

1 Samuel 1:11-28 - Thursday, June 6th, 2013

(11) Then she made a vow and said, "O LORD of hosts, if You will indeed look on the affliction of Your maidservant and remember me, and not forget Your maidservant, but will give Your maidservant a male child, then I will give him to the LORD all the days of his life, and no razor shall come upon his head."

- As I mentioned at the beginning, the account of Hannah, and Samuel has been a profound blessing in my life to both myself, and my wife.
- This because I too made a vow to the Lord like did Hannah, that if He would indeed give me a son, I would serve him all the days of my life.
- The fact of the matter is, that had it not been for our ten years of barrenness, and my crying out to the Lord, I wouldn't be the pastor here.

- Be that as it may, notice that she makes the vow of a Nazirite for him from his birth. This speaks to not just that she wanted a child but why.
- I'm of the belief that Hannah was so godly, that she new Israel needed a son to be born who would be dedicated to serving God in Israel.
- I'm also of the belief it was for this reason God would answer her prayer under the banner of seeking first His kingdom and righteousness.

(12) And it happened, as she continued praying before the LORD, that Eli watched her mouth. (13) Now Hannah spoke in her heart; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard. Therefore Eli thought she was drunk. (14) So Eli said to her, "How long will you be drunk? Put your wine away from you!"

- You'll pardon the pun but these verses are rather sobering for me as a pastor, such that I'm just as prone as Eli to handle this in this way.
- Here's someone whose heart is pouring out as she's crying out to God for a son who she dedicates back to the Lord, and he rebukes her.
- He's not only rebuking her, he's accusing her of being drunk. The irony of this is that it's his sons that are the drunks, and he's the priest.

- The reason I find this to be so ironic is that it would seemingly indicate that this was a common occurrence in Israel during this dark time.
- Such was the condition of God's people in that day, that if one who was actually godly were to worship one day, they wouldn't be believed.
- This gives me pause in that, I pray this day would never come, such that the godly and righteous become the exception and not the norm.

Adam Clarke - "The fact that Eli supposed her to be drunken, and the other of the conduct of Eli's sons already mentioned, prove that religion was at this time at a very low ebb in Shiloh; for it seems drunken women did come to the place, and lewd women were to be found there."

Charles Spurgeon - "Good men may err. Elis was too indulgent where he ought to have been sever, and too censorious where he should have been charitable. How small a thing it is to be judged of men."

- Can you imagine how Hannah must have felt right about now? If you really think about it, here-to-for everyone has been insensitive to her.
- Her husband doesn't understand her, nor can he resolve the situation for her, and her sister-wife, as it were, has been tormenting to her.
- Then she goes to the house of God as it were, and has the man of God if you will, not only rebuking her but he goes as far as accusing her.

- If I'm Hannah, I have had it at this point, and as such I'm going to give you a piece of my mind, as I demand a pound of flesh, in the flesh.
- However, that's not what Hannah does, as we see in the next verses, by virtue of how she's more godly than this priest, and your pastor.
- What we're about to see is that Hannah is a very meek, and kind woman who does not get angry and how does not become disrespectful.

Charles Spurgeon - "How gently she replied! Some would have flown into a passion. Meekness is a lovely ornament of piety."

(15) But Hannah answered and said, "No, my lord, I *am* a woman of sorrowful spirit. I have drunk neither wine nor intoxicating drink, but have poured out my soul before the LORD. (16) Do not consider your maidservant a wicked woman, for out of the abundance of my complaint and grief I have spoken until now." (17) Then Eli answered and said, "Go in peace, and the God of Israel grant your petition which you have asked of Him." (18) And she said, "Let your maidservant find favor in your sight." So the woman went her way and ate, and her face was no longer *sad*.

- Couple of thoughts here the first of which is that Hannah has indeed changed, though Hannah's circumstances have in no way changed.
- Nothing has changed in terms of Hannah's barrenness yet something has changed in terms of Hannah's heart concerning her barrenness.
- It's evidenced by how she was able to leave the tabernacle in peace and, with a joyful countenance, and finally be able to eat something.

- The question becomes, what happened? What is it that took place there in the tabernacle that would be such a game changer for Hannah?
- I believe the answer is simply that Hannah chose to believe by faith the word she heard when Eli said to her God would grant this for her.
- If you're wondering how it is that God could speak through someone like Eli who was a high priest, you need look no further than Caiaphas.

John 11:49-52 NIV Then one of them, named Caiaphas, who was high priest that year, spoke up, "You know nothing at all! (50) You do not realize that it is better for you that one man die for the people than that the whole nation perish." (51) He did not say this on his own, but as high priest that year he prophesied that Jesus would die for the Jewish nation, (52) and not only for that nation but also for the scattered children of God, to bring them together and make them one.

- In other words, just as God would speak through someone like Caiaphas who was the high priest, so too did he speak through Eli as well.
- It's not so much that God would speak a word through Eli, to me it's more that Hannah would receive by faith the word spoken through Eli.
- I'm of the belief it was for this reason that God answered her prayer. I truly believe God did it because He was pleased by Hannah's faith.

Hebrews 11:6 NIV And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.

- Perhaps you'll indulge me for just a moment because I want to share with you something concerning Hannah being such a woman of faith.
- Here's what I'm thinking, we know that Hannah had that God pleasing faith, but we don't know how she ever got that God pleasing faith.
- Or do we? Let me explain, there had to be a well as a source from which she could draw the water from in order to have this kind of faith.

- I would submit that it was the well of God's Word, from which Hannah, and all who like her are willing can draw the water of faith, if you will.

