



And they that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in.

Isaiah 58:12

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Depression (part 5)

The account in I Samuel 1 reveals the source and nature of the depression that Hannah experienced. The affliction upon the heart of Hannah was in and from a person identified as her adversary (vs. 6). In fact, the word itself carries with it the meaning of tightness, affliction or distress.

The affliction was not that Elkanah's other wife bore him children, but that a particular person would speak words to Hannah provoking her with the intent of making her soul fret, tumble or be violently agitated (vs. 6). This vexation of soul continued from year after year causing Hannah to weep, bemoan or bewail. An important thing to notice is that the blessings (worthy portion) received from her husband and the positive view towards the situation [am not I better than tens sons? (vs. 8)] did not and could not change her situation. Modern psychology stresses cognitive therapy or the development of more positive thought patterns as the solution for depressive situations, but Hannah's actions revealed that she would look outside of herself for the solution to her vexation of soul.

When Hannah took her problem to the Lord, it revealed three important aspects about her and her recovery from depression.

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1. Hannah expressed her situation and emotional dilemma to the Lord (vs. 15). She describes herself to the Lord as afflicted or depressed (I Peter 5:7).
2. She submitted herself (handmaid vs. 11) and the outcome of her prayer and life situation to the Lord.
3. She wanted the outcome of her life and prayer to have spiritual implications (vs. 11): she was dedicating to the Lord the son that she was requesting.

If you recall from the account in Numbers 11, the people were only concerned about themselves and their physical needs. This is not the case with Hannah.

After an interaction with Eli, she received a blessing from him stating that the Lord would grant her request. This blessing brought hope to Hannah, which was the solution for her depression. Her hope was manifested by the fact that she ceased from crying and also began eating. This hope came from her taking problems to the one who could bring hope, from her yielding herself to the person of hope and that her desire was for glory and honor to be given to him who was the source of all hope.