1 Samuel 1.0

Planting Seeds of Hope

“It all starts with a baby”

Mothers Day, May 13, 2012

Today we celebrate Motherhood, and more specifically, Mothers. Mom’s we today we celebrate you, we rejoice in you. God has a plan for your life.

He has a plan to know you personally and to be known by you, this is His great and general plan for everyone, and with that plan, God has a very specific plan for you personally, in His divine strategy for the redemption of the world, in which He brings billions more into His Great and General Plan.

You are very important to God’s Plan.

Today we are beginning a new series based on scripture from the Book of 1st Samuel. How perfectly fitting to begin this study today, on Mother’s Day. I didn’t plan it this way, but our Blessed Holy Spirit did and momentarily you will see why.

In about 1,426 BC, Joshua, the son of Nun and protégé’ of Moses died after having lead the Hebrew Nation into the Promised Land and through the mostly successful conquest of Canaan. For 65 years and three generations, God had provided strong central leadership for His people.

Judges Chapter’s One and Two record how that after Joshua dies, the loosely organized tribes of the Chosen People of God, faltered and stumbled failing miserably in the completion of their mission, which was to utterly drive the wicked, pagan people from the land God had given them.

It has been the ambition of mankind since the garden to govern themselves, to go their own way, and we have argued with one another and with God for centuries that we have what it takes, we don’t need extra rules, or law, nor do we need anyone telling us right from wrong, we can handle it.

But the truth is that we cannot handle it. Successful society requires regulation and oversight in balance. Just right, just enough.

Too much and you get despotism, where one person or group rules with an iron fist, and whose sin nature, always dominates their subjects selfishly, seeking their own at the expense of everyone else.
Too little and you have anarchy and chaos where no one is in charge and everyone does what he or she thinks right in their own eyes and heart, and whose sin nature, always seeks its own at the expense of everyone else.

God in His Great and General Plan for mankind had given just the right amount of regulation, just the exact direction we need, in a perfect law from our Perfect Creator, manufacturers instruction if you will.

After Joshua died, the Lord gave the Jews, Judges, men and at least one women, for about 270 years these Judges lead Israel out of one mess after another. They would run to themselves, and find what we all do when we get to the end of ourselves, disaster.

Then God would raise up a Judge, some who’s names are famous, synonymous with victory and sometimes with defeat and compromise themselves, Gideon, Sampson, Deborah, all in all 15, leaders, to point them back to the source, the only source of victorious living, Jehovah God.

We will refer back to the Book of the Judges from time to time during this study, as 1 Samuel begins at the end of the time of the Judges whose book begins with these words in Judges 2:10

10 And also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers: and there arose another generation after them, which knew not the LORD, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel.

And ends with these words from Judges 20:25

25 In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes.

Two hundred and seventy years of mankind trying to do it on their own, with God’s Perfect Law fresh on the stones of Moses, with the miracles of God in Egypt still fresh on the pages of their history, 270 years of disaster, defeat, divine intervention, of renewal and revival followed by compromise, carnality and chaos, then repeating the vicious cycle all over again.

We think that we are in such an age of enlightenment that humanity has evolved far beyond the cyclical patterns the Jews experienced in the time of the Judges, but we are fools to believe such ignorance!

3,000 years later, after hundreds of social and political experiments, countless wars and reconciliations, literally explosion of knowledge and education, we are still circling, still in that same old cyclical pattern of disaster, defeat, divine intervention, renewal, revival, victory, compromise, carnality, chaos, disaster, defeat, divine intervention, and so on and on.

And in all of this, God has a plan, a Great and General Plan for the redemption of humanity, and we all have a part in His Plan, and mothers, He has a special role for you in the plan, because His plan, starts with a baby. Yep, a teeny, tiny baby.
It all starts with a baby. From the foundations of history, God’s plan of redemption begins with a child. Yes He created Adam and Eve fully grown, but when they messed things up, He gave them Able to begin anew.

When Cain killed Able, God gave Seth to Eve. Reading in God’s Word, in His Story, you will find that every time God is about to do something new and wonderful in His Great Plan, He sends a baby.

Often in impossible situations, in difficult or unlikely circumstances, He sends Isaac to aged Sarai, Jacob to barren Rebecca.

When all was lost and utterly hopeless to the Israelites in bondage to Egypt, they cried out for a deliverer and God sent Moses to Jocebed.

And when we cried out for a Deliver of our own, He sent Jesus to a young, virgin girl named Mary, and He is still sending Him to us even today! When we cry out for deliverance He still sends Jesus! But that’s the plan, He is no longer a baby, He is a grown, King on a Throne! That’s the plan!

When that time was full, God gave John to old and barren Elisabeth, John would be the forerunner of the Messiah and the last prophet.

Today I want to talk about the last Judge and the first Prophet, Samuel.

When the Israelites invaded Canaan, they found in Jericho a lady who ran a boarding house of sorts, who befriended some Hebrew spies and assisted in the destruction of Jericho and the conquest of Canaan. Her name was Rahab, and the Bible says she was a harlot, forgiven and redeemed through faith in our Great God, she became part of the plan.

