

Text: 1 Sam. 2:1-10

Title: "A mother's song of victory"

Time: 5/11/2025 am

Place: NBBC

Introduction: London England was a special place to be on May 8, 1945. Around 3 o'clock that afternoon, Winston Churchill addressed a thronging crowd of happy people who were ready to begin a celebration of VE Day, Victory in Europe Day, which would last for some days. He began his speech this way: "Hostilities will end officially at one minute after midnight tonight. We may allow ourselves a brief period of rejoicing." With those words London exploded with patriotic cheer at their victory in battle over the Nazis. Churchill spoke of a brief period of rejoicing, because Japan was not yet vanquished, but the rejoicing experienced in that city on that day was an unique kind of rejoicing. It was the joy of victory over an enemy.

This special rejoicing over an enemy threat is what Hannah expresses when she says, "My heart rejoices in the Lord" (v. 1). The word translated *rejoices* here is not the common word so translated from the Hebrew in our Bibles, but a word that appears especially in contexts that involve victory over an enemy (v. 1b). One Hebrew scholar says this about the word: "every occurrence of the word has a context of victory, a victory won or to be won by God, giving His people cause and liberty to rejoice" (*NIDOTE*). The KJV translation of Ps. 25:2 brings this nuance out especially well: "O my God, I trust in thee; let me not be ashamed, let not mine enemies *triumph* over me."

One of the stubborn facts of living the Christian life is that we are in a war and that we have a cruel enemy. This is no less true for those of us who share the calling Hannah had recently come to in this passage, those who are called to be mothers. I am sure that not a mom here today would object to the assertion that mothering can be a battle. What we fail to see sometimes, however, is that all our battles in life are at their core spiritual battles. Hannah's great spiritual battle involved the irritation of a rival named Peninnah (1:5-7). It was a battle that caused her great

stress. When God finally gave her victory in this battle, Hannah experienced a wonderful joy, the kind of joy spiritual victory brings, and so she writes a song of victory (v. 1). This joy is one of God's purposes in allowing us to go through battles, and that is true in this context of a godly mother specifically. I want us to notice three things about this mother's song of victory today.

I. Hannah gained victory because of who her God is (vv. 2-3).

Illustration: Every once in a while you get the sense in the world of sports that a certain individual or team simply cannot be beaten. Tiger Woods was that kind of golfer at one time; Mike Tyson was that kind of boxer at one time; Michael Jordan was that kind of basketball player at one time; Secretariat was that kind of horse at one time. Eventually, however, each of these unbeatable performers passed their pinnacle, or just had an off day, and that was the day when they could be beaten.

Application: I think a good majority of the children here today would claim to have the best mom who ever lived, yet each of those best-moms-who-ever-lived knows that there have been days when they were beaten in the spiritual battles they faced as mothers. Hannah could certainly remember days like that. But she also remembered that Yahweh is one competitor whose nature always means that He cannot be beaten by His enemy. Hannah rejoiced in this as she interpreted her own victory as something that she experienced because of who and what her God is. She mentions four things about Him.

A. Hannah's God is exclusively holy (2a-b). Holiness is one of those essential attributes of God that can be difficult to define, but I want you to see that Hannah had a definition. She says: "There is none holy as the Lord; for there is none beside thee." The first phrase states the attribute: God is holy. And the second explains the attribute. The second phrase can be translated one of two ways, either *there is none beside thee* as in our KJV, or *there is none/nothing without thee* (the word translated *beside* means *without* in Isa. 14:6; *continual stroke* is very literally *a stroke without ceasing*). So let's read the verse this way: "There is none holy as

the Lord; for there is nothing without thee.” God’s holiness is explained by the fact that nothing exists without Him. He is holy in the sense that His existence is completely independent of everything else, and the existence of everything else depends completely on Him. This means, of course, that He is in absolute control of those circumstances of life’s battles that seem so out of control to us at times. No circumstance can be out of His control; nothing can exist apart from Him (see Psalm 77).

B. Hannah’s God is uniquely impregnable (2c). Webster’s defines *impregnable* as “incapable of being taken by assault.” This is what Hannah means when she calls God a one-of-a-kind rock in this passage. In 2 Samuel 22, King David gives expression to Hannah’s understanding of her God this way: “The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; the God of my rock; in him will I trust; he is my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my high tower, and my refuge, my saviour; thou savest me from violence. I will call on the Lord who is worthy to be praised; so shall I be saved from my enemies” (vv. 2-4). Because Hannah’s God is an impregnable rock, those who take refuge in Him will be saved from their enemies. The Lord knows moms need security. Moms can find this security when they hide in this Rock the way Hannah learned to. Her rejoicing and victory include a sense of safety.

