

Grace to You :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time*

Profile of a Godly Mother

Scripture: 1 Samuel 1-2

Code: 1253

Would you take your Bible and turn with me to the first chapter of 1 Samuel, the first chapter of 1 Samuel. This morning, we're going to do something special and that is we're going to talk about the profile of a godly mother, hoping that this message will not only be a blessing to you that are here but to many who will hear the tape in days to come. First Samuel chapter 1 introduces us to a godly mother by the name of Hannah and if you have been a Christian for any years at all, you have no doubt heard about Hannah and you're going to hear more about her this morning.

In 1908, Ms. Anna Jarvis of Philadelphia observed the first Mother's Day. She did it in memory of her own mother and believing that others should share her feelings, she began a nationwide campaign to try to get everybody to observe a day known as Mother's Day. Little by little the idea grew and finally the United States Congress set apart this day by a formal act and the president encouraged its observance and now Mother's Day is worldwide.

When Mother's Day was initiated in 1908, and years before and after that, it was a day really when mother was an exalted person. I did some reading back in some old tributes to mothers from years back just to find out how people back then looked at women in the role of a mother.

I found an interesting one written in 1928 and delivered to a Mother's Day audience by a Reverend W. L. Caldwell and this is what he said. "Well may we pause to pay honor to her who after Jesus Christ is God's best gift to men...mother. It was she who shared her life with us when as yet our members were unformed. Into the valley of the shadow of death she walked that we might have the light of life. In her arms was the garner of our food and the soft couch for our repose. There we nestled in the hour of pain. There was the playground of our infant glee. Those same arms later became our refuge and stronghold. It was she who taught our baby feet to go and lifted us up over the rough places. Her blessed hands plied the needle by day and by night to make our infant clothes. She put the book under our arm and started us off for school. But best of all, she taught our baby lips to list the name of Jesus and told us first the wondrous story of a Savior's love. The pride of America is its mothers. There are wicked mothers like Jezebel of old. There are unnatural mothers who sell their children into sin. There are sin-cursed, rum-soaked and abandoned mothers to whom their motherhood is the exposure of their shame. But I am glad to believe that there are comparatively few in this class." So said Mr. Caldwell.

Few? In 1928, few; in 1977, not so few. What about motherhood in America today? Are mothers still the pride of America? In our pragmatic and selfish and self-centered age, I'm afraid that such sentiments as Caldwell expressed are almost funny. What about American motherhood? Well, the U.S. News and World Report, March 11, 1976, says that there are one million legal abortions a year. Not exactly the great defender of motherhood. In 1976, the United States divorces were 1,777,000; 14.2 percent of all births in 1975 were illegitimate. In Washington, D.C. and 38 other states, one-half million illegitimate births in 1976. The rate of battered children in the United States, 4 million battered children a year. That's 1 out of every 12 children. October 24, 1976, L.A. Times said between 1 and 4 million children were sexually molested last year.

Caldwell says, "No nation is ever greater than its mothers for they are the makers of its men." The rabbis used to say, "God could not be everywhere so He made mothers." But all of that seems irrelevant and all of that seems out of date when you compare it with the statistics. The only thing I'm afraid that remains for Mother's Day is commercialism. I'm afraid that Mother's Day is not perpetuated by lovers of mother. It's perpetuated by lovers of money. Motherhood in our day has been devastated. Marriage has been mocked. Parental responsibility shirked. Children are killed wholesale by abortion. Mothers exercise selfishness and go to work and play to their satisfaction ignoring their children.

But God's standards haven't changed at all. And in 1 Timothy chapter 2 in verse 15, we have God's standard reiterated in the New Testament, a standard which is given many times in the Old when it says that a woman shall be saved in childbearing. Interesting phrase; a woman shall be saved in childbearing. Now the passage in 1 Timothy 2 is saying this. In the church, the leaders of the church are to be men and Paul says, "I do not permit a woman to take authority and to teach but to learn in silence, to be in subjection, for the woman was made after the man and the woman was the first in sin and so the woman is given a role of submission to a man. But she shall be saved in her childbearing."