Rahab had a son named Salmon, by a man named Nashon, who had a son named Boaz, who, in a wonderful story of God’s grace and a woman’s faithfulness, a true story of motherhood, had a son by Ruth named Obed, who was the father of Jesse who was the father of David who would be a man after God’s own heart and a great king in Israel, who’s eventual wife Bathsheba would give birth to Soloman, the greatest king and wisest man ever to reign, and eventually our Lord Jesus would come from this line.

But I am getting ahead of the story. Today for a few minutes I would like to introduce you to another mother, one who’s courage and commitment is testimony to God’s Grace and who’s faithfulness should be held up as a model for mothers everywhere and for us today. And not just mothers, everyone should aspire to this woman’s righteousness and sacrifice for God.

Her name was Hannah and she lived toward the end of the time of the Judges, in fact her son would be the last of the Judges of Israel and the first of the Prophets!

Hannah’s story was a lot like the stories of many other mothers of the great men of God, it started out rocky, it was discouraging and difficult, but in the hard ground of adversity, Hannah was sowing seeds of greatness!
Hannah was sowing seeds of faith. 1 Samuel 1:1-18

Now there was a certain man of Ramathaimzophim, of mount Ephraim, and his name was Elkanah, the son of Jeroham, the son of Elihu, the son of Tohu, the son of Zuph, an Ephrathite: and he had two wives; the name of the one was Hannah, and the name of the other Peninnah: and Peninnah had children, but Hannah had no children. And this man went up out of his city yearly to worship and to sacrifice unto the LORD of hosts in Shiloh. And the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, the priests of the LORD, were there. And when the time was that Elkanah offered, he gave to Peninnah his wife, and to all her sons and her daughters, portions: But unto Hannah he gave a worthy portion; for he loved Hannah: but the LORD had shut up her womb.

And her adversary also provoked her sore, for to make her fret, because the LORD had shut up her womb. And as he did so year by year, when she went up to the house of the LORD, so she provoked her; therefore she wept, and did not eat. Then said Elkanah her husband to her, Hannah, why weepest thou? and why eatest thou not? and why is thy heart grieved? am not I better to thee than ten sons? So Hannah rose up after they had eaten in Shiloh, and after they had drunk. Now Eli the priest sat upon a seat by a post of the temple of the LORD. And she was in bitterness of soul, and prayed unto the LORD, and wept sore. And she vowed a vow, and said, O LORD of hosts, if thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of thine handmaid, and remember me, and not forget thine handmaid, but wilt give unto thine handmaid a man child, then I will give him unto the LORD all the days of his life, and there shall no razor come upon his head.

And it came to pass, as she continued praying before the LORD, that Eli marked her mouth. Now Hannah, she spake in her heart; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard: therefore Eli thought she had been drunken. And Eli said unto her, How long wilt thou be drunken? put away thy wine from thee. And Hannah answered and said, No, my lord, I am a woman of a sorrowful spirit: I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but have poured out my soul before the LORD. Count not thine handmaid for a daughter of Belial: for out of the abundance of my complaint and grief have I spoken hitherto. Then Eli answered and said, Go in peace: and the God of Israel grant thee thy petition that thou hast asked of him. And she said, Let thine handmaid find grace in thy sight. So the woman went her way, and did eat, and her countenance was no more sad.

It would appear that Hannah was the wife of Elkanah’s youth, likely having married for love many years before, and despite their affection for one another, things had just not worked out. Hannah was barren, she could not have children.

I suspect that they tried and tried for years, and eventually, even though it was frowned upon by the scriptures, Elkanah took another wife, legally, in order to have a family and to have sons to carry on in his latter years.

In their time, sons were a legacy, vital to carrying on their family name and trust, critical to completing their mission from God, to multiply and subdue the earth. And children, especially sons were also important in their latter years. There were no retirement plans, no social security, no 401k or medicare, these are all recent evils, in their day and not too long ago, family took care of family, and was devasting for a family to lack new generations to care for the older.
So Elkanah married a woman named Peninnah, who gave him children and gave Hannah a hard time. Obviously Elkanah loved Hannah most which made Peninnah very jealous.

Elkanah was a good and righteous man, a Levite, who honored the Lord faithfully, and each year would take his family to sacrifice to the Lord at Shiloh, where the tabernacle and the ark of the covenant was kept at that time.

After the sacrifice, the man would distribute portions of meat from the animal he had offered, giving the choices cuts to those he would honor most. This drove Peninnah crazy and she would harp on Hannah, teasing her about her infertility.

People can be so cruel, and life can really hurt, and God would have us respond to our critics and our enemies like Hannah did. Hannah took her hurt to the Lord. One night after the feasting, she went into the quiet of the temple and prayed to God, offering to give her child to Him in service, if only he would grant her life to grow inside her.

