

There Is a Way to a Rejoicing Heart

by Carter Conlon

Carter Conlon's sermon emphasizes the journey to a rejoicing heart through understanding desperation, God's timing, and the importance of seeking His higher purpose.

Duration: 57:18

Scripture: Matthew 6:33

Topics: "Rejoicing"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker shares a powerful story of a man who experienced a transformation after encountering someone in need. The speaker emphasizes that there is a way to find a rejoicing heart, even in times of desperation. They encourage the audience to not be arrogant or discouraged, but to trust in God's promises. The speaker also references the story of Hannah in the book of First Samuel, highlighting her prayer of rejoicing in the Lord.

Transcript

This message is one of the Times Square Church pulpit series. It was recorded in the sanctuary of Times Square Church in Manhattan, New York City. Other tapes are available by writing World Challenge, PO Box 260, Lindell, Texas 75771 or calling 903-963-8626.

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First Samuel. My message tonight is entitled, There is a way to a rejoicing heart. There is a way.

I believe that tonight that many are going to experience a breakthrough in an area of desperation. This is what the Holy Spirit's been speaking to me all throughout this week, throughout this day, that there are people here tonight that you are desperate. Yes, you're a Christian and yes, you love the Lord.

You come to the house of God, but there's an area of desperation in your life. A place where you have been believing God for something that only he can do. And tonight he's going to do it for you.

Tonight you're going to get your answer. We have been fighting an opposition for about the last week and a half, but because God wants to do something very powerful, you're going to hear tonight a culmination really of what you've heard this morning and this afternoon. And then the Lord's going to give us the grace

to be free.

Father, we thank you tonight. God, I praise you with all my heart for your presence. I thank you for the anointing of the Holy Spirit.

I thank you, God, that you have an intended purpose tonight and no power of hell can stop what you have determined to do in and through your church, your people, your beloved bride. I ask, O God, that you make all of our hearts open and receptive to the message that we have heard throughout this day and what we're going to hear tonight. Lord, let your kingdom come and be established in our hearts and in our praises.

Lord, you've shown me you've opened something in the scripture. There's a way to a rejoicing heart. Help us now to hear.

God, you said in the mouths of two or three witnesses, everything is confirmed. We've heard it once, twice. Now we're going to hear it a third time.

And Father, you're going to bring the work home tonight. Lord, we thank you for the rejoicing. Thank you, God, for your presence.

Thank you for your manifested glory. We thank you for your favor that rests on us. I ask, O God, that you'd enable me to preach far beyond my own ability, far beyond anything thoughts that I have.

Take me into realms of God that are eternal, where your life is. Lord, let not anything of flesh be lifted up in this house. Father, we thank you for it.

I praise you for it from the depths of my heart. In Jesus name. OK, we're in the book of 1 Samuel, but before I even begin to read.

Now, this is a time, 1 Samuel is written at a time of spiritual decline or about a time of spiritual decline. This is the time in history known as the time of the judges. After Joshua went in and through him, the people conquered what was then the promised land.

After Joshua's death, Israel entered into an approximate 350 year period of what the Bible calls the time of the judges. There were 13 judges during this period, the last of which was a prophet called Samuel. After Samuel, you remember that Samuel anointed Saul.

Then we go from the time of judges into the time of kings. There was Saul, then of course, Samuel anointed David after Saul. We're at the time of the second last judge of this 350 year period where Israel is riding this wave and crest, this high and low as it is in the spiritual experience.

They would be greatly delivered by, the Holy Spirit would come upon an individual that God would raise up. The word of God as it is or the reflective presence of Christ, if I can call it such, would come back again to the people. They would be called back again to right relationship.

They would know marvelous victory over their enemies. They would begin to prosper again. And of course, that prosperity would drive them again into the trough of carelessness where when they would forget God, God would allow again their enemies to be risen up against them.

And when they cried out to the Lord, then he would come in miracle power one more time and raise up his voice again. And at the time that we're about to talk was a time of spiritual declension. This was a prayerless, backslidden, immoral and greedy priesthood was over Shiloh.

Now, Shiloh is the place where the ark of God was. And the ark of God, you remember, represented the presence of the Lord God in and among his people in Israel. Now, there was a man in first Samuel, chapter one, verse one called Elkanah.

And the Bible says that he had two wives in verse two. The name of the one was Hannah and the other was Peninnah. And Peninnah had children, but Hannah had no children.

And the man went up out of his city yearly to worship and to sacrifice to the Lord of hosts in Shiloh. And the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, the priests of the Lord were there. Now, you remember Hophni and Phinehas are the results of a prayerless priesthood.

They're the sons of a prayerless priest. He has no idea what prayer is. For when Hannah comes in and begins to pour out her complaint before the Lord, the scripture tells us that he thought she was drunk.

It had been so long since he'd seen genuine intercession that he couldn't even recognize it in the house of the Lord. And that's a tragedy. He had two sons that he put into the ministry and Hophni and Phinehas were immoral.

