

Translations in Present Day Literature

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Abstract

The paper analyzes the translations of relevant subjects pertaining to literature. Hannah's life was a prosperous one. Elkanah her husband provided for her unconditionally and she had no qualms regarding any matter. Her only anxiety was the absence of a child. Her life was green in every respect but she was childless. Her feelings were provoked when her rival Peninnah made a parade of her children. Hannah was heart-broken. At home she probably felt empty and useless. But her husband loved her and cared for her. He loved her more than Peninnah but Hannah was not comforted. She could not tolerate the giggles and the unrestrained laughter. She may have felt restless and troubled. As her soul was vexed every day, she was downcast. Elkanah gently touched her shoulder in a loving manner and spoke to her like a lover. The mountains were beautiful and the flowers blossomed and swayed in the wind. The translation of this familial story into English is a presentation of facts.

KEYWORDS: Translations, Literature, Respect, Facts.

Translators generally use their skills and knowledge on subjects to translate texts. They may foster insights for easy understanding of a new language. Translators who translate from their native language do so with an understanding of literature, context and historical background analysis. In terms of spiritual literature which enlightens the mind and heart, they pass through training given by the Maker. The paper analyzes the translations of relevant subjects pertaining to literature.

Hannah's life was a prosperous one. Elkanah her husband provided for her unconditionally and she had no qualms regarding any matter. Her only anxiety was the absence of a child. Her life was green in every respect but she was childless. Her feelings were provoked when her rival Peninnah made a parade of her children. Hannah was heart-broken. At home she probably felt empty and useless. But her husband loved her and cared for her. He loved her more than Peninnah but Hannah was not comforted. She could not tolerate the giggles and the unrestrained laughter. She may have felt restless and troubled. As her soul was vexed every day, she was downcast. Elkanah gently touched her shoulder in a loving manner and spoke to her like a lover. The mountains were beautiful and the flowers blossomed and swayed in the wind. The translation of this familial story into English is a presentation of facts. The story is retold in a very plain and simple manner. It also presents the story of one's background in an honest and traditional perspective. Affections and love making scenes are not portrayed unlike the books of the present day. Love is presented in a beautiful manner and tradition does not impose rules or law upon love; especially upon Elkanah's feelings for Hannah.

The Tamil translation of the book of first Samuel depicts the status of Peninnah and Hannah in a humble perspective. It reads as, 'the one was Hannah and the next one Peninnah'.

The literal translation from the Tamil translation presents a similar conversation in the English translation. It reads as such, "one was called Hannah and the other Peninnah" (1 Sam. 1.2). The language that Elkanah chose to represent himself was the language of love. He did not threaten his beloved wife nor did he voice any bare words pointing out her barrenness. He was faithful. The environment they chose to live in was supportive of people who had been victimized or affected by humiliation and ridicule in various forms. The laws of the land protected the stranger, foreigner, widow and the oppressed from an unlawful dialogue. The law promotes peace.

The story of Hannah – regarding Elkanah, -- it seemed to the world that one wife was not enough. Since Hannah could not bear a child, Peninnah proved useful. Baskaran writes of an incident, similar to that of Hannah:

'Once a beautiful school teacher came to see me. She had a handsome son. She was very timid and shared her problem with me. She said, 'My husband wants to marry a colleague of his. I have no parents. I live in a very sorrowful situation, Now, the same problem continues. He tortures me every day to give my consent for divorce in writing. I have no one to help me. I am afraid that my son also will become an orphan. God alone can save me. Please pray for me'. When I prayed for this person with a great burden, God reminded me of Hagar the servant girl of Abraham and said that this new girl in his life will be sent away from his life like her (Gen. 21.14). Her husband was planning to marry the other girl in a week's time and God miraculously worked things out. The wedding of that girl was fixed with another person and they were engaged. It was God's hand that did it. Yes, the son of the slave girl will not be heir with her son" (23-24).

The story is a translation made by Thangaraj. Hannah, Elkanah, Peninnah and her children went out to Shiloh every year to present a sacrifice to the Maker. They must have conversed on the way. There would be no divorces for this family. If it were so Peninnah would succeed as being the only wife; for she humiliated Hannah almost every day. The topics for discussion probably were in relation to the sacrifice, the purpose of the sacrifice and the necessity of it, and of course food. The sacrifice is observed for the forgiveness of one's sins. It was indeed a very solemn matter.

When Hannah and Elkanah found time alone away from the noisy clatter of children they probably talked about their accommodation and their commitment and love for each other. They loved each other's presence very much. Their embraces and the constant presence enabled them to overcome the obstacle of barrenness. It was indeed a challenge for the couple, especially when Peninnah flaunted her children now and then. It probably ripped Hannah's heart and killed her again and again. Hannah was a girl to be pitied. She would have had scenes at weddings and social gatherings. She patiently bore Peninnah's pride. Elkanah made sure to reveal his greatest love for Hannah. He gave her a "worthy portion" (1 Sam. 1.5). This was of love. It was considered that someone was

responsible for Hannah's well-being – her husband and her Maker. But there was also the Maker who had “shut up her womb” (I Sam. 1.5). Elkanah did not let the Maker's decision concerning her to end in frustration.

Peninnah was not like Hannah. It seemed that she was disquieted about Hannah's constant petting by her husband. This was of love, in spite of difficult people and the devastation of a childless life. It was considered that someone was responsible for Hannah's situation. The Translation of the English text narrates the story in brief. It portrays love as a kind of law and not necessary to explain. There were other books which supported this text and discussed the matters in detail.

