

There Is a Song in Every Barren Womb

by Carter Conlon

God's judgment is not arbitrary, but rather a response to a people who have misrepresented his life, nature, and character, and he will always have a testimony in the earth.

Duration: 57:26

Scripture: 1 Samuel 2:27, 1 Samuel 2:32, Matthew 6:33, 1 Corinthians 10:11

Topics: "Barren"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the four hundred years of silence from God and how He never leaves Himself without a testimony. The speaker emphasizes that God determined to send His Son, Jesus Christ, in glorious power and visitation. However, before Jesus came, God needed a voice to announce Him. The speaker also explores how God deals with His people when they turn His testimony into a false religion, using the example of Eli and his sons.

Transcript

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This recording cannot be posted on any website. However, written permission to link to the Times Square Church homepage may be requested by emailing [info](mailto:info@timessquarechurch.org) at timessquarechurch.org. Other recordings are available by calling 1-800-488-0854 or by writing to Times Square Church Tape Ministry, 1657 Broadway, New York, New York, 10019. I have a word this morning from the Lord.

It's a word for people. You've come into the house this morning and you are grieved. You are grieved at the lack of spiritual fruit in your own life.

You've been a seeker of God and you've come in faithfully, perhaps even for years in some cases. But you're wondering, God, why? Why am I here today and why is there such a lack of life in me? Why is it that the deepest cry of my heart seems as of yet unanswered? Now, if you will bear with me, I believe that you'll have the answer before this message is finished. I know this is from the throne of God.

The enemy is fighting hard that this message not come out today. And it started long before this service today. You can trust me on this.

But I've got a message for you today called There is a Song in Every Barren Womb. First Samuel, Chapter 2. If you'll turn there with me, let's pray together. Now, Lord, you are speaking something to this generation.

You have shown me something, a secret of your heart. You've shown it to me in the scriptures. You've given my heart a clear understanding of where you're taking us as a people.

Father, I pray for the quickening of the Holy Spirit, the ability to speak this clearly and simply, to be animated by the heart and the passion of God. No human passion, no natural passion, only that which is in God's heart. I pray that you anoint our ears to hear today.

Lord, truly, you are taking us on a journey. And we sense the demonic is upset. God, we thank you for that.

We thank you that the enemy is kind enough to confirm when we are on the right path. We give you the praise and the glory. We thank you for it.

God, we thank you. In Jesus' mighty name. 1 Samuel chapter 2, beginning at verse 27.

There's a song in every barren womb. There came a man of God unto Eli and said unto him, Thus saith the Lord, did I plainly appear unto the house of thy father when they were in Egypt in Pharaoh's house? And did I choose him out of all the tribes of Israel to be my priest and to offer upon mine altar, to burn incense, to wear an ephod before me? And did I give to the house of thy father all the offerings made by fire of the children of Israel? Wherefore, kick ye up my sacrifice and mine offering, which I have commanded in my habitation, and honorest thy sons above me, to make yourselves fat with the chiefest of all the offerings of Israel my people. Wherefore, the Lord God of Israel saith, I said indeed that thy house and the house of thy father should walk before me forever.

But now the Lord saith, Be it far from me, for them that honor me I will honor, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed. Behold, the days come that I will cut off thine arm and the arm of thy father's house, and there shall not be an old man in thine house. And thou shalt see an enemy in my habitation in all the wealth which God shall give Israel.

And there shall not be an old man in thine house forever. And the man of thine whom I shall not cut off from mine altar shall be to consume thine eyes and to grieve thine heart, and all the increase of thine house shall die in the flower of their age. And this shall be a sign unto thee that shall come upon thy two sons on Hophni and Phinehas, and one day they shall die, both of them.

And I will raise me up a faithful priest that shall do according to that which is in my heart and in my mind, and I will build him a shore house, and he shall walk before mine anointed forever. It shall come to pass that everyone that is left in thine house shall come and crouch to him for a piece of silver and a morsel of bread, and shall say, Put me, I pray thee, into one of the priest's offices that I may eat a piece of bread. Now, folks, if you're discouraged here today, I want you to hold on.

I want you to hold through till we get to the end of this word today, because I have to take you on a bit of a journey. In order to understand what God was about to do in this generation, and perhaps to have an understanding of the pattern of God, how he deals with his own people, how he deals with a people who have taken the testimony that he determined that they should have of him, and they have turned it into a false religion, how does he deal with it? The patterns of God never change. You remember Paul said in 1

Corinthians chapter 10 and verse 11.

Now, prior to this verse, there were a listing of things that happened to the children of Israel when they were going through the wilderness. And Paul says, All these things happened to them for our examples, and they are written for our admonition. That means our instruction.

Upon whom the ends of the world are come. Now, I do believe if Paul thought the ends of the world had come on his generation, how much more today? Folks, if you've got your eyes closed, if you don't see this world unraveling very, very quickly now, very quickly, all around us, a lawlessness is breaking out. There is a very deep difficulty coming upon the whole world as we know it in the not too distant future.