The Bible says they were seducing women that were coming into the court of God's presence. And they were also greedy. And they made the people of their generation abhor the offering of the Lord.

People didn't. They lost heart to give because of the greediness of Hophni and Phinehas. This is an absolute spiritual low.

Now, you have to understand that Shiloh is the place where Samuel, not Samuel, but Elkanah and his two wives are coming up. And if we were, if we had time tonight to go a little farther into the Bible, Shiloh is about to be overthrown. The Philistine army is about to be victorious over Israel's forces and the ark of God is about to be taken.

So keep that in mind. And there's going to be a defeat of this priesthood and a defeat of the Hophni and Phinehas are both going to be killed in the same day. Eli is going to fall off a wall as an old man and break his neck.

And that's going to be the end of Eli's priesthood, the end of his house. And God's about to establish now a new priesthood. So this is a desperate time in the nation of Israel.

Now, Hannah, one of Elkanah's two wives was in despair. The Bible says that he was coming up yearly to the house of the Lord to sacrifice. But verse six and seven tells us about Hannah and her adversary provoked her sore to make her fret for the Lord, 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. Now, the Bible just tells us that the yearly visits had left Hannah barren.

That's an incredible thing. Here is one wife who's having all kinds of children and seemingly knowing great success as it is, because really to have children was a sign of God's favor. It was the one thing that

brought honor to a woman, to her husband.

It was the increase, as it is, of his lineage. And Penina now has got all these children and Hannah's coming up, same husband, same temple, same God. And not only is her womb barren, but the Bible says that God had shut up her womb.

That's an incredible thing. Folks, you ever gone through times like that in your Christian walk, when everybody around you is getting blessed and you're not? Everyone's talking about, they're walking around singing, I'm free, I'm free. And you feel like singing, I am not.

I am not. Testimonies of favor and abundance and all these things coming in and you're going to the same place. You're praying to the same God.

You have an honest heart. You want God for some mysterious reason. This thing that you've been asking for has not been given to you.

And you may not be aware of it. Hannah would not be aware of it. But we know in retrospect, reading the scriptures, that it was not the devil.

It was God had shut her womb for a reason. Now, it was a disgrace to her own heart to return to God empty in this area of her life year after year. Now, it would be awful to think that you and I could come to the house of the Lord for the rest of our days and never know victory in a certain area of our lives.

Yes, have victory, have a husband. She had a husband that loved her. And how can I said, well, why are you weeping? I'm better than you than to you to the 10 sons.

Hannah, I love you. Isn't my love sufficient? And sometimes we come into the house of the Lord and we are aware of God's love. We know how much Jesus Christ loves us.

But yet there's still that area of emptiness. There's still that area of barrenness that's in our lives, that area that for whatever reason has not yet been touched by God. We don't understand it.

Everyone around us seems to be getting the victory, but we're not getting the victory. And we have to ask ourselves the question. Now, why would God withhold something from this woman? Why would he withhold? Doesn't the scripture say, ask that your joy might be full? Doesn't the scripture say that if we ask something according to the will of God, that he will give it to us? Well, wouldn't it be the will of God to give this woman a child and children so that she can be fulfilled and she can honor her husband? So what justifiable reason would there be that God would shut her womb? Is there something wrong with wanting to feel personally fulfilled? Others around are seemingly getting what they want.

So why would God be withholding from me? And to make matters worse, verse six tells us that her adversary, this is the other wife who had all kinds of children, provoked her sore to make her fret. And really, in the original text, it means provoked her heart to a heated condition which triggered hurt feelings and worry within her. She was being provoked constantly by an adversary, coming to the house of God, praying the same prayers and going home.

Then the Bible says year after year, empty, for some unknown reason. No life, no conception, a barren womb, absolutely dead inside. No matter how much she prayed, no matter what she did, no matter how much she believed, nothing was happening within her life in this area.

And the adversary is provoking her. First Peter 5-8 tells us that your adversary, that means the one who is against you, the devil is a roaring lion, walks about seeking whom he may devour. And the word devour in the Greek text means to drink you down or swallow you up.

The adversary is here. And I know there are desperate people here tonight. I know it because the Holy Ghost has been speaking to me all day and all week.

There are desperate people here tonight. No, you might not look desperate. You've come into the house and you are worshiping God and you're singing the songs of Zion.

And you've been here some cases year after year. But there's an area in your life and for whatever reason, there's no life there. There's no freedom there.

It's as if a death is in operation. And the adversary is here every time you come into the house of God as a roaring lion, provoking your heart to a heated condition and making you feel as if you've been rejected somehow by God and causing you to worry. Psalm 74, 10 tells us that the enemy does this by blaspheming the name of God.

I want you to hear this. It's important. The psalmist says, O God, how long shall the adversary reproach? Shall the enemy blaspheme thy name forever? Now, the word for blaspheme in the Hebrew is a verb that is often used of God rejecting men.

