

1st Samuel 2

Verses 1 -10

Then Hannah prayed and said,
“My heart exults in the Lord;
My horn is exalted in the Lord,
My mouth speaks boldly against my enemies,
Because I rejoice in Your salvation.
2 “There is no one holy like the Lord,
Indeed, there is no one besides You,
Nor is there any rock like our God.
3 “Boast no more so very proudly,
Do not let arrogance come out of your mouth;
For the Lord is a God of knowledge,
And with Him actions are weighed.
4 “The bows of the mighty are shattered,
But the feeble gird on strength.
5 “Those who were full hire themselves out for bread,
But those who were hungry cease *to hunger*.
Even the barren gives birth to seven,
But she who has many children languishes.
6 “The Lord kills and makes alive;
He brings down to Sheol and raises up.
7 “The Lord makes poor and rich;
He brings low, He also exalts.
8 “He raises the poor from the dust,
He lifts the needy from the ash heap
To make them sit with nobles,
And inherit a seat of honor;
For the pillars of the earth are the Lord’s,
And He set the world on them.
9 “He keeps the feet of His godly ones,
But the wicked ones are silenced in darkness;
For not by might shall a man prevail.
10 “Those who contend with the Lord will be shattered;
Against them He will thunder in the heavens,
The Lord will judge the ends of the earth;
And He will give strength to His king,
And will exalt the horn of His anointed.”

**¹ Then Hannah prayed and said,
“My heart exults in the Lord;
My horn is exalted in the Lord,
My mouth speaks boldly against my enemies,
Because I rejoice in Your salvation.**

**² “There is no one holy like the Lord,
Indeed, there is no one besides You,
Nor is there any rock like our God.**

Hannah's prayer begins with a few words concerning her relationship with the Lord and then she proclaims how The Lord God is worthy of praise.

**³ “Boast no more so very proudly,
Do not let arrogance come out of your mouth;
For the Lord is a God of knowledge,
And with Him actions are weighed.**

Then she warns Peninnah concerning her proud talk and arrogance. This of course applies to anyone that talks or acts this way.

**⁵ “Those who were full hire themselves out for bread,
But those who were hungry cease *to hunger*.
Even the barren gives birth to seven,
But she who has many children languishes.**

Then Hannah describes how her barrenness was turned into fulfillment while Peninnah who had many children would not feel fulfilled. Whatever comes from faith is always more fulfilling than what comes naturally.

**⁶ “The Lord kills and makes alive;
He brings down to Sheol and raises up.**

**⁷ “The Lord makes poor and rich;
He brings low, He also exalts.**

**⁸ “He raises the poor from the dust,
He lifts the needy from the ash heap
To make them sit with nobles, and inherit a seat of honor;**

Hannah then shows how God humbles the proud (Peninnah) and lifts up the humble.
See Matt 20:25-28

⁹ **“He keeps the feet of His godly ones,
But the wicked ones are silenced in darkness;
For not by might shall a man prevail.**

¹⁰ **“Those who contend with the Lord will be shattered;
Against them He will thunder in the heavens,
The Lord will judge the ends of the earth;
And He will give strength to His king,
And will exalt the horn of His anointed.”**

Here Hannah draws the contrast between believers and unbelievers. God looks after his children while the wicked will be in darkness.

In the last three lines of verse 10 Hannah is making reference to things that will take place in the future. The Lord will judge, will give and will exalt. But how far into the future should we look? Does this prophesy refer to the time of King David, to the time of Christ, or to the time of His second coming? Maybe it refers to all three. With so little context to go by it is best not to be too dogmatic about the interpretation.