Now, God has a pattern because he will always have a testimony in the earth. Now, in this day that we're reading about in Samuel, the religious condition of Eli's day had produced immoral and self-seeking sons. Eli was a backslidden, a type of a backslidden priesthood.

And his priesthood, having lost its authority, he had no spiritual authority. He couldn't correct his sons. Nobody was listening to him.

And his priesthood, it was a lazy priesthood, had produced sons that the Scripture tells us in the previous verses to the ones that I read, they were randomly fornicating while attending to the service of God. They were immoral and they were living in rampant immorality. And they were coming in.

You can see them on the Sabbath day, whatever day it was. They came to the temple. They're going through the temple rituals.

But behind the scenes, they become grossly immoral to the point where they are seeking out women at the temple door to commit fornication with. And not only this, but they're standing at the door. They're no longer content to live by faith.

God commands that the ministry should live by faith. But these men were standing at the door and no longer willing to live by that which God provides. And they were demanding of the people the choice cuts of their offering.

They're demanding the fillet, in other words. They were supposed to take a hook of three prongs. Now, there's a lot of typology in this, obviously.

It speaks clearly of the totality and the provision of God. They were to cast it into the pot of the offering. And whatever God chose as it is to have cling to one of those hooks, that was to be the portion that provided for them and for their families.

But they were no longer content. And they began to stand before the people and they began to demand the choice cuts as it is for themselves as they came into the house. And the Bible says the people began to abhor the offering of the Lord.

They began to see the offering that they brought to God as a vile thing, a disgusting thing. Because of these men who stood and demanded the choice cuts for themselves. Now, folks, we can easily castigate this priesthood.

We can cast it down. We can say how awful, how terrible, how immoral, how religiously corrupt. But we can also forget that under the New Testament, we too are called kings and priests unto the Lord.

Revelation 1, verses 5 and 6. John says unto him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood and has made us kings and priests unto God and his father. And so the question, therefore, we must ask ourselves, especially in this hour that we're living in, is why am I at the door of God's house? Folks, you and I have to ask that question to ourselves. Why did we come to church this morning? Why am I sitting here? Why am I doing what I'm doing? Why am I singing the songs of Zion? How am I living? How am I representing Christ before this generation? It's easy to look at those who have gone before and literally just throw, as it is, our most fiercest condemnation upon them, failing to see that we might even be following, some of us at least, in their footsteps.

Now, there's no doubt numerous warnings had come to them. Until finally, a man of God comes with the ominous declaration of a soon coming judgment on this God dishonoring religious system. The scripture just says clearly, this has been going on for quite some time.

Until one day, a man of God simply appears. And that's the way God will always do something. He finds a vessel.

He will put an anointing on a vessel. And this man of God comes into the scene. He's fearless.

He doesn't care if he's going to invoke the ire of an entire backslidden religious system. But he makes a clear declaration. This is abomination in the sight of God.

The glory of God is departing from the people because of this. And the man says, there's a judgment now. The justice of God must come because the sons of Eli could no longer hear the warnings.

As a matter of fact, in chapter 2 and verse, I believe it's chapter 1 or 2, verse 25. The scripture says that the sons of Eli couldn't hear anymore. And the reason they couldn't hear is because God had determined to slay them.

It's amazing when you begin to realize that there's a flashpoint of God's judgment. He will only endure for so long with something that misrepresents his life, his nature and his character. And he says, there's enough of this.

It's gone on long enough. It's robbing the people who are coming to my house of the knowledge of who I am. These young men have closed their ears.

They're not willing to hear. Even if I send a prophet among them, they're not willing to hear. And so, therefore, I'm going to take them literally out of the picture completely.

And he begins to speak this man of God, the judgment that is coming into Eli's house. Now, look and follow closely on how God judges false Christian religion, in particular, in our generation. Verse 31, he says, behold, the days come that I will cut off thine arm and the arm of thy father's house, and there shall not be an old man in your house.

Now, this is a judgment of God. It speaks to me of the loss of wisdom. It speaks to me of a people who rise and they lose respect for those who have gone before them.

There'll not be an old man in your house. There'll not be a grandfather, a father of the faith as it is. Your house is going to be led by all young men, all perhaps in their early 30s, late 20s, whatever it is.

They have no experience. They're very unwise. They're being led largely by the flesh.

The desires and lust of their own heart for success, ambition is leading them. But you see, this system that's under the justice of God casts away the old as if they're of no use anymore to the house of God. This is a justice of God.

This is a judgment of God. I thank God that in this house that we have Pastor David Wilkerson. I pray God with all my heart that he'd be standing in this pulpit after I'm dead.

I pray he'd still be here speaking to this house. We have Reverend Ben Crandall who's gone a long way in the ways of God. We had at one time Jack West until the Lord took him home.

We had men of age and experience standing, speaking words of life and encouragement and direction. And God forbid this house should ever get to the place where there is no longer any representation as it is of the ancient of days. Any who have walked with God have known the pitfalls.

This is a judgment that came on the house of Eli. No representation of the ancient of days. And Daniel says of the ancient of days in Daniel chapter 7 and verse 9 that he's the one who cast down false thrones.