Yet it contains the idea of disdain for one who formerly received favorable attention. Now, let me put it in simple terms. In other words, the enemy comes and blasphemes the name of God by saying God has seen some flaw within you.

It's a flaw that's known only to God himself. And this has caused him to withdraw his hand from you. Now, the psalmist calls this blasphemy.

I want you to know this. It's important to know this tonight. If the devil is trying to tell you.

Now, I'm not talking about somebody that's living in willful sin. This doesn't really apply to you. If there is something you need to repent of, repent of it.

I'm talking about the honest Christian. Yes, the struggling Christian, but the honest Christian who doesn't want to live in sin and wants a life that brings honor and glory to Jesus Christ and comes into the house of God. And the enemy is there because there's an area in your life where you're not getting your prayer answered.

And the enemy comes in and blasphemes the name of God by trying to convince you that God, for some unknown reason, has taken his grace away from you, has withdrawn as it is his hand of mercy. Folks, I'll tell you why it's blasphemy. Because God has beyond all doubt proven his desire and his willingness to release the miraculous power of his life within yours and mine.

He's proven it. So if my request is withheld, there must be a reason for good. Of which I'm not yet aware.

God proved it to me when he became a man. God proved it to me when he was born of a virgin. God proved it to me when he walked through this life for 33 years, suffering the indignities of humanity as it is.

God proved it to me when he stood before Pilate and allowed his face to be slapped in his back to be smitten by those with wits in their hands. God proved it to me because he did it all that his life might be released within mine. I refuse to let the enemy ever blaspheme the name of God by trying to convince you or me that there's some hidden thing that is causing the hand of God's mercy to be withdrawn from us.

And we're not knowing victory in some area because there's an area of evil or some mysterious thing that God only himself knows about us. You see, beloved, there's a higher purpose for God meeting our needs than just for our own satisfaction. There's a higher purpose.

And sometimes he withholds until we get so desperate that we want to know what the higher purpose is. We don't want our need met just so that we can leave the house and say, my need is met. Oh, folks, if it were that easy, the purposes of God would never be fulfilled through his church.

Yes, there are some things that he will do automatically because he's a God of incredible grace. But there are some areas of our life, let me tell you, that he will withhold the answer. He will hold it off.

Even if we can quote the scriptures to him day in and day out, he will withhold until we are willing to seek his higher purpose for our lives in this area. Let me show you something. Go to the New Testament, please.

Put a marker in First Samuel because we'll be back there. Luke chapter 10. This will all tie into the moment and you'll understand how it fits together.

In Luke chapter 10, verse 25, the Bible says a certain lawyer stood up and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? Now, first of all, this man was not really wanting to conform his life to God, but he was testing to see if God would be conformed to his own lifestyle. He was testing God to see if his own particular thoughts matched those thoughts of God, or if God would, in effect, bend his thoughts towards his thoughts. That's what human nature is all about many times.

Coming to the house of the Lord and we say, we want God to conform to our ways. And we don't want, in some area of our life, to conform our lives to God's ways. And so he asked a question that looked so spiritual.

He said, what shall I do that I might inherit eternal life? Now, as I read this, he's speaking about the future. He's saying, basically, I want to go to heaven. I want to be part of this eternal kingdom you're talking about.

So what must I do to inherit it, that it may be mine someday in the future? And Jesus said to him, well, what is written in the law? How do you read it? And he answered, he said, thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and all thy soul, and all thy strength, and all thy mind, and thy neighbor as thyself. And Jesus answers him, verse 28, and he said to him, thou hast answered right, this do, and thou shalt live. Now, he knows the answer.

In verse 25, his question is about the future, but in verse 28, Jesus answers him in the present. He said, yes, you love God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength, and love your neighbor as yourself, and you shall live. The word is zeal, and it means you will be caused to live, you will be quickened, or you will live under the constant guidance and influence of God.

He's talking about the future. Jesus is talking about right now. You see, what he's trying to say to this man is eternal life is not something that's coming down the road after the judgment seat.

Eternal life starts now. For those that are mine, they have eternal life now. If you belong to Christ, you now have eternal life.

It's not something coming down the road. You've got it now. And the evidence of that eternal life is that you are quickened in your spirit.

You are raised from the dead. Your heart, your mind, your motives, everything begins to change. The old nature begins to be put away, and a new nature, which is in the likeness and image of the one who died and was raised again from the dead, begins to live within you.

And it's an evidence that you are quickened. You are now entered into eternal life. And Jesus said, yes, this is the right way.

You love God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength. And if you do, you will also love your neighbor as much as you love yourself. But he, verse 29, says, willing to justify himself, said to Jesus, and who is my neighbor? Now, here's the type of a man who wants to appear to be in right standing with God.

And he will love his neighbor someday. But for the time being, he says, I'm excused because you see, I'm just not sure of the definition of the word neighbor. Yet, but when I find out, you know, Jesus, I love him as much as I love you.