Verses 11 -20

Then Elkanah went to his home at Ramah. But the boy ministered to the Lord before Eli the priest. ¹² Now the sons of Eli were worthless men; they did not know the Lord ¹³ and the custom of the priests with the people. When any man was offering a sacrifice, the priest’s servant would come while the meat was boiling, with a three-pronged fork in his hand. ¹⁴ Then he would thrust it into the pan, or kettle, or caldron, or pot; all that the fork brought up the priest would take for himself. Thus they did in Shiloh to all the Israelites who came there. ¹⁵ Also, before they burned the fat, the priest’s servant would come and say to the man who was sacrificing, “Give the priest meat for roasting, as he will not take boiled meat from you, only raw.” ¹⁶ If the man said to him, “They must surely burn the fat first, and then take as much as you desire,” then he would say, “No, but you shall give *it to me* now; and if not, I will take it by force.” ¹⁷ Thus the sin of the young men was very great before the Lord, for the men despised the offering of the Lord. ¹⁸ Now Samuel was ministering before the Lord, as a boy wearing a linen ephod. ¹⁹ And his mother would make him a little robe and bring it to him from year to year when she would come up with her husband to offer the yearly sacrifice. ²⁰ Then Eli would bless Elkanah and his wife and say, “May the Lord give you children from this woman in place of the one she dedicated to the Lord.” And they went to their own home.

12 Now the sons of Eli were worthless men; they did not know the Lord ¹³ and the custom of the priests with the people. When any man was offering a sacrifice, the priest's servant would come while the meat was boiling, with a three-pronged fork in his hand. ¹⁴ Then he would thrust it into the pan, or kettle, or caldron, or pot; all that the fork brought up the priest would take for himself. Thus they did in Shiloh to all the Israelites who came there.

This is one of the problems of having a priesthood based on family lineage. No one can guarantee that the sons of a believer will themselves believe in the Lord.

The priest's portion of the peace offering was restricted to the breast and thigh.

See Leviticus 7:34

34 For I have taken from the sons of Israel the breast of the wave offering and the thigh of the contribution from the sacrifices of their peace offerings, and have given them to Aaron the priest and to his sons as *their* allotted portion forever from the sons of Israel.

The sons of Eli were not satisfied with just the breast and thigh of the sacrifice so they would take a fork and thrust it into the kettle of the one who made the peace offering. Whatever stuck to the fork was taken by one of these two men. Taking this additional meat from the worshipper was a violation of the law and just down right greedy.

¹⁵ Also, before they burned the fat, the priest's servant would come and say to the man who was sacrificing, "Give the priest meat for roasting, as he will not take boiled meat from you, only raw." ¹⁶ If the man said to him, "They must surely burn the fat first, and then take as much as you desire," then he would say, "No, but you shall give *it to me* now; and if not, I will take it by force."

The priest was required to burn the fat of the peace offering before he took his portion of the meat.

See Leviticus 7:33

33 The one among the sons of Aaron who offers the blood of the peace offerings and the fat, the right thigh shall be his as *his* portion.

However, Eli's sons would send servants to get their portion of the meat before the fat had been burned because they wanted to get their meat before it was boiled by the one who was offering the sacrifice. If anyone objected, they would take it by force.

**¹⁸ Now Samuel was ministering before the Lord, as a boy wearing a linen ephod.
¹⁹ And his mother would make him a little robe and bring it to him from year to year when she would come up with her husband to offer the yearly sacrifice.**

Hannah's returned to the tabernacle each year with a little robe for Samuel.

The yearly sacrifice probably refers to the Passover. However, the Jewish men were required to go the Tabernacle three times each year.

See chart 205

Jewish Feasts						
Feast	Scripture	Date Observed	Roman Calendar	Sabbath	Offerings	Commemorates
Passover	Lev. 23:05	Nisan 14 At twilight	March/April	No	Numbers 28:16-24	Oldest son saved from death
Festival of Unleavened Bread	Lev. 23:6-8	Nisan 15-21	March/April	Day 1 & 7 Spec Sabbath	Numbers 28:16-24	The hasty flight from Egypt
Offering the First Fruits	Lev. 23:9-14	After the Sabbath	March/April	No	Numbers 28:16-24	Beginning of the barley harvest
Feast Of Weeks (Pentecost)	Lev. 23:15-22	50 days after F.F.	May/June	Special Sabbath	Numbers 28:26-31	beginning of the wheat harvest.
Festival of Trumpets	Lev. 23:23-25	Tishri 1	September	Special Sabbath	Numbers 29:1-6	Civil New Year
Day of Atonement	Lev. 23:26-32	Tishri 10	Sept/Oct	Sabbath	Numbers 29:7-11	Forgiveness of sin for the nation
Tabernacles Temp. Shelters	Lev. 23:33-34	Tishri 15-22	Sept/Oct	Day 1 & 8 Spec Sabbath	Numbers 29:12-38	Wilderness End of harvest

The first three boxes highlighted in yellow all took place during the Week of Passover. So the 3 feasts that all men had to attend were the week of Passover, the Feast of weeks, and the Feast of Tabernacles.

