

May 11, 2014

“Hannah: Samuel’s Mom”

Introduction:

Mother’s Day 2014 – we’re studying God’s revelation through motherhood

A clear theme of Scripture: We are called to live a L_____ of L_____. Ephesians 5:1, 2

John’s writings tell us that the requirement of the one who would be intimate with God is to be comfortable D_____ in His love

I John 4:7 – 11

The Lord uses the metaphor of the family to communicate His desire to walk with us in

R_____ L_____.

Some aspects of God’s nature are portrayed using M_____ pictures, while other aspects are portrayed by using M_____ pictures.

Exodus 34:5 – 7 God speaks about Himself for Himself regarding His nature

Today we will focus on how God uses motherhood in our lives to portray His

N_____ and C_____ love to us.

The similarities between mothering and God’s saving love: B_____

... B_____ ... R_____

Today we will study attributes of God that we see through motherhood as seen the life of Hannah: Samuel’s mom

I. The Picture of a Woman Who is Grieved and Broken in Heart:

I Samuel 1:1 – 8 (selected)

The story unfolds in Ephraim – Hannah, Elkanah, and their family tribe

I Chronicles 6:26 - 28

That makes Elkanah and his sons to be men C_____ to S_____ the Lord in life

It was one thing to be Ephraimite and not be able to have children. It was another thing to be Levite and not be able to have a son. This was considered to be an act of divine punishment!

She was also in a marriage in which her husband had another wife.

Peninnah had no trouble birthing little Levites and no qualms about tormenting Hannah because she couldn't. I Samuel 1:6 – 8

Brothers, let's learn something from Elkanah's "why" questions. To ask her this series of questions is both **M**_____ and relationally **S**_____

II. Hannah Woman of Prayer:

I Samuel 1:9 – 11

Hannah went to the Lord with her broken heart and **P**_____ out her heart and soul in passionate **P**_____

God knew the need of the hour was for a man who could **H**_____ His Word and then **S**_____ it to others with integrity and zeal.

He saw her powerful **P**_____ in her heart for a son. That moved the heart of God to want to grant her request. When God hears passionate praying it moves Him deeply.

Her **R**_____ for the Lord's great purposes for Israel moved Him to want to help her

She **B**_____ God had heard her prayer and she **R**_____ her miracle boy.

She prayed from deep, **H**_____ **D**_____

She prayed as an **E**_____ **V**_____ awaiting His fulfillment

III. Hannah: Mother of a Man of God:

I Samuel 1:19, 20 and 26b - 28

The pictures we see of Hannah and the boy Samuel, her act of worship and surrender

Samuel grew up in the same household as Hophni and Phinehas. But the difference is that Samuel was **B**_____ and **P**_____ for by a Hannah

The tremendous words about Samuel's life and ministry I Sam. 3:19 – 21

Though he took many tours of Israel he always returned to his home base of **R**_____, the place where his mom birthed him and prayed for him

Hannah's legacy after Samuel: I Chronicles 6:28 she also got a Heman

Concluding Thoughts:

Discussion Starter Questions for Home Groups

- 1. What are your thoughts on the truth that the only requirement of a person to dwell in intimacy with God is to be comfortable dwelling in the love of God?*
- 2. What were your thoughts when you heard the teaching that some of our pictures of the nature of God come to us through the gift of motherhood?*
- 3. What do you think of Ken's point that just because something is legal to do doesn't necessarily insure that it is right, moral, or even a good way to live?*
- 4. What were you thinking as Ken talked about Elkanah's series of why questions to Hannah?*
- 5. In your opinion, why would God be awaiting prayers from His people that are prayed with passion and holy desperation?*
- 6. What is the significance pointing out the difference between Eli's two biological sons and Samuel; that they had different mothers?*
- 7. Why do you think Samuel lived in Ramah instead of one of the major cities of Israel?*
- 8. Read together aloud the story in I Thessalonians 2:6b – 9 and discuss insights you have regarding how Paul describes motherhood.*
- 9. Read together aloud Matthew 15:21 – 28 and discuss insights that you have about motherhood from this mother's story.*
- 10. Are you thankful for your mother's sacrifice to you? Does she know it? Have you encouraged mothers, single mothers in their journey lately?*

“Hannah: Samuel’s Mom”
I Samuel 1 (selected verses)

Introduction:

This morning as we turn our attention to the Word of the Lord, we are looking at the theme of motherhood, on this Mother’s Day 2014. One of the most wonderful things about the truth that we find in God’s Word is that God reveals Himself to us as knowable, kind, and gracious to us. He reveals Himself to us in human pictures so that we can more clearly understand His nature. And more specifically, the truth is that we get pictures of who God is from the human beings in our lives.

