

BIRTH NARRATIVES

Samuel

A DESPERATE WOMAN

1 There was a man from Ramathaim-zophim in the hill country of Ephraim. His name was Elkanah son of Jeroham, son of Elihu, son of Tohu, son of Zuph, an Ephraimite. **2** He had two wives, the first named Hannah and the second Peninnah. Peninnah had children, but Hannah was childless. **3** This man would go up from his town every year to worship and to sacrifice to the LORD of Hosts at Shiloh, where Eli's two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, were the LORD's priests.

4 Whenever Elkanah offered a sacrifice, he always gave portions of the meat to his wife Peninnah and to each of her sons and daughters. **5** But he gave a double portion to Hannah, for he loved her even though the LORD had kept her from conceiving. **6** Her rival would taunt her severely just to provoke her, because the LORD had kept Hannah from conceiving. **7** Whenever she went up to the LORD's house, her rival taunted her in this way every year. Hannah wept and would not eat. **8** "Hannah, why are you crying?" her husband Elkanah asked. "Why won't you eat? Why are you troubled? Am I not better to you than 10 sons?"

9 Hannah got up after they ate and drank at Shiloh. Eli the priest was sitting on a chair by the doorpost of the LORD's tabernacle. **10** Deeply hurt, Hannah prayed to the LORD and wept with many tears. **11** Making a vow, she pleaded, "LORD of Hosts, if You will take notice of Your servant's affliction, remember and not forget me, and give Your servant a son, I will give him to the LORD all the days of his life, and his hair will never be cut."

12 While she continued praying in the LORD's presence, Eli watched her lips. **13** Hannah was praying silently, and though her lips were moving, her voice could not be heard. Eli thought she was drunk **14** and scolded her, "How long are you going to be drunk? Get rid of your wine!" **15** "No, my lord," Hannah replied. "I am a woman with a broken heart. I haven't had any wine or beer; I've been pouring out my heart before the LORD. **16** Don't think of me as a wicked woman; I've been praying from the depth of my anguish and resentment." **17** Eli responded, "Go in peace, and may the God of Israel grant the petition you've requested from Him." **18** "May your servant find favor with you," she replied. Then Hannah went on her way; she ate and no longer looked despondent.

19 The next morning Elkanah and Hannah got up early to bow in worship before the LORD. Afterward, they returned home to Ramah. Then Elkanah was intimate with his wife Hannah, and the LORD remembered her. **20** After some time, Hannah conceived and gave birth to a son. She named him Samuel, because she said, "I requested him from the LORD."

21 When Elkanah and all his household went up to make the annual sacrifice and his vow offering to the LORD, **22** Hannah did not go and explained to her husband, "After the child is weaned, I'll take him to appear in the LORD's presence and to stay there permanently." **23** Her husband Elkanah replied, "Do what you think is best, and stay here until you've weaned him. May the LORD confirm your word." So Hannah stayed there and nursed her son until she weaned him. **24** When she had weaned him, she took him with her to Shiloh, as well as a three-year-old bull, half a bushel of flour, and a jar of wine. Though the boy was still young, she took him to the LORD's house at Shiloh. **25** Then they slaughtered the bull and brought the boy to Eli. **26** "Please, my lord," she said, "as sure as you live, my lord, I am the woman who stood here beside you praying to the LORD. **27** I prayed for this boy, and since the LORD gave me what I asked Him for, **28** I now give the boy to the LORD. For as long as he lives, he is given to the LORD." Then he bowed in worship to the LORD there.

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HYMNS OF PRAISE

1 Sam 2¹ Hannah prayed:

My heart rejoices in the LORD;
my horn is lifted up by the LORD.
My mouth boasts over my enemies,
because I rejoice in Your salvation.
² There is no one holy like the LORD.
There is no one besides You!
And there is no rock like our God.
³ Do not boast so proudly,
or let arrogant words come out of your
mouth,
for the LORD is a God of knowledge,
and actions are weighed by Him.
⁴ The bows of the warriors are broken,
but the feeble are clothed with strength.
⁵ Those who are full hire themselves out for
food,
but those who are starving hunger no more.
The woman who is childless gives birth to
seven,
but the woman with many sons pines away.
⁶ The LORD brings death and gives life;
He sends some to Sheol, and He raises others
up.
⁷ The LORD brings poverty and gives wealth;
He humbles and He exalts.
⁸ He raises the poor from the dust
and lifts the needy from the garbage pile.
He seats them with noblemen
and gives them a throne of honor.
For the foundations of the earth are the
LORD'S;
He has set the world on them.
⁹ He guards the steps of His faithful ones,
but the wicked perish in darkness,
for a man does not prevail by his own
strength.
¹⁰ Those who oppose the LORD will be
shattered;
He will thunder in the heavens against them.
The LORD will judge the ends of the earth.
He will give power to His king;
He will lift up the horn of His anointed.

¹¹ Elkanah went home to Ramah, but the boy served the LORD in the presence of Eli the priest.

