

Happy Mother's Day.

This morning I want to share with you from 1 Samuel chapter 1.

But before I do that let me share with you some things that Mother taught me:

- **My mother taught me about Religion** - she said, "You better pray that will come out of the carpet."
- **My mother taught me about Time Travel** - she said, "If you don't straighten up, I'm going to knock you into the middle of next week."
- **My mother taught me Logic** - she said, "Because I said so, that's why."
- **My mother taught me Foresight** - she said, "Make sure you wear clean underwear in case you're in an accident."
- **My mother taught me Irony** - she said, "Keep crying, and I'll give you something to cry about."
- **My mother taught me about Contortionists** - she said, "Will you look at the dirt on the back of your neck."
- **My mother taught me about Stamina** - she said, "You'll sit there until all that spinach is gone."
- **My mother taught me about the weather** - she said, "This room looks like a tornado went through it."
- **My mother taught me about Hypocrisy** - she said, "If I told you once, I've told you a million times, don't exaggerate."
- **My mother taught me about Behavior Modification** - she said, "Stop acting like your father."
- **My mother taught me about Anticipation** - she said, "Just wait until your father get's home."

- **My mother taught me about Medical Science** - she said, "If you don't stop crossing your eyes, they are going to get stuck that way."
- **My mother taught me about Genetics** - she said, "You're just like your father."
- **My mother taught me about my Roots** - she said, "Shut that door behind you. Do you think you were born in a barn."
- **My mother taught me about Justice** - she said, "One day you'll have kids, and I hope they turn out just like you."

Now let me share something on the more serious side. . .this is a story originally told by Louis L'Amour he was a western writer. And to the best of my knowledge this story although strange is also true.

The year was 1820 Peter Richley was a grateful man. Because he had survived one of the strangest and most harrowing events anyone could have ever imagined. The ship which he had been traveling on sank. But the good news is he was rescued by another ship. However, by some strange twist of circumstance that ship also sank.

And he was rescued again. And you will never guess what happened. . .This third ship sank as well. And for a third time he was rescued. And you guessed it, that ship also sank on his journey.

And unbelievably, he was rescued for a fourth time, but this fifth ship sank as well.

I can imagine by this time people had to be wondering if this was Job thing with everything going on. Talking about the unluckiest man around. Or was he?

This story would be laughable had it not been so serious. On the high seas, however, he floated with the confidence that somehow God did not want him to die.

I wonder why he would think that.

And sure enough, as if on cue, another ship came by and rescued him with his call for help.

This was an ocean liner called The City of Leeds, named after its British city of origin.

It was bound from England to Australia and traveled the same sea lane as Peter Richley's downed ships. The crew of The City of Leeds hoisted Peter aboard. The crew provided Peter with some dry clothing and the ship's doctor gave him a quick exam, pronounced him fit, and then asked him for an unusual favor.

"There's a lady on board who booked passage to Australia," the doctor explained. "She's looking for her son who disappeared years ago. She's dying and she's asking to see her son. She knows everybody on board and since you're the only newcomer, would you pretend to be her son?"

Peter agreed. After all, his life had now been saved five times. He followed the doctor below deck and entered into a cabin. There on a small bed lay a frail woman with silvery hair. She was suffering from a very high fever. Deliriously, she was crying out. "Please God. Let me see my son before I die. I must see my son!"

The ship's doctor gently pushed the young man toward the bed.

Soon, however, Peter Richley began sobbing. For lying there on that bed was the reason that he couldn't seem to die. Here was the lifeline that had kept him from drowning five times. For lying on that bed was none other than Sarah Richley—who had prayed for ten years to be reconciled to her son, Peter.

The ship's doctor stood in amazement as the young man fell down by the bed and embraced the sick woman. "I'm here mom! I'm here. It's me!" Within days the fever had subsided, and his mother awakened to find an answered prayer seated on the edge of her bed.

How many know prayer is powerful.

This morning my prayer is that all our mother's here or listening online will be encouraged, as we look at the story of Hannah.

1 Samuel 1:1 (NIV): There was a certain man from Ramathaim, a Zuphite from the hill country of Ephraim, whose name was Elkanah son of Jeroham, the son of Elihu, the son of Tohu, the son of Zuph, an Ephraimite.