And he is wisdom in its completeness. He describes him as having his hair and his head are as pure wool. It speaks of experience.

It speaks of there's no ambition. These are lives that have been laid down for the glory of God. And God forbid that in this house we should ever begin to discount those who have gone before us.

The Lord said to Solomon in Proverbs 1 8, My son, hear the instruction of thy father and the law of thy mother, for they shall be an ornament of grace unto thy head and chains about thy neck. Hear the instruction of your father. Don't close your ears to those who have gone before you.

This instruction will give you proper knowledge in your mind. And it will be an adorning of Christ around about your neck. It's a tragedy.

Eli, even in his backslidden condition, tried to speak to his sons. But you see, his sons had cast off age as being insignificant. They were no longer willing to listen to their father.

And instead of having grace on their heads and chains about their neck, these adorning as it is crowning jewels of Jesus Christ, these truths of Christ, all they had around their necks were the arms of women that they had led into sinful practice. What a difference it was from what God had destined the ministry to be. In verse 32, he says, You'll see an enemy in your habitation and in all the wealth that God shall give unto Israel.

And there not be an old man in your house forever. He said to Eli, you're going to see an enemy come in and take away all the wealth that I would have given you. The knowledge of God, the life of God, the treasure of God.

And of course, Eli lived to see this. When the Philistine army came in and captured the ark of God and Eli died, the shock of it all as it finally hit him. It's not as if the word wasn't there.

I don't know if he could clearly hear it anymore. But the shock of it all when it happened suddenly. And folks, you better be walking with God because we know even from 9-11-2001 how suddenly things can change.

Suddenly, you've got to have the stability. You've got to be walking with God. You've got to be walking an honest walk with God.

Or the things that you even thought you had could be taken away in just a moment. Eli, perhaps, was comfortable in his priesthood. And all of a sudden, in a moment, everything, including his immoral sons, are taken away.

And of course, he lost his own life in the process. Verse 33, it says, And the man of thine, whom I will not cut off from my altar, shall be to consume thine eyes and to grieve thine heart, and the increase of thine house shall die in the flower of their age. Now, in other words, the ministry that is left is going to become a visible grief to man and God.

The Lord says, I can't cut them completely off because as long as man lives, there will always be those who will misrepresent me. But those who are left of your type of ministry will become a visible grief to you. And there will be a visible grief to me, the Lord says.

They will take away from you, it says, to grieve, to consume your eyes. They'll take away true vision from you. You'll come to the house of the Lord and you'll be looking for hope, courage, a reason to live.

But these men, no, they don't see you as the body of Christ. They see you as a prospect. They see you as a donor to their ministry.

And their whole focus is how to get you to be a larger donor so that you can enhance their vision of themselves. They'll take away true vision. They'll take away what it really means to walk with Christ.

The treasure of the resurrected Christ will be obscured from your eyes. You'll come to them looking for hope, but your heart will be saddened under their ministry. This is the judgment that comes upon this house.

And he says the increase of your house will die in the flower of their age. Men will rise in this type of ministry. And they will appear to be the new superstar on the stage.

And really, technically speaking, a man should be at the zenith of his age as he grows older. And as they begin to look like they're the new rising star in the church of Jesus Christ, they will all fall. And this was the curse on Eli's house.

They will fall because God says, I will not let them go beyond a certain point because they don't represent me. And they will fall. And at the very time that it should be the pinnacle of their strength.

What an incredible judgment of God. And if we look at the pattern throughout history, this is how God has always judged that which falsely represents his name. And he goes on.

You see, the judgment is not complete. Verse 35. Until a ministry with his heart and mind is raised up again.

That's the completion of the judgment. God says, I'm going to take one thing away. Just like he does with us.

When you come to Christ, the Holy Spirit comes into your life. He takes the old away and he brings in the new. This is the pattern of God.

He takes your old thinking away and gives you a new mind. Takes your old selfish heart away and gives you a heart that has his agape or his giving love in it. He takes away confusion of mind and sets a clear pathway before you.

Takes the old away and brings in the new. You see, so judgment is not really complete until the new comes. And at the end of this time where this man of God is prophesying against Eli's house.

He says, I'm going to raise up a faithful priest in verse 35. That will do according to all that is in my heart and in my mind. And I'll build him a sure house and he shall walk before my anointed forever.

Now, we ask ourselves the question, how does he do this? How does God do this? If he's judging one thing and bringing a new thing in. Does he have another? Does he have a reserved class of future superstars somewhere that are hidden in the cave? Some in some Bible college we've never heard about studying, preparing. Is that how he does it? We would like to think so, but that's not the pattern of Scripture.

No, he'd already reserved somebody for himself. And I'm going to show you this pattern throughout history. You're going to understand as I speak this, why you're feeling so empty.

You see, God is about to do something in our generation. He will have a church. He will have a testimony.

He will have a people who glorify him because he has said he would. It's as simple as that. I don't have to prove it.

You just have to read the Scriptures. You're going to see it. He will have a testimony right through until the end of time.