Verse 21

The Lord visited Hannah; and she conceived and gave birth to three sons and two daughters. And the boy Samuel grew before the Lord.

Hannah had 6 children in all.

Verses 22 -25

²² Now Eli was very old; and he heard all that his sons were doing to all Israel, and how they lay with the women who served at the doorway of the tent of meeting.

²³ He said to them, “Why do you do such things, the evil things that I hear from all these people? ²⁴ No, my sons; for the report is not good which I hear the Lord’s people circulating. ²⁵ If one man sins against another, God will mediate for him; but if a man sins against the Lord, who can intercede for him?” But they would not listen to the voice of their father, for the Lord desired to put them to death.

Now Eli was very old

When Eli dies in chapter 4 he will be 98 years old.

And he heard all that his sons were doing to all Israel, and how they lay with the women who served at the doorway of the tent of meeting.

The wickedness of his sons was a public scandal that hurt God's people.

How long had this been going on? Was this the first time that Eli had heard about these accusations? What should Eli have done to correct this situation beyond his verbal reprimand?

²⁵ If one man sins against another, God will mediate for him; but if a man sins against the Lord, who can intercede for him?”

Any sin against another person is also a sin against God but we all understand what Eli is saying here. There are different degrees of punishment for sin. Some sins required a sacrifice, some sins required a fine, some sins required physical punishment (lashes) and some sins brought the death penalty.

But they would not listen to the voice of their father, for the Lord desired to put them to death.

Eli tried to rebuke them but it fell on deaf ears. The Lord may have temporarily hardened their hearts so they would suffer the full penalty of their sin. Just as God hardened the heart of Pharaoh after he had willfully opposed the Lord many times.

Verse 26

Now the boy Samuel was growing in stature and in favor both with the Lord and with men.

This is similar to the statement concerning Jesus when he was young.

See Luke 2:52

And Jesus kept increasing in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and people.

Verses 27 -29

²⁷ Then a man of God came to Eli and said to him, “Thus says the Lord, ‘Did I *not* indeed reveal Myself to the house of your father when they were in Egypt *in bondage* to Pharaoh’s house? ²⁸ Did I *not* choose them from all the tribes of Israel to be My priests, to go up to My altar, to burn incense, to carry an ephod before Me; and did I *not* give to the house of your father all the fire *offerings* of the sons of Israel? ²⁹ Why do you kick at My sacrifice and at My offering which I have commanded *in My dwelling*, and honor your sons above Me, by making yourselves fat with the choicest of every offering of My people Israel?’

²⁷ Then a man of God came to Eli and said to him, “Thus says the Lord

When a man of God comes to anyone and delivers a message that begins with the words, “Thus says the Lord”, it’s probably going to be a bad day.

The prophet begins with blessing that Eli and his house had received from God:

- 1. Did I *not* indeed reveal Myself to the house of your father**
- 2. Did I *not* choose them from all the tribes of Israel to be My priests**
- 3. To go up to My altar, to burn incense, to carry an ephod before Me**
- 4. And did I *not* give to the house of your father all the fire *offerings* of the sons of Israel?**

God had blessed the tribe of Levi, and in particular the priestly line, with some great privileges.

²⁹ Why do you kick at My sacrifice and at My offering which I have commanded *in My dwelling*, and honor your sons above Me, by making yourselves fat with the choicest of every offering of My people Israel?’

Eli was to blame along with his sons. Yes, Eli was very old when he heard the bad report but there must have been some signs that things were not right. Again, we have no idea how long this had been going on but Eli and his sons didn’t get “fat” overnight.