Romans 10:17 NKJV So then faith *comes* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

Charles Spurgeon - "Her faith in the word of God spoken by His servant was so strong, that she began at once to rejoice in the blessing promised to her. Such ought to be our confidence in the divine promise; we should be no more sad, but look out for the blessing, and welcome it with smiling countenance."

As one commentator so aptly said it; "When Hannah was told her prayer was answered, although she had no tangible evidence of this, she chose to believe [by faith]. Are you discouraged or depressed? The cure lies not in seeing your situation change, but in hearing the Word and choosing to believe it. What has God whispered in your ear? Hang on to it. Believe it. Don't despair. Live a life of rejoicing, for in so doing, you will prevent Satan from aborting that which God wants to conceive in you and birth through you."

(19) Then they rose early in the morning and worshiped before the LORD, and returned and came to their house at Ramah. And Elkanah knew Hannah his wife, and the LORD remembered her. (20) So it came to pass in the process of time that Hannah conceived and bore a son, and called his name Samuel, *saying*, "Because I have asked for him from the LORD."

- This is where yet again the name being the nature comes into play, such that the name Samuel means in effect, God answered my prayer.
- Because Hannah asked in prayer for God to give her a son and God heard her prayer and answered her prayer she names him Samuel.
- Before we go to verse twenty-one, I would like to share with you seven characteristics of a godly mother, and in this case a father as well.

1. Hannah prayed for children to God
2. Hannah prayed for her children to God
3. Hannah saw her child as a gift from God
4. Hannah dedicated her child for God
5. Hannah herself was a woman of God
6. Hannah had a personal relationship with God
7. Hannah raised her child to serve God

(21) Now the man Elkanah and all his house went up to offer to the LORD the yearly sacrifice and his vow. (22) But Hannah did not go up, for she said to her husband, "*Not* until the child is weaned; then I will take him, that he may appear before the LORD and remain there forever."

- It's important to understand that in those days, and in that culture in that day a child would nurse sometimes until they were three years old.
- The question becomes, why would Hannah wait until what could have very well been three years to take him to Eli there in the tabernacle.
- I would suggest the answer is two-fold. First, it was for spiritual reasons, in that she had three years to instill the Word of God in his heart.

- In addition to the spiritual reasons, secondly, it was for physiological reasons in that nothing matches the mother's milk for a baby's health.
- At the risk of getting too motherly, allow me to share with you some of the facts about how healthy breastfeeding is for both baby and mom.

1. Breastfeeding protects their baby from a long list of illnesses
2. Breastfeeding protects the mother from breast cancer
3. Breastfeeding can protect the baby from developing allergies
4. Breastfeeding may boost the child's intelligence
5. Breastfeeding may protect the child from obesity
6. Breastfeeding may lower your baby's risk of SIDS
7. Breastfeeding can reduce the mother's stress level and risk of postpartum depression
8. Breastfeeding may reduce the risk of some types of cancer
9. Breastfeeding may help to reduce pregnancy weight

(23) So Elkanah her husband said to her, "Do what seems best to you; wait until you have weaned him. Only let the LORD establish His word." Then the woman stayed and nursed her son until she had weaned him.

- This is interesting for a number of reasons not the least of which is, it speaks to the godliness and submissiveness as it relates to Elkanah.
- The reason I say that is because according to the law, the husband can override a vow made on the part of his wife if he wished to do so.
- For Elkanah, to honor this vow, especially when it had to do with his first begotten son, demonstrates how committed he is to God in this.

- There's something else that I want to point out here before we bring our study of this chapter to a close and it has to do with what he says.
- Notice in verse twenty-three where he says, "only let the Lord establish His Word." Now that is what I am talking about my brother Elkanah!
- Would to God, that every man of God would say what Elkanah said on that day wanting only that God's Word be established in his home.

Charles Spurgeon - "What a choice saying, 'only the Lord establish His Word.' We ought to think everything less important than this. If God will but deal with us according to promise, other things are of little consequence."

(24) Now when she had weaned him, she took him up with her, with three bulls, one ephah of flour, and a skin of wine, and brought him to the house of the LORD in Shiloh. And the child *was* young. (25) Then they slaughtered a bull, and brought the child to Eli. (26) And she said, "O my lord! As your soul lives, my lord, I *am* the woman who stood by you here, praying to the LORD. (27) For this child I prayed, and the LORD has granted me my petition which I asked of Him. (28) Therefore I also have lent him to the LORD; as long as he lives he shall be lent to the LORD." So they worshiped the LORD there.

- Thus we bring what is arguably one of the best ways to start off in our study through a book in this God's Word, the book of First Samuel.
- Actually, in so doing we have a built in template of sorts, by which we dedicate children to the Lord, as Hannah does here with her son.
- So in closing, I'll share with you the very form that we have parents who wish to dedicate their children to the Lord, both read and fill out.

BABY DEDICATION

"I WILL GIVE HIM TO THE LORD FOR ALL THE DAYS OF HIS LIFE."

~ 1 SAMUEL 1:11

The ceremony dedicating a child to the Lord appeals to those present as a beautiful and meaningful celebration of a young life held up before God. The presentation, while beautiful and full of heartfelt sentiment, also signifies a serious vow on the part of the parents: that they will raise this child unto the Lord to the best of their ability with God's help. As we promise to raise a child in the will of our heavenly Father, we not only make that vow at that moment, but also agree to sustain that child *over time* as active Christian parents. This includes:

Praying constantly for our children. (Job 1:5)

Living Christ-like lives as authentic examples to our children. (Prov. 20:7)

Instructing our children in the way of the Lord. (Proverbs 22:6)

Disciplining our children with love, even as the Lord disciplines us.

(Proverbs 13:24; 29:15,17; Colossians 3:21)