Now in 1 Samuel 1 and verse 5, you see, he had reserved a woman with a barren womb for himself. This was his plan right from the beginning. And the Scripture says, this woman came with her husband yearly to the temple to offer sacrifice.

And in verse 5, it says, Hannah, this is her husband. He gave a worthy portion for he loved Hannah. But the Lord had shut up her womb.

Now, it's important to just take note of that. It wasn't a medical problem. It wasn't the devil.

It was God. God shut her womb. He had destined this woman's life to come to life and fruition at a certain point in time and history.

He said, I'm going to judge a ministry. It's a backslidden ministry. It's an evil ministry.

It's standing at the door. It's a ministry that is largely rife with immorality. It's a ministry of greed that is stealing from the people.

Now, I have a plan. And I'm amazed at how the plans of God work. I'm amazed that God doesn't do things the way that we think they should be done.

Years before the justice comes, he singles out a woman and he speaks to this woman's life and he says, bear no fruit. Let the deepest desire of your heart. Now, in that generation, the deepest desire was to have a child, especially a son, an heir for her husband.

It was considered disgraceful not to have a child. And he speaks to this woman and to her womb and says, let the deepest desire of your heart not be met. It's hard to envision God like that.

But he creates a longing in this woman. And the adversary, it says in verse 6, provoked her sore. Now, we know this was another person, but the enemy is speaking through this other person into her life and provoking her, just like the devil has provoked you not to come to the house of the Lord today.

What are you even getting up for? Why are you bothering to come to the house of God? Look how little fruit is in your life. You go there, you cry out to God week after week, year after year. And what's happening in your life? Absolutely nothing.

Where's the fruit? Where are the things that you're asking God for? Where's this new life? And the adversary is after her, moment after moment. But she is still coming to the temple, just like, praise God, you are in the temple also this morning. Hallelujah.

And the adversary made her fret because the Lord had shut up her womb. The adversary is trying to convince her, no doubt, there's some sin in your life, there's something wrong in your life. God isn't answering your prayer.

Look at all the fruit in this other person's life, and there's so little in your life. And she did, as he did, verse 7, it says, year by year, when she went up to the house of the Lord, she was provoked. And therefore, she wept and did not eat.

Now, it's amazing. She got to the point where she was not concerned about all of the nonsense, perhaps, that was going on in the temple. You've got Hoppe and Phineas there, and I've no doubt they're leading people into a party.

That was all their ministry was about. But this woman is not part of the party, and she cares for nothing of it. She says, I'm not going to the banquet.

I'm not getting involved in this. There's something in me that is not satisfied. And she begins to cry out to God.

Now, Eli is so backslidden that he's never seen anybody pray a travailing prayer. He's sitting at the post of the gate, and he looks at this woman and thinks she's drunk. He's never seen anybody in intercession.

There are so many churches today. Now, I'm not indicting the church. Please don't misunderstand me.

But there's a lot of churches today. It's been so long since they had an intercessory prayer meeting that the priest at the door would think people are drunk if they came in and began to literally cry out to God. But God kept her from the life that she wanted.

Now, I believe I'm speaking prophetically. You have to hear this. I know I am today.

There's people here today that God has kept you from the things that you've asked for until you've said something, until she said something that he'd been waiting to hear. He'd been waiting for this. She got to the point in verse 11 of 1 Samuel 1. The scripture says she vowed a vow.

And she 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 thy handmaid a manchild, I will give him to the Lord all the

days of his life, and there shall no razor come upon his head. This was what God was waiting for. He was waiting for this type of a prayer.

God, if you will give me life, I promise. Now, we can't keep our promises, but in the New Testament it's in the measure of God that you give me grace. If you will bring me to life in this area of my life, if you will give me this longing of my heart, I promise you, I will bring this life back to you for your honor and for your glory.

And she says there's no razor come upon this child's head. That means this child will be separated. This child will be a Nazarite to you all the days of his life.

And this is the cry that God is waiting for from his people. This is why in many of you there's an emptiness and an increasing desperation is coming into your heart. He's waiting for that kind of a prayer to come from you.

Lord, if you touch me. God, if you raise me up. God, if you meet this need that I believe you've stirred within me, then Lord, I will not run and party with it, but I will bring it back for your honor and for your glory.

I will use it, God. You give me a new heart, and you can call me to Africa. I will go.

You give me a new mind, and I will use this mind for your glory. You give me a new spirit, and I will follow you. As the Holy Spirit leads, I will follow you, God.

And I don't care what it costs me. You see, there was a great cost to Hannah. She had longed for this child all of her life, and she knew it was the chiefest cry of her heart.

And she knew that if God granted her her cry, that she would have to bring this little boy and give him into this place that didn't even appreciate the anointing of God anymore. There's many, many people that if you are touched of God, you're going to be called to give what you have, even in places where it's not appreciated. But God says, I'm waiting for this cry.

Remember that Christ came to His own, and His own didn't appreciate Him. We're called to follow in His steps and to be ambassadors of His life in the time that remains this generation that we're living in. Now, this is not the only time that God had used a barren womb to accomplish His purposes.