What he's saying there is this, that salvation, not for the soul of a woman, not spiritual eternal salvation, but the saving of her dignity and the salvation of her personhood and the significance of her meaning and the ultimate happiness of her existence in creation is found not from leading the church, not from preaching in the assembly, but from bearing children. That God's intention for most women...and there are exceptions...1 Corinthians 7 tells us that God has designed some women to be single; not to be married, not to be mothers. And God has shut the womb of other women for His own purposes. But in the main and for the majority, a woman's real happiness does not come from leading. A woman's real happiness does not come from dominating or ruling men. A woman's real happiness comes from raising children. That's how she contributes to the godliness of society, not by pastoring the church but by raising the god-fearing seed.

A man influences society from the top down and a woman influences society from the bottom up. And the two come together to create that godly society that God has so purposely designed. And so a woman must reach her goal by way of childbearing, through childbearing, diain the Greek. This is her act of obedience to God. This is the way she is delivered from a role of inferiority or a role of secondary usefulness. This is a divine priority for her is to raise people who will be godly influences in society. And so the Christian mother gets her greatest delight in children born to be raised to the glory of God. That is God's design and that is to be her life commitment. It is never to be sidetracked by her own self indulgence, by her own desire for money, by her own desire to lead or rule men, by her own indolence or laziness or any other thing.

The Scripture exalts motherhood. It begins with Sarah who is a model of faith in God and obedience to her husband. And then there was Rachel, whose last words were, as she was giving birth to a child in death, she named the child Benoni which means a child of grief and that was her life, Rachel weeping for her children. But to her heart, even with all the pain, motherhood was everything and so that was all right. And there was Deborah who was called a mother in Israel who led the whole of the sons of Israel to victory. And there was Ruth, the gentle, sweet spirit who loved and sacrificed and was blessed to be the mother of Obed and Obed bore Jesse and Jesse bore David and David was the Seed of Messiah. So the Bible exalts motherhood. In the New Testament, there was Elizabeth and there is Mary.

But especially when the Bible honors mothers, it devotes much attention to a very special lady by the name of Hannah. Hannah became a mother by faith. She appears as a childless woman in 1 Samuel 1. She becomes a mother. In fact, she becomes the mother of Samuel. And the study of her character is a profile of a godly woman. Now I want to develop this as much as is possible but I realize our time is limited so we're going to hurry along these thoughts. It's going to be just very simple and very practical and allow you to fill in the gaps.

As the Book of 1 Samuel opens up, it is the period of the judges in Israel. That is, the period of the patriarchs is in the past where Israel was pretty much guided by men like Joseph and Jacob and so forth and now it is earlier than the time of the kings, Saul and David and Solomon and then on from there. It is that little period in the middle when there were judges in Israel such as Barak and Deborah and Gideon and Samson. It is that time. It is a time of turmoil. It is a time of confusion. It is a time of spiritual degeneracy. It is a time of a corrupted priesthood. It is a time when there is moral desecration in the temple. It is a sad and tragic hour in Israel's history.

The one great hero that they had is dead and his name is Samson, but he's gone and the country is divided and the country is leaderless. The Philistines are encroaching more and more and gaining greater strength. The nation is weak. The nation is impotent. First Samuel 3:1 says that there was really no prophetic voice being heard. So it was a dire time in the history of Israel and it was time for God to bring along a man who could lead the people back to Himself and that man was to be none

other than Samuel. And in order to bear Samuel, God chose a very special lady.

Let's look at verse 1. "Now there was a certain man of Ramathaimzophim...that's just the name of the town... around the area of Mount Ephraim and his name was Elkanah, the son of Jeroham, the son of Elihu, the son of Tohu, the son of Zuph, an Ephrathite." Now here we are introduced to Elkanah and verse 2 tells us something about him. He had two wives. The name of one was Hannah and the name of the other Peninnah. Hannah means "grace;" Peninnah means "rosy" or "red" or "ruby colored." And Peninnah had children but Hannah had no children.

Now here we are introduced to this interesting family, one husband and two wives. In those days, you recognize the fact that polygamy was a part of culture. It was a part of the custom of certain societies and although it is never promoted in the Scripture, it is never approved in the Scripture, and although it always, every time it appears in the Bible brings about heartache and pain and agony and judgment, still God was patient in overturning the culture, as the priority was to communicate the basis of His saving Word. That is not unlike many cultures today where missionaries go where polygamy exists and polygamy is down the list of priorities for them. First, they must get the people to make a commitment to God and then begin to instruct them in God's principles for marriage.