C. Hannah’s God is perfectly knowledgeable (3a). In the original language the word *knowledge* appears in the plural form so as to intensify the description of God as a knowledgeable God. He is intensely knowledgeable, and Hannah notes that this especially ought to inform how much you and I think we know (v. 3a).

We can look in a lot of places today for insights about what a good mom should be. The world’s understanding of this is very different from the Lord’s understanding, however. Victory is known by moms who have learned to trust the Lord’s plan for motherhood, those who open their Bibles each morning to see how better to faithfully execute their high calling as mothers.

D. Hannah's God is unfailingly just (3b). The phrase that we have in our KJV translation indicates that God is someone who weighs the actions of men. That is certainly true, but I do not think that this is what the Hebrew is saying here. Rather than *by Him* I think we do better to translate the phrase *with regard to Him* actions are weighed. So Hannah is talking about God's actions, not man's actions. And God's actions are *weighed* in the sense that they are weighed correctly or with equal and just scales. I conclude this because of the other two passages in which this form of the word *weighed* is used (Ezek. 18:25, 29; 33:17, 20 [*equal*]).

God's actions are weighed accurately; they are equal; they are just. Mothers have many reasons to wonder at times why life is not fairer, why God allows things that do not seem just. Hannah must have wondered from time to time whether God's ways were truly equitable, as she asked for Samuel, as she suffered the persecutions of her rival, and even as she endured the well-meaning but inept comforting efforts of her husband. Part of the joy of victory in spiritual battles like this is the joy of realizing again that God cannot be anything less than unfailingly fair and just. Hannah knew this truth in a new way because God answered her prayer, but sometimes we must know this by faith, not sight, while we wait still for the answers we seek.

So Hannah credited her victory as a mother to the nature of her Lord, to who He is and what He is like. Do we see this morning that our victory will come from Him too? Paul put it this way in his celebration of the victory of the resurrection: "Be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Cor. 15:58).

II. Hannah credited her victory as a mother to her Lord's desire to help the humble (vv. 3a, 4-5, 7-8a).

Illustration: The term *underdog* is not meant normally as a criticism. In fact, there is something endearing to us about the term, so much so that one of our mythical superheroes had been named, "Underdog." In Great Britain there was something called

*The Underdog Show.* *The Underdog Show* was a reality TV contest in which dog trainers were paired up with rescue dogs in a contest to see which trainer/dog combination could learn the quickest. Every week some trainer/dog team was eliminated until the winner stood alone. The show is called *The Underdog Show* because the dogs used are all rescue dogs that were formally abandoned. We all want to root for an underdog (unless you are a Yankees fan, of course).

Application: Hannah understood what life looked like from the position of the underdog as a barren woman inexplicably unable to have children. And as she reflects on the victory the Lord gave her, she comes to realize that one of the reasons for her victory is that the Lord cares about underdogs, the disadvantaged, the weak things of this world, those who have a humble attitude toward Him.

We see this theme often repeated in the New Testament: 1 Cor. 1:27, “But God has chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God has chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty”; Jesus spoke of this in the Sermon on the Mount when He taught: “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for they shall see the kingdom of God” (see v. 8).

Hannah understands that it is the poor in spirit that are blessed because it is her God’s special delight to help this kind of person. And so well-armed champions fear while those who had stumbled find true power (v. 4); the full become hungry and the hungry full (v. 5a), the fruitful womb stops giving birth and the barren womb brings forth children (v. 5b), a case especially close to Hannah’s heart.

We can take heart when we find that we are the underdog—our God, Hannah’s God, has a special place in His heart for us who are weak and needy before Him. Moms can feel like the underdog in the battle for their children. Satan and the world seem so incredibly overpowering and effective. Remember with Hannah that God has a special propensity for helping the underdog. Stay

humble in that work. The victory He best likes to win is the one against all odds.