How many are thankful for all that information? Verse 2. . .

1 Samuel 1:2 (NIV): He had two wives; one was called Hannah and the other Peninnah. Peninnah had children, but Hannah had none.

Examining this text it appears to me that Hannah was Elkanah's first wife. I do think that is an important piece of information and I will share more about why in just a minute.

Let me just say on the onset that it was never God's intention to have anyone have more than one wife. This was not in God's original design.

So, here's Hannah she gets married has all these dreams of being the virtuous wife. She loves her husband and wants to do what every Jewish girl during this time wants to do for her husband and that is provide him with someone to carry on the family name.

But Hannah can't have children. So, it isn't too long in this relationship that she realizes her dream isn't happening. And it isn't too hard for Elkanah to realize the problem as well. So he comes up with what seems to be this awesome solution.

If Hannah who I love can't provide me children I will find someone who can. So he takes Peninnah as his 2nd wife.

If that just doesn't add insult to injury.

However, his plan seems to work it seems like Peninnah has no trouble making babies. She has at least 5 that she gives to Elkanah her husband.

But that doesn't come without its own set of problems.

He has really caused quite a mess. A rivalry develops between Hannah and Peninnah. Hannah knows that she is loved, but also understands that she has fallen short of his and her dreams.

Each year they would take a trip to Shiloh to worship and on this particular year something interesting takes place. . .

1 Samuel 1:3–5 (NIV): Year after year this man went up from his town to worship and sacrifice to the Lord Almighty at Shiloh, where Hophni and Phinehas, the two sons of Eli, were priests of the Lord. 4 Whenever the day came for Elkanah to sacrifice, he would give portions of the meat to his wife Peninnah and to all her sons and daughters. 5 But to Hannah he gave a double portion because he loved her, and the Lord had closed her womb.

Elkanah would sacrifice the animal and instead of giving out equal proportions the Scripture tells us that he gave Hannah a double portion.

This was I suppose one of the ways that he wanted to express his love for Hannah. I'm not sure if he realized how saddened she was that she could not fulfill her calling of wanting to be parent, but nonetheless he gave her a double portion because he loved her.

The text seems to tell us that he didn't love Peninnah, at least not like he did Hannah.

He gave her the portion more out of obligation rather than love, but to Hannah he gave it out of love and not obligation.

I think there are some in the Body of Christ that do the same thing. We come to church out of obligation, we give out of obligation, we do out of obligation. But God desires we give and do out of love.

So, Elkanah wants to express his love to Hannah and he wanted to honor her, but despite all that. . .

The Scripture says, the Lord closed her womb.

It almost appears that Hannah wanted so badly to have a child, just one to show her womanhood. That the statement the Lord closed her womb became her identity. It seems like if that doesn't happen I'm not the woman I'm supposed to be.

Let me pause here for a moment and tell you this. I don't care what anyone says about you. It doesn't matter what names they have called you. Your identity is not in your job, your family, or the names. Your identity is in God. You need to realize what God has called you. And what He called you is always good.

But at this stage in Hannah's life this stigma has become her identity. She is the woman who has the scarlet letter B for barren.

She knows, but so does Peninnah. And once again that rivalry starts up, because Peninnah notices something else as well. She notices that Hannah receives a double portion of the sacrifice. And so, it breeds more jealousy.

Peninnah has something she can use it's found in verse 6.

1 Samuel 1:6 (NIV): Because the Lord had closed Hannah's womb, her rival kept provoking her in order to irritate her.

Peninnah decides to use what she knows will get under Hannah's skin. She makes jabs at the fact that she is barren.

It's almost if she was saying, "I can do what you can't do."

And this wasn't just a onetime thing look at verse 7.

1 Samuel 1:7 (NIV): This went on year after year. Whenever Hannah went up to the house of the Lord, her rival provoked her till she wept and would not eat.

They are going to the temple to what? . . .Worship.

This should be a time of celebration instead we find Hannah weeping and not eating. Not because she's in God's presence but because she's being provoked and ridiculed.



i don't know about you, but I have noticed that the enemy wants to distract us from our worship. He will go through great lengths to get you to think you don't belong here. He will keep you depressed, distracted and distraught.