When I find out who my neighbor is, you know, there's a whole segment of the church that is always learning and never coming to the knowledge of the truth, always studying, always going to one new conference after another to learn one new corner on God, but never, ever finding the heart of God for humanity. Oh, Lord, I'm learning. And one day, as soon as I understand what the word neighbor means, I'll be out there, oh, God, and I'll be doing exactly what you called me to do.

Always studying. And it's just a cover up. It's a smoke screen for a heart that doesn't want to live for God.

Folks, when you get saved, the very first thing you want to do is reach out and help all the humanity around you. I remember one night when I was a police officer, a friend of mine, another police officer, I took him. We were on duty and I took him to a place where I had been baptized in the Holy Ghost.

And I took him to that place and it was another friend. And he got saved and filled with the Holy Ghost. And I remember as he was heading home, he jumped out of the car, took the last money, saw some fellow, not as a police officer who normally arrests people on the street who are sleeping on the street, at least where I came from.

He jumped out of the car, took everything he had out of his pocket and gave it to the man so that he could find himself somewhere to stand, some food to eat. What brought about that transformation? In a matter of an hour, the man was a different man. I'll tell you what brought it about.

He was saved. The power of God had come upon him. And the evidence of the Holy Ghost within him as there was a benevolence, that benevolence of God as it is, was in him and now flowing through him to fallen humanity all around him.

Now Jesus said, let me help you understand who your neighbor is. In verse 30 he says, a certain man went from Jericho, Jerusalem to Jericho and fell among thieves that stripped him of his raiment and wounded him and departed, leaving him half dead. And he said, and by chance there came down a certain priest, etc., and passed by and a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked at him and passed by on the other side.

Jesus was saying to him, let me help you understand who your neighbor is. This was a time of thievery. Now you know the Bible says the devil has come to steal and to kill and to destroy.

There was a spirit, as it is, that was released among men and it was depriving violently people of their clothing and of healing and of comfort. They stripped him and wounded him and left him half dead. And folks, that's exactly what happens to humanity without God.

That's exactly what happens to... they are stripped of the righteousness that could be theirs in Christ and the covering of their sin. They are stripped and robbed of the healing that Jesus has died for on Calvary. That wholeness that could be every man's.

The enemy roars about using those that are at his disposal to inflict, as it is, his desire to wound the creation of God. And leaving them, walking away. Society without God is indifferent at best.

Walking away and leaving the man comfortless. And folks, it must have been a common thing because Jesus seems to infer that people were just passing by. It must have been common to see people beat up and stripped and left without comfort.

Obviously, it had gotten into society, perhaps, that it was accepted. That you saw people just walk by and say, oh, poor man, I wonder what happened to him. And just kept right on going to their appointed grounds as they saw it.

The priest, for example, heading to the temple to his service at the altar. That's where the priest ministered. He ministered at the altar.

Perhaps, hoping that night for a Zacharias vision. You remember, Zacharias was in ministering at the altar and an angel appeared to him and said, oh, Zacharias, your wife Elizabeth has been barren, but you're going to have a son and he's going to be mighty and he's going to turn, that was John the Baptist, he's going to turn the hearts of many and be a forerunner of the Messiah. And perhaps the priest is heading that night and he's hoping at the altar that he's going to have a Zacharias vision of some new great thing that's going to come into his life and be part of his life.

And we see the Levi coming to worship and hoping for a new song. Maybe tonight I'll get a new song. I'll come in and I'll be singing and some new vision of a song will come before me and I'll be able to write it down.

It'll be a wonderful new praise song it will be in the house of the Lord. And still, but passing him by, unaware of the heart of God for fallen humanity all around them. But he said there was another man and this man saw the need and he said he came where the man was and when he saw me had compassion on him and he went to him and bound up his wounds and poured in oil and wine and set him on his own beast and brought him to an end and took care of him.

Another man, he said, saw the need. I believe this is Christ speaking about himself. He's talking about God, the heart of God.

And at his own expense, he bent down as it is to him. God bent his knee to become a man. Don't ever doubt it for one second.

God bent his knee to become one of us and came to us in our condition, our pitiful condition. And he tenderly cared for him until he was well. Says he poured in oil and the word for oil in the Greek is eleon, which means the exhilarating influence of the Holy Spirit or the enlightening of God.

He poured in himself. That's what Christ did, folks. Do you understand? He bent his knee and became a man.

Almighty God saw our condition before the foundation of the world. And God the Father and God the Son made a covenant one with another. And God came to the earth and became a man.

He bent his knee to our fallen condition. He stopped on the road. Aren't you thankful tonight? Aren't you thankful that he came to you? Hallelujah.

How many tonight could say I wasn't even looking for him? And he came to me. I was laying there in my pitiful condition. And he came to me and bent his knee.

I know there's a man in this house that has a testimony of trying to commit suicide. And the very day he was going to kill himself, a voice, an audible voice came to him and said, give me a chance in your life. And he knew it was the voice of Jesus.

