

Hanna - Ike - Josephine
(09-03-08)



What do all of these hurricanes have in common? Their names are all derived from Biblical characters who are associated with stories of barren women giving birth to extraordinary sons.

Tropical Storm	Biblical Association	Relation
Hanna	Hannah	Mother of Samuel
Ike	Isaac	Son of Sarah
Josephine	Joseph	Son of Rachel

The Bible contains a number of historical accounts of women who were barren. Being childless was a tremendous stigma in ancient ages, much more so than it is today. The Bible recounts the great distress of those who longed to bear children, and we can be assured that no testimony of Scripture is without great significance. God both ordered the details of individuals' lives and selected which stories to record for our benefit.

That there are great things prophetically foreshadowed in the lives of barren women is beyond dispute. Yahweh desired to reveal a spiritual pattern through their lives, a pattern to be fulfilled among His own wife, seen first in Israel and then in the Church. From the beginning of creation the Father (I use the title Father intentionally to reveal a central aspect of His character) longed to have sons in His own image and likeness.

Genesis 1:26

Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness..."

The plan of God took into account the fall of man in the Garden of Eden. Man who was to bear the image of God became formless and void. The image of God was lost, and rather than becoming a tabernacle of the Holy Spirit, man ended up in emptiness (void). This was not the end of God's plan, for He saw the end from the beginning. He saw the barren state mankind would fall into, and He planned to intervene, removing the barrenness of mankind. He was determined to have sons in His own image and likeness.

Due to sin, a new element entered into the process of bringing forth sons in the image of God. This new element was pain.

Genesis 3:16

To the woman He said, "I will greatly multiply your pain in childbirth, in pain you shall bring forth children; yet your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you."

These words spoken to Eve serve as a parable of the church and her relationship with her Husband, who is Christ. God was testifying that due to sin, mature sons after His image would only come forth through pain. Despite this fact, the church would still set her desire upon her Husband, and He would rule over her.

Rather than looking at these words as some tyrannical establishment of a patriarchal society where men rule over women, those with spiritual sight will recognize that what is expressed is greatly to be desired. Most gladly will we have Christ to rule over us. He is the Husband that laid down His life for His bride.

Ephesians 5:25-29

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her; that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she should be holy and blameless. So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself; for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also does the church...

What woman would not desire such a husband, One who was willing to die for her? To have such a One as Head and Ruler would not be an offense, but

rather an honor. "Your desire shall be for your Husband, and He shall rule over you."

The Bride of Christ, however, has proven to be unfaithful in her devotion. She has acted as a harlot, taking many lovers, living for pleasure, while failing to bring forth sons after the image of her Husband. This failure was first seen in Israel, and later in the church.

Ezekiel 16:8-16

Then I passed by you and saw you, and behold, you were at the time for love; so I spread My skirt over you and covered your nakedness. I also swore to you and entered into a covenant with you so that you became Mine," declares Yahweh God... "Then your fame went forth among the nations on account of your beauty, for it was perfect because of My splendor which I bestowed on you," declares Yahweh God. "But you trusted in your beauty and played the harlot because of your fame, and you poured out your harlotries on every passer-by who might be willing."

James 4:4-5

You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. Or do you think that the Scripture speaks to no purpose: "He jealously desires the Spirit which He has made to dwell in us"?

Both the Old Testament and the New reveal that God chose a people for His bride, but they played the harlot with the world. They embraced many loves, when they had been espoused to God, and therefore proved unfaithful.

II Corinthians 11:2-3

For I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy; for I betrothed you to one husband, that to Christ I might present you as a pure virgin. But I am afraid, lest as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, your minds should be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ.

The church today has departed from a pure devotion to Christ. The church loves to call herself the bride of Christ, but in her actions and words she has proven that her heart is far from Him. The church is pursuing the same things that a lost world pursues, forgetting the words of Christ that declared, "Where your treasure is your heart will be also."

