**THE BARREN HATH BORN SEVEN; AND SHE THAT HATH MANY CHILDREN IS WAXED FEEBLE.**

**I SAMUEL 2:5b**

 First Samuel chapter two verses one through ten records Hannah’s second prayer or what I like to call Hannah’s Song. Her first Biblically recorded prayer is found in First Samuel the first chapter and verses ten and eleven. The first prayer was a prayer embedded in grief and emotional suffering, while the last is one of rejoicing and song. In the heart of the second prayer or Hannah’s Song is found this beautiful lyric “the barren hath born seven; and she that hath many children is waxed feeble.”

 The foundation for this line is found in the circumstances surrounding the first prayer. Hannah was barren. Her husband’s other wife, Peninnah, had been blessed with sons and daughters. No specific number of how many children she had is given. Peninnah was labeled as Hannah’s adversary. Why? Because Elkanah, the husband, may have allowed a spirit of competition to stand between the two wives, which is going to happen when one has two wives. In this case, Peninnah was quite insensitive to Hannah and made her cry, made her fret, and made her sick. Because of her barrenness, Hannah also was in bitterness of soul and considered herself a woman of grief.

 Can prayer change things? Can it ever!!! Hannah went to church. Elkanah took his family to Shiloh. Once in Shiloh we have the account of Hannah’s first prayer which voiced her request for a son. God granted her request and Samuel was born. The barren hath born seven.

 Samuel was not seven people. So how could Hannah refer to herself and say “the barren hath born seven. Here is an opportunity to learn from Hannah and look for the unique areas in our children’s life. There are seven unique areas in Samuel’s life. First he was born of a barren woman. Second, Samuel was born a Nazarite. Hannah vowed a vow unto God that she would give her son for lifelong service unto the Lord. Third, Samuel became a child priest. The next unique thing about Samuel was that he was the last of the judges. The fifth area of Samuel’s life that was unique was that he introduced the age of the prophets. Sixth, the first king, Saul, was anointed by Samuel. Finally, the man after God’s own heart, King David, was anointed first by Samuel.

 Would you take time today to consider some of your prayers that God has graciously answered and try to see how unique they are? Is it possible that when you were just looking for a way out of your grief that God may have brought a very special person in your life? You may be one that thought you could never have children but God has answered your prayer with a child through birth or adoption. How special was it to know that you were with child? What a day it must have been when that child was born? Do you remember his first smile, her first word, her first step, his first day at school? I think it is easy to see how Hannah’s sad condition turned to an occasion for song.

 May God bless you with answered prayers full of his uniqueness.

 Randy Burtram