I'm amazed, I began to see this in the Scriptures, how many times God has wanted to do something pivotal, something miraculous, something that changes the tenure as it is of a generation. And He looks to a barren womb one more time. He looks to that person who has a cry.

It doesn't matter what your education is. It doesn't matter what culture you come from. It doesn't matter if English is not your first language.

None of it matters. If you have the cry, that's all God is looking for in your life. You have to have that cry.

God, if you raise me up, I will walk with you. I will speak for you. I will go where you call me to go.

I will believe you for the impossible. God, I will do it. I will live for you.

You see, earlier on, He had looked for a people. He wanted a new generation. After Adam's generation subsequently continued in a succession of failures, trying, in a sense, to worship, but never coming to the

place where the natural man cannot bring men to in their worship of God, He looked for a new people that He could call His own.

And in order to bring this people into existence, He one more time found a barren womb. And her name was Sarah. And this lineage that came through Sarah ultimately was the lineage that brought forth the Messiah into the world.

You see the pattern. One more time, He goes to a barren womb. One more time, He finds a person who's got an inner cry.

And this lady, Sarah, had gone beyond the time that she could naturally have a child. It was helpless that she could ever have this child, this life as it is that's been promised to come through her, and subsequently, with her husband, blessed the world. But Hebrews 11 says, Through faith also Sarah received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged Him faithful who had promised.

You see, through Sarah's life we learn to wait for the promise of God. If God makes a promise to you, God will fulfill His promise. Jesus Himself in Acts 1 and verse 4 said, Wait for the promise of the Father which you have heard of Me.

Wait for the promise. There's a time, there's a season that God has foreordained that the Holy Spirit should come. You cannot rush this promise of God.

You cannot make this happen. It does not come out of the minds of men. It does not come out of the ingenuity of human strength.

This is something that God sovereignly does. But before He does it, He has to have a people that are set apart for Him and willing to tarry and wait. Through Hannah's life, we learn that the anointing of His life comes when who we are and what He gives us are separated for His use.

He said in 1 Samuel 2 verse 35, I'll build Him a sure house, and He shall walk before Mine anointed forever. God said, through this man of God that came to Eli, I'm going to raise up a faithful priest, and I'm going to build Him a sure house. I'm going to give Him a dwelling place.

Now folks, I know of no other dwelling place but in Christ Himself that is a sure house. I'm going to invite this man, this woman into My presence, into this house, and in this place, He's going to walk before Me anointed forever, before Mine anointed. In Acts chapter 2 and verse 2, the Scripture says they were all with one accord and in one place.

They were there because Jesus had said, Wait for the promise of the Father which you have heard of Me. They were there for a specific reason. They knew they were bankrupt.

After Calvary, there was nobody really who stood with Christ. They all knew they were powerless. They all knew they had these great promises of life, but they were bankrupt.

But there was the same cry that had been in the heart of Sarah, the same cry that had been in the heart of Hannah. And you found 120 of them with a similar cry in the upper room, powerless to stand in their generation, but having this great promise that God was going to come and fill the emptiness that was within them. And they were all in one place and with one accord.

This one accord is not with one another, it's one accord with God. One accord with the purpose of God for their very existence as the now blood-washed church of Jesus Christ. And in this place, the sound of a rushing mighty wind came, and God filled them.

The Scripture says, Cloven tongues of fire sat on each one of them, and they burst through the doors of this upper room of fear as it is and into the public marketplace, where there was still a bloodlust, no doubt, among the crowd because the smell of the cross as it is was very fresh. The supposed victory over this religious testimony was being lived, although it was short-lived. And into this place burst these 120, filled with the glory of God.

There are, no doubt, murderous people all around them. The Scripture says 3,000 of them bent their knee to God that day. They were all with one accord and in one place, and God came and filled them.

And the deepest desire of God's heart and of their heart was fulfilled. They stepped into the marketplace. I pray God with all my heart.

Why is there a church in Times Square in our generation? I believe with all my heart that the Lord wants to fill this house, fill those who gather here with His Spirit, and send you into the marketplace, send you onto Broadway, send you to Wall Street, send you into the boroughs of New York City, alive in Jesus Christ, alive with the power of God, alive with the mind of God. This life having been birthed within you that you know has not come from human effort. This is not a party.

This is God. This is the Spirit of God has come upon you. He's touched you.

You're stepping out of obscurity. Your life, your voice, your song, your eyes, your hands are a clear declaration. There is a Christ who rose from the dead and sits at the right hand of Almighty God.

400 years of silence between the Old Testament and the New. The prophetic voice seemingly had died with Malachi. The long series as it is of religiousness for 400 years, the people must have wondered, where did the voice of God go? But you see, God never leaves Himself without a testimony.

And one more time, at the end of 400 years of silence, He determined that He was going to send His Son in glorious power and visitation that people like John could say, we beheld Him as of the only begotten of God, full of grace and truth. The Christ of God, God incarnate in the flesh, was going to come. But before He would come, He needed a voice to announce Him.