He will get you to think all sorts of things that are contrary to what God has said. He will jab at you until you snap.

You come and their still not healed, still not saved, still not. . .that's what he does he came to steal, kill, and destroy.

Steal your joy, kill your worship, destroy your destiny.

Hannah, however, gives us hope.

Hannah is in the temple and won't eat. She is no doubt tired of hearing Peninnah and her jabs. She is in the temple, and it should be a time of rejoicing, but. . .

Hannah is sitting in front of this double portion. Peninnah is jealous over that. Hannah sitting in the presence of the one that she is jealous over sad, depressed, miserable, and downcast.

The scene just couldn't get more uncomfortable. Or could it?

In walks mister I can fix this thing Elkanah.

He looks over to Hannah who he was trying to honor, and she won't even eat. He has had enough; it is time for him to address this situation and fix it.

So, he asks a series of questions. 4 to be exact. The first 3 not so bad, the last one however, doesn't bring much comfort to the situation.

We find them in verse 8. . .

1 Samuel 1:8 (NIV): Her husband Elkanah would say to her, "Hannah, why are you weeping? Why don't you eat? Why are you downhearted? Don't I mean more to you than ten sons?"

It almost as through Elkanah with this last question. . . "Don't I mean more to you than ten sons?" is saying, suck it up buttercup. Why be so sad you've got me babe. Remember that Donny and Cher song. I've got you babe.

I think just like many of us men Elkanah is thinking, "there that should help, she'll be happy now."

Many times, I need to be honest I can be pretty naive.

And what happens is the exact opposite of what he was expecting to happen. Instead of her looking him in the eyes and saying, "you know what honey your right." She burst into tears.

I don't know about the rest of you guys, but I have had those moments when I said something, didn't get the response I thought and said to myself, "what did I say?"

That was probably how Elkanah felt.

I mean let's consider this for a moment. Imagine how Hannah is feeling. She's thinking, I can't have children. I have to share my husband with another woman and this woman constantly makes jabs at me because I'm barren. Rubs that in my face all the time. She has all these kids and me I have none. I'm miserable and depressed and my husband doesn't get it. He just wants me to suck it up, put on my big girl panties and move on.

And all the time she's thinking well, it's just not the easy.

We don't know how or even if Hannah responded to these questions. I can almost imagine on the last question, don't I mean more to you than ten sons? Her saying oh really if you mean so much, if I mean so much why then did you run off and marry another woman.

This is a mess.

But let me pause here for a moment and say this, I don't care how messy your circumstances are right now. God is bigger than

your circumstances. I mean this circumstance is ugly. But let's look what Hannah does.

I want to share a few things that I think will help us understand what we need to do when our lives circumstances seem ugly.

1. Hannah takes her circumstance to God.

Maybe she's thinking no one understands me, my husband sure doesn't, this other woman certainly has no compassion. And so, she needs to talk with someone, and we find that in verses 9 and 10.

1 Samuel 1:9–10 (NIV): Once when they had finished eating and drinking in Shiloh, Hannah stood up. Now Eli the priest was sitting on his chair by the doorpost of the Lord's house. 10 In her deep anguish Hannah prayed to the Lord, weeping bitterly.

So many times, in a situation we look to get revenge. We pour out our anger on those who hurt us. Some may even think that Hannah would have been justified to lash out at Peninnah.

But there was something different about Hannah. She doesn't lay into her husband telling him about all his weaknesses. She doesn't look at Peninnah with the evil eye thinking wait your turn is coming. No she pours her heart out to God.

See maybe Hannah would have been justified in her mind or even in the mind of others to get even with Peninnah, but she learned I need to take my anger, my bitterness, my hatred. I need to bring it to God.

Church, God is saying the same thing to us today. Bring all those things to me. I'm bigger than your bitterness, I'm bigger than the circumstances you are struggling with right now.

Look at how her prayer is described in verses 15 and 16.

1 Samuel 1:15–16 (NIV): “Not so, my lord,” Hannah replied, “I am a woman who is deeply troubled. I have not been drinking wine or beer; I was pouring out my soul to the Lord. 16 Do not take your servant for a wicked woman; I have been praying here out of my great anguish and grief.”