And so early in Israel's history when they were involved in a culture that was polygamous, God was somewhat patient in overturning that culture, although He never approved them. And in this case, it caused Hannah no end of heartache. Now as we meet Hannah, I want to share with you three viewpoints of Hannah that give us a profile of a godly mother. Number 1, and this is very simple, she had a right husband relationship. She had a right husband relationship. You say, "How in the world could you have a right husband relationship when she was one of two wives?" Well, irrespective of the other wife, she had cultivated a right husband relationship and I would just encourage you with this, men and women, that the soil in which a godly mother flourishes is the soil of a right relationship to husband...vital. Let me show you two things about this.

First of all, they shared worship, verse 3. "And this man...Elkanah...went up out of his city yearly to worship and to sacrifice unto the Lord of hosts in Shiloh." Shiloh, of course, at that time was the place where God was worshipped. "And the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, the priests of the Lord, were there." God's Ark was in Shiloh so God's presence was there and the sons of Eli, the high priest, they acting as priests were there, and it was the prescribed worship to go to Shiloh three times yearly. That was what was required and that is what Elkanah did.

And we first learn then that Hannah was married to a man who worshipped God, a man who was truly given over to believing in God. He wasn't a perfect man and I think it's almost important that he was a polygamist, not important for the blessings of God but important to make the point that I want to make right now. And that is that a godly mother can flourish with an imperfect husband if the imperfect husband is at least committed to believing in and worshipping God in spite of his

imperfection. If you're looking for a perfect husband, you might as well give up. We have people who come in for counseling and their problem is that their husband has a problem or their husband has a fault and the fastest thing you need to tell them is "What else did you expect?" Humanity is humanity.

It's almost significant that Elkanah had this problem. He was less than perfect, but yet he had made that priority commitment to God. His cultural adaptation to polygamy hadn't been overturned yet but at least his heart was toward God so that he was obedient, that he responded to God the three times that Exodus 23 says the Jew was to respond by going to worship. And so he went devotedly. And this is the first aspect of a right husband relationship, to be married to a man who is a true worshipper of God; very basic then to godly mothers or godly fathers.

A godly mother is a responder. Woman is a responder. And a godly mother grows best in the soil of response to a godly father, a godly husband. Abraham was the strength of Sarah and Abraham's faith induced Sarah's faith. And so Elkanah is the strength of Hannah and Elkanah's confidence induces Hannah's. You know, the Bible is so clear about this, young people, I would simply mention it. The Bible is so clear that we are only to marry believers. That is an absolute divine principle and that's where we have to start. In Deuteronomy 7, "When the Lord thy God shall bring thee into the land where thou goest to possess it and hath cast out many nations before thee, the Hittites, the Girgashites, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, the Jebusites, and nations greater and mightier than thou, and when the Lord thy God shall deliver them before thee, thou shalt smite them and utterly destroy them. Thou shalt make no covenant with them nor show mercy to them. Neither shalt thou make marriages with them. Thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son." That's the basic principle of God's plan that believing people marry believing people. And God never violates that throughout the whole of Scripture. Rather, He continually reiterates it.

In Joshua chapter 23 and verse 11, "Take good heed therefore unto yourselves that you love the Lord your God. Else if you do in any way go back and cling to the remnant of these nations, even these who remain among you, and shall make marriages with them and go in unto them and they to you, know for a certainty that the Lord your God will no more drive out any of these nations from before you, but they shall be snares and traps unto you, and scourges in your sides and thorns in your eyes until you perish from off this good land which the Lord your God hath given you." He says if you intermarry, you will lose the land. They did and they lost the land. God's standard has never changed at all.

At the end of the Old Testament history, the Book of Ezra, the same principle is reiterated again. And if you were to read Ezra chapter 9, verse 12, "Now therefore give not your daughters unto their sons. Neither take their daughters unto your sons." It's the same principle. You come into the New Testament, 1 Corinthians 7:39 says that a believer is to marry only in the Lord...basic. How else can

Ephesians 6:4, the raising of children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord take place?