Nobody had ever told him before, but he just knew it was God speaking to him, bending his knee to us in our fallen condition. And that's exactly what Jesus Christ has done for us. And he tenderly cares for us and pours himself into us.

The oil of his presence, the oil of quickening, the oil of enlightening. And heals us of our wounds and carries us. He said, set him on his own beast.

He carries us as it is and takes us to shelter and takes care of us all the days of our lives. Isn't that an amazing thing? Hallelujah. I thank God for the understanding that I'm not left to walk this walk alone.

There's a song we sing that says, he walks with me and he talks with me and he tells me I am his own. He has poured his life into mine and he has carried me when I can't walk. And he has taken me to shelter.

And even beyond that, it says on the morrow when he departed, he took out two pence and gave them to the host and said to him, take care of him. And whatever you spend more when I come again, I will repay you. Guess who the host is? Guess who the host is? I see that as you and me.

I see that as the church. This man came and poured into humanity and those that have come to Christ are those that are in need of care. He said, listen, I'm going to give you a deposit.

I'm going to give you a down payment as it is and I'm going to give it to you. I'm going to entrust it to you and take care of him. And anything you spend beyond this, I will give it to you when I come again.

I will repay you, says the Lord. And then he says to this man, go and do likewise and you will have life. Go and do likewise and you will be quickened.

Go and do likewise and you will be tapped into that quickening power of God and you will be drawn into eternity now. Eternity will not be a far off concept. Eternity will become now.

But you see, eternity has a cost to it. Yes, it cost the son of God. It cost God his very life.

It cost him pain. It cost him suffering and sorrow and temporary separation from his father and the pain of that we will never understand until we finally get into eternity. And sometimes it will cost us some comfort.

It will cost some of us some of the things perhaps that we hold dear in this world, that we may walk with him and follow in the very footsteps of the son of God among fallen humanity all around us. Now, go back to 1 Samuel again. Remember the story of Hannah.

It's a desperate hour. God has withheld from her for a reason. God has held off answering her prayer.

And she got desperate. In 1 Samuel 1, 7 it says, So as he did year by year when she went up to the house of the Lord, she provoked her. Therefore, she wept and did not eat.

Now, she refused any other satisfying, but that satisfying which comes from God. She stopped eating. She started fasting.

This was the beginning of the search of saying, God, what is it that you're trying to do in my life? What is it that I'm not hearing? I'm not satisfied with this barrenness. You said you came to fill me. You said you came to give me an abundance.

And I'm not satisfied with anything but the fullnesses of your promises being released into my life. I'm not satisfied. And folks, that's a good thing.

It's a good thing if you have an empty area in your life and you're here tonight saying, I'm not satisfied with this emptiness. Because many people are. Many people called by the name of Christ are quite happy to be absolutely bankrupt for the presence of God.

As long as they go to church and have some semblance of hope for the future, that's good enough for them. But this is a desperate hour. We are living in modern day Shiloh with a fat bachelor in priesthood and sons who don't know God, who have made the offering of God an abhorrence among God's people, standing at the door and demanding the fattest and the finest of the meat for themselves, not willing to live by faith and trust God for their provision.

And they've caused the people of God to laugh and to abhor the offering of God. This is a desperate hour that we're living in. Just as desperate as the hour of Hannah.

And then said Elkanah her husband, why are you weeping? Why are you not eating? Verse 8. And why is your heart grieved? Am I not better to you than ten sons? Verse 9 says, Hannah rose up after they had eaten in Shiloh and after they had drunk. In other words, she said, I'm going to press through. Everyone around me is eating and drinking.

Everyone around me is satisfied. But something is missing in me. And I'm not happy.

I'm not satisfied. I'm getting up. They might be quite content to eat and drink and go and say a few prayers every year, but I'm not satisfied.

She was going to press through to where no one around her had a desire to go. There may be people listening to this message on tape in the future, and you're sitting in a church with a fat, bastard, knee-high priesthood. I challenge you to get up and press through to God, even if you're the only one that wants to go in your church.

Get up and press in and let God begin to do miracles in your life. She said, you may be full but I'm not. And I'm going back to find out what is blocking the life of God.

I'm going back to find out what is blocking the life-flowing power of God within me. The Bible said she went back after they were all finished eating and drinking in Shiloh. Eli the priest sat upon a seat by the post of the temple of the Lord.

Verse 10 says she was in bitterness of soul and prayed unto the Lord and wept sore. She was desperate. God, you've got to do this thing in me.

Lord, you've got to come and give me life. I want life. I don't want religion.

I'm not going home with an empty womb one more time. I'm going home with a seed of life in me. I want life.

And now she gets to the place where God has been trying to bring her all along. This is where he's been trying to take her to in verse 11. And she vowed a vow and said, O Lord of hosts, if thou will indeed look on the affliction of thine handmaid and remember me, and not forget thine handmaid, but will 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.