Look at this she says, I'm deeply troubled, I was pouring my soul out to the Lord. I'm praying out of great anguish and grief.

It's as if she is saying, "Eli if you only knew everything I've been dealing with, if you knew what that woman was saying to me." Maybe then you would understand.

These were not just now I lay me down to sleep, or God I have a few requests today type of prayer. This was gut wrenching I'm at my last leg have nowhere else to go, and no one to turn to prayer.

She had a request, and it was pretty big at that. She asked for a son.

This was a prayer of desperation.

Let me pause here and give another example of what Hannah was praying like. (Talk about the woman with the issue of blood).

Listen church if you are not moving towards something, it most likely isn't moving towards you. Jesus called the disciples and said come follow me. The Scripture tells us desire spiritual gifts.

We need to move toward the things we want.

I couldn't wait for Joy to ask me out. I had to move toward her and let her know I was interested.

Hear this church, there may be times in your circumstances when you need to go crawling to the Savior. Man won't have the answers, husband won't have the answers, pastor won't have the answers, but we serve a God that can walk with you and guide you through every circumstance and situation that you encounter.

Hebrews 4:16 (NIV): Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

Hebrews 4:14–16 (The Message): Now that we know what we have—Jesus, this great High Priest with ready access to God—let’s not let it slip through our fingers. We don’t have a priest who is out of touch with our reality. He’s been through weakness and testing, experienced it all—all but the sin. So let’s walk right up to him and get what he is so ready to give. Take the mercy, accept the help.

So, the first lesson we learn from Hannah is that she takes her circumstances to God. The next lesson we can learn is. . .

2. Hannah surrenders to God the very thing she wanted more than anything else.

Look at verse 11.

1 Samuel 1:11 (NIV): And she made a vow, saying, “Lord Almighty, if you will only look on your servant’s misery and remember me, and not forget your servant but give her a son, then I will give him to the Lord for all the days of his life, and no razor will ever be used on his head.”

This was a vow to have Samuel under a Nazarite vow. What was a Nazarite vow? Thanks for asking.

A Nazarite vow can be found in Numbers chapter 6. Without reading it let me just share with you the key points of a vow like this.

First we need to look at the word Nazarite it comes from the Hebrew word nazir meaning "consecrated or separated."

This vow required a person to abstain from wine, grapes, raisins, any intoxicating drink or vinegar made from such substances that contains any trace of grapes. They had to refrain from cutting their hair. And they could not come in contact with someone who had died, even those in their own family.

Another interesting point about a Nazarite vow found in Numbers 6 is that it seems that it was for a predetermined length of time. Some may have been under this vow for a year. But Hannah says I will give him to you all the days of his life.

In reading this story about Hannah it looks like up to this point that she wanted a son almost more than God. It had become her identity. I need a son or I just can't survive.

But as she was praying something shifted.

What shifted, the I want this more than anything, was now, I want a son, but I give him back to you.



Listen church nothing and I mean nothing can be more important than God in your life. They call that an idol. And we need to destroy all of them. God needs to be first.

The next lesson we learn is that Hannah changed her demeanor before God changed her circumstances.

Look at verses 12-14

1 Samuel 1:12–14 (NIV): As she kept on praying to the Lord, Eli observed her mouth. 13 Hannah was praying in her heart, and her lips were moving but her voice was not heard. Eli thought she was drunk 14 and said to her, “How long are you going to stay drunk? Put away your wine.”

Think about this Peninnah had attacked her, Elkanah doesn't understand her, and now Eli the priest, God's called out one is accusing her of being drunk.

Let's look at verse 15 once more. . .

1 Samuel 1:15 (NIV): “Not so, my lord,” Hannah replied, “I am a woman who is deeply troubled. I have not been drinking wine or beer; I was pouring out my soul to the Lord.

Eli I'm not drunk. I'm depressed, I'm miserable.

I can think of another time when they thought people of God were drunk. It happened on the Day of Pentecost.

Isn't it amazing that if God does something out of the ordinary or different than what we tend to think is that it can't be Him?