III. Hannah credited her victory as a mother to her Lord's ability to do powerful works (vv. 6, 8b-10).

Illustration: Unless you are one of the great horse whisperers in our congregation, you probably do not know the name Ron Turcotte. Ron was the jockey who rode Secretariat to the horse's dominate victories. Ron could not have run those races to victory himself, but he was carried by a great ride. In short, Turcotte's weakness combined with Secretariat's power won the victory. Yet in spite of his dependence on the horse, Turcotte still had an important part to play.

Application: I believe that Hannah's prayers for Samuel worked this way. God is powerful. Only He can win the race. We are invited to enter into the victory that only He can win through prayer. Mothers, like all of us, need a sense of personal helplessness and of God's incredible power so that they feel the need to pray fervently for the children. As Hannah rejoices in her victory as a mom, she credits her victory in prayer to the Lord's ability to do things that she cannot do. Notice some of these powerful works.

A. The powerful work of resurrection (v. 6). Critics often argue that you cannot find the doctrine of the resurrection in the Old Testament. This, of course, was not the position of the apostles. Peter argued for the resurrection of Jesus Christ from Psalm 16 on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:24-36). Here in Hannah's song, we see her faith that God has power over the grave, the power to kill and then to raise up again, to resurrect. The phrase she uses here occurs also in Deut. 32:39, where it is parallel with *wounding and healing*, demonstrating that the bringing to the grave comes before the bringing to life – the bringing to life is resurrection.

Our victory in the Lord is such that not even death itself has lost its victory in its attack on us. There is perhaps no sorrow as difficult for a mother as the loss of a child. But God is powerful enough to correct even such a terrible tragedy as this.

B. The powerful work of creation (v. 8b). Hannah was victorious because she knew the God who laid the pillars or the foundations of the earth. God not only laid the foundations down; these foundations very literally belong to Him. Hannah's God is the omnipotent designer, who made the world, and the family, and motherhood. It is He who gives it its purpose and its parameters, and she was able to rejoice in the spiritual victory God's creative power had brought to her own life in the gift of a son.

C. The powerful work of protecting saints (vv. 9-10a). The word translated *saints* here is a designation for those who are the objects of God's covenantal love (*covenanted-ones*). He keeps their feet in spite of darkness. He protects them from the enemy. The enemy employs many schemes to trip up godly moms, and these are dark days for motherhood, but God has promised to keep the feet of those He loves with covenantal love.

D. The powerful work of the coming Christ (v. 10b). The word *anointed* in this verse is the Hebrew word from which we get the word *Messiah* or *Christ*. It comes from a verb meaning *to smear* and refers to the smearing of the anointing oil that was done when God called someone to be king. At this juncture in Israel's history, no king had ever been anointed in this way. Hannah is not speaking of Saul, nor of David, when she refers to God giving strength to His king for the final judgment. Instead, she speaks of the promised King of kings and Lord of lords, the Messiah, the Anointed One, the Christ. His name would be Jesus.

That promise was made to Abraham and Jacob and their sons. Remember the prophecy regarding Judah: "The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until Shiloh (*he to whom it belongs*) comes, and to him shall be the obedience of the peoples" (Gen. 49:10). Hannah understood that the victory she experienced in the Lord as a mother would be finalized when the promised King came. This is the blessed hope of faithful mothers today as well.

Conclusion: May God encourage our mothers with the rejoicing of the joy of Hannah. He is our God, whose nature precludes

defeat, whose heart is always with the humble and downcast, and whose mighty works conquer death, create all things, keep covenant, and promise both the first and the second coming of Christ.

And Jesus promises not only, “Behold, I come quickly,” but also “and my reward is with Me, to give every man according as His work shall be.” My mom is enjoying that reward even now with many others of our mothers and with Hannah. Their rejoicing is the joy of victory. That will be a great day indeed, when we join them. Until then let’s faithfully wait for and then prayerfully rejoice in the Lord’s victory in our lives, like Hannah did.

“A man came—I think it was actually in Philadelphia—on one occasion to the great George Whitefield and asked if he might print his sermons. Whitefield gave this reply; he said, ‘Well, I have no inherent objection, if you like, but you will never be able to put on the printed page the lightning and the thunder.’ That is the distinction—the sermon, and the ‘lightning and the thunder.’ To Whitefield this was of very great importance, and it should be of very great importance to all preachers, as I hope to show. You can put the sermon into print, but not the lightning and the thunder. That comes into the act of preaching and cannot be conveyed by cold print. Indeed it almost baffles the descriptive powers of the best reporters.”

—David Martin Lloyd-Jones,

*Preachers and Preaching*