

Volume 12, Issue 18: Necessary Arrangements Part II

Something changes on the inside of us when we pour out our hearts to God. Time with God lifts our countenance and gives us hope for the outcome we seek. That change on the inside doesn't fail to bear fruit in the fullness of God's timing. Immediately the change happens on the inside, God begins to make the necessary arrangements to manifest the change on the outside.

At the beginning of the the first chapter of the book of 1st Samuel, we meet Hannah, the childless first wife of her husband Elkanah. Her family are at the sanctuary of God in Shiloh where they had gone from their hometown for their annual trip to worship and offer a sacrifice to God. We meet Hannah at mealtime. Her family had sat down to eat together, but Hannah was sad and dejected, reduced to tears and had no appetite for food. Her loving husband tried to encourage her. She ate, but her heaviness of heart persisted.

The reason for Hannah's sadness was her lack of children. Whenever they made their annual family trip to the sanctuary, her co-wife taunted her cruelly, rubbing it in and never letting her forget that she was childless. This went on year after year. Every time she went to the sanctuary of God she could expect to be taunted. We meet Hannah when she is reduced to tears from the taunting.

The story starts with Hannah being sad and dejected, crying. But the story soon changes when she pulls herself together to go pray. Crushed in soul, Hannah prayed to God and cried inconsolably, telling God exactly how she felt and what she wanted.

Hannah admitted to the priest who thought she was drunk that she was desperately unhappy and in pain, pouring out her heart to God. She also asked the man of God to think well of her, and to pray for her. The Bible then records in the eighteenth verse of the chapter that Hannah then went her way and ate heartily, her face radiant.

How did Hannah move from being sad and dejected to radiant in a matter of moments? Nothing had changed from the time she went out to pray to the time she returned to her family. How is it that she left sad and dejected, didn't feel like eating, was broken-hearted as she prayed, but

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when she was done praying, she was in high spirits? That is the mystery of spending time with God.

No promise of a child was given to Hannah when she prayed, but her countenance changed. Why did she become happy and rested all of a sudden? That is something that only heartfelt prayer can do for you. Your situation may not change, but time with God transforms desperation into hope. Time with God leaves you feeling settled regardless of whether or not you ever get what you seek.

Now here comes the best part. I read the Message translation of the Bible because it speaks my language. The Bible says that after Elkanah's family returned home, Elkanah slept with his wife Hannah, and God began making the necessary arrangements in response to what she had asked. How about that? And before the year was out, Hannah had conceived and given birth to a son!

Doesn't that just wow your heart? When we cry out to him in submission, our Heavenly Father goes to work making necessary arrangements in response to our plea. Let's explore this further in the next post where we will consider some of the examples we see God making necessary arrangements in our lives today.

For His Glory,

Lillian Chebosi