

Time to Dream Again

Greet everyone. Give honor to Bishop & Pastor April.
Pre-service announcements

TIME TO DREAM AGAIN

INTRO: Have you ever had a dream that you know was from God, but it never happened? Have you ever been in a place where you've been waiting for something so long that you abandoned all hope? Have you ever been in position, where you've tried and failed to no avail, so you gave up on your dream? At some point in our lives, we encounter situations where our present doesn't match our dream. What do we then?

1. Don't allow envy or jealousy to fill our hearts.

1 Samuel 1:1-8 GNT ¹ There was a man named Elkanah, from the tribe of Ephraim, who lived in the town of Ramah in the hill country of Ephraim. He was the son of Jeroham and grandson of Elihu, and belonged to the family of Tohu, a part of the clan of Zuph. ² Elkanah had two wives, Hannah and Peninnah. Peninnah had children, but Hannah did not. ³ Every year Elkanah went from Ramah to worship and offer sacrifices to the Lord Almighty at Shiloh, where Hophni and Phinehas, the two sons of Eli, were priests of the Lord. ⁴ Each time Elkanah offered his sacrifice, he would give one share of the meat to Peninnah and one share to each of her children. ⁵ And even though he loved Hannah very much he would give her only one share, because^[a] the Lord had kept her from having children. ⁶ Peninnah, her rival, would torment and humiliate her, because the Lord had kept her childless. ⁷ This went on year after year; whenever they went to the house of the Lord, Peninnah would upset Hannah so much that she would cry and refuse to eat anything. ⁸ Her husband Elkanah would ask her, "Hannah, why are you crying? Why won't you eat? Why are you always so sad? Don't I mean more to you than ten sons?"

- The enemy loves to remind us of what we don't have and what God seemingly hasn't done. He whispers, "You're dreaming, while others are living the dream." This not only can crush our hearts but cause us to slide into envy or jealousy.
 - **Envy** - a feeling of discontent or covetousness regarding another's advantages, success, possessions, etc. It denotes a longing to possess something awarded to or achieved by another.
 - **Jealousy** - denotes a feeling of resentment that another has gained something that one more rightfully deserves.

2. Answer the devil's whispers with shouts of:

a) Gratitude

Philippians 4:6-7 NLT ⁶ Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need and thank him for all he has done. ⁷ Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.

Gratitude is a doorway into God's peace.

b) Contentment

Philippians 4:11-13 NLT ¹¹ Not that I was ever in need, for I have learned how to be content with whatever I have. ¹² I know how to live on almost nothing or with everything. I have learned the secret of living in every situation, whether it is with a full stomach or empty, with plenty or little. ¹³ For I can do everything through Christ,^[a] who gives me strength.

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- Contentment allows us to wait patiently and remain constant regardless of our circumstances.

c) Confidence in God's ability

Philippians 4:19 NLT ¹⁹ And this same God who takes care of me will supply all your needs from his glorious riches, which have been given to us in Christ Jesus.

3. Give it to God and leave it with Him.

1 Samuel 1:9-11 NLT ⁹ Once after a sacrificial meal at Shiloh, Hannah got up and went to pray. Eli the priest was sitting at his customary place beside the entrance of the Tabernacle. ¹⁰ Hannah was in deep anguish, crying bitterly as she prayed to the Lord. ¹¹ And she made this vow: "O Lord of Heaven's Armies, if you will look upon my sorrow and answer my prayer and give me a son, then I will give him back to you. He will be yours for his entire lifetime, and as a sign that he has been dedicated to the Lord, his hair will never be cut."

- Talking to others may or may not help. It never substitutes for talking to God.
- Humans are limited. They can't always solve our problems. Even when they can, they don't always care enough to help nor are always willing or available.
- God is always available, willing, and able to do what He said He will do!

1 Samuel 1:12-16 NLT ¹² As she was praying to the Lord, Eli watched her. ¹³ Seeing her lips moving but hearing no sound, he thought she had been drinking. ¹⁴ "Must you come here drunk?" he demanded. "Throw away your wine!" ¹⁵ "Oh no, sir!" she replied. "I haven't been drinking wine or anything stronger. But I am very discouraged, and I was pouring out my heart to the Lord. ¹⁶ Don't think I am a wicked woman! For I have been praying out of great anguish and sorrow."

- It's ok not to be ok. It's just not ok to stay that way.
- Rest in the truth. God's promise is bigger than the problem.
- God is not intimidated by the size of the problem. He didn't change His mind when it showed up.
- We should be like Hannah and not let opportunities for offence (distractions) sidetrack us.
- Don't allow people or problems to cause us to abort our dreams.

Jeremiah

4. Get rid of the negative voices.

(Example: The struggle with having our first child)

Proverbs 4:23 NLT Guard your heart above all else, for it determines the course of your life.

- We must protect our hearts at all costs. The Word puts the dream in our hearts. Hope, faith and patience reel it in.

Ephesians

- No dream is too big for God to fulfill!

- **1 Samuel 1:20 GNT** ²⁰ So it was that she became pregnant and gave birth to a son. She named him Samuel, and explained, "I asked the Lord for him."
- This child would go on to be a great prophet. He served as priest, prophet and judge of Israel. He anointed the nation's first and second kings. What if Hannah had given up?
- Don't let the pharaohs of the world tell us what's not going to happen and get us to give up any part of our dream.
- Keep dreaming! Keep believing until your dream becomes reality just like God said!