

Mother's Day Sermon—Hannah 1 Sam 1:8-2:10

This morning we're going to look at Hannah, a mother described for us in God's word who left a legacy in her son Samuel. This legacy was the result of deep sorrow which in turn made her a woman of prayer, a woman of her word, and a woman of joy. During the days of Hannah, at the end of the period of the judges, it was rare to find gracious, humble persons such as Hannah, who leaned on God. Even the High-Priest Eli, although a good man, was weak-willed morally, and couldn't even reign in the evil of his own sons, much less act as a moral guide to Israel. The name Hannah means *grace*, and she is true to her name. Her story is one of deep pain, fervent prayer, and ultimately divine healing of her wounds, and restoration of her life. The Lord sometimes allows social tragedies, yet he carries them out **"that the work of God might be displayed"** (John 9:3).

I. She was Sorrowful. "A woman of a sorrowful spirit" (v. 15).

Hannah's husband Elkanah had taken a second wife, since Hannah was barren, and couldn't carry on his family name by giving him sons. In Israel it was considered a great reproach from God to be barren, since they believed that **"Children are a heritage of the Lord"** (Psa. 127:3). The whole family used to go to a feast every year at the tabernacle in Shiloh, where Her husband Elkanah demonstrated his love for her by giving her a double portion of food. Hannah's rival Peninnah, had several sons and daughters, provoked and tormented Hannah severely, and this year she was tormented so badly that she just cried, and would not even eat. 1 Sam 1:8: **8 Elkanah, her husband, said to her, "Hannah, why are you weeping? Why aren't you eating? Why do you let your heart be troubled? Am I not better than ten sons to you?"** It is a heart-searching and deeply humbling experience for any child of God, as Hannah was, to have the people point in derision and ridicule at our lives that we're trying to live for God, reminding us of our many troubles, while those who don't serve the Lord seem to enjoy more of His favor. We're sensitive to this, because we have an open and loving heart, and it's not much fun to endure.

II. She was Prayerful.

Hannah chose to pray, instead of taking matters into her own hands. **10 She greatly distressed, prayed to the Lord and wept bitterly.** She poured her heart out to the Lord, and instead of fighting back and reviling, and returning evil for evil, she turned to God. She followed the words that Paul would later write in Romans 12:17-19 **Never repay evil for evil to anyone. Respect what is right in the sight of all people. 18 If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all people. 19 Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written: "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord.** If we decide to take matters into our own hands, then we do not leave room for the wrath of God, we take out our own wrath instead. God's justice is perfect, ours is not, and sometimes we sin in our wrath and anger, and remove all of the justice from our cause. But Hannah did not return railing for railing; being reviled, she did not threaten or fight back, but instead pleaded her cause before the Lord. And without the insults and trials, she would have never done this. That means that if we are looking at them rightly, we can thank God for the trials that send us into His presence, to plead, with full purpose of heart. We pray, and fight the battle on our knees, instead of following our own anger and indignation. Then Hannah **11 and made a vow: "O Lord of Hosts! If you will indeed pay attention to the affliction of your maidservant and remember me and do not forget your maidservant and give your maidservant a child, I will give him to the Lord all the days of his life, his head no razor shall touch."** As Hannah makes this vow to God, she is not attempting to bargain with God and get Him to give her a son. What Hannah is doing is surrendering to God, offering back to God the best that He could give her. She is showing her surrender through her great trust and love for God by offering back to Him that which would be the dearest to her, that for which her heart yearned, her firstborn son. Hannah asks God to remember her, not just remember that she exists, but to act on her behalf and take away the bitter sorrow in her heart, to take away her disgrace by giving her a son. In her surrender she not only promises to give this son back to the Lord, but she dedicates him to serve the Lord his whole life as a

