

The Quotations Bible Study: Series I: The Person of Jesus

© Robert McAnally Adams, 2009

Appendix: Suggestions as to answers to the study questions

Week 2. Unto Generations: the *Magnificat* of Mary

- Q1: For one's "horn [to be] lifted high" (1 Sam. 2:1) is an idiom that occurs several times in the Bible, and it may mean that one's strength is displayed or increased in or by the LORD. Another possible understanding is that one's honor or prestige is increased. How are either of these true for Hannah?** Hannah's strength as a bearer of children was certainly uplifted. In a similar way, her honor or prestige in the family was also uplifted, as she no longer had to bear the jibes from Peninnah. Her more general enemy is failure. The LORD has saved her from childlessness.
- Q2: The mention of enemies strikes a militant tone. Who are Hannah's enemies? (1 Sam. 2:1)** Her immediate enemy is the other wife, Peninnah, who had been making life miserable for her.
- Q3: God is compared to a rock for the sake of what characteristic? (1 Sam. 2:2) Where else is God compared to a rock?** There was the rock at Horeb, from which water flowed when Moses struck it. Paul claims that the rock is Christ (1 Cor. 10:4). Other similes are found in Ps. 18:2; 28:1; 31:2, etc.
- Q4: Which does God pay attention to, talk or actions? (1 Sam. 2:3) Whose proud talk and arrogance might Hannah have been thinking about?** The LORD weighs action, not talk. Hannah may have been thinking about the arrogant talk of the fruitful Peninnah.
- Q5: In 1 Sam. 2:4-8, Hannah's Song turns to the mighty acts of God. A main theme of this passage is "reversal of fortune." What are six pairs of conditions that are contrasted, for instance, in 1 Sam. 2:4, strength in war vs. the stumbling warriors?**
- 1 Sam. 2:4 -- strength in war vs. stumbling warriors
 - 1 Sam. 2:5 -- the full vs. the hungry
 - 1 Sam. 2:6 -- those whom the LORD destroys vs. those whom He raises
 - 1 Sam. 2:7 -- the poor vs. the rich
 - 1 Sam. 2:7 -- the high vs. the low
 - 1 Sam. 2:8 -- princes vs. the poor and beggars
- Q6: Where can the same kind of reversal be found in the New Testament? (Matthew 5:5)** Throughout the Sermon on the Mount, particularly in places like, "Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth."
- Q7: What are the "foundations of the earth"? (1 Sam. 2:8)** This might mean, "the laws of creation." What it certainly affirms is God's complete sovereignty.
- Q8: What does "guard the feet of his saints" mean? (1 Sam. 2:9)** Probably, this means to keep them from any danger, and particularly to keep them from walking in sinful ways.
- Q9: If "it is not by strength that one prevails," then how? (1 Sam. 2:9, 10)** By the being on the side of the LORD.
- Q10: In 1 Sam. 2:10, Hannah's Song mentions the LORD's king. Who is that? (1 Sam. 2:10)** Jesus.
- Q11: The opening lines, in which Mary exalts the Lord, are a response to what recent events? (Luke 1:31, 36, 42-45)** The news that Mary will bear the Messiah, confirmed by her cousin Elizabeth.
- Q12: Why does Mary consider her state "humble"? (Luke 1:26,27)** Mary was a young woman engaged to be married, who lived in a country village far from Jerusalem. With little experience and education, she undoubtedly thought of herself as humble. This is not to suggest that Mary was not of extraordinary character.

Quotations Bible Study—Series I, Week 2, Suggested Answers

- Q13: Why will Mary be considered blessed? (Luke 1:32,33)** Her child will be the all-powerful Messiah, seated on the throne of David forever.
- Q14: What is God’s mercy, extended from one generation to the next conditioned on? (Luke 1:50)** The forgiveness of sins.
- Q15: In Mary’s recital of the mighty acts of God, a main theme of the passage is “reversal of fortune.” What are three conditions that are contrasted, for instance, in Matt. 1:51, scattering those who are proud? (Luke 1:51-3)** He has scattered the proud; He has put down the mighty, while exalting the lowly; and He has fed the hungry, while sending the rich away from the table without food.
- Q16: At the end of Mary’s Song, she speaks of God’s mercy to Abraham and his descendants, helping Israel. On what basis has God done this? (Luke 1:54,55)** Purely on the basis of His mercy and His promise.
- Q17: What are the similarities and common themes between the Song of Hannah and the Song of Mary?** Both were sung by women upon the event of a miraculous childbirth (though of different kinds) in a hymn of thanks and praise. They use similar words and ideas in many places.
- Q18: What are the differences?** Mary’s repeated references to mercy strike a different tone compared to Hannah, with her victory theme. Hannah looked forward to a kingship foretold but not yet materialized. Mary, on the other hand, actually experienced the coming king and saw in that event the mercy of God in action, in and through her very body.