

Desperation of the Heat

The teaching of the word of GOD is difficult at best because the intent must be reconciled in the heart of the teacher. As I began to converse concerning the book of 1 Samuel; I have read it from several different translations of the scriptures. The principal characters of the book are varied from a barren woman to Kings of character and those who have the appearance of character but no true sustenance. There are instances where curses from God are brought forth and the obedience of people and animals are without question.

In the first Chapter of Samuel the characters are a Levite man Elkanah whose name means "God has created". Elkanah lived in Ephraim. The character of Elkanah is spoken of in many cases where it is obvious that he understands the requirements of his faith. Elkanah took his family to Shiloh to sacrifice to the Lord of Hosts at the prescribed intervals.

There is also mention of the sons of the priest Eli whose name means "God is High". Eli's had two sons. The oldest Hophni's name means "Tadpole" and the younger Phineas whose name means "Black One". The personality and the intent of the priests are critical to the presentation of God's will and their relationship with this Holy GOD,

When it came time for the time of the sacrifice Elkanah would make the trek to the tabernacle, he would bring his family as well. During the time of the sacrifice Elkanah would present a double portion sacrifice for Hannah out of his love and devotion for Hannah his beloved wife. Hannah desperately wanted a child or as it is stated in the NKJV her womb was shut up. The accepted practice when a man whose wife was shut up or barren the man would take another wife. This was method was used to produce children to carry on the family name or the bloodline. This was not considered as inappropriate behavior. Many Israelite men were guilty of this transgression against the request that the Lord had made for the children of Israel not to take on the customs of the nations or tribal culture of those nations that surrounded them.

Elkanah's second wife Peninnah was very productive in giving children to Elkanah, but note that this does not lessen his love for Hannah. This is stated verse 6 of chapter 1 Samuel.

On one of the particular journeys to give sacrifices to the Lord; Hannah pleads her case to the Lord of her desire to be the mother of a child. In the ancient culture there are many things that cause shame to the women and no one was greater than the barrenness of the womb. Note that in the reference of Hannah, obedience is reflected in her prayer or petition to the Lord. At the feast or celebration at the temple Hannah even refuses to eat for her grief or suffering.

Elkanah asks her to not grieve for he loves her at a level that is better than 10 sons. Hannah then moves to the tabernacle to pray. The depth of her prayers or petitions of GOD are so powerful that she is in a state of mind that appears to as she was drunk. This is brought to light by Eli the priest.

As we look at this type of prayer we see someone who is dealing with Peninnah and the shame she feels for being barren. She is in state that nothing else matters but the relationship with the GOD of the creation and her petition for her womb to be opened to produce a child.

Hannah has reached a point of bitterness of heart because of the pain she is enduring. Note in 1 Samuel 1:10 the it is stated that Hannah was in bitterness of soul and prayed to the LORD and wept in anguish and made the following vow.

Her vow is as follows 1 Samuel 1:11;

“O Lord of Hosts, if You will indeed look on the affliction of Your maidservant and remember me, and not forget Your maidservant, but will give Your maidservant a male child, then I will give him to the LORD all the days of his life, and no razor shall come upon his head.”

This is a powerful promise that Hannah is making. She is willing to give the one thing she wants more than anything in an offering to the giver of the gift. She is dedicating the gift for the service of the LORD. Note also the statement of the fact that no razor will be applied to the child’s head. This is the vow of a Nazarene. No razor will come to his head, no strong drink will be consumed and he would not touch anything dead. This is stated in Numbers chapter 6.

What are the reasons that a woman would make such a strict vow?

Desperation, Depression, Defeat how can we know the extent of the pain in Hannah’s heart?

What would drive someone to this desperate place?

Did Hannah finally realizing that the only place for true help is at the altar of the Most High GOD?

We know that Eli noticed the desperation of Hannah and thought that she was drunk. Her appearance was not normal. She was speaking but no words were heard by Eli. Because of the obvious reasons Hannah did not appear to be in a normal state. She had reached a place where her appearance really was not important. We hear of this in many cases where individuals were so caught in the place of GOD that others did not understand the real reasons.

Eli spoke to Hannah and mentioned that she should not be drunk in the house of the LORD. Hannah spoke to Eli and stated her case for her sorrowful spirit and the request she had made of GOD.

Eli speaks simply that may her request be granted. Hannah and Elkanah then return to their home and have intimate relations. The LORD granted Hannah’s request and she was with child. Hannah gave birth to Samuel with the statement “Because I have asked for him from the LORD.”

As was the custom at the proper time Elkanah and his family were to go to the tabernacle to worship. Hannah stayed behind to nurse Samuel as was the custom at the time. Hannah informed Elkanah that she would not return to the house of GOD until the child had been weaned for his presentation to the priest for service. As was the case Elkanah loved Hannah and accepted her request. After a span of approximately 2 years the child would be weaned from breastfeeding the baby boy Samuel is taken to Eli to fulfill the vow of his mother Hannah.

The complete family along with Samuel begins the trek to the tabernacle to offer a sacrifice. Hannah is faithful in her vow. Hannah presents the young man Samuel to Eli to begin the process of working in the care of the tabernacle as required by the Mosaic laws. These will be discussed at a later time.

To bring this portion to a close is state some fundamental statements of faith from my standpoint. No amount of conversation or written word will ever take the place of a personal examination of the scriptures by each person who seeks truth and personal fulfillment. The reality of the GOD I serve is that his desire is for each one person in his creation to seek a personal relationship day by day with GOD. Do not allow anything to keep you from this seeking of a relationship with the Lord of All.

Know this that I would truly love the feedback from any and all who read these journeys into the word of the Living GOD. Please read these snippets of my studies as they present glimpses of the words and actions of GOD.