So where did He go? Did He go to Jerusalem Bible College? Did He go to the temple? Was there a priesthood? No! He found another barren womb. Her name was Elizabeth. She was the cousin of Mary.

She was past childbearing age. And when the angel Gabriel came to Mary and told Mary she was going to have a son who was going to be called the Son of the Most High, the angel told her, and your cousin Elizabeth, whose past childbearing age is in her sixth month of pregnancy. Amazing! You see, we learn that that which God gives will be a voice of witness leading men to Christ.

John was a voice who came out of a barren womb. If you can hear it today, there is a voice that God wants to plant within you that's why there's a hunger in your heart today. That's why there's a feeling of emptiness.

That's why He says, no, I can't fill you until the time until you're willing to use what I give you for My glory. And you're willing to stand in the midst of a dark generation and point men and women and say, behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. The Scripture says in Luke 1, 15 and 16, He shall be filled with the Holy Ghost even from His mother's womb.

And many of the children of Israel shall return to the Lord their God. Acts 1.8, again, Jesus said you will receive power after that the Holy Ghost has come upon you. You shall be witnesses to Me both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the uttermost parts of the earth.

When you have the cry, when we walk together in one accord, when you're willing to be set apart for the purposes of God, I'm going to come to you. I'm going to fill you. I'm going to empower you.

But you're going to be witnesses to Me. This is not to have some charismatic party. There is a plan and purpose of God to reach this generation of those that are lost because it's not His will that any should perish.

In verse Samuel 1.18, it tells us that Hannah came to an altar and here she laid down her sorrow. And she went away to receive that which God said would be separated for His own glory. Look at it in verse 18.

And she said, Let thine handmaid find grace in thy sight. And so the woman went her way and did eat and her countenance was no more sad. And they rose up early, in the morning early, and worshiped before the Lord and returned and came to their house to Ramah.

And Elkanah knew Hannah his wife and the Lord remembered her. Wherefore it came to pass when the time had come about that Hannah had conceived that she bear a son and called his name Samuel, saying, Because I have asked him of the Lord. Now the word Samuel means asked of God.

Hannah went to an altar and at that altar she got a word from God. And the word that she got from God took away the sorrow of her emptiness. And she got up with faith in her heart.

And that's where many of you are going to be today. You've been brought here for this time. You are the Esther, many here today of this generation.

You've been born for this time in New York City. You've been brought here for this time. It's not happenstance that you are in this congregation.

Now we're not exclusive. I believe that the Holy Spirit is speaking this word in many pulpits throughout this city. But you've been born for this time.

We don't know what the future holds for this city. But I do know that there will be a voice and a testimony for God in the midst of it. She got up.

She had a word from God. She went home. And the Scripture says she was no more sad.

She still didn't have the life that she was asking for, but she had the word and that's all she needed. And she went home. And in the right season, God brought new life into her.

And can you imagine, Hannah, when people asked, where did this new life come from? And she would say to them, His name is Samuel, which means asked of God. Where did you get this new life? I can see many of you going into your places of business, walking into your tenement buildings, going home,

meeting your families, walking amongst people who once knew you and they knew you were empty, and they're going to say, where did you get this new life? How did this happen to you? You've been going to church for years, but yet you've never seemed to change like you're changing this year. You'll say, I asked God, and God gave me this new life.

He birthed it within me. He gave me something that I can bring back to His house. Can you imagine now, all of the world around her? Oh, Hannah, are you sure this is a good thing? Are you sure you want to do this? I remember going through this one.

I was crying out to the Lord and He was changing me and giving me a new heart and a new mind. I remember even the casual Christian voices around me saying, Are you sure this is a good thing? Leaving the security of your employment to pasture these few sheep in the wilderness? I had to go through these. Are you sure? Are you sure? Hannah, you're going to take this boy and you're going to bring this child to the Eli temple? Are you sure this is a good thing? Eli couldn't even raise his own sons and now you're going to bring yours? Surely God wouldn't ask this of you.

But Hannah said, No, this was what I cried out to God for. This is why I've had a child. I had a barren womb.

But I said, Lord, You give me life and I will give this life to You for Your glory. And thank God she did because Samuel, what a mighty man of God Samuel became. Through Samuel.

The Scripture says there was no open vision in those days. There was no word of God. But God, even as a child, began to call Samuel.

And the Scripture says the Lord was revealed to him by the word of the Lord. God opened His word to Samuel and Samuel saw again who God was. What the testimony of God, especially like in our time in Christ, is supposed to be.

And Samuel is the one who kept the door open and kept the lamp lit as it is, which was what God commissioned him to do. All of his life he knew the mind of God. All of his life he could walk with God.

The Scripture says, if you follow Samuel's life, that all of his days the people of Israel feared God and Samuel. They feared both of them because they walked so closely together. They knew if Samuel came to town and if it wasn't for good, we are in severe trouble.

I wish I had time to go through the songs. In Genesis 21, 6, Sarah said, God has made me to laugh so that all the world will laugh with me. God, in my old age and in my barrenness, has given me a child.