One of the clearest themes of the New Testament is that we are called to live a life of love. Paul is the one who writes about this theme often in his letters. For example, he told the Ephesians in 5:1, 2 that they were to *“Be imitators of God as dearly loved children, and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.”* The person, from whom we first learn to receive sacrificial love and respond to sacrificial love, is our mother.

Through John’s writings in the Bible we learn the truth that **the only requirement** of the person who lives in **deepening intimacy with God is to be comfortable Dwelling in the Love of God!** It doesn’t all depend on our spiritual disciplines, time in prayer, or gaining spiritual knowledge through reading and studying The Bible. The measuring stick of intimacy with God is to be comfortable giving and receiving the love of God!

I John 4:7 – 11 “Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, since God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.”

The Bible uses the family metaphor in numerous ways to communicate the truth that the Lord God desires to walk through life with us in **Relational Love**. We see pictures of God’s heart illustrated by our human relationships: That of a husband and wife, a dad to children, and brothers and sisters who love each other deeply. A significant part of God’s nature is revealed to us through the gift of motherhood.

Many aspects of God’s nature are communicated to us in Scripture by using **Masculine Pictures**. These pictures include doing tasks, creating, protecting, and strength. But many other aspects of the nature of God are communicated to us in Scripture using **Maternal Pictures**. These pictures include warmth, relational love, care-giving, and nurture.

God reveals His nature to us in Scripture as multidimensional. One of my most favorite Scriptures, upon which to meditate, is found in Exodus 34:5 – 7. God’s man Moses records it, and it is the only place in all of Scripture where God speaks for Himself about Himself. *“The Lord, the Lord, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love, and faithfulness, maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished.”*

I find it absolutely remarkable that the enemy has succeeded in portraying God to people in the world that He is this angry, distant, and punitive being who is just waiting for us to make a mistake so He can swing into punishment mode. When in actuality, God give us seven attributes about Himself, and tells us there are six loving and tender qualities in His nature, before He even mentions punishment!

In this message today we are going to focus on how God uses motherhood in our lives, the birthing and bonding of the mother and child, the gift of mothering and femininity to portray God’s **Nurturing** and **Caring** nature to us. The similarities between mothering and the nature of God are absolutely striking when you stop to think about it.

Let’s think together about the picture of a little baby in its mother’s arms, or a newborn drinking from a mother’s breast. It is an interesting coincidence that a newborn babies eyes focus 14 to 15 inches, the exact distance from a mother’s breast to her face! In this picture we see images of God:

Birthing – a mother endures intense pain to bring a baby into the world, and yet the mother’s heart is overwhelmed with love when the baby is laid in her arms. Similarly, the Lord went through incredible agony on the cross to give each of us the gift of new life, to bring us to new birth. Jesus told His followers, *“there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over 99 person who do not need to repent.”*

Bonding – is what happens in the mother’s body when the baby is en utero and the bonding that takes place as the mother pours love into the child to whom she has given life. There are nurturant aspects of the bonding process. The baby, which cannot fend for itself is bathed, cared for, caressed and made to feel secure. The picture is that of the Lord as our Good Shepherd who watches over and cares for each one of us as His people. The Holy Spirit lives in us and tends to our processes of growth and maturation as a child of God.

The **Relationship** that grows and develops between a mother and child. She is the child’s window of learning. As long as mom is there everything is OK. She can even take the sting out of a scrapped knee with kisses and she can make oatmeal that is edible. Similarly no one can relate to us in our spiritual person, heal us, feed us on bread from heaven, and tend to us like the Lord Jesus.

There is a radiance about a mother going about her care-giver’s role that is just beautiful to watch. A little child that is the recipient of this kind of radiant love of a mother is thinking to himself, “Cool, I wonder if all the little kids around here have one of these big loving people.

A mother shares her life with the child in the womb, through nursing, and for a lifetime. A mother's heart does well if her children are doing well. It gives a mother great joy to give her love to her children. What a picture of God's nature. The life-giving love of God is portrayed for us in this incredible sacrificial love of a mother.

Today we are going to focus on the attributes of motherhood that are found in my favorite mother story recorded for us in the Bible. Our mother under study today is Hannah: Samuel's mother. I think every mom in this room today will be able to find things in her heart and life that will touch you. Let's go visit with her in I Samuel 1 and 2.

I. The Picture a Woman Who is Grieved and Broken:

I Samuel 1:1 – 8

Many people can read this story and miss something that is tremendously important for us to know. As the story unfolds it appears that Samuel is a descendent of the tribe of Ephraim. But that is not the case at all. Back in Deuteronomy we learn that the Kohathite Levite clan was assigned to be given land in the tribal areas of Ephraim, Manasseh, and Dan.

