

1 Samuel Chapter 2

Verses 1-10: In contrast to the prayer that came from her bitterness (1:10), Hannah prayed from joy in these verses. The prominent idea in Hannah's prayer is that the Lord is a righteous judge. He had brought down the proud (Peninnah), and exalted the humble (Hannah). The prayer has four sections:

1. Hannah prays to the Lord for His salvation (verses 1-2);
2. Hannah warned the proud of the Lord's humbling (verses 3-8d);
3. Hannah affirmed the Lord's faithful care for His saints (verses 8e-9b);
4. Hannah petitioned the Lord to judge the world and to prosper His anointed king (verses 9c-10e).

This prayer has a number of striking verbal similarities with David's song of (2 Sam. 22:2-51):

"Horn" (2:1; 22:3), "rock" (2:2; 22:2-3), salvation/deliverance (2:1-2; 22:2-3), grave/Sheol (2:6; 22:6), "thunder" (2:10; 22:14), "king" (2:10; 22:51), and "anointed" (2:10; 22:51).

1 Samuel 2:1 "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."

The "horn" (verse 10), was an ancient symbol of great strength (Num. 23:22; 24:8; Dan. 7:21). At times, it was used of the successful establishment of a progeny (Deut. 33:16-17; 17:1; 1 Chron. 25:5; Psalms 132:17).

"Hannah" owes her strength and newly found success to the Lord's provision for her. Her psalm (1-10), praises the "Lord" for giving her victory in the issues of life.

This is a song of praise from Hannah. She begins by stating the wonderful blessings God has bestowed upon her. The other women can no longer look at her, and think that she is cursed of God. She is no longer barren. Her weeping has been turned into joy.

The "horn" symbolizes strength. Her strength is in the LORD. She can speak of the greatness of God boldly before her enemies. She begins a prophecy of salvation here. She has been delivered. She speaks prophetically of the great deliverance in the coming Messiah, Jesus Christ.

1 Samuel 2:2 "[There is] none holy as the LORD: for [there is] none beside thee: neither [is there] any rock like our God."

"Rock": is a frequent symbolic metaphor of God" as a place of security and rest (Psalms 18:1-2; 31:3; 71:3; Deut. 32:4). Accordingly, it becomes easily applicable to the person of Christ (1 Cor. 10:14; 1 Pet. 2:6-8).

She is very sure of the holiness of the LORD. She is aware, it was the LORD who heard her prayer and sent her a son. He also is the Rock that will never fail her. He is the Rock that is unmovable. Those that build on this Rock should have no fear of the storm.

1 Samuel 2:3 "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."

“Proudly ... arrogancy”: The majestic and powerful God humbles all those who vaunt themselves against Him. The idea of God’s humbling of the very proud is shown throughout (1 and 2 Samuel), toward Peninnah, Eli’s sons, the Philistines, Goliath, Saul, Nabal, Absalom, Shimei, Sheba and even David.

Hannah is speaking of the fact that we are what God made us, nothing more, and nothing less. We have nothing to be arrogant about. It is the LORD who decides what will happen and who it will happen to. The Lord weighs our actions, He is the Judge. The knowledge of God is beyond human comprehension. The following are a few of my favorite Scriptures pertaining to this.

Luke 1:51 "He hath showed strength with his arm; he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts."

2 Corinthians 5:10 "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things [done] in [his] body, according to that he hath done, whether [it be] good or bad."

Hebrews 4:12 "For the word of God [is] quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and [is] a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

We may be able to hide our true self from each other, but we cannot hide from God. He knows all things, even the desires of our heart. He is Knowledge and He is Wisdom.

Verses 4-7: Seven contrasts are found in these 4 verses:

1. Mighty and weak;
2. Full and hungry;
3. Barren and fertile;
4. Dead and alive;
5. Sick and well;
6. Humbled and exalted;

1 Samuel 2:4 "The bows of the mighty men [are] broken, and they that stumbled are girded with strength."

God reverses human conditions, bringing low the wicked, and raising up the righteous.

"And they that stumbled are girt with strength": Who, through weakness, are ready to stumble at everything they meet with in the way. Yet, being girded with strength by the Lord, are able to do great exploits, as David did, that being his case (in Psalm 18:29). So such as are weak in grace, in faith, in knowledge, and ready to stumble at every trial and exercise, let it come from what quarter it will. Yet being girded by the Lord with strength, are able to exercise grace, perform duty, and go through every service they are called to. Whether in doing or suffering, to bear the yoke and cross of Christ and oppose every enemy, to walk on in the ways of God, and to persevere in faith and holiness to the end.

