

Hannah's Petition

Key Verse: “Go in peace, and may the God of Israel grant you what you have asked of him.”

—*I Samuel 1:17*,
New International
Version

Selected Scripture:
I Samuel 1:9-20

BEFORE THE TIME WHEN Israel had kings, there was a man named Elkanah who had two wives, Peninnah and Hannah. Peninnah had children, while Hannah had none. Every year Elkanah took his family to Shiloh to worship and offer sacrifice to the Lord, giving a portion of the sacrifice to each member of his family. Elkanah gave a double portion to Hannah because of his great love for her. Peninnah, however, mocked Hannah because she had no children, and this cruelty went on year after year, causing Hannah to weep and not eat. Finally one year, Hannah silently prayed to God and vowed saying, “O LORD Almighty, if you will only look upon your servant’s misery and remember me, and not forget your servant but give her a son, then I will give him to the LORD for all the days of his life, and no razor will ever be used on his head.”—*I Sam. 1:1-11, NIV*

God heard Hannah’s prayer and the following year she had a son, and named him Samuel. (vss. 19,20) The vow she had made to God, not allowing a razor to come upon her son’s head, was the Nazarite vow. This was “a special vow, a vow of separation to the LORD.” As part of this vow, in addition to not cutting the hair, no wine was to be drunk, nor was anything from the grapevine eaten. One taking this vow was to have no contact with any

dead body, including immediate family members.—Num. 6:1-21, *NIV*

Throughout the entire time a person placed themselves under the Nazarite vow, that individual was “consecrated to the LORD.” (vs. 8) Very few Israelites took the Nazarite vow for their entire life. The Bible records just three people who did—Samson, Samuel and John the Baptist. (Judg. 13:5; I Sam. 1:11; Luke 1:15) Similarly, those consecrated to the Lord during the present Gospel Age are admonished, “be thou faithful unto death.”—Rev. 2:10

The name Hannah means “favor” or “grace.” The Lord’s followers are told, “By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God. Not of works, lest any man should boast.” (Eph. 2:8,9) Hannah lived a life of prayer. She prayed when she was troubled. She also prayed when she was thankful, such as when she presented her child Samuel to Eli the high priest.—I Sam. 2:1-10

Paul’s exhortation is, “Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” (Phil. 4:6,7 *NIV*) We are to fully place our hope and trust in God, have the spirit of rejoicing, and pray continually, asking in harmony with his promises. Thus we will have the peace of God, and be able to “give thanks in all circumstances,” whatever his providences may permit.—I Thess. 5:16-18, *NIV*

Hannah made a great sacrifice to God. She dedicated her son Samuel to live the Nazarite vow of complete dedication to the Lord, all the days of his life. Today, consecrated followers of Christ have also made a life-long vow of complete dedication to God, including separation from the “dead things” of this present evil world. These, instead, “put on Christ,” developing the fruits and graces of the Holy Spirit.—Gal. 3:27; Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10-17 ■