

# HANNAH'S EXAMPLE (PART 2)

Jon Macon

Hannah is among the great examples in the Bible, not just for women, but for all who desire to follow God. She was loved by her husband, but tormented by her husband's other wife (1 Sam 1:1-8). By her faith in God, she prayed to God for a son, vowing to give him to God if her prayer was heard (1 Sam 1:9-11). God indeed heard the prayer of this righteous woman, and she became the mother of the great prophet and judge, Samuel. Hannah responded to the Lord's kindness by displaying her faithfulness and humility.

## **God hears the prayers of the righteous**

The circumstances of Samuel's birth is a reminder that the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous person does indeed avail much (Jas 5:16). God's eyes *are* over the righteous and His ears *are* open to their prayers (Psa 34:15; 1 Pet 3:12). God is *pleased* by the prayers of His saints (Rev 5:8; 8:3-4). After Hannah had prayed to God (1 Sam 1:10-16), Eli the high priest blessed her and said, "the God of Israel grant thee thy petition that thou hast asked of him" (1 Sam 1:17). God did just that. After Hannah returned with her husband Elkanah to their house in Ramah, "the Lord remembered her" (1 Sam 1:19), and gave her the son that she had prayed for (1 Sam 1:20). This was not a miracle. This was God's non-miraculous response to a righteous woman's prayer. This vividly demonstrates the power of prayer, which should motivate us to pray more diligently and fervently (see also 2 Kgs 20; 2 Chr 32:24; Isa 38). After Hannah gave birth to her son, she "called his name Samuel" (1 Sam 1:20). The name "Samuel" literally means "*heard of God.*" Hannah named her son Samuel, "saying, Because I have asked him of the Lord" (1 Sam 1:20). God heard Hannah's prayer for a son, and that is the very meaning of his name.

## **Hannah's faithfulness**

When Hannah prayed for a son, 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 1:11). God heard her prayer and gave her the son that she had prayed for (1 Sam 1:19-20). Immediately after Samuel was born, Hannah was prepared to keep her vow. She told her husband Elkanah that after Samuel was weaned, "then I will bring him, that he may appear before the Lord, and there abide for ever" (1 Sam 1:22). True to her word, "when she had weaned him,

## HANNAH'S EXAMPLE (PART 2)

(continued)

she took him up with her, with three bullocks, and one ephah of flour, and a bottle of wine, and brought him unto the house of the Lord in Shiloh: and the child was young. And they slew a bullock, and brought the child to Eli. And she said, Oh my Lord, as thy soul lives my Lord, I am the woman that stood by thee here, praying unto the Lord. For this child I prayed; and the Lord has given me my petition which I asked of him: therefore also I have lent him to the Lord; as long as he lives he shall be lent to the Lord” (1 Sam 1:24-28). The Law of Moses required faithfulness to vows (Num 30; Eccl 5:4-6). God Himself is the ultimate example of being completely faithful to His word (Deut 7:9; Psa 36:5; 89; 119:90; Isa 25:1; Lam 3:23; 1 Cor 1:9; 10:13; 1 Thes 5:24; 2 Thes 3:3; 2 Tim 2:13; Heb 2:17; 10:23; 11:11; 1 Pet 4:19; 1 Jn 1:9; Rev 19:11). Hannah obeyed God’s law and followed God’s example, and kept her vow to the letter. Hannah is an excellent example of faithfulness.

### **God exalts the humble, abases the proud**

Finally, what happened to Hannah teaches us the principle that God exalts the humble and abases the proud (see also Job 26:12; 40:9-14; Psa 75:10; Isa 2:11-17; Prov 16:18; Ezek 17:24; 19:11-14; 21:26; 31:3-14; Obad 4; Matt 23:12; Luke 1:52; 14:11; 18:14; Jas 4:6; 1 Pet 5:5-6). This is the basic principle of how God works that Hannah acknowledged in her prayer of praise and thanksgiving to God. Hannah said, “Talk no more so exceeding proudly; let not arrogance come out of your mouth: for the Lord is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed. The bows of the mighty men are broken, and they that stumbled are girded with strength. They that were full have hired out themselves for bread; and they that were hungry ceased: so that the barren has born seven; and she that has many children is waxed feeble. The Lord kills, and makes alive: he brings down to the grave, and brings up. The Lord makes poor, and makes rich: he brings low, and lifts up. He raises up the poor out of the dust, and lifts 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 has set the world upon them. He will keep the feet of his saints, and the wicked shall be silent in darkness; for by strength shall no man prevail. 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 2:3-10).