And the laughter, it's an uproarious shout of joy because this is impossible. Only God can do this. And she says, all the world is going to laugh with me.

And she was right. She didn't realize she was speaking prophetically because down through time there would be thousands and thousands and thousands and thousands and thousands who would not just laugh with her because she had a great story thousands of years ago. No.

They would experience this same miraculous birth within them. And there would, because of what God had done in Sarah's womb, there's a lineage created now and from this lineage was going to come Christ. And from Christ was going to be sent the Holy Spirit.

And through the power of the Holy Spirit and the Word of God were going to come thousands and thousands of people and thousands times thousands of people who would experience this same miracle that Sarah had known of new life as it is, for God's glory coming out of a place of emptiness and barrenness. And Sarah and Isaac, and Abraham rather, I could see them dancing around their tent and among their friends and rejoicing at the new life that had been given them by God. When is the last time you danced around your family and around your office and come in and said, Folks, let me, I just got to tell somebody what God's doing in my life, how He's changing me.

And people would ask and Hannah, or Elizabeth rather, if we had time, you really got to do this if you have time, you got to go to Luke chapter 1, don't do it right now, and read verses 39 to 80. It's like a sanctified Broadway play. That's the only way I could describe it when I was reading.

It's just a pile of songs. You know in a Broadway play, now I'm not trying to liken this to Broadway, but it's, In walks Mary and the babe leaps. The closeness to Christ produces this leaping.

And Elizabeth begins to glorify God and I don't have time to go into it, but Elizabeth begins to sing and glorify God. Who am I that the mother of my Redeemer, as it is with my Savior, I'd have the privilege of walking in the company of my Savior. That's a song that will come out of your heart.

Who am I? Oh God, that I have the privilege of walking in Your company. That I have the privilege of being with You. Me, who was past age.

Me, who was so hopeless. Me, who was so empty for so long and given up hope. And now, I'm like three feet from my Savior.

I'm walking in the presence of my God. And Elizabeth begins to sing and Mary begins to join the chorus. And she begins to say, Oh, God has been good to me.

All generations shall call me blessed. He has brought down the lofty and He has lifted up the lowly in heart. He has given grace to the meek.

And Mary begins to sing this incredible song. Then Zacharias bursts into song. Oh folks, it's amazing when you see it.

The song that comes from a barren womb. The rejoicing that hits Zacharias. This child will be called... This will be a voice that announces the coming of the Most Highest.

Now, let me close with this. In chapter 2, 1 Samuel chapter 2, verse 1 it says, And Hannah prayed and said, My heart rejoices in the Lord, and my horn is exalted in the Lord. My mouth is enlarged over mine enemies, because I rejoice in Thy salvation.

There's none as holy as the Lord. There's none besides Thee, neither is there any rock like our God. Talk no more so exceeding proudly.

Let not arrogance come out of your mouth, for the Lord is a God of knowledge, and by Him actions are weighed. Think of what happened to Eli's house. And look at this song that's now coming out of this vessel.

The bows of the mighty men are broken, and they that stumbled are girded with strength. They that were full have hired themselves out for bread. This was the curse on Eli's house.

False religion. He says, You'll be bowing before the ministry that I raise and asking for a piece of silver and a piece of bread. And they that were hungry ceased, so that the barren has borne seven, and she that has many children is wax feeble.

The Lord kills and makes alive. He brings down to the grave. He brings up.

The Lord makes poor and makes rich. He brings low and lifts up. He raises up the poor out of the dust and lifts up the beggar from the dunghill to set them among princes and make them inherit the throne of glory for the pillars of the earth are the Lord's and He has set the world upon them.

He will keep the feet of His saints. The wicked will be silent in darkness for by strength shall no man prevail. The adversaries of the Lord shall be broken to pieces.

Out of heaven shall He thunder upon them. The Lord shall judge the ends of the earth and He shall give strength to His King and exalt the horn of His anointed. Hallelujah! In other words, He will bring to life those that call out to Him.

And He will always, always, always have a testimony. I want to give an altar call to every Hannah, every Sarah and every Elizabeth, male or female. Say, God, I wondered why I'm so empty.

The Lord says, I've reserved you. I've reserved you. You remember when Elijah had the confrontation with the prophets of Baal and he went up into the mountain and he said, Lord, there's nobody left? The Lord says, not so.

I have reserved. I've reserved 7,000 for myself. I've not let them find satisfaction in the religion of Baal.

I've kept them empty. I've reserved them for myself. Hallelujah! The good news today, I want to tell you, if you've not heard anything else that the Lord has given me to say, if you are empty, now, if you're living in willful sin, that's one thing.

That can produce an emptiness. But I'm talking about the honest, come-to-the-house seeker of God and you're just so empty. It's because God has reserved you for Himself.

He's reserved you. He's got a sign on you. Reserved.

No false theology here. No finding satisfaction apart from me. Reserved.

For the name of Jesus Christ and the glory of God. Hallelujah! Father, thank You, God Almighty, that You have given me the ability to convey this. I pray for the faith to hear and the courage to respond.

