



Hannah: Humility, Hutzpah, Whispering, Joy

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Manger Winter Learning Seminar 5783/2023

Nigun Hannah

Text: 1 Samuel 1:13, 1:10, and Yerushalmi Brachot 63a:1

Melody: Deborah Sacks Mintz

חנָּה מְדַבֶּרֶת עַל-לִבָּהּ רַק שִׁפְתֶיהָ נִעוֹת וְקוֹלָהּ.
וְתַתְּפִל עַל-יְהוָה, עַל-לִבָּהּ.
קָרוֹב לְבְרִיּוֹתָיו כַּפֹּה לְאָזְנוֹ.

Hannah was praying in her heart; only her lips moved, but her voice could not be heard.
She prayed to God, in her heart.
God is close to God's creations like a mouth to an ear.

A. 1 Samuel 1:12-15

10 וְהִיא מָרַת נַפְשָׁהּ וְתַתְּפִל עַל-יְהוָה וּבְכָה תִבְכֶּה:...	10 Being bitter of spirit, she prayed at the LORD , weeping all the while...
12 וְהָיָה כִּי הִרְבֹּתָה לְהַתְּפִל לִפְנֵי ה' וְעָלִי שָׁמַר אֶת-פִּיהָ:	12 As she kept on praying before the LORD, Eli watched her mouth.
13 וְחַנָּה הִיא מְדַבֶּרֶת עַל-לִבָּהּ רַק שִׁפְתֶיהָ נִעוֹת וְקוֹלָהּ לֹא יִשְׁמַע וַיַּחְשְׁבֶהָ עָלֶי לְשֹׁכְרָה:	13 Now Hannah was praying in her heart; only her lips moved, but her voice could not be heard. So Eli thought she was drunk.
14 וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלֶיהָ עָלֶי עַד-מָתַי תִּשְׁתַּכְרִין הַסִּירִי אֶת-יַיְיָגֶר מֵעָלַיָּהּ:	14 Eli said to her, "How long will you make a drunken spectacle of yourself? Sober up (lit. Remove your wine from upon you)!"
15 וַתַּעַן חַנָּה וַתֹּאמֶר לֹא אֲדֹנָי אִשָּׁה קִשְׁת־רוּחַ אֲנֹכִי וַיֵּן וְשָׁכַר	15 And Hannah replied, "Oh no, my lord! I am a very

<p>לֹא שָׁתִיתִי וְאֶשְׁפָּךְ אֶת־נַפְשִׁי לִפְנֵי ה':</p>	<p>unhappy woman. I have drunk no wine or other strong drink, but I have been pouring out my heart before the LORD.</p>
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B. Bavli Berakhot 31a-b

<p>וְאָמַר רַבִּי אֶלְעָזָר: חֲנָה הִטִּיחָה דְבָרִים כְּלָפֵי מַעְלָה. שָׁנְאָמַר "וַתִּתְפַּלֵּל עַל ה'"...</p>	<p>And Rabbi Elazar said: Hannah shot words towards heaven/God. As it is stated: "And she prayed <u>on</u> the Lord," (as opposed to the more common "to" or "before" the Lord.)</p>
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C. Yerushalmi Berakhot 63a:1

<p>ראה כמה הוא גבוה מעולמו ואדם נכנס לבית הכנסת ועומד אחורי העמוד ומתפלל בלחשיה והקב"ה מאזין את תפלתו. שנאמר (שמואל א א:י"ג) וחנה היא מדברת על לבה רק שפתייה נעות וקולה לא ישמע והאזין הקב"ה את תפילתה.</p> <p>וכן כל בריותיו שנאמר (תהילים ק"ב:א') "תִּפְלֶה לְעֵנִי כִי־יֵעָטֵף וְלִפְנֵי יְהוָה יִשְׁפָּךְ שִׁחוֹ:" כאדם המשיח באוזן חברו והוא שומע. וכי יש לך אלוה קרוב מזה שהוא קרוב לבריותיו כפה לאוזן.</p>	<p>See how much higher God is than God's world, but a person enters the synagogue and stands behind the pillar and prays in a whisper, and the Holy Blessed One hears their prayer, as it is said, "Hannah spoke upon her heart, only her lips moved, and her voice was not heard." And the Holy Blessed One heard her prayer.</p> <p>So too with all of God's creations, as it is said, "A prayer of the lowly/impooverished when faint who pour forth their plea before the LORD."-like a person who talks in the ear of their friend, and the friend hears. Is there another god who is closer than this? For God is as close to God's creations as a mouth to an ear.</p>
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- What do the rabbis learn from Hannah's prayer about the relationship between people and God? What is the relationship between mouth, heart, and ear here?

D. Yerushalmi Berakhot 29b

יכול יהא מגביה קולו ומתפלל פירש בחנה (שמואל א א'י"ג) "וחנה היא מדברת על לבה" יכול יהא מהרהר בלב ת"ל (שם) "רק שפתייה נעות" הא כיצד מרחיש בשפתותיו	Could it be that one should raise one's voice and pray? [No.] It is explicit regarding Hannah: "Hannah was speaking on her heart" (1 Sam 1:13). Could it be that one should think [only] in one's heart? [No.] Scripture teaches, "Only her lips moved." How so? One should move one's lips.
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The rabbis use Hannah as a model for the volume of our prayer.

- What is the role of the heart in this source? The mouth? What do you make of this relationship between mouth and heart?
- How might it feel to sing Nigun Hannah this way?

E. Likutei Moharan

וְזֶהוּ בְּחִינַת "וְחָנָה מְדַבֶּרֶת עַל לִבָּהּ" (שְׁמוּאֵל א, א), שְׁעֵקֶר הַתְּפִלָּה לְקִשְׁר הַדְּבֹר אֶל הַלֵּב כְּדִי לְבַטֵּל חֲרַפַּת לֵב, שְׂבִירַת לֵב עַל-יְדֵי הַדְּבֹר	And this is the aspect of "Hannah speaks upon her heart" (1 Samuel 1:13), that the essence of prayer is to link speech to the heart in order to nullify the same of the heart, breaking of the heart by means of speech...
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- How is Rabbi Nahman reading Hannah's prayer?
- What does Rabbi Nahman suggest about the effect prayer is meant to have on us?
- What is the relationship between the mouth and the heart here? How do you think this relates to God's hearing of our prayers?

F. I Samuel 2:1

וַתִּתְפַּלֵּל חָנָה וַתֹּאמֶר עֲלֵץ לִבִּי בָּה' רָמָה קִרְנֵי בָּה' רָחַב פִּי עַל-אֹיְבֵי כִי שָׂמַחְתִּי בִישׁוּעֶתְךָ:	Hannah prayed and said: My heart rejoices in the LORD; I have triumphed through the LORD. My mouth is wider than my enemies'; I rejoice in Your deliverance.
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Hannah returns to Shilo after having her son and prays to God once again:

- What role does the heart play in Hannah's prayer this time?
- What about the mouth?
- How might it feel to sing Nigun Hannah this way?