The Hebrews, better than anyone else, should be aware that mighty men are broken easily, when they are depending on their own strength. Those who humbly obey the LORD are those who win battles.

Psalms 18:2 "The LORD [is] my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, [and] my high tower."

2 Corinthians 12:9 "And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me."

1 Samuel 2:5 "[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."

"Hath born seven": This is not a personal testimony since Hannah bore only 6 children (2:21). "Seven" here is a general reference to women who God blesses.

At the beginning of this verse, it appears their money to buy this plentiful bread is because they have sold out to the world. God will not let the righteous go hungry, as we see in the following verse.

Psalms 37:25 "I have been young, and [now] am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread."

God can rain manna from heaven, if He desires to. She is very familiar with the fact that God can cause the barren to produce children. The number "seven" means spiritually complete. She is, possibly, prophesying that she will have more children. She gave her first to the service of the LORD.

We could see also, the spiritual message in this: the Gentiles were barren, away from God, but will have a multitude in Christ. The feeble, in this, is speaking in a physical sense as well as a spiritual. Women do grow feeble after having many children. The law will wax old as well.

1 Samuel 2:6 "The LORD killeth, and maketh alive: he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up."

Hannah's declaration takes its place beside many other texts demonstrating that Old Testament believers clearly understood there was life after death (Job 14:14; 19:25-27; Psalms 17:14-15; 49:14-15; 73:24-26; Isa. 26:19; Dan. 12:1-3).

It is not by chance that we live, and it is not by chance that we die. Our days on this earth are numbered of God. The very breath we possess is a gift from God. Surely, when we do go the way of all flesh and our body dies, that is not the end. Sometimes, those bodies will rise again to eternal life, or eternal damnation.

1 Samuel 2:7 "The LORD maketh poor, and maketh rich: he bringeth low, and lifteth up."

Which is true in a natural sense of the same persons, as might be exemplified in the case of Job; and of different persons, as in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus; for both poverty and riches are of God (see Proverbs 22:2). Poverty is of God; for though it is sometimes owing to a man's own conduct, yet that there is such a difference among men in general, that some should be poor, and others rich, is owing to the wise providence of God, that men may be dependent on one another. Riches are of God, and are the gifts of his bountiful providence; for though they are oftentimes the fruits of industry and diligence, as means, yet not always. And whenever they are, they are to be ascribed to the blessing of God attending the diligent hand.

"He bringeth low, and lifteth up": Which has been verified in the same persons, as in Job, Nebuchadnezzar, etc. And in different persons, for he puts down one, and raises up another; so he rejected Saul from being king, and took David from the sheepfold, debased Haman, and raised Mordecai to great dignity. And, in a spiritual sense, the Lord shows men the low estate and condition they are brought into by sin, humbles them under a sense of it, brings down their proud spirits to sit at the feet of Jesus, and to submit to him, and to his righteousness. And he lifts them up by his son out of their fallen, captive, and miserable estate. And by his Spirit and grace brings them out of the horrible pit of nature into the state of grace; sets them upon the rock Christ, and makes their mountain to stand strong by the discoveries of his love. And will at last lift them up to glory, and place them on the same throne with Christ.

We can keep from being poverty stricken by working diligently here in the United States. It is God who put us in the United States. Some are born to wealthy parents. That is a blessing from God. God can make you prosper at whatever you do. He can cause the land not to produce for you.

Our relationship with the Lord has a great deal to do with whether we are blessed, or cursed of Him. What people generally call good luck is nothing more than blessings from God. They were in the right place, at the right time, because God put them there.

1 Samuel 2:8 "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."

“Pillars of the earth”: A figure of speech which pictures the earth’s stability (Psalms 75:3; 82:5; 104:5).

God is often portrayed as the Defender of the needy, such as the widow, the orphan, the “Poor,” and the stranger (Deut. 27:19; Psalms 68:1-5; 82:3-4; Prov. 22:22-23; Jer. 22:3). Hannah’s reference to the “pillars of the earth” is not scientific language, but popular and poetic. The Creator and Sustainer of the earth is also the sovereign Controller of earth’s history and mankind’s destiny.