And Father, I thank You for this in Jesus' name. We're going to stand in a moment and as we do, I'd like everyone who can say honestly, Pastor, you've just preached my life. You've preached right where I am today.

I know there are many. In the annex, you can stand between the screens if you don't mind. And we'll be praying with you momentarily.

In the main sanctuary, you can go to either exit in the balcony or in the main sanctuary. Just make your way down here. And I have another word for you.

Just something very simple, but the Lord's given it to me to give you today. Let's all stand together. You're going to leave here with a song.

Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Hallelujah.

Just make your way down. See, you've been reserved. You've been reserved for God.

Hallelujah. Thank You, Jesus. Now listen.

Those that have come to this altar, the Bible says that, and I shared it with you, that Hannah got up and went home. Now there's no evidence of any new life, but she was no more sad. She'd gotten the word from God that she wanted.

She understood. I believe at that moment the Lord must have given her an understanding of why the emptiness for so many years. That somehow from her life was going to come a testimony for the glory of God.

Isaiah said it this way. Let me just read it to you. Sing, O barren, and thou that didst not bear, break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not prevail with child, for more are the children of the desolate, that means the empty, than the children of the married wife, says the Lord.

Enlarge the place of your tent. In other words, get ready. You've been barren and you've been living in this little place, spiritually speaking, but you're going to have children now, so enlarge your house and let them stretch forth the curtains of your habitation.

Do not spare. Lengthen your cords and strengthen your stakes. In other words, God says I'm going to do something in you and through you.

It's going to be much larger than where you're living right now. For you will break forth on the right hand and on the left, and your seed will inherit the Gentiles and make the desolate cities or the empty places to be inhabited. There are barren places I'm sending you to.

There are empty places where there's no help and no hope. And I'm sending you there and through you, these places are going to know what it's like to dwell in the presence of God. Fear not.

You will not be ashamed. That means you will not be triumphed over. Neither be confounded, for you will not be put to shame.

I want you to forget the shame of your youth and not remember the reproach of your widowhood anymore. For your maker is your husband and the Lord of hosts is his name. In other words, God describes him in this passage as the one who sets the battle.

It's funny. He says, I'm your husband. You'd think he'd describe himself as the bringer of flowers or something like that.

He says, No, I'm the commander of the army. He says, I'm your husband and I'm the commander. I'm the one who sends the army.

And thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel, and the God of the whole earth, shall he be called. He says, Sing now. Go home.

Because I've reserved you to this day. And I'm the Lord who sets the battle in a ray. And I've chosen one more time to manifest my life through those who know they are empty.

And they're willing to bring back to me from my glory what I do within them. Hallelujah. Jesus, thank you.

God Almighty, I give you praise, Lord. I give you praise from the depths of my heart, Lord. Oh, God, we bless you.

Your ways are not our ways. Your thoughts are not our thoughts, Lord. You take the foolish things of the world and things that are nothing to bring to nothing things that think they are.

God Almighty, one more time, you're reaching down to the Hannah's and the Sarah's and the Elizabeth's of this generation. All of us who know we are empty without your life. And you've produced in us a cry because you've reserved us for your testimony.

Oh, God, I pray that you give courage to everyone who will hear this message on the internet, all over the world. You've reserved a bride everywhere. You have a remnant bride all through this world.

They're not at the top of the list. But, oh, God, they're at the top of your list. They're not known in the church, but they're known in your church.

Hallelujah. Mighty God. Oh, God.

Our only cry is be glorified to us. Be glorified to our lives. Be glorified in our lives, oh, God.

Oh, Jesus. Oh, Jesus. The life that you give us, we will bring it back to you.

We will bring it back in the strength that you give us, and it will be used for your glory. Be glorified in us, oh, God. Be glorified.

And I pray, Father, for a song of the redeemed to be birthed in this house. I ask you, God, that when people come into this house in the days ahead, it would be like Elizabeth and Mary and Zacharias all over again. There would be a constant song of the blessing, the power, and the incredible grace of God.

The new life that is being born in the hearts of those who know that without God it would have been impossible. Jesus, we want to glorify You in this last hour of time. We want this city to know Your voice and to hear Your song.

My God, don't let the songs of Broadway be the only songs this city hears. These empty tunes that lead to nowhere. I pray the song of the redeemed be birthed, oh, God.

I pray, God, You do it in all churches through this city. Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians, Salvation Army, Pentecostal and Charismatic. My God, I pray the song of the bride come now to the fore.

I pray for a revelation of the knowledge of Jesus Christ and that Your voice be lifted, oh, God, in Manhattan and all the surrounding boroughs. Your voice be heard and lifted through a bride. Hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah, hallelujah.

Jesus, be glorified, be glorified, be glorified. Somehow, deep, deep inside, I know this is not just another, not that we ever want just another church service, but I know if ever there was a service, it's not just another service, it's today. You may not feel a thing, but go home and be no more sad.

That's the word of the Lord to you. This is the conclusion of the message.

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