Now she's finally come to the place where God has won. That's why he had closed her womb. And so, she got to the place and said, God, whatever you give me, I promise you, I promise you, I promise you, I will bring it back for your glory.

I will bring it back for your cause. I will bring it back for your half. I will bring it back for your purposes.

I'm not just asking for something to take home. I'm asking for something to bring back. I'm asking for something, God, that you can take and use for your glory.

There's a reason why God withholds. Until we get to the place where we say, God, I want you to come and touch this area of my life. And I don't want just to be set free, I want to be overflowing with your presence.

And God, by your grace, by your grace I'll bring it back into your house. By your grace I'll use it for your glory. By your grace I'll stand on the mountaintop and I'll shout your name to my generation.

By your grace. Hallelujah. It's like the person that comes into the house of the Lord and says, God, I can't love anybody.

I don't love anybody. And I'm sick and tired of this lovelessness in my heart and in my life. God, fill me with your love.

Birth your love in me and I'll love everybody that you lead me to. You lead me to them and I'll love them, oh God, for your glory. I'll reach out, I'll touch their lives, because it won't be me, it will be your life within me that is touching them.

Hallelujah. This is the place where Eli, so unused to intercession, thinks he's drunk. Isn't that amazing? Here's the first intercessor, been in this house perhaps in months, if not years.

And he looks down and he says he's drunk. And he's trying to portray some semblance of spirituality. He says, how long will you be drunk and put your wine away from you? Isn't that amazing? Somebody is interceding, he thinks they're drunk.

And we're in a generation where the priests of this generation think that drunks are intercessors. Folks, it's all turned around. We have holy ghost bartenders now in the house of God.

Dispensing spiritual booze to people. Thinking that drunks are worshippers. It's as stupid as Eli was in this situation.

And Hannah goes on and says, Eli answered and said, go in peace. And the God of Israel grant thy petition. He's got no faith.

It's just the right thing to say. But verse 18 says, 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. Folks, I want to tell you something. When you get to this altar, when you finally say, God, whatever you do is for your glory.

I tell you that's where faith comes into your heart. That's where faith begins to take hold of you. She rose up from that place.

As far as she knew, she's still as barren as she was before. But a seed of faith was now planted in her life. God, I now understand why you've withheld from me.

Lord, you're going to do something in my life. I could see her going back into that place where everybody's eating and drinking and all laying at the table after their banquet in Shiloh. And she comes back in and there is a glow on her face, a presence of God.

She has a promise in her heart now. God, you're going to do something that can't be done by the hand of man. Hallelujah.

Hallelujah. Now the Bible tells us they went home. Elkanah knew his wife and the Lord remembered her.

Verse 20 says it came to pass that when the time was come after about Hannah had conceived that she bear a son, they called his name Samuel and said, because I've asked him of the Lord. And the man Elkanah and all his house went up to offer unto the Lord the yearly sacrifice. That's a year later.

Going back again to the yearly sacrifice. And Hannah didn't go up for she said to her husband, I will not go up until the child be weaned. Now folks, you have to be careful of this.

Now, she said, no, I'm not taking the child back until it's nurtured, until it's grown. But folks, you can't wean the child forever. There are people like that.

God begins to touch their life and they say, I'm going to use this for God. Boy, this is going to be for God's glory. As soon as it matures and it grows and the grace increases.

And you imagine how foolish it would be if she were still holding a 20 year old in her bosom. You know, saying, he's not ready yet. He's not quite weaned yet.

To take him up to the house of the Lord. No. Don't hold on to your gift forever.

When God gives it to you, remember it's for a purpose. It's to bring back and to be used for His honor and for His glory. We are to be a testimony.

We are to be living witnesses in the entire world of the fact that Jesus Christ is alive from the dead. Sitting at the right hand of all power and glory. And verse 26, she brings him now to the house of the Lord and she said, now you have to understand now, this is Samuel.

She called him Samuel, which means God asked of God. That's what Samuel actually means. He's asked of God.

I asked God for him and He gave him to me. And now I'm giving him back to God. And she said, O my Lord, as thy soul liveth.

Verse 26, My Lord, I am the woman that stood here by thee praying unto the Lord. And for this child I prayed. And the Lord has given me my petition which I asked of Him.

Therefore I have lent him unto the Lord as long as he lives he shall be lent to the Lord and he worshiped the Lord there. You see, the child was brought to God and the need of a nation was met. How is the need of a nation met? The need of a nation is met when you and I, in desperation, say God Almighty in the power of the Holy Ghost, let your life be released through me.

And then bring me back again into your house and tell me and show me what I should do. That the need of the nation should be met. Folks, when the people are just sitting at the table eating and drinking, the need of the nation is not met.

There has to be somebody that is willing to give their lives as a living sacrifice to God which Paul the Apostle said is your reasonable service. It is reasonable to do these things. It is reasonable to bring back to God the giftings that He has planted within our lives.

