORD, so she provoked her; therefore she wept, and did not eat. <sup>8</sup> Then said Elkanah her husband to her, Hannah, why weepest thou? and why eatest thou not? and why is thy heart grieved? am not I better to thee than ten sons? (1 Sam 1:1-8)*

Every child conceived in the womb is a gift directly from God. At the moment of conception, all human characteristics and natures are sealed by the immediate properties of the DNA established by God. (Ruth 4:13) So to terminate a life, once conceived, is egregious and is the most reprehensible form of murder of innocents. There are women such as Sarah and, as we see here, Hannah, who long for that special gift of God that will grant them motherhood. Mothers in those days were not disposed to murder their babies, but rather prayed that God would grant them the conception of a precious child. This is precisely the kind of woman Hannah defined. She was married to Elkanah who had two wives – Peninnah and Hannah. Polygamy was never approved of God, but was allowed in the time of Moses because of the ‘hardness of men’s hearts.’ In actuality, the fact that Elkanah (meaning acquired by God) had two wives gives import to the view that having children was the most important consideration for a woman. Hannah (meaning GRACIOUS) seemed to be the first wife who was unable to bear children; so, Elkanah took a second wife, Peninnah (Pearl – beautiful but HARD). We learn in this account that beauty has far less value than grace.

In verse 3, we read that Elkanah went up annually to Shiloh to sacrifice to the Lord of Host (Heb. Jehovah-Sabaoth – meaning Lord of all hosts in Heaven and on Earth).

Our text opens with the sorrowful life of Hannah – a good and Godly woman whose only desire is to bear a child. Her antagonist, Peninnah, had sons and daughters while Hannah remained barren. It seems that Elkanah loved Hannah more than Peninnah, and gave her an extra measure of treasure when they went up to Shiloh. *“But unto Hannah he gave a worthy portion; for he loved Hannah.”* (Verse 5)

When one feels oppressed and deprived of joy, there is one source of power upon which to carry our burdens for remediation – the altar of the Lord. This is exactly what Hannah did! Hannah made a covenant with the Lord at Shiloh: *9 So Hannah rose up after they had eaten in Shiloh, and after they had drunk. Now Eli the priest sat upon a seat by a post of the temple of the LORD. 10 And she was in bitterness of soul, and prayed unto the LORD, and wept sore. 11 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.* (1 Sam 1:9-11) This is a promise of greater solemnity and faith than first impression may provide. *Thou shalt not delay to offer the first of thy ripe fruits, and of thy liquors: the firstborn of thy sons shalt thou give unto me.* (Ex 22:29) This is the perfection of the Law of Tithe! As Hannah has been praying, Eli is observing the extraordinary manner in which she is praying. It was uncommonly solemn and SILENT – only her lips moved.

*12 And it came to pass, as she continued praying before the LORD, that Eli marked her mouth. 13 Now Hannah, she spake in her heart; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard: therefore Eli thought she had been drunken. 14 And Eli said unto her, How long wilt thou be drunken? put away thy wine from thee.* (1 Sam 1:12-14) Those who lack the spiritual depth of others may question their faith. The world does so always because they cannot know the depth of the spiritual meaning in life, prayers, or worship of the devoted unto the Lord. Eli was a priest and he lacked the depth of Hannah’s understanding of prayer. *But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:* (1 Peter 2:9) Eli was accustomed to extreme outbursts in prayer, and perhaps many other pretensions to piety, but never had he observed someone pray silently. Perhaps God has poor hearing to understand a whispered prayer? No way. Even prayers that are murmured mentally are just as clear to God as those that are screamed – in fact, clearer to him and less offensive.

Hannah explains her grievance and prayers to Eli: *15 And Hannah answered and said, No, my lord, I am a woman of a sorrowful spirit: I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but have poured out my soul before the LORD. 16 Count not thine handmaid for a daughter of Belial: for out of the abundance of my complaint and grief have I spoken hitherto. 17 Then Eli answered and said, Go in peace: and the God of Israel grant thee thy petition that thou hast asked of him. 18 And she said, Let thine handmaid find grace in thy sight. So the woman went her way, and did eat, and her countenance was no more sad.* (1 Sam 1:15-18) After expressing her great grief to the One who was able to grant the most good, Hannah was no more sorrowful. That is the miracle of true prayer!

Hannah did, indeed, bear a child – a son named Samuel – one of the greatest of all prophets of Israel (if not the greatest). Hannah was not a shallow believer. She remembered her covenant with God and dedicated Samuel to the work of the Lord. She also remembered to thank God, just as she had at first pleaded with Him, for her child. Hannah kept the baby until he was weaned. She consulted Elkanah about her pledge to the Lord and he, being a good husband, responded that she should do according to her promise. She returned to Shiloh with offerings to the Lord and to the altar. *26 And she said, Oh my lord, as thy soul liveth, my lord, I am the woman that stood by thee here, praying*

unto the LORD. <sup>27</sup>For this child I prayed; and the LORD hath given me my petition which I asked of him: <sup>28</sup>Therefore also I have lent him to the LORD; as long as he liveth he shall be lent to the LORD. And he worshipped the LORD there. (1 Sam 1:26-28)

Hannah proclaimed her song at the dedication of the child, Samuel, to the Lord:  
<sup>1</sup> And Hannah prayed, and said, My heart rejoiceth in the LORD, mine horn is exalted in the LORD: my mouth is enlarged over mine enemies; because I rejoice in thy salvation. <sup>2</sup> There is none holy as the LORD: for there is none beside thee: neither is there any rock like our God. <sup>3</sup> Talk no more so exceeding proudly; let not arrogancy come out of your mouth: for the LORD is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed. <sup>4</sup> The bows of the mighty men are broken, and they that stumbled are girded with strength. <sup>5</sup> They that were full have hired out themselves for bread; and they that were hungry ceased: so that the barren hath born seven; and she that hath many children is waxed feeble. <sup>6</sup> The LORD killeth, and maketh alive: he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up. <sup>7</sup> The LORD maketh poor, and maketh rich: he bringeth low, and lifteth up. <sup>8</sup> He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory: for the pillars of the earth are the LORD'S, and he hath set the world upon them. <sup>9</sup> He will keep the feet of his saints, and the wicked shall be silent in darkness; for by strength shall no man prevail. <sup>10</sup> The adversaries of the LORD shall be broken to pieces; out of heaven shall he thunder upon them: the LORD shall judge the ends of the earth; and he shall give strength unto his king, and exalt the horn of his anointed. (1 Sam 2:1-10) Hannah leaves very little unspoken regarding the mighty power and love of God. She returned every year with a coat of linen, made by her own hands, to her boy-child. Hannah had other sons and daughters as well – in fact, three more sons and two daughters.

She is one of the finest examples of woman and motherhood in all of the Bible. Young Christian and Jewish ladies of every nation share the name of Hannah for it is a very good and Holy name. No further mention is made of Peninnah. She was pretty, but lacked the grace and true beauty of Hannah! Samuel would go on to anoint the first two kings of Israel, including Saul and David – the morning star of the royal line of Christ!