There have been a number of “Christian” charlatans that have behaved like Eli’s sons. Jim and Tammy Faye Bakker scammed hundreds of millions of dollars from millions of well-meaning people. But after 13 years of deception, Jim Bakker was caught in a sex scandal and was imprisoned on fraud and conspiracy counts.

Verses 30 - 36

³⁰ Therefore the Lord God of Israel declares, ‘I did indeed say that your house and the house of your father should walk before Me forever’; but now the Lord declares, ‘Far be it from Me—for those who honor Me I will honor, and those who despise Me will be lightly esteemed. ³¹ Behold, the days are coming when I will break your strength and the strength of your father’s house so that there will not be an old man in your house. ³² You will see the distress of *My dwelling*, in *spite of all the good that I do for Israel*; and an old man will not be in your house forever. ³³ Yet I will not cut off every man of yours from My altar so that your eyes will fail *from weeping* and your soul grieve, and all the increase of your house will die in the prime of life. ³⁴ This will be the sign to you which will come concerning your two sons, Hophni and Phinehas: on the same day both of them will die. ³⁵ But I will raise up for Myself a faithful priest who will do according to what is in My heart and in My soul; and I will build him an enduring house, and he will walk before My anointed always. ³⁶ Everyone who is left in your house will come and bow down to him for a piece of silver or a loaf of bread and say, “Please assign me to one of the priest’s offices so that I may eat a piece of bread.”’”

³⁰ Therefore the Lord God of Israel declares, ‘I did indeed say that your house and the house of your father should walk before Me forever’; but now the Lord declares, ‘Far be it from Me—for those who honor Me I will honor, and those who despise Me will be lightly esteemed.

When people dishonor God they should not expect His continued blessings.

See Jeremiah 18:7-10

⁷ At one moment I might speak concerning a nation or concerning a kingdom to uproot *it*, to tear *it* down, or to destroy *it*; ⁸ if that nation against which I have spoken turns from its evil, I will relent of the disaster that I planned to bring on it.

⁹ Or at *another* moment I might speak concerning a nation or concerning a kingdom to build up or to plant *it*; ¹⁰ if it does evil in My sight by not obeying My voice, then I will relent of the good with which I said that I would bless it.

This has always been the case between God and man. God gave Israel two choices.

1. Live for God and follow his teaching and they will be blessed.
2. Forsake God and ignore his teachings and they will be punished.

³¹ Behold, the days are coming when I will break your strength and the strength of your father's house so that there will not be an old man in your house. ³² You will see the distress of My dwelling, in *spite of* all the good that I do for Israel; and an old man will not be in your house forever. ³³ Yet I will not cut off every man of yours from My altar so that your eyes will fail *from weeping* and your soul grieve, and all the increase of your house will die in the prime of life. ³⁴ This will be the sign to you which will come concerning your two sons, Hophni and Phinehas: on the same day both of them will die.

There are three prophecies in these verses.

1. You will see the distress of My dwelling

In chapter 4 the city of Shiloh, where the Tabernacle resided, will be destroyed and the Ark will be captured by the Philistines.

2. All the increase of your house will die in the prime of life

This prophecy was fulfilled by Doeg's massacre of the priests at Nob

See 1 Samuel 22:18-19

¹⁸ Then the king said to Doeg, "You, turn around and attack the priests!" And Doeg the Edomite turned around and attacked the priests, and he killed on that day eighty-five men who wore the linen ephod. ¹⁹ He also struck Nob the city of the priests with the edge of the sword, both men and women, children and infants; he also struck oxen, donkeys, and sheep with the edge of the sword.

3. Hophni and Phinehas: on the same day both of them will die.

Also in chapter 4, Eli is told that his two sons had died.

³⁵ But I will raise up for Myself a faithful priest who will do according to what is in My heart and in My soul; and I will build him an enduring house, and he will walk before My anointed always.

This is a reference to Zadok.

He will be the High Priest of Israel during the reigns of David and Solomon.

³⁶ Everyone who is left in your house will come and bow down to him for a piece of silver or a loaf of bread and say, “Please assign me to one of the priest’s offices so that I may eat a piece of bread.

Eli’s sons took meat that was not theirs, so in the future their sons would have to beg for a loaf of bread, only a small part of what a priest was supposed to get.