In I Chronicles 6:26 – 28 when the writer is recalling the family history of the Levites who became the temple singers and worship leaders under king David, Elkanah and Samuel are listed in that record of Levites. As a matter of fact Samuel's dad is the fourth Elkanah listed in the family tree of Kohath.

Here is why that is an important piece of information for us to know and understand. It was one thing to be an Israelite from Ephraim and not be able to conceive and bring a boy into the world. It was another thing entirely to be a Levite woman married to a Levite man and be without a son. The entire purpose for a Levite man to marry a Levite woman was to have little Levite boys who would serve the Lord in the worship rites of the tabernacle, then later in the temple.

To not be able to do so was considered to be a divine act of punishment. So for Hannah to be a Levite wife who was unable to conceive and give birth to a son was hard enough on her maternal instincts and desires as a woman. But spiritually speaking, as people looked on at her barrenness they believed she was under the punishment of God for something that was unseen.

Then we get to double the sense of cursing and heartache she was feeling because she was also in a marriage to a man who had another wife named Peninnah. Let's make a point here from this issue of polygamy. It was permitted under the law of the time, the Code of Hammurabi. But just because something is **Legal** doesn't make it **Moral** nor does it insure that it is the best way to live nor even a good way to live. What a word for we who live in this culture in North America that is legalizing wickedness and calling it good!

The rival wife had no trouble conceiving and birthing little Levite boys and girls at all. She also has not trouble in letting Hannah know who the better wife is because she has had sons and daughters for Elkanah while Hannah has had none! Let's look in on the story of how Peninnah

acted toward Hannah. Women, take notice of the crushing effect this is having on this dear woman's empty heart and soul.

I Samuel 1:6 – 8 “And because the Lord had closed her womb, her rival kept provoking her in order to irritate her. 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. Elkanah her husband would say to her, ‘Hannah, why are you weeping? Why don't you eat? Why are you so downhearted? Don't I mean more to you than ten sons?’”

Now dear brothers, there is a message here for us in Elkanah's response to his wife Hannah's broken and grieving heart. We need to get a picture here of what is happening in this dear woman so that we can engage with our wives and daughters and granddaughters when they are feeling similarly. Asking a female who has a broken heart a series of questions that begin with the word why regarding her emotions is completely male and relationally stupid!

Then the dear brother tops it off by asking a question of her that points her to the fact that he is really all that she will ever need in life to be happy! Talk about being unaware of her feminine needs and emotions! Come on Hannah I have enough ego strength for both of us to live on. You don't need a son because you baby, have me!

Brothers, put away your Mr Fix It hat when a woman or girl you loves comes to you for comfort and help when they are hurting. There are three questions only that you may ask your wife, daughter, or granddaughters when they are hurting and come to you for comfort and love: What happened honey? How did that make you feel? What do you think you can do about your feelings?

II. Hannah a Woman of Prayer:

I Samuel 1:9 – 11 “Once when they had finished eating and drinking in Shiloh, Hannah stood up. Now Eli the priest was sitting on a chair by the doorpost of the Lord's temple. In bitterness of soul Hannah wept much and prayed to the Lord. And she made a vow, saying, ‘O 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.’”

Hannah went to the Lord God with her broken heart, and poured out her heart and soul to the Lord in prayer. My personal conviction is that the Lord had been waiting for this prayer to pour out of this precious woman's broken heart for years. He knew that the people of Israel were going through a terrible time of not hearing the Word of the Lord alive among them. The reason was that Eli and his sons were sinful, self-indulgent, and were obese from overeating. Eli's sons Hophni and Phinehas, although from the tribe of Levi and called to be men of God, were overtly wicked men, thieves, and adulterers.

God Almighty knew that the need of the hour was for a man to come on the scene in Israel who could hear the Word of the Lord and then speak it out to others with integrity and passion. So God knew before Hannah started praying that He was going to put a boy named Samuel in her

womb, bring Him to term and what He would become! God had been waiting for her prayer to fulfill His plans to send them a redeemer!

He saw powerful **Passion** in her heart, for a child. She pled with God because she had so much love in her heart and wanted to lavish it on a son. That moved God's heart to want to help her. When the Lord God Almighty sees passionate praying it touches Him deeply. We must be people who, like Hannah, mean business when we pray! She is praying so passionately that Eli can see her and thinks that she is drunk and rebukes her for it. Not your best day on the job there Eli!

Her **Reverence** for the Lord and His great purposes for Israel moved Him to want to help her. She came and knelt before Him and cried out to Him for help, with a full knowledge that she desperately needed God's help for her to conceive and give birth to a son. Her words are revealing a heart of a woman who passionately desires to make a difference for God in this world. If you give me a son I will give him to you!