The church has embraced another gospel that is called “the prosperity gospel,” and truly it is rightly named. For worldly prosperity has become the “good news” that the church wants to hear about. She does not want to hear about suffering, or bringing forth mature sons after the image of Christ. Suffering and pain are things she greatly seeks to avoid. You will never hear the following words proclaimed in the houses of prostitution that are marked by steeples and which sit at every crossroads and at the head of every street.

Philippians 1:29

For to you it has been granted for Christ's sake, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake...

A church that pursues pleasure will not endure the sorrow necessary to bring forth children after the image of Christ. God told Eve that she would only bring forth children through much pain and sorrow, and this was a parable for the church to understand. Only by pain and sorrow will the church bring forth sons after the image of Christ. The church must endure the discomfort of pregnancy. She must allow her sexy image to be replaced with the image of maternity when the belly swells and the walk becomes a waddle.

It is no coincidence that society at large is aborting babies by the millions, for this is a reflection of the course the church has chosen. Rather than bringing forth children in pain, caring for them, disciplining them, and instilling in them the spirit and image of their Father, the church has abandoned her children. If one comes too close to term she will abort them that her pleasures and pursuit of endless pleasure and the enjoyment of her lovers might not be interrupted. The church has become barren by choice.

Yet, through many testimonies of Scripture God has revealed that a day will come when the wife of Christ will turn her desire to Him. She will gladly choose for Him to rule over her. And she will greatly desire to bring forth children. Consider the testimonies of the women who are referenced by the three tropical storms that have recently formed.

Sarah was the wife of Abraham, and she was barren. It was such a reproach to be childless that Sarah suggested that Abraham take her handmaid Hagar, an Egyptian, and raise up offspring by her. In this was pictured man's attempts to bring forth offspring in God's image by communion with the world. The world's methods are employed.

How many churches have hired men to lead them who have the title of Doctor before their name, or who have college credentials that follow the same? How many seek to build gilded edifices with stained glass and vaulted ceilings, to employ the skills of musicians and choreographers, and to set before the people some gifted orator who can cause them to feel that 30 minutes of men's wisdom has somehow brought them closer to the presence of God? Such are the methods and allure of men. The world and its methods, like Hagar, appears fertile, but what she produces is despised in the eyes of God. Read Christ's rejection of the Laodicean church to see how far the opinion of the church is pertaining to her success, and the actual view of God upon her works.

God told Abraham that Hagar was not the one to produce an heir that He would accept. The heir would come through Sarah. Sarah laughed, for she was already advanced in years and had been barren all her life. So too has the church remained barren, failing to bring forth mature sons after the image of Christ. Yet in her advanced age the child will come forth. Sarah was 90 years old, and Abraham 100 when Isaac was born. Isaac means "laughter."

Consider Rachel, the mother of Joseph and Benjamin. Though she was the favored wife of Jacob, she was barren. Her sister became her rival, and Leah gave birth to multiple sons while Rachel remained barren. Great was Rachel's distress.

Genesis 30:1-2

Now when Rachel saw that she bore Jacob no children, she became jealous of her sister; and she said to Jacob, "Give me children, or else I die."

Great was the desire of Rachel before God listened to her and opened her womb. Consider also Hannah, the mother of the prophet Samuel.

1 Samuel 1:1-11

Now there was a certain man... Elkanah... And he had two wives: the name of one was Hannah and the name of the other Peninnah; and Peninnah had children, but Hannah had no children. .. And when the day came that Elkanah sacrificed, he would give portions to Peninnah his wife and to all her sons and her daughters; but to Hannah he would give a double portion, for he loved Hannah, but Yahweh had closed her womb. Her rival, however, would provoke her bitterly to irritate her, because Yahweh had closed her womb. And it happened year after year, as often as she went up to the house of Yahweh, she

would provoke her, so she wept and would not eat. Then Elkanah her husband said to her, "Hannah, why do you weep and why do you not eat and why is your heart sad? Am I not better to you than ten sons?"