Now Hannah, praise your prayer. Chapter 2 Remember the title of my message tonight is There is a way to a rejoicing heart. Verse 1 says Hannah prayed and said My heart rejoices in the Lord.

My horn, that means the power of God within me or the symbol of power is exalted in the Lord. And my mouth is enlarged over my enemies because I rejoice in thy salvation. God, you have released your power within me.

And now she goes on to say verse 2, there is none holy as the Lord. And there is none beside thee neither is there any rock like our God. Talk no more so exceeding proudly.

And let not arrogancy come out of your mouth. For the Lord is a God of knowledge and by Him actions are weighed. Folks, when we are dedicated to God you can face the devil you can look him right in the eye and say don't speak so arrogantly.

For God knows my heart. And I know my God. And I know what God has given me.

And I know what God is going to do in my life and through my life. There is no rock like our God. There is no standing place in all of the universe than to stand on the promises of God and the completed work of Calvary.

Don't talk arrogantly to me, my enemy. Don't rejoice over me. Because God is my stay.

He has given me His promise. And God's life is going to be birthed into my life. And I'm going to bring it back to His glory by His power and by His grace.

The bows of mighty men are broken. Verse 4. And they that stumble are girded with strength. They that were full have hired themselves out for bread.

And they were hungry ceased. So that the barren is born seven and she that has many children is waxed feeble. In other words, the children of natural strength are going to lose their strength.

But those that wait upon the Lord are not going to lose their strength. God says I'm going to keep you and give you something that's eternal. The Lord killeth and maketh alive.

He bringeth down to the grave and bringeth up. The Lord maketh poor and maketh rich. He bringeth low and lifteth up.

He raiseth up the poor out of the dust and lifts up the beggar from the dunghill to set them among princes and to 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. Verse 9 says He will keep the feet of His saints and the wicked shall be silent in darkness.

He will keep the feet of His saints. God says I will keep you in the coming times of difficulty. Give me everything.

Give me all of your life. Give me all of your heart. Bring back to me those things that I have done and will do within your life.

And I will keep your feet in the time of darkness. I will give you a sure path. You are not going to stumble and you are not going to be afraid.

The wicked are going to be silent, but you will not be. The adversaries of the Lord, verse 10, shall be broken to pieces. Out of heaven He shall thunder upon them.

The Lord shall judge the ends of the earth. He shall give strength to His King and exalt the horn of His anointed. And what does exalt mean? Lift up.

The horn is the symbol of power. And the word anointed implies an anointing of God for a special purpose. And here is Hannah's time of rejoicing.

God alone, she says, is going to lift me up in His power because I have been anointed of Him for a special purpose. Hallelujah! Hallelujah! That is your promise tonight. Whatever area of your life is this area of desperation, wherever it is that God has withholden from you, I want you to hear me tonight.

Wherever He has witholden from you, He has done it for a reason. That at this altar tonight, whether it is a physical altar or a place in your heart, you are going to say, Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe, Mighty God, I am coming to You tonight. And by grace alone, what You birthed into me, I am bringing it back for Your kingdom's sake.

You are going to lead me. You are going to guide me. And You are going to use my life for Your glory because You have anointed me for a special purpose.

God, thank You for not giving me all my desires without understanding. Thank You, Lord Jesus, that You withheld even this one area of my life just to make me desperate so that I would want to know what Your kingdom is about in my life. There are people here tonight that are going to pray a simple prayer and say, God, I give You the life that You have given me.

I give it to You for Your purposes. The child is now weaned. I ask You to begin to start touching lives through me.

The child is weaned. There are people here tonight that God has given you long ago what you asked for, but you have not yet brought it back for His purposes. You have not yet brought it back to begin to touch suffering humanity.

You see, that is the purpose of God, folks. There is no other purpose. Christ came to save sinners.

Paul said it clearly. Christ came to touch, heal, set free, anoint, release, preach comfort and peace to all who could turn to Him. That is the purpose of God.

And there are many, many here that you have been given. You have been given your gift already. And now it is time to give it back to God.

It is time just to come to an altar somewhere and just say, Lord Jesus Christ, touch through me. Touch through me. Speak through me.

Walk through me. Give through me. Oh, Jesus, forgive me for being given such wonderful things.

And I have taken them home and I am still weaning them. And I haven't brought them back to the temple. I have not come back to you with everything you have given me and said, God, take it and use it for your glory.

You see, that is why there is so little rejoicing sometimes. So little joy. You will never really fully understand and neither will I. None of us will fully understand the joy, the true joy of the Lord until we are released to His purposes.

Until we are just a channel of God's blessing to the church, and to those outside of the kingdom of God. We become a channel of the blessing of God. That is the source of joy.

There is a pathway to a joyful heart. Hannah didn't rejoice until she had... You know how hard that must have been, folks? Do you know how hard that would be to bring a child... That generation would be weaned at around 3 to 4 years of age. Can you know how hard it would be to bring that child and give that boy to that fat, back-slidden priest, Eli? Do you know how difficult that must have been? Is anybody saying it's easy to live for God? No, sometimes it's hard.