Peninnah wanted Elkanah to give her a ‘worthy portion’ but Elkanah would have given her some more if she had contributed to Hannah's happiness. The worthy portion referred to the food served at the table. Hannah was given a double share. However Peninnah was grieved by Hannah's presence with Elkanah. It is written, “And her adversary also provoked her sore, for to make her fret, because the LORD had shut up her womb. And as he did so year by year, when she went up to the house of the LORD, so she provoked her, therefore she wept and did not eat” (I Sam 1.6). There was a godly presence around Hannah for she would not irk her rival. She would not irritate Peninnah. Her husband loved her more than enough and she need not irk her despite the “spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings. It takes its origin from emotion recollected in tranquility” (151) rendered to her by her husband. Hannah is a woman of values. She would not arouse jealousy like Peninnah. It is written, ‘And her adversary also proved her sore, for to make her fret’. Peninnah probably carried her children one by one to and fro to disorganize Hannah in any possible way. Her actions indicated that Hannah should quit the family. It was indeed a trial for Hannah. Elkanah noticed Hannah's frustrations and tears streaming down her lovely face. The translated text in English refers to this scenario with emotions suspended; meant only for private rumination and not necessary for great anguish to multiply into a cathartic effect. Hannah's husband spoke tenderly to her. He said, “Hannah why weepest thou? And why eatest thou not? And why is thy heart grieved? Am not I better to thee than ten sons?” (I Sam. 1.8). Peninnah probably had ten sons to boast of, and parade to the world.

Elkanah passionately wiped away the tears in Hannah's eyes. Hannah found an opportunity to go to the temple to converse with the Maker. Hannah seemed to be a recluse. If others beheld Hannah they would consider her a drunkard. She was grieved to the point of death. Her mouth moved in such a way that it was not possible to assume otherwise. It is written, Hannah, she spake in her heart; only her lips moved, but her voice not heard: therefore Eli thought she had been drunken” (1 Sam 1.13). Eli, the priest came up to her and told her quite rudely to stop drinking liquor. “And Hannah answered and said, No, my lord, I *am* a woman of a sorrowful spirit: I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but have poured out my soul before the LORD” (KJV 1 Sam. 1.15)(Maker). Eli, the priest and his sons Hophni and Phinehas were priests of the LORD there in Shiloh. The two sons of Eli probably came across Hannah but left her alone; for her presence seemed to be the afflictions made upon a servant and she seemed undeterred from her purpose. As Eli questioned her, Hannah recovered from the praying mode and began to justify herself rightly. She said, “Do not consider your maidservant a wicked woman, for but of the abundance of my complaint and grief I have spoken until now”

(NKJV I Sam 1:16). Hannah had planned a Nazirite life for her first born boy child; a life of consecration for her first born son. Eli was sympathetic towards Hannah and felt compelled to bless her. Truly she was a woman of great anguish. He comforted this young woman. He said, “Go in peace, and the (Creator) God of Israel grant your petition which you have asked of him” (I Sam. 1.17). Hannah was relieved and she said to Eli in utter humility, “Let your maidservant find favour in your sight. “So the woman went her way and ate and her face was no longer *sad*” (I Sam. 1.18). Hannah was indeed relaxed; she had let down her worries and even expressed her desire for the birth of a son to the Creator. It was sure that Hannah would receive the blessing. Soon she would be a happy mother.

A Nazirite consecration involved the aversion of alcohol and any fermented drinks. It is written,

All the days of his separation he shall eat nothing that is produced by the grape wine, from seed to skin. ‘All the days of the vow of his separation no razor shall come upon his head; until the days are fulfilled for which he separated himself to the LORD, he shall be holy. *Then* he shall let the locks of the hair of his head grow. All the days that he separates himself to the LORD he shall not go near a dead body. He shall not make himself unclean even for his father or his mother, for his brother or his sister, when they die, because his separation to God is on his head. (Num. 6:4-8)

There were yet, a number of Nazirite rules to be followed. The meaning of such a separation includes the complete devotion to the Maker. This separation and special feature enabled them to converse closely with the Maker and fulfill his duties and follow commands. It was indeed a special vow Hannah had committed, to impose on her firstborn child. The King James Translation discusses the stories in entirety with royalty in mind. It was not intended for colloquial style. The purpose was to stir man to become royalty. For all who gave unto the Maker became quite rewarded with bounty. The King James Version of the translation records many stories with the purpose to enlighten man with higher thought and advice.

Translations of texts of various languages inspire research. The legend of Hannah who raised a great seer presents the beauty of families raising children amidst competition. Hannah must have cared for her child with great strength. She had to leave her baby at Shiloh after he grew up and she had so little time. She was no more downcast. Little Samuel was a gifted child and she was very much pleased with the Maker’s decision to give her a baby after many years. The story of Hannah in the Tamil language is quite informative of a culture that protects and preserves family interests and culture – of the English text, it presents a wonder-filled interesting text keen on invoking more research and enquiry of the subject.

The story of the young beloved wife of Elkanah ends with a beautiful tapestry of family ties. It is written, “And they rose up in the morning early, and worshipped..., and returned, and came to their house to Ra-mah: and Elkanah knew Hannah his wife; and the LORD remembered her” (1 Sam. 1.19). She bore a son and sang a song. A song from a grateful heart. Samuel grew up in Shiloh under the supervision of Eli the priest. His mother visited him every year. She had other children besides Samuel.

The translation of this story into English is exemplary. The King James Version presents a royal tribute to the Maker by addressing Him as 'Thou', 'thee', as one address a prince and a king. It is indeed a text worth studying. There are many translations, such as the New International Version, The New King James Version, The Revised Standard Version, The New Living Translation and many more. The study of the various translations renders insight on understanding of history, families, society with a view on how present day readers may grasp the story and interpret it. and perspective.

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