Then Hannah rose after eating and drinking in Shiloh. Now Eli the priest was sitting on the seat by the doorpost of the temple of Yahweh. And she, greatly distressed, prayed to Yahweh and wept bitterly. And she made a vow and said, "O Yahweh of hosts, if You will indeed look on the affliction of Your maidservant and remember me, and not forget Your maidservant, but will give Your maidservant a son, then I will give him to Yahweh all the days of his life, and a razor shall never come on his head."

Consider the distress of Hannah. She was so humiliated by her failure to bring forth children for her husband that she made a pledge to God of devoting her offspring to Yahweh. This is what God has been waiting for. He has allowed the church to remain barren until she would bring forth a son who will be devoted to God all the days of his life. This would truly be a son after the image of Christ, for He always lived to do the will of the Father.

It is no coincidence that the boy Samuel is described with similar language as the young Son of God.

I Samuel 2:26

Now the boy Samuel was growing in stature and in favor both with the LORD and with men.

Luke 2:52

And Yahshua kept increasing in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.

Both Samuel and Yahshua came from the wombs of women who had never previously born children. Both were given as gifts of God. Both were devoted to God their entire lives. And both serve as types of the sons of God who must come forth in this last hour to be readied to rule and reign with Christ for a thousand years.

The church has long been remiss in bringing forth sons after the image of Christ. The church has pursued many loves, and her devotion to Christ has been divided. The church is about to be cast into such distress, she will become so provoked at the realization that she is barren in God's sight, that

she will cry out with great provocation of spirit to bring forth sons.

Sarah, Rachel and Hannah are all symbols of a barren church that must bring forth children. Various truths can be seen in each of their lives. In Sarah we observe that it is in the church's old age that she brings forth a son. In Rachel we see that in a time of sorrow, of great birth pangs, her sons must come forth. In Hannah we see that out of great pleading with God these sons will come forth, and they will be devoted to God from the day of their birth. There will be no thought of these sons belonging to the world. They will be God's unique possession.

In recent years God has placed signs in the heavens and upon the earth that a time of great birth pangs is at hand. God's has witnessed through signs and wonders that great distress is coming to the nations and that America will fall. Can we not therefore understand that the message found in these three witnesses, these tropical storms that all relate to barren women, are declaring once more that it is time for the church to bring forth children? And if the time has come, then the church must go through pain and sorrow, yet her desire will be for her Husband.

Rachel first gave birth to Joseph after a long period of barrenness. Joseph's name means "He will add," for Rachel looked to God to give her another son to add to this one. This later son was Benjamin.

Genesis 35:16-19

Then they journeyed from Bethel (house of God); and when there was still some distance to go to Ephrath (fruitfulness), Rachel (a ewe) began to give birth and she suffered severe labor. And it came about when she was in severe labor that the midwife said to her, "Do not fear, for now you have another son." And it came about as her soul was departing (for she died), that she named him Ben-oni (son of my sorrow); but his father called him Benjamin (son of my right hand). So Rachel died and was buried on the way to Ephrath (fruitfulness) (that is, Bethlehem).

Is it not evident that God orchestrated every detail here to provide a testimony? Rachel's name means "a ewe," that is a female sheep. The church is pictured as sheep and Christ as the Good Shepherd. The sheep must leave Bethel, the house of God in order to become fruitful. Even now the Spirit is crying out, "Come out of her My people, lest you participate in her sins and partake of her plagues." The people of God are being called out of houses of

apostasy that are referred to as “houses of God.” As she journeys and is herself some distance from Ephratha (fruitfulness), she comes into severe labor. Through the course of this severe labor she brings forth a son in sorrow, for she is surrendering her own life even as this son is coming forth. Yet the Father changes the name of this son to “Son of My right hand.” It is this son who is to rule the nations with a rod of iron, and bring every enemy under subjection to the feet of Christ.

People of God, even as these storms bring with them destruction and calamity, they bring forth the promise that a son of power, a son after the image and likeness of God, will come forth. Let us look up with hope, for even as we can watch the progression of these storms we can know that those things God has promised to be accomplished in these last days will be performed.

May you be blessed with peace and understanding in these days.