Sometimes it costs. Sometimes we have to release those things that are the dearest things to our heart. We have to let them go that God might be glorified.

I remind you one more time that the boy she brought was called Samuel. One of the greatest judges that Israel had ever known. Brought the nation back again.

The one who anointed David king over Israel. Samuel. Samuel was asked of God, but he was brought back to God.

We live in a church age where all people do is ask, and ask, and ask, and ask, and ask. And we have whole denominations built around just asking. But nobody brings back to God what He's given to them.

And it's just this greed. There are greed altars in the house of God. More! More! During the so-called blessing revival in Canada, the mantra was to chant around their altar.

More! More! And they're filled to the full with the fullness of God so many of the people, but it's just an endless greed. So few bringing anything back to God. People flying from all over the world for a so-called revival.

And when an offering was taken in one instance for missions, I believe the offering amounted to 15 cents for a transformed life. Swallowing a camel and straining at a gnat. Religion at its worst.

No! No! No more, God says, until we bring back what He's given us. No more! To consume on our own greed. It's the highest calling in the universe to live for God.

There's no higher calling to speak for Him. To come to His throne. To hear from God and bring it to the people.

There's no higher calling in the world than to reach out and touch the fallen soul. To stop by the wayside and pour in oil and wine. And give of ourselves in representation of the God who gave Himself for us.

There is no higher calling in the universe. God forbid! I don't ever want to be found around some altar crying out, more! I want to be found in a place where what God has given me is being used for His glory. And let it start small.

Let it start where we are, where we live. Let it start by bringing back to Him now what God has given us. The child is now weaned.

We live in the generation, folks, it's a fearful time we're in. Because I see many of God's people being released to foolishness. We've seen it for seven years now in the house of the Lord.

All over North America released to absolute foolishness. Countries all over the world now are closing their doors now to North American preachers. Did you know that? All over the world now they're closing their doors because they brought the same stupidity that swept our borders into other countries.

There are others here tonight that are just simply going to say, Lord, I'm barren. I'm empty in this area of my life. Give me new life.

And by grace, I will bring it back to You for Your glory. God, give me life in this area. If you are plagued with immorality, you can say, Lord, give me clean eyes and a clean heart.

And God, I'll bring it back to You for Your glory. Whatever your situation is, whatever your problem is, whatever difficulty you face, if you have an indifferent heart, indifferent means that you can't even work up a burden for anybody around you. You can't even work up a burden for the work of God.

You say, Lord, I'm barren. I'm supposed to be a Christian. I'm empty.

I'm bereft as it is of Your life. I'm empty. But God, I'm going to press in until You give me new life.

And then by grace, I'm going to bring it back to You. I'm going to bring it back to Your glory that Your kingdom may come through my life. That I'll be faithful to Your call only.

Hallelujah. Hallelujah. The Holy Spirit is speaking to you tonight.

I'm going to ask you to stand all together and come and join us at this altar. We're going to pray together. Would you do that right now? And let's believe God.

This is a fine hour. You're going to be set free tonight. You're going to be set free.

You're going to go home with faith. Please move in close. The devil fights this with everything in his arsenal to stop this from happening, this type of thing tonight.

Because you're desperate now. And we understand, you understand, we understand tonight, all of us, that the kingdom comes for a purpose. Bless you Jesus.

Bless you Lord. I have fought hell this week to preach this message. Right to the last moment.

I had severe chest pains tonight. The enemy doing everything in his power to stop you from getting free. Keep coming.

You're desperate. Remember Hannah said, enough is enough. I want life.

I want life. I want freedom. I want to be the bride of Jesus Christ.

Give you an opportunity everyone, please reconsider if you're wavering in the balcony tonight, if you're not sure you want to live for Christ, please reconsider this. Same thing in the Annex Main Sanctuary, reconsider this. Because this is an altar where God's promise is going to fill you.

You're going to walk away from here with faith tonight like Hannah did. You're going to be different. I speak that because I've been in the presence.

You're going to walk away. You're never going to be Lord Jesus Christ, Savior of my soul, and King of my life. I thank you for making me desperate in this area of my life.

I now understand you've withheld from me because you've desired that I may live with your life being fully known and fully expressed through my life. Tonight, I ask you to fill me in the area of my deepest need. Lord Jesus Christ, you know what that is, and I know what that is.

Tonight, by grace, Lord, whatever you do in me that it may be used, I ask tonight you would begin to touch life and your feet and a bruised generation. Speak through me, Jesus. Touch through me, Jesus.

Love through me, Jesus. Let your life be in my life. God, thank you tonight in me.

You're going to change me. King of this universe, I thank you tonight for your quickening power and changing me. I have a testimony of a rejoicing heart.

Something happened at that altar. Don't you let the devil take it away from you. God is going to work a miracle in me, and I'm bringing it back for his glory.

This is the conclusion of the message.

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