Most of the judges that were raised to great fame were men of low estate. We remember that Gideon reminded the Lord of his unworthiness, before he accepted his call to greatness. The earth and everything and everyone in it, belong to the Lord. He can do with all of it as He wishes as it is His possessions. We are what we are because of the blessings of God. He decides who will reign.

1 Samuel 2:9 "He will keep the feet of his saints, and the wicked shall be silent in darkness; for by strength shall no man prevail."

Meaning the steps or paths or their counsels and actions. They will keep both that they may not fall, at least, into mischief or utter ruin; and direct and preserve from wandering, and from those fatal mistakes and errors that wicked men daily run into.

"Shall be silent": Shall be put to silence: they who used to open their mouths wide against heaven, and against the saints, shall be so confounded with the unexpected disappointment of all their hopes, and with God’s glorious appearance and operations for his people, that they shall have their mouths quite stopped, and sit down in silent amazement and consternation (see Isa. 15:1 Jer. 8:14; 47:5-6).

"In darkness": Both inward, in their own minds, which are wholly in the dark, perplexed by their own choice and counsels, not knowing what to say or do; and outward, in a state of deepest distress and misery.

"By strength shall no man prevail": To wit, against God, or against his saints, as the wicked were confident they should do, because of their great power, and wealth, and numbers. Whereas God’s people were mean, impotent and helpless. And particularly, Peninnah shall not prevail against me by that strength which she hath, or thinks to have, from her numerous offspring. But it is to be observed, that although Hannah takes the rise of this song from her own condition, yet she extends her thoughts and words further, even to the usual methods of God’s providence in the government of the world.

It is not our great physical strength that saves us. We must place our trust in the Lord.

Phil. 4:13 "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

We must walk in the Light of the Lord and He will keep our path. The wicked walk in darkness, and cannot find their way. It is His Light that guides us. It is not our strength, but the strength of Christ in us, that makes us succeed.

1 Samuel 2:10 "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."

The Lord's presence in power is often associated with "thunder" (Psalms 18:13; 29:3; 77:18). The mention of God's "king, his anointed," is predictive of the messianic king of whom each king in the Davidic line was, ideally, an earthly representative (Psalms 45:6-7; Heb. 1:8-9).

"The Lord shall judge the ends of the earth": The Lord will impose His righteous rule upon all the nations and people (see Isa. 2:2-4).

"His king": Moses had already predicted the coming of a king who would exercise God's rule over all the nations of the earth (Gen. 49:8-12; Num. 24:7-9; 17-19). It was this future, victorious king whom Hannah anticipated and Saul and David prefigured.

"His anointed": Previously in the Old Testament, both the tabernacle and its utensils along with the priests (Aaron and his sons), had been anointed with oil. This pictured their consecrated and holy status before the Lord (Exodus 30:26-30). In Samuel, first Saul (10:1), and then David (16:13; 2 Sam. 2:4; 5:3), were anointed as they were inaugurated for the kingship. From this point in the Old Testament, it is usually the king who is referred as "the anointed (of the Lord;)" 12:3; 24:6; 26:9, 11, 16; 2 Sam. 1:14, 16; 19:21). The kings of Israel, particularly David, foreshadowed the Lord's ultimate anointed king. The English word "Messiah" represents the Hebrew word used here meaning "anointed." Thus, this ultimate king who would rule over the nations of the earth came to be referred to as "the Messiah" (as here and 2:35; 2 Sam. 22:51).

The "adversaries of the LORD" are those who have chosen to follow Satan, instead of God. The "thunder from heaven" is speaking of the voice of God. The "LORD that judges" is the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the Judge. The "horn" symbolizes strength. This Scripture is prophetic. We see the "Anointed of God" is the Messiah, Christ. It is His strength that tears down the adversaries. It is His strength that holds the believers up. It is by His power that He judges.

1 Samuel 2:11 "And Elkanah went to Ramah to his house. And the child did minister unto the LORD before Eli the priest."

"Minister unto the Lord": As a Levite, the boy Samuel performed services that assisted Eli, the High-Priest.