We must stop here and say once again, that God, Himself is the Author of life, we participate, and Mother’s you are His blessed instrument of creation, and He gives and He takes away. All life is precious and has the fingerprint of God upon it and we must cherish and treasure every life, beginning with life in the womb.

After sharing her heart with God, Hannah went home in peace, knowing as Paul would centuries later, that giving our troubles to God, leaving our burdens with God brings indescribable peace.

**Philippians 4:6-7**

6 Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. 7 And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

Hannah had sown seeds of faith. Because Hannah was a woman of faith. Mother’s I have prayed to God to increase your faith. Please remember that most often, faith is born of adversity, please do not cower and hide or run from your problems, give them to God in faith believing, sow seeds of faith in your life and see what God can do! What He will do!

Hannah was sowing seeds of faith and Hannah was sowing seeds of sacrifice and of righteousness. 1 Samuel 1:19-23

19 And they rose up in the morning early, and worshipped before the LORD, and returned, and came to their house to Ramah: and Elkanah knew Hannah his wife; and the LORD remembered her. 20 Wherefore it came to pass, when the time was come about after Hannah had conceived, that she bare a son, and called his name Samuel, saying, Because I have asked him of the LORD. 21 And the man Elkanah, and all his house, went up to offer unto the LORD the yearly sacrifice, and his vow. 22 But Hannah went not up; for she said unto her husband, I will not go up until the child be weaned, and then I will bring him, that he may appear before the LORD, and there abide for ever. 23 And Elkanah her husband said
unto her, Do what seemeth thee good; tarry until thou have weaned him; only the LORD establish his word. So the woman abode, and gave her son suck until she weaned him.

I say to you today that faith has legs, faith has substance in our behavior and our attitude or it isn’t faith. Hannah let her request be known to God and He heard her prayer and knowing it was from her heart, and according to His Great Plan, God granted her request and gave her a son, her seeds planted in faith would bear fruit, (and so will yours).

And Hannah continued to sow seeds, seeds of sacrifice and of righteousness. How often is it that when we cry out to God and He gives us what we request of Him, do we then go back on our promises? Often we hoard that blessing or resource He provides and keeping it to ourselves sometimes even claim it as our own!

God answers prayer from the abundance of love and purpose in His heart for us, and He is to get the glory and He is to get the honor and He is entitled to the fruit of our blessings, fruit that is found only in our sacrifice and righteousness, which is found only in our relationship with Christ.

Hannah made good her promise to God, offered in faith, confirmed in sacrifice, she stood upright before the Lord. And her righteousness, her faithfulness gave courage to her husband to give up his firstborn son of Hannah, whom he had been waiting on for years too.

Hannah wasn’t the only one sacrificing here, and her sacrifice opened the door for both Elkanah and Samuel’s own personal sacrifice, and for God’s plan! What or how would God have you sacrifice today? How can you make good on your pledge to God today?

Hannah was sowing seeds of faith, seeds of sacrifice and seeds of righteousness and Hannah was sowing seeds of service.

1 Samuel 1:24-28, 2:11

24 And when she had weaned him, she took him up with her, with three bullocks, and one ephah of flour, and a bottle of wine, and brought him unto the house of the LORD in Shiloh: and the child was young. 25 And they slew a bullock, and brought the child to Eli. 26 And she said, Oh my lord, as thy soul liveth, my lord, I am the woman that stood by thee here, praying unto the LORD. 27 For this child I prayed; and the LORD hath given me my petition which I asked of him: 28 Therefore also I have lent him to the LORD; as long as he liveth he shall be lent to the LORD. And he worshipped the LORD there.

2:11 And Elkanah went to Ramah to his house. And the child did minister unto the LORD before Eli the priest.

Hannah was creating something in her faithful service to the Lord that would become a big thing in Israel, and over the next few weeks as we study the life and ministry of Samuel, we will see how her sacrifice and service to God bore fruit in the life of her son, bringing restoration to their land and healing to their mess and brought about blessings to all of humanity, even to us today.
We live in a sort of a “time of the judges”. Our biblical foundations are crumbling around us and secularism and mixed messages, and wrong priorities and all sorts of wickedness has invaded our culture, our society and our Churches.

Our homes and families are suffering, often in shambles, and it will only get worse.

God sent His Son, our Messiah, our Savior, our Redeemer, our Lord to save us from ourselves and from this mess. He is our only Savior, God will not send another baby to rescue us, that work is accomplished.

But, Father God is still sending babies! And every baby He sends has a father and a mother, and its well past time for the fathers to step up to the plate and lead their families in faith and righteousness and sacrifice and service.

And every baby God sends has a mother. A mother who can make a difference like Hannah, to live her life sowing seeds of faith, sacrifice, righteousness and service, seeds that will bear fruit in the lives of her children who will then sow their own seeds.

And God will raise up prophets and pastors and teachers and evangelists, and leaders and mothers and fathers who will restore our land and bring healing to our mess and see His Kingdom come.

Mothers and everyone else, I want to encourage you today, to seek to be like Hannah. Beginning with committing your heart and your life anew to Jesus today.

544 Have Thine Own Way Lord

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