

"Hannah"

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P. M.

Scripture Lesson: -

Text: - I Samuel 1: 20. "Because I have asked him of the Lord"

Introduction: - There is no greater spiritual potential than a praying mother. As the curtain of history lifts upon a praying mother on Old Testament times, it is the occasion of her visit to the temple, where Eli the Priest of God was sitting at his post. Her name was Hannah. She was a woman of much prayer.

Although a woman of prayer, Hannah carried a great sorrow in her life. She was childless. This was a severe reproach to any Israelitish woman who had a husband. Hannah prayed much about her reproach. She not only prayed about her burden at home, but she took her burden in prayer to the house of God.

God's house is a different place. It has been consecrated and set apart as a place of spiritual ministry for those who may be in need. God has given this designation to his house, in the Scripture, "Mine house shall be called an house of prayer". It is possible to get help in the house of God which cannot be obtained elsewhere.

I.

Hannah's prayer. She prayed in the house of God and there made a solemn covenant to dedicate her son to God, if God should give her a son. She said in her prayer, "I will give him unto the Lord all the days of his life and there shall no razor come upon his head". Her prayer was offered in such fervency, that Eli, the High Priest, thought she was drunk with wine. The Scripture thus describes the event: "Therefore Eli thought she had been drunken. And Eli said unto her, how long wilt thou be drunken? Put away thy wine from thee".

When we become dead earnest in behalf of our faith

We are certain to invoke criticism. The disciples were branded by the world as being drunk at Pentecost. Peter was quick to explain in his sermon that the disciples were not drunk. He said: "For these are not drunken as ye suppose, seeing it is but the third hour of the day".

Hannah was not drunk with wine, only her soul was greatly burdened in prayer. She answered Eli, saying "No my Lord, I am a woman of a sorrowful spirit: I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but have poured my soul before the Lord". We may well thank God for such earnestness in prayer. The earnest praying of Hannah was destined to give to Israel one of the greatest prophets of all time.

In due time Samuel was born in answer to prayer. When the child was old enough Hannah brought him to the temple to present him to the Lord in fulfillment of the promise which she had made in her prayer. In bringing the child immediately, according to her promise to present him to the Lord, Hannah furnishes a significant example. The things we promise to God in prayer, we should fulfill immediately. If all unfilled promises made to God in prayer by members of any congregation, there would be no small stir in Zion and many things would come to pass for the glory of God.

When Hannah presented Samuel to the Lord in the presence of Eli, the priest, she said, "For this child I prayed; and the Lord hath given me my petition which I asked of him: therefore also have I lent him to the Lord; as long as he liveth he shall be lent to the Lord."

Following this declaration, Hannah offered a prophetic prayer. It stands as one of the most beautiful prayers in the Bible. In the introduction of the prayer we find expression of the dignity which permeates prayer. "My heart rejoiced in the Lord, mine horn is greatly exalted in the Lord: my mouth is enlarged over mine enemies; because I rejoice in thy salvation. There is none as holy as the Lord: for there is none besides thee: neither is there any rock like our God."

II.

While Samuel was yet a child, he ministered unto the Lord in the temple. The Scripture says:; "But Samuel ministered before the Lord, being a child, girded with a linen ephod". The scripture declares also in another place, "A little child shall lead them". In the child Samuel we have revealed the spiritual potentialities of childhood.

The child has potentiality for both good and evil. In Samuel's case, the spiritual potentiality was exercised for the glory of God. We should ever bear in mind that in Samuel's case the spiritual potentiality was exercised for the glory of God. We should bear in mind that in Samuel's case we have a praying mother. Cigaret smoking, drinking, ballroom mothers do not produce men like Samuel.

The religious training of the child should begin early. Parents make a great mistake in saying, "I will let my child grow up and then make his own choice in religious matters. I will do nothing about his religious training now, lest I prejudice the child in matters of religion". Parents do not pursue this course about other things. The child is sent to the public school, and parents help mold the thought of the child in many things. Parents who do not wish to prejudice children in matters of religion do not hesitate to talk politics and other subjects with their children, and with no little emphasis.

Conclusion:- Samuel, a child in answer to the prayers of his mother, grew up to be a man of prayer. Samuel prevailed mightily with the Lord in prayer. When Israel failed to heed his admonitions and went astray he said, "Moreover as for me, God forbid that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you: but I will teach you the good and the right way: only fear the Lord, and serve him in truth with all your heart: for consider how great things he hath done for you. But if ye shall still do wickedly ye shall be consumed, both ye and your king".

The things over which we have no control, we can commit to the Lord and continue to pray about them.

It would have been a sin for Samuel to quit praying for Israel, when the people failed to heed his Godly admonitions. It will likewise be a sin for us to quit praying, when all of our efforts have seemingly failed. Prayer is still available in the presence of closed doors. It is a sin when we quit praying. May God help us to walk humbly before him and keep praying, regardless of what the outward circumstances may be.