This has suddenly broken away from the prophecy of Hannah, and is telling what happened next. Hannah and her husband Elkanah have left the tabernacle and gone home. The beauty of this is, the fact that Hannah did not complain. She left her son, Samuel, with Eli, to be taught of the things of God. Samuel, from the time he was very small, ministered unto the Lord in the tabernacle. It appears, even from the time he was brought to the service of the Lord (about 3

years old), Samuel began to minister. At first the things he did were just what Eli told him. As he grew, he took on more and more responsibility.

Verses 12-17: "Eli" was a priest and restrainer of sin for Israel, but he failed to be a priest and restrainer of sin in his own home (3:13). Eli's sons were taking parts of the offering before they were offered to God rather than waiting until after the sacrifice had been made, as God had instructed (Lev. 3). By giving in to greed, they showed utter contempt for God's laws.

1 Samuel 2:12 "Now the sons of Eli [were] sons of Belial; they knew not the LORD."

Worthless: "Sons of Belial" was a Hebrew way of saying base or wicked men (see 2 Cor. 6:15), where it is used as a name for Satan. Eli had falsely considered Hannah a wicked woman (1:16). Eli's sons were, in fact, wicked men.

"They knew not the Lord": Eli's sons had no personal experience of or fellowship with, the Lord. The boy Samuel came to "know the Lord" when the Lord revealed Himself to him (see 3:7).

For the "sons of Belial" (see the note on Judges 19:22).

This has always been a mystery, how godly men and women can have children who turn away from God. "Belial", in this particular instance, means worthless. They went through the motions of performing the duties of the priests, but they were not even saved. They knew not God. They lived to please their own flesh.

1 Samuel 2:13 "And the priests' custom with the people [was, that], when any man offered sacrifice, the priest's servant came, while the flesh was in seething, with a fleshhook of three teeth in his hand;"

"The priests' custom": Not content with the specified portions of the sacrifices given to the priests (Deut. 18:3), Eli's sons would take for themselves whatever meat a 3-pronged fork would collect from a boiling pot.

This was not the law. This was the custom of these greedy people. It appears that Eli's sons had no regard for the law of God. They made up customs that suited their desires.

1 Samuel 2:14 "And he struck [it] into the pan, or kettle, or caldron, or pot; all that the fleshhook brought up the priest took for himself. So they did in Shiloh unto all the Israelites that came thither."

The Law of Moses defined exactly what was to be the priest's portion of every peace offering (Lev. 7:31-35), as it also gave express directions about the burning of the fat (Lev. 7:23-25; 7:31). It was therefore a gross act of disobedience and lawlessness on the part of Hophni and

Phinehas to take more than the Law gave them. Incidental evidence is afforded by this passage to the existence of the Levitical law at this time.

There were specific portions that should have gone to the priests. There was nothing random about the offerings that God had instructed. The right shoulder of the offering went to the priests, but it must be waved before the altar first.

1 Samuel 2:15 "Also before they burnt the fat, the priest's servant came, and said to the man that sacrificed, Give flesh to roast for the priest; for he will not have sodden flesh of thee, but raw."

“Before they burnt the fat”: The law mandated that the fat of the sacrificial animal was to be burned on the altar to the Lord (Lev. 7:31). In contrast, Eli’s sons demanded raw meat, including the fat, from the worshipers.

The fat always belonged to God. There were no exceptions to this. It is apparent that either the priest did not know God's law, or just did not have respect for God's law. This would have been a terrible sin.

1 Samuel Chapter 2 Questions

1. What is verse 1 the beginning of?
2. How does it begin?
3. The "horn" symbolizes _____.
4. Why is Hannah so happy?
5. What does Hannah speak of prophetically, beginning with verse 1?
6. What does verse 2 say she is aware of?
7. Those that build upon this _____ should have no fear of the storm.
8. We are what _____ made us, nothing more, and nothing less.
9. The knowledge of God is beyond _____ comprehension.
10. Who should know better than anyone else, that mighty men are broken easily, when they are depending upon their own strength?
11. God's _____ is made perfect in our _____.
12. In verse 5, why is there plenty of money to buy bread?

13. The _____ killeth, and maketh alive.
14. What many people call good luck is really what?
15. Most of the judges, who were raised up, were men of _____ .
16. Who are the "adversaries of the LORD"?
17. Who is the "Anointed of God"?
18. As Samuel grew, he took on more and more _____ .
19. The sons of Eli were the sons of _____ .
20. How do we know that Eli's sons had no regard for God's law?
21. The fat always belonged to _____ .