¹⁸ The boy [Samuel served in the LORD's presence and wore a linen ephod.](#) ¹⁹ Each year his mother made him a little robe and took it to him when she went with her husband to offer the annual sacrifice. ²⁰ Eli would bless Elkanah and his wife: "May the LORD give you children by this woman in place of the one she has given

Lk 1⁴⁶ And Mary said:

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,
⁴⁷ and my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior,
⁴⁸ because He has looked with favor
on the humble condition of His slave.
Surely, from now on all generations
will call me blessed,
⁴⁹ because the Mighty One
has done great things for me,
and His name is holy.
⁵⁰ His mercy is from generation to generation
on those who fear Him.
⁵¹ He has done a mighty deed with His arm;
He has scattered the proud
because of the thoughts of their hearts;
⁵² He has toppled the mighty from their
thrones
and exalted the lowly.
⁵³ He has satisfied the hungry with good things
and sent the rich away empty.
⁵⁴ He has helped His servant Israel,
mindful of His mercy,
⁵⁵ just as He spoke to our ancestors,
to Abraham and his descendants forever.

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to the LORD.” Then they would go home. ²¹The LORD paid attention to Hannah’s need, and she conceived and gave birth to three sons and two daughters. Meanwhile, the boy Samuel grew up in the presence of the LORD.

SAMUEL’S CALLING

3 The boy Samuel served the LORD in Eli’s presence. In those days the word of the LORD was rare and prophetic visions were not widespread. ²One day Eli, whose eyesight was failing, was lying in his room. ³Before the lamp of God had gone out, Samuel was lying down in the tabernacle of the LORD, where the ark of God was located. ⁴Then the LORD called Samuel, and he answered, “Here I am.” ⁵He ran to Eli and said, “Here I am; you called me.” “I didn’t call,” Eli replied. “Go back and lie down.” So he went and lay down. ⁶Once again the LORD called, “Samuel!” Samuel got up, went to Eli, and said, “Here I am; you called me.” “I didn’t call, my son,” he replied. “Go back and lie down.”

⁷Now Samuel had not yet experienced the LORD, because the word of the LORD had not yet been revealed to him. ⁸Once again, for the third time, the LORD called Samuel. He got up, went to Eli, and said, “Here I am; you called me.” Then Eli understood that the LORD was calling the boy. ⁹He told Samuel, “Go and lie down. If He calls you, say, ‘Speak, LORD, for Your servant is listening.’” So Samuel went and lay down in his place.

¹⁰The LORD came, stood there, and called as before, “Samuel, Samuel!” Samuel responded, “Speak, for Your servant is listening.”

¹¹The LORD said to Samuel, “I am about to do something in Israel that everyone who hears about it will shudder. ¹²On that day I will carry out against Eli everything I said about his family, from beginning to end. ¹³I told him that I am going to judge his family forever because of the iniquity he knows about: his sons are defiling the sanctuary, and he has not stopped them. ¹⁴Therefore, I have sworn to Eli’s family: The iniquity of Eli’s family will never be wiped out by either sacrifice or offering.”

¹⁵Samuel lay down until the morning; then he opened the doors of the LORD’s house. He was afraid to tell Eli the vision, ¹⁶but Eli called him and said, “Samuel, my son.” “Here I am,” answered Samuel.

¹⁷“What was the message He gave you?” Eli asked. “Don’t hide it from me. May God punish you and do so severely if you hide anything from me that He told you.” ¹⁸So Samuel told him everything and did not hide anything from him. Eli responded, “He is the LORD. He will do what He thinks is good.”

¹⁹Samuel grew, and the LORD was with him, and He fulfilled everything Samuel prophesied. ²⁰All Israel from Dan to Beer-sheba knew that [Samuel was a confirmed prophet of the LORD](#). ²¹The LORD continued to appear in Shiloh, because there He revealed Himself to Samuel by His word.

1 Sam 16 The Lord said to Samuel, “How long are you going to mourn for Saul, since I have rejected him as king over Israel? Fill your horn with oil and go. I am sending you to Jesse of Bethlehem because I have selected a king from his sons.” ²Samuel asked, “How can I go? Saul will hear about it and kill me!” The Lord answered, “Take a young cow with you and say, ‘I have come to sacrifice to the Lord.’” ³Then invite Jesse to the sacrifice, and I will let you know what you are to do. You are to anoint for Me the one I indicate to you.”

⁴Samuel did what the Lord directed and went to Bethlehem. When the elders of the town met him, they trembled and asked, “Do you come in peace?” ⁵“In peace,” he replied. “I’ve come to sacrifice to the Lord. Consecrate yourselves and come with me to the sacrifice.” Then he consecrated Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice. ⁶When they arrived, Samuel saw Eliab and said, “Certainly the Lord’s anointed one is here before Him.” ⁷But the Lord said to Samuel, “Do not look at his appearance or his stature, because I have rejected him. Man does not see what the Lord sees, for man sees what is visible, but the Lord sees the heart.” ⁸Jesse called Abinadab and presented him to Samuel. “The Lord hasn’t chosen this one either,” Samuel said. ⁹Then Jesse presented Shammah, but Samuel said, “The Lord hasn’t chosen this one either.” ¹⁰After Jesse presented seven of his sons to him, Samuel told Jesse, “The Lord hasn’t chosen any of these.” ¹¹Samuel asked him, “Are these all the sons you have?” “There is still the youngest,” he answered, “but right now he’s tending the sheep.” Samuel told Jesse, “Send for him. We won’t sit down to eat until he gets here.” ¹²So Jesse sent for him. He had beautiful eyes and a healthy, handsome appearance. Then the Lord said, “Anoint him, for he is the one.” ¹³So Samuel took the horn of oil, anointed him in the presence of his brothers, and the Spirit of the Lord took control of David from that day forward.