

Hannah's Prayer Answered

Key Verse:
*“Wherefore it came
to pass, when the
time was come
about after
Hannah had
conceived, that she
bare a son, and
called his name
Samuel, saying,
Because I have
asked him of
the LORD.”*
—*I Samuel 1:20*

Selected Scriptures:
*I Samuel 1:1-28;
2:1-11*

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, New International Version*

God heard Hannah’s prayer. 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) Throughout the entire time a person placed themselves under the Nazarite vow, that individual was "holy unto the LORD."—vs. 8

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. 2:1-11

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 consecration 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 ■