A close-up photograph of a wooden manger, likely a nativity scene prop. The manger is made of dark wood with vertical slats and is filled with dry straw and hay. It sits on a rough, textured surface, possibly a piece of burlap or a wooden floor. The background is a warm, out-of-focus wooden wall. The lighting is soft and warm, creating a cozy and rustic atmosphere.

Miraculous Births

Samuel

Psalm 27:1-2, 13-14

*The Lord is my light and my salvation -
whom shall I fear?*

*The Lord is the stronghold of my life -
of whom shall I be afraid?*

*When the wicked advance against me
to devour me,*

*it is my enemies and my foes
who will stumble and fall.*

*I remain confident of this:
I will see the goodness of the Lord
in the land of the living.
Wait for the Lord;
be strong and take heart
and wait for the Lord.*

1 Samuel 2:1-10 NRSV

*Hannah prayed and said,
“My heart exults in the Lord;
my strength is exalted in my God.
My mouth derides my enemies
because I rejoice in your victory.
There is no Holy One like the Lord,
no one besides you;
there is no Rock like our God.
Talk no more so very proudly;
let not arrogance come from your mouth,
for the Lord is a God of knowledge,
and by him actions are weighed.
The bows of the mighty are broken,
but the feeble gird on strength.*

- 1 Samuel 2:1-10

*⁵ Those who were full have hired themselves out for bread,
but those who were hungry are fat with spoil.*

*The barren has borne seven,
but she who has many children is forlorn.*

*The Lord kills and brings to life;
he brings down to Sheol and raises up.*

*The Lord makes poor and makes rich;
he brings low; he also exalts.*

*He raises up the poor from the dust;
he lifts the needy from the ash heap*


*to make them sit with princes
and inherit a seat of honor.*

*For the pillars of the earth are the Lord's,
and on them he has set the world.*

- 1 Samuel 2:1-10

*⁹ He will guard the feet of his faithful ones,
but the wicked will perish in darkness,
for not by might does one prevail.
The Lord! His adversaries will be shattered;
the Most High will thunder in heaven.
The Lord will judge the ends of the earth;
he will give strength to his king
and exalt the power of his anointed.”*

- 1 Samuel 2:1-10

A close-up photograph of a wooden manger, likely a nativity scene prop. The manger is made of dark wood with vertical slats and is filled with straw and hay. It is set against a rustic wooden background. The text "Miraculous Births" is overlaid in a large, white, cursive font, and "Samuel" is overlaid in a smaller, white, sans-serif font below it.

Miraculous Births

Samuel

Her husband Elkanah said to her, “Hannah, why do you weep? Why do you not eat? Why is your heart sad? Am I not more to you than ten sons?”

- 1 Samuel 1:8

After they had eaten and drunk at Shiloh, Hannah rose and presented herself before the Lord. Now Eli the priest was sitting on the seat beside the doorpost of the temple of the Lord. She was deeply distressed and prayed to the Lord and wept bitterly. She made this vow: "O Lord of hosts, if only you will look on the misery of your servant and remember me and not forget your servant but will give to your servant a male child, then I will set him before you as a nazirite until the day of his death. He shall drink neither wine nor intoxicants, and no razor shall touch his head."

- 1 Samuel 1:9-11

But Hannah answered, “No, my lord, I am a woman deeply troubled; I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but I have been pouring out my soul before the Lord. Do not regard your servant as a worthless woman, for I have been speaking out of my great anxiety and vexation all this time.”

- 1 Samuel 1:15-16

Then Eli answered, “Go in peace; the God of Israel grant the petition you have made to him.” And she said, “Let your servant find favor in your sight.” Then the woman went her way and ate and drank with her husband, and her countenance was sad no longer.

- 1 Samuel 1:17-18

And she said, “Oh, my lord! As you live, my lord, I am the woman who was standing here in your presence praying to the Lord. For this child I prayed, and the Lord has granted me the petition that I made to him. Therefore I have lent him to the Lord; as long as he lives, he is given to the Lord.” And they worshiped the Lord there.

- 1 Samuel 1:26-28

*Hannah prayed and said,
“My heart exults in the Lord;
my strength is exalted in my God.
My mouth derides my enemies
because I rejoice in your victory.
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no one besides you;
there is no Rock like our God.
Talk no more so very proudly;
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- 1 Samuel 2:1-10

God overturns the typical order of things