She **Believed** God had heard her prayer and ultimately she **Received** her miracle. When she went home she had a renewed interest in intimacy with Elkanah. She knew that this time something would be different. The Lord God used Hannah's faith to bring into existence a person who only existed in God's heart and Hannah's passionate praying: Samuel the next great prophet of God, who would lead Israel back to worship of Yahweh!

The heart of God for us is steadfast and faithful love for the good of His people. The Lord specializes in using as models of His great grace people like Hannah. The truth is that through the passionate prayer of a godly mother named Hannah, the Lord God revealed His nature, His love, and His work to us. Her prayers model two very powerful things for us that we all need to see and put into practice regardless of our gender:

She prayed with passionate heart-cry to the Lord God from a deep and **Holy Desperation!** Hannah's desperate heart-cry to God moved her to pray until God acted on her behalf. From my seat as a man who longs to experience God's presence and power in our church life, this is a heart attitude that we need here at Cedar Grove. **For whom are you praying and is the Lord God waiting for you to have this kind of desperation before He acts to redeem that life?**

She prayed as an **Empty Vessel** waiting to for the promise of God to be **Fulfilled!** One of the clear things about walking with the Lord God is that He does not fill people who are already full of our own selfish motives, self-interest, and who glory in our own accomplishments. God fills empty men and women who know how desperately we need Him to act on earth in our lives!

III. Hannah: Mother of a Man of God:

I Samuel 1:19, 20 *"Early the next morning they arose and worshiped before the Lord and then went back to Ramah. Elkanah lay with Hannah his wife, and the Lord remembered her. So in the course of time Hannah conceived and gave birth to a son. She named him Samuel, saying, 'Because I asked the Lord for him.'"*

I Samuel 1:26b – 28 *“I am the woman who stood here beside you praying to the Lord. I prayed for this child, and the Lord has granted me what I asked of him. So now I give him to the Lord. For his whole life he will be given over to the Lord.”*

There are simply some awesome pictures that I want to share with you as we think about the legacy that Hannah prayed into existence that day at the Tabernacle at Shiloh.

The second chapter tells us that Hannah praised God with a powerful prayer of praise. Then it says that Samuel grew up there in the tabernacle community of Shiloh under the mentorship of Eli. We have already noted that Eli raised two sons who were horribly wicked. And yet, the Scriptures tell us that Samuel grew to be a man of God under Eli’s training. The big difference between Eli’s sons Hophni and Phinehas and the boy Samuel, is that Samuel was birthed and prayed for mightily by a **Godly Mom** named **Hannah!**

There are tremendous words about Samuel’s life and ministry found in the third chapter of this book, verses 19 – 21: *“The Lord was with Samuel as he grew up, and he let none of his words fall to the ground. And all Israel from Dan to Beersheba recognized that Samuel was attested as a prophet of the Lord. The Lord continued to appear at Shiloh, and there he revealed himself to Samuel through his word.”*

Another truly beautiful thing about this story of Samuel as a man of God who led Israel is this truth. After touring Israel and ministering the word of the Lord Samuel always went home to **Ramah** the place where his mom **Prayed** for him and **Taught** him to be a man of God. Samuel chose his mom’s hometown as his home base for carrying on his ministry as prophet and leader.

Just in case you are wondering if God did any other great things for Hannah because of her praying heart and passion for God, let’s read I Samuel 2:20 – 21a: *Eli would bless Elkanah and his wife, saying, ‘May the Lord give you children by this woman to take the place of the one she prayed for and gave to the Lord.’ And the Lord was gracious to Hannah; she conceived and gave birth to three sons and two daughters.”*

One last thought about his incredible woman and the legacy we see of her four sons, Samuel being one of them, and grandsons in I Chronicles 6. Not only did she get a Samuel. She also got a great-grandson named Heman, who was one of the greatest worship leaders in the history of Israel. He was the lead worshipper along with Asaph in the Levitical worshippers set up by kings David and Solomon.

Conclusion:

We conclude this message where we began it. It is vital that we understand the truth that the Lord is after intimate relational love with each one of us. We tend to think primarily in terms of the masculine pictures of God and major on them. Men are doers, creators, and do work for the sake of working and providing for their loved ones. Women tend to focus more on the relational aspects of life, on being warm, nurturing, loving, and gentle. As a culture we tend to elevate and reward the masculine motifs and to devalue the feminine motifs. It is almost as if there is some

cosmic force out there that doesn't want the people of this planet to know the warm and relational aspects of God the Father's love for us!

The Father's love, revealed to us in both masculine and feminine pictures must be received and dwelt in by faith, it must be actively engaged in and taken into our lives. In the same way we must receive Christ Jesus as Savior and Redeemer, and we must receive the Holy Spirit in our lives as believers, we must receive by faith dwelling each new day, in the Father's love!

Titus 3:4 – 7: Listen carefully to how Paul tells us God works in our salvation. *“But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life.”*