Nazirite. What God impressed on her heart she surrendered to and as a woman of prayer she was devoted to her God and could do this hard thing of giving her son back because she trusted in God's faithfulness to her and His love for her. Hannah's sincerity won over the old High Priest Eli. **17 Then Eli answered and said, "Go in peace; and may the God of Israel grant your request that you have asked of Him."** **18 She said, "Let your bond-servant find favor in your sight."** So the woman went on her way and ate, and her face was no longer sad. Because of her willingness to go to the Lord, she received blessing and honor immediately. She brought her burden to the Lord, and she went away *without it*. It is one thing to *tell* the Lord about our burdens; it is quite another thing to *cast them* on the Lord. It takes humility. (1 Peter 5:6-7). **6 Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, so that He may exalt you at the proper time, 7 having cast all your anxiety on Him, because He cares about you.** And her burden was lifted, as evidenced by the change in her countenance. She was no longer sad.

III. She was Joyful (chap. 2:1).

1. Her Prayer was Answered. 1 Sam 1:19-20 **19 Then they got up early in the morning and worshiped before the Lord, and returned again to their house in Ramah. And Elkanah had relations with Hannah his wife, and the Lord remembered her. 20 It came about in due time, after Hannah had conceived, that she gave birth to a son; and she named him Samuel, saying, "Because I have asked for him of the Lord."** She asked a *son*, and the Lord provided. Psa. 113:9 **He has the infertile woman live in the house As a joyful mother of children. Praise the Lord!** Psalm 30:5b **Weeping may last for the night, But a shout of joy comes in the morning.**

She raised Samuel at home, until he was old enough to be separated from his mother, probably at about 5 or 6 years old. And, although it must have been very difficult, Hannah kept her vow before the Lord. **24 Now when she had weaned him, she took him up with her, with a three-year-old bull, one ephah of flour, and a jug of wine, and brought him to the house of the Lord in Shiloh, although the child was young. 25 Then they slaughtered the bull, and brought the boy to Eli. 26 And she said, "Pardon me, my lord! As your soul lives, my lord, I am the woman who stood here beside you, praying to the Lord. 27 For this boy I prayed, and the Lord has granted me my request which I asked of Him. 28 So I have also dedicated him to the Lord; as long as he lives he is dedicated to the Lord."** And he worshiped the Lord there. Because God had spared all the firstborn in Egypt by the Passover All Israelite firstborn sons were to be dedicated to the Lord, but God provided a way to buy them back. This redemption price was a symbolic act acknowledging God's claim over the firstborn and served as a tangible expression of gratitude and obedience. In the New Testament, the redemption of the firstborn finds its ultimate fulfillment in Jesus. As the firstborn Son of God, Jesus embodies the perfect sacrifice, redeeming humanity from sin and death. Hebrews 12:23 refers to the **"church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven,"** The presentation of Jesus at the temple, as recorded in Luke 2:22-24, reflects the adherence to the law of the redemption of the firstborn. Mary and Joseph brought Jesus to Jerusalem **"to present Him to the Lord (as it is written in the Law of the Lord: 'Every firstborn male shall be consecrated to the Lord')"** (Luke 2:23).

Hannah's vow was Performed. **"As long as he lives he shall be lent to the Lord"** (v. 28). She paid her vow unto the Lord (Psa. 116:18). In the giving back of Samuel, she was forming a powerful link of connection between herself and the Lord that was going to continue to enrich her whole life with blessing. Every sacrifice we make for the honor of our Lord will certainly increase our ability to center our life around Him. **18 Now Samuel was ministering before the Lord, as a boy wearing a linen ephod. 19 And his mother would make for him a little robe and bring it up to him from year to year when she would come up with her husband to offer the yearly sacrifice. 20 Then Eli would bless Elkanah and his wife, and say, "May the Lord give you children from this woman in place of the one she requested of the Lord."** And they went to their own home. **21 The Lord indeed visited Hannah, and she conceived and gave birth to three sons and two daughters. And the boy Samuel grew up before the Lord.** Because she chose to Bless God with what was most important to her, she was blessed, over and over again.