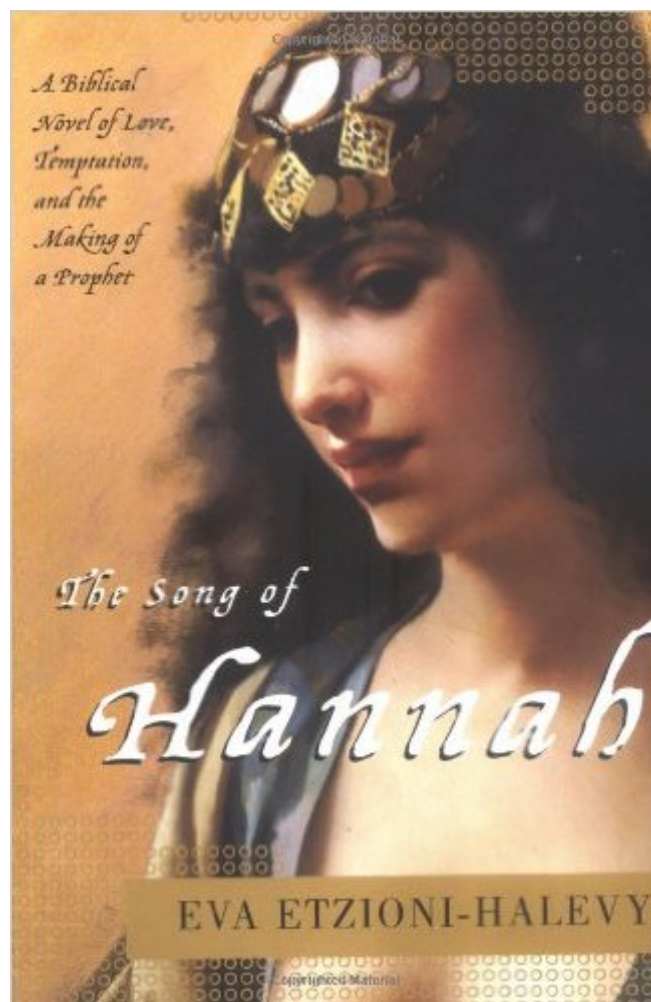


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The Song Of Hannah: A Novel



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

Paperback: 292 pages

Publisher: Plume (August 30, 2005)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0452286727

ISBN-13: 978-0452286726

Product Dimensions: 5.3 x 0.7 x 7.9 inches

Shipping Weight: 8 ounces

Average Customer Review: 3.8 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (62 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #1,179,491 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #69 in [Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Literature & Fiction > Biblical Fiction](#) #196 in [Books > Religion & Spirituality > Judaism > Holidays](#) #2149 in [Books > Literature & Fiction > Genre Fiction > Religious & Inspirational > Historical](#)

Customer Reviews

The Song of Hannah is a very good book and has many good aspects to it. First of all, the topic is greatly to my interest and I originally bought it because it says on the back that it is written in the style of "The Red Tent" by Anita Diamant. The novel is the story of the biblical prophet, Samuel, told through the eyes of his two mothers. One, Hannah, is the epitome of angelic. The second, Peninah, is impulsive and full of emotion. These two women are very different and every chapter is told by a rotation between the two characters' views. It is the lives of these women and their relationships to their shared husband and their gifted son. The writing was stunning. Only in a few other books have

I encountered such beautiful writing. I could really picture what was happening and I felt as if I was there because the image was put so perfectly in my mind. The story was also very captivating. Ms Etzioni-Halevy wrote it in a way she always kept me interested and constantly turning the pages to learn what was going to happen next and to learn more about the characters whose lives I was being showed. One criticism I have for the novel is that you fail to attach yourself to the characters. When I read a novel, I like to close the book and not be able to get my mind off of the characters and their stories. I love being able to feel close to them and feel their sorrows and joys. This novel lacked character development to the emotional level of the reader. I could describe to you what the main characters were like very well, but I cannot tell you that I cried with them or smiled in their joy. Also, when the story was supposed to be at its lowest and most depressing point, I felt the same way as I did when I read the first page of the novel. In short, it failed to move me. However, this book is definitely very well written and good. I do recommend it to people who have enjoyed other biblical novels, including *The Red Tent*. I will just warn you, nevertheless, to not get your hopes up for a story as good as *The Red Tent*. I enjoyed this book very much.

This new novel, the first of several planned or in the works, by Eva Etzioni-Halevy is a wonderful, easy read. Although set in Biblical times, the situations facing the protagonists and antagonists in this work seem almost contemporary. The author manages to convey the erudition, wit and beauty of her characters without resorting to heavy, pedantic language and abstract concepts. The culture, customs and history of the era come alive, as do the historic figures we usually meet only in the Old Testament. Although barely finished with reading this work, this reviewer is already recommending it as a future selection for her Hadassah chapter book club. If we are lucky, we may be able to discuss the work with the author herself, who plans a US promotional tour this fall. Happy reading!

"The tale of my son Samuel's birth and life has been told in a scroll that resides in the Temple, and in the scroll rooms across the Land of Israel. The people will read it now and in all the generations to come. But it contains only a small part of that which really happened." Thus begins "Hannah's Prologue"--the opening chapter of *The Song of Hannah*. And with that paragraph, the author drew me in, but her second paragraph cinched it. This was to be an 'all-nighter,' one of those books you just can't put down before reading just one more chapter and then another and another, and yet one more. "And so I suggested to my husband's first wife, Pninah, that we each write a book that would reveal all that could not be laid bare in the House of the Lord," Hanna continues as she draws me in even further. "By the time you read these words, we are no longer of this earth. But I hope that

because of Samuel our memories live on in your hearts. So you will wish to know about him, about us, all that has been concealed so far and has been recorded in this book for the first time." Now, if that doesn't make you want to read well into the night, I don't know what does. Each chapter of this exquisitely sensual and revealing book is told by Hannah or Pninah. As children, Hannah and Pninah were best of friends. As young women, they held the distinction of being well educated in reading and writing, something almost unheard of for women of that time. Their close friendship survives the ultimate challenge... Both are wed to the same man, Elkanah. Pninah bears many children for Elkanah while, for many years, Hannah is barren. Based on Biblical facts, readers learn of Hannah's promise to give her firstborn son back to God if he blesses her with a pregnancy. Samuel, one of the great Israelite prophets, was that firstborn son. Readers also learn of "escapades" by a less than faithful Pninah and the lengths that friends will go to protect one another and their children in a society that does not leave room for women to disobey or stray. As Etzioni-Halevy tells the story of Pninah and Hannah, she also sheds light on the Israeli culture of the day, the religious ceremonies of the Jewish faith, the war between the Philistines and the Israelites, and how that war tore families apart. Above all, we are reminded that no matter how many hundreds of years ago these remarkable women lived, they experienced some of the same trials and tribulations, joys and blessings that women have universally shared since the beginning of time. No doubt, readers will see a bit of themselves in Hannah or Pninah or both women. Women's issues and female friendships are timeless treasures, and Etzioni-Halevy reminds us of this time and time again as she shares *The Song of Hannah*. by Lee Ambrose for Story Circle Book Reviews reviewing books by, for, and about women

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 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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