

Birthed in Brokenness

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“My heart rejoiceth in the Lord, my horn is exalted in the Lord; my mouth is enlarged over my enemies; because I rejoice in thy salvation. There is none holy as the Lord, for there is none beside Thee; neither is there any rock like our God.” 1 Samuel 2:1-2

The name of Hannah’s antagonist, “Peninnah,” fittingly means “pearl.” Pearls form as a result of the discomfort caused by an agitating grain of sand lodged within a mollusk.

Hannah was barren, which was a reproach in that day. Peninnah had children, and each year as they went to the temple to offer their sacrifice, she would provoke Hannah, causing her to weep.

It appeared that Peninnah was favored due to her children. But Hannah, although barren, was greatly beloved. As she wept, her husband would express his love for her, but human comfort could not satisfy the cry that was within Hannah’s heart.

Little did Hannah understand as she wept day after day that this all was part of God’s plan! How often the Lord uses less than perfect circumstances in our own lives, when we yield to Him, not only to work in us for our own benefit, but also as preparation for a much higher purpose.

“And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.” Romans 8:28-29

In order to birth the prophetic voice that the Lord desired at that time, it was necessary for Hannah to enter into a state of brokenness. Although she was seeing only her present personal situation in the moment, there was a bigger picture that pertained to the Lord’s people and His purposes.

Hannah may have been content to remain barren were it not for an adversary in her life who provoked her, causing her to cry out to the Lord for a son. As pressures worked to intensify that desire within Hannah, God heard her cry, and in this state of brokenness, Hannah brought forth a man child who became the prophetic voice that was needed to meet the need of that day.

“For this child I prayed; and the LORD hath given me my petition which I asked of him.” 1 Samuel 1:27

**“And Samuel grew, and the LORD was with him,
and did let none of his words fall to the ground.”
1 Samuel 3:19**

It was a time of transition. Eli, the High Priest, was aware that his heritage would be displaced, because the Lord had sent a prophet to pronounce judgment upon his household. Even so, when Hannah brought Samuel into the temple, Eli received and nurtured him. If Eli's heart had been hardened as was Saul's, he would have risen up against Samuel like Saul trying to kill David. But Eli did not do this; rather, he valued the things of God and held in high regard the word of the Lord.

However, the vision of Eli had grown dim. There was no “present word” from the Lord. Though he knew his sons were doing evil, he did not restrain them. Although Eli loved the Lord, he had become fat; that is, he had allowed compromise in his life and ministry.

The child, Samuel, was given not only to lift the reproach from Hannah, but for God's higher purpose in birthing the prophetic voice needed at that particular time. For that voice to come forth in power, that which was birthed had to be fully consecrated and given to the Lord. The pressure Hannah experienced worked to bring a brokenness of spirit within her, causing her to make this necessary consecration within her life.

There is a barrenness today that many are recognizing, and it is producing an inner cry. The “Peninnahs” of our day are causing this cry to increase. There are always those who do not understand the depth of this cry when it comes. As it begins to surface, there are those who will wonder what is wrong with us or pat us on the back and say, “cheer up.” Eli saw Hannah's lips moving in prayer but did not understand why— he thought she was drunk!

Just as Hannah would not allow herself to be comforted by the kind words of others, so there is a need today for those who will never become satisfied with just gifts or provisions given to make them comfortable. It is important that those who have this deep inner cry do not allow themselves to be satisfied with any consolation less than the Lord Himself. The Word tells us that Hannah continued in prayer before the Lord until He spoke.

As she persevered, there grew within Hannah the willingness to fully consecrate to the Lord the man child she so desperately desired. This released the Lord to speak a word through Eli that a child would be given to her. Once Hannah received this assurance, she wept no more. Soon after, Samuel was conceived. Now, Hannah's tears became a song:

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I had considered this song to be Hannah's rejoicing over her adversary because she now had a child and was no longer barren. But this song of rejoicing goes much deeper than that. It did not come forth after the birth of Samuel, but only after he had been weaned and fully consecrated to the Lord.

The exultation in Hannah's heart was not over this woman who had provoked her, nor was it mere triumph because her state of barrenness had been broken. She triumphed in being able to deliver this child to the Lord as she had petitioned.

Hannah had not only birthed Samuel, but she had fulfilled her vow before the Lord. This was a great victory within her own life. She had a son in the temple. Others did not know, nor did they need to know; she knew that the Lord had given this child to her and that she had fulfilled her vow by giving him back to the Lord.

The Lord is looking for "Hannahs" in this day and hour. There is coming forth the Kingdom rule of God in and through a people who are to rule with a rod of iron. But this end-time prophetic voice must first be birthed in a state of brokenness, bringing an inner submission to the Lord Jesus Christ. The birth pangs are a deep inner cry within a heart that can be satisfied with nothing less than a present word from the Lord.

**"...thou hast enlarged me when I was in
distress..."
Psalm 4:1**

This level of inner brokenness brings a yieldedness to the Lord. The Scriptures say of the child that Hannah brought forth, "none of his words fell to the ground." His voice was used solely for the purposes of the Lord. Because of the depth of consecration, submission and yieldedness within, God was able to bring forth a prophetic voice accompanied with a God-given authority.

**"And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works
unto the end, to him will I give power over the
nations: And he shall rule them with a rod of
iron." Revelation 2:26-27a**

We said that the name "Peninnah" means "pearl." This reveals to us that Hannah's trouble had been pre-arranged by the Lord to be her servant, the very thing necessary to bring forth the purpose of God in her life. The antagonist that troubled Hannah was actually serving her. The agitation caused by Peninnah produced the pearl that became Samuel, the prophet.

If this woman had not provoked her, Hannah might have been content in her relationship with her husband and the gifts he gave her. She needed this pressure in order to come into that which the Lord desired for her.

It is very important during our times of trouble that we are careful in how we respond or react. When we are under pressure, we usually try to rearrange our circumstances or

make adjustments so we will feel a little better. But the Lord is seeking to do something closer to us than we may realize.

“Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” Matthew 5:3

As we are willing to break before the Lord, yielding to Him, He will be able to bring forth that which He intends. We will see the rule of Christ come forth through a corporate people who have allowed this deep inner working of the Lord in their hearts, because they are confident that:

“We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.” Ephesians 2:10

“For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.” Philippians 2:13

“Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.” Philippians 1:6

May we be confident of that which the Lord is doing not only in our lives, but in the times we are in. Let us look not at the “Peninnahs” He has allowed, but at the man child coming forth through a broken, yet victorious people who have set their face toward the Lord and will settle for nothing less than His intervention.

If you would like, please pray with me:

Lord, even as Hannah prayed and continued to pray until You intervened, so we set our faces toward You. Bring forth that which You desire, first in us, then through us. May we submit to You, allowing Your inner workings deep within our hearts. May we become that very expression of who You are, Your words, Your heart. Cause us to become an active part of the fulfillment of Your purposes today. In Jesus’ name we pray. Amen.