Verses 16-18 tells us,

1 Samuel 1:16–18 (NIV): Do not take your servant for a wicked woman; I have been praying here out of my great anguish and grief.” 17 Eli answered, “Go in peace, and may the God of Israel grant you what you have asked of him.” 18 She said, “May your servant find favor in your eyes.” Then she went her way and ate something, and her face was no longer downcast.

Eli begins to understand, he looks with compassion which Hannah may not have had for quite some time and says to her. “. . .May the God of Israel grant you what you have asked of him.”

Hannah goes on to say may your servant find favor in your eyes.

Oh by the way the name Hannah means, favor or grace.

It seems like she was finding out her destiny and what it should be, something shifted in that prayer closet.

She begins to realize her true identity. She begins to find her true calling. No longer the label of Barren, but favor and grace.

I think this is a great picture of Christ and how He takes care of the church. We come to him with a mess, and he grants us favor and grace in the midst of our messes.

Look again at the last part of verse 18. Then she went her way and ate something, and her face was no longer downcast.

She picks herself up, goes back to the table, thinks to herself you know I'm a little hungry I think I will go eat that double portion that I was given.

Basically, this Scripture is saying. I believe in faith that it is done.

Her whole countenance, and her demeanor changed.

When you are in the presence of God, something ought to change. She walked away no longer downcast. No longer miserable. No longer depressed .

Hannah had a changed heart. It is as if she began to have a new identity.

Now here we are back at the table. Peninnah is there, Elkanah is there, and in walks Hannah. She walked out sad, walks in with hope. Looks at her meal and begins to eat. Both recognize something happened.

I love this check this out look at Acts 4:13

Acts 4:13 (NIV): When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus.

Acts 4:13 (TPT): The council members were astonished as they witnessed the bold courage of Peter and John, especially when they discovered that they were just ordinary men who had never had religious training. Then they began to understand the effect Jesus had on them simply by spending time with him.

When you spend time in the presence of God, when you spend time with Jesus. If you will surrender all to Him, people will take notice. Your life will change.

While Hannah is eating maybe they are wondering, "why is she happy, what happened." What does she know that we don't?

Listen I have seen people that say they are Believers. That they love the Lord. That He is everything to them. They don't attend a

local Body. They don't look the part or act the part. They are negative, always looks like they have been sucking on a lemon. Is that the Jesus I serve? Absolutely not!

He came to give us joy unspeakable. Life abundantly.

I want a Jesus that people when they see me say, "what is it about him?" "There's something going on with him." I need my countenance to reflect His goodness.

Hannah's circumstances hasn't changed. She's not pregnant, She still has no son, but there was something that took place in her heart as she wept before God.

4. Hannah remembers what she prayed.

Look at verses 19 and 20.

1 Samuel 1:19–20 (NIV): Early the next morning they arose and worshiped before the Lord and then went back to their home at Ramah. Elkanah made love to his wife Hannah, and the Lord remembered her. 20 So in the course of time Hannah became pregnant and gave birth to a son. She named him Samuel, saying, "Because I asked the Lord for him."

They get up in the morning and worship.

Hear this church we need to learn to worship even when things don't appear to be in our favor.

- The walls of Jericho fell because of worship.
- Jehoshaphat was victorious because of worship.
- Paul and Silas were set free from the prison because of worship.

So, Hannah becomes pregnant with who will be Samuel. By the way the name Samuel in Hebrew means, asked of God, or heard by God.

The Scripture tells us the Lord remembered her.

So, Hannah begins to trust before anything changes. And when things do change she remembers what she prayed.

I think sometimes we forget what we prayed for and so when our request is finally fulfilled maybe years down the road. God doesn't get the glory, because we forgot that we asked him. And since the timing wasn't our timing we feel it never was answered that some how it just came about.

Now I realize that this is much different, but my point is we need to trust God when we take something to Him. Believing it's done before we may even see a change. And then give Him the glory no matter how long that answer may be in coming.

That is why testimony is so encouraging to others. If we can remember what God has done, it can be a launchpad of encouragement for another that may need a similar answer.

So, Hannah after years of being barren has the opportunity to rejoice for an answered prayer.

It doesn't say this in Scripture, but I think Hannah shared her prayer time and her discussion with Eli with Elkanah.

Look at verse 21.

