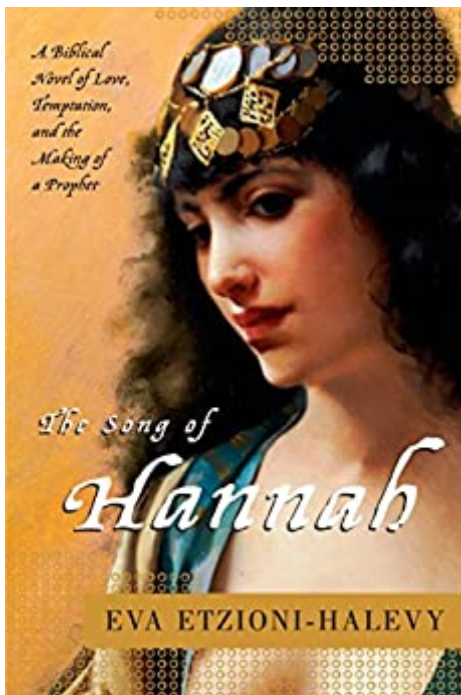


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The Song Of Hannah: A Novel



Synopsis

In the tradition of the international bestseller *The Red Tent* comes a beautiful, sexy novel featuring Hannah, one of the most well-known and beloved heroines of the Old Testament. Hannah and Peninah, once close childhood friends, become rivals for the attention of Elkanah, the man who has married them both. Peninah, passionate and independent, easily bears Elkanah many children, but bitter that he has taken her friend as a second wife, seeks fulfillment with her own secret lover. Hannah, the epitome of goodness and grace, remains completely devoted to her husband, but remains childless for many years, until a promise to God brings her the son she has yearned for. Despite their differences, these two women must learn to live together, protecting their own interests as well as each other's, while sharing not only the love of their husband, but that of Hannah's son Samuel, who will become one of the great prophets of the Jewish people.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Marriage, relationships, love, and desire, in accordance with the Seventh Commandment,

“Thou shall not commit adultery,” form the centerpiece of the biblical

fiction, *The Song of Hannah*. The novel is well written, descriptive, informative of the era, and the characters, entirely human. The story relays the lives of Hannah and Pninah, two girls who are the closest of friends, and grow up together in the hills of Ephraim, nearby the town of Ramathayim. As the young women, both become scribes, and begin to prepare for marriage. Pninah, a spirited beauty, longs for the love of one man, and allows her suitor, Elkanan, to know her before he fulfills his pledge of marriage. Hannah, beautiful and cerebral, holds to her belief that she is destined for greatness, and to her parents' frustration, casts aside wealthy, worthy suitors and agrees to become Elkanan's second wife. The novel contends with the rivalry between the two women, the demanded subservience of women in marriage and of Hannah's and Pninah's children, particularly, Samuel, Hannah's long awaited for son. Hannah realizes she fulfilled her mission for greatness with the birth of Samuel and keeps her promise to God by allowing Samuel to be raised in the Temple, where he eventually becomes a prophet.

The story of the birth of the prophet Samuel, but a brief snippet at the opening of the story that will focus first on the rise and fall of King Saul, and then the rise and foibles of King David, has long occupied a special place in the hearts of Bible lovers. The tale of Hannah, the childless woman pleading at the Temple contains all the hallmarks of a great biblical episode -- sparse prose, raw emotion, and deep humanity. No surprise then that an author chose to use these brief chapters as the basis of a novel of the relationship between Elkanah and his wives. Indeed readers are fortunate that Mrs. Etzioni-Halevy approaches the work with a deft pen, avoiding the excesses of "The Red Tent" and the two dimensional characters of "Queen Maker". The Song of Hannah, with its often raw sexuality and emotions may offend some readers. Yet it is just such humanity that is at the heart of the Bible's eternal appeal; the characters are not paragons of myth but real complex people with all the strengths and flaws contained there in. Others may dislike the occasional anachronisms used by the author, transposing traditions likely post exile into the pre-monarchic period, but such choices are well within the rights of a writer. Moreover, this is not a piece of scholarship but a novel. Provocative, engaging, and human, Eva Etzioni-Halevy has produced a fine and entertaining piece of biblical fiction, well worth the time for those who enjoy the genre.

The Song of Hannah by Eva Etzioni-Halevy: There is a sizeable subgenre of women's novels retelling Old Testament stories from the heroine's point of view; *The Red Tent* was an excellent example. Some are little more than chick-lit. The best of them document daily life in ancient Israel

adding depth and understanding to Bible stories; they correct the male-centric nature of the original. The savvy authors walk a fine line: can they convey the Biblical icons from 4,000 years ago in a manner that today's reader can identify and respect without moving Sarah and Leah too far ahead of their own time? Fourth century B.C.E. women did not have 21st century C.E. mindsets. The Song of Hannah is the story of Samuel's mother, a traditional woman, her struggles as the second wife, and her anxieties as a mother. It is also the story of Peninah, the first wife, a passionate, intelligent woman who loves two men and chafes at restrictions. Their lives shadow that of Israel's at a time of prosperity as well as war. Etzioni-Halevy, a retired professor of political sociology at Tel Aviv uses her insights to illuminate the turbulent emotions and turbulent times with much emphasis on the sexual.

Oooohhh i love this book . It was a good read.

Well written, suspenseful, creative. I personally found it a little dark and kind of creepy towards the end. However, the author does a good job of brainstorming out of the box by placing you in a different time and culture. She also helped me to see these Biblical heroes as humans who have faith and flaws.

this was recommended because i bought the triumph of deborah. these are characters from the bible and the stories of their lives

Great read

This author does an excellent job of bringing the biblical story to life. She doesn't stoop to proselytizing as some other authors do. Her books are well researched and plausible. One learns a great deal in historical fiction.

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