1 Samuel 1:21 (NIV): When her husband Elkanah went up with all his family to offer the annual sacrifice to the Lord and to fulfill his vow,

Look at it. To fulfill his vow. Sure part of that included the time of worship he said aside year after year.

But could it also be, alright God, I know you gave Samuel to us, I know Hannah said he would be a Nazarite all the days of his life. I'm in agreement with that he is yours not ours.

See here's the thing in Numbers chapter 30. If a wife made a vow, the husband could veto it and overturn what she committed to. Elkanah doesn't do that.

He easily could have said you did what? What were you thinking? That's not going to happen on my watch. But he doesn't he supported her decision.

I need you to understand the ramifications of this vow. And I will look at this in a few minutes.

1 Samuel 1:22 (NIV): Hannah did not go. She said to her husband, "After the boy is weaned, I will take him and present him before the Lord, and he will live there always."

1 Samuel 1:23 (NIV): "Do what seems best to you," her husband Elkanah told her. "Stay here until you have weaned him; only may the Lord make good his word." So the woman stayed at home and nursed her son until she had weaned him.

I think it could be said like this. Honey I'm behind you on this one, I get it. But don't forget what you vowed and when he is weaned honor what you said. God did His part make sure you do yours.

It continues verse 24. . .

1 Samuel 1:24 (NIV): After he was weaned, she took the boy with her, young as he was, along with a three-year-old bull, an ephah of flour and a skin of wine, and brought him to the house of the Lord at Shiloh.



This may have been when he was around the age of two or three.

Look what happens. Verses 25-28. . .

1 Samuel 1:25–28 (NIV): When the bull had been sacrificed, they brought the boy to Eli, 26 and she said to him, “Pardon me, my lord. As surely as you live, I am the woman who stood here beside you praying to the Lord. 27 I prayed for this child, and the Lord has granted me what I asked of him. 28 So now I give him to the Lord. For his whole life he will be given over to the Lord.” And he worshiped the Lord there.

Think about this for a moment. She is bringing Samuel to the temple. She's committed, Elkanah is committed, and Samuel is committed. Look at the ending of verse 28, and he worshipped the Lord there. I think he is Samuel.

About the age of three. He's in the temple worshipping. Lifting his hands, maybe singing, just worshipping.

Let me just say this for the children that are here. The one thing that mom wants on Mother's Day more than anything is for her children to be in love with the Lord, worshipping with her in the temple.

Now here is where the story really gets radical. I mentioned that we needed to understand the ramifications of this vow.

Here is where it gets difficult.

You would think that Elkanah would have to drag Hannah out of that place. She is dropping him off at around 3 to stay there without her. She will see him a few times a year, maybe. You would almost expect her to say wait a minute, I know what I said, but I was hoping this would be one of those sacrifices like it was with Isaac and Abraham when an angel came and said don't do it.

But we don't see that all we see is a time of praise.

Now I could go on, but I want to try and bring this plane in for a landing. I do want to just mention a few things that I think are extremely important to this story.

First when you look at the life of Samuel you need to see that. . .

He was the one that anointed the first two kings of Israel. Saul and David. Jesus came from the lineage of David. So had it not been for Hannah's prayer. . .think about that. Her prayer changed the world.

Because of Jesus, we are given Eternal life, by what he did at Calvary.

Here's the point church you never know whose life you will affect when you get in the throne room of God.

Oh, by the way Hannah went on to have more children 5 more to be exact. 3 sons and 2 daughters. That's just how good God is.

Let close with a couple of things that may help us make this more applicable for us.

- No matter how bad the situation looks, take it to the Lord.

James tells us if any man lack wisdom let him ask of God. God can take a mess and with that mess make a message.

- Is there anything you are placing before God or His will in your life? Hannah had to say Lord thank you for giving me Samuel, but I give Him back to You, all I want to do is please You. I love him, but I love you more.
- Trust that God is a Good Good Father. And that even if it may not seem like it right now, he has a plan for you. A hope and a future. Let people see the confidence you have in Him. Let them sense that you know something that they don't, and it is that you have been with Jesus.

Ask mothers and ladies to stand and have a prayer specifically for them. (They are your daughters) (Holy Spirit touch them) (You gave your best, let them give theirs) (use the messes and give them a message).