And so Hannah had a believing husband. Now you may say, "I was converted after I was married. What do I do about my unbelieving husband?" I would suggest that you pray for him. Don't leave him and look for a believing one. That would be to violate God's law, 1 Corinthians 7. But pray that God would bring him to Christ so that there can be that kind of sharing of worship. Look at verse 7 of 1 Samuel 1. "And as he did so year by year, when she went up to the house of the Lord," and stop there. When he went...what?...she went. She shared worship with him. Husband, that speaks to you. I'll tell you something, young men, if you're looking for a young woman and you want your young woman that you marry to be a godly mother, you better make a commitment to be a godly man because that's the soil in which godly mothers grow best.

Secondly, they not only shared worship but they shared love. Verse 4, "And when the time was that Elkanah offered...that is when they went up to Shiloh and they were giving their offerings and Elkanah, it was time to offer...he gave to Peninnah his wife and to all her sons and her daughters portions. But unto Hannah he gave a worthy portion...or literally in the Hebrew a double portion...for he loved Hannah even though the Lord had shut up her womb."

Now here's an interesting thing. Whenever a Jew would go to make a sacrifice, he would offer certain of it to God, certain of it he would take back and then he would eat it at a feast. And so they would make the offering, they would take it back and they would eat it. And a double portion was given to Hannah. You say, "Why? Was she thin ____ whatever?" No. The reason is you always gave a double portion to the honored guest and in the mind of Elkanah, Hannah was the most honored guest at his table. He specially loved her. And so they shared love in spite of the absence of children, in spite of the fact that she felt terribly inferior to Peninnah who had this whole pile of kids. They shared love. It says in verse 5 "...for he loved Hannah."

And I want you to notice that love as always in the Bible is not simply an emotion. His love is always demonstrated by an act of goodness or kindness or graciousness and so he shows his love by giving her the double portion. And this certainly should be true in the home where like in Ephesians 5 it says, "Husbands...what?...love your wives." You see, she had a right husband relationship. Even though there was this unusual existence of Peninnah, she had worship which she shared with her husband. They agreed to worship God together. They shared love together even though it was somewhat strained and somewhat insecure. The only thing she could hold to was the fact that he loved her, an unbearable situation. But then again maybe the imperfection of Elkanah and maybe the horror and the fear of this situation, the deep insecurity that it could bring, the anxiety and the frustration that she bore in her heart, just maybe that was part of what made Hannah a great mother. Like our Lord Jesus who came to this earth and suffered as a man and felt everything we'll ever feel makes him a sympathetic high priest, I think a mother who goes through anxiety becomes better for it and can better understand the anxiousness of the child's heart. And so in spite of the problem,

Elkanah loved her and he had become for her in that love a sense of strength and security and support and confidence even in a very insecure circumstance.

Verse 6 shows how it was intensified. "And her adversary also provoked her relentlessly. She and Peninnah were adversaries and Peninnah rubbed it in. She made her fret 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." In other words, Peninnah just kept it up and kept it up, bugging Hannah about her no children problem. "Therefore, she wept and did not eat." When she went to Shiloh, she wept before God. She poured out her heart. She fasted. And then comes Elkanah and again we see his love as he reassures her and reaffirms her and secures her in verse 8. "Then said Elkanah, her husband, to her 'Hannah, why are you weeping? And why are you not eating? And why is your heart grieved? Am I not better to you than ten sons?' He loved her and she knew it. And he knew that he could say, "Am I not good enough for you" and she would have to say, "Oh, yes, Elkanah." She had a right relationship to him. He was sympathetic. He knew her hurt and he tried to reaffirm her in his love. "Am I not good to you? Do I not love you? Is that not enough?"

And so we see beginningly that she had a right husband relationship and I believe this again is the soil so necessary to the rearing of a godly wife. Men, it comes back to us. If the wives are not fulfilling the pattern of the godly profile then maybe the problem is that we have not provided the soil in which it can happen. And so rather than turn off Elkanah out of jealousy because he had another wife or rather than neglect him and become bitter, she followed his worship. She obeyed him. She shared his love in a beautiful submission. She responded to his sympathy and there is absolutely no hint of conflict between them. And with all their love, the Lord had shut up her womb and she had no children.

Now that introduces us to the second element in the profile. First, a right husband relationship. Here comes the second, a right heavenly relationship. She knew right where to go with her problem and that begins in verse 9 and goes through verse 20. She went right straight to the Lord. She had a problem; she took it to the Lord. Now as I studied verses 9 to 20, I started pulling out of them all of the virtues that made this woman a godly woman or all of the virtues that manifested her godliness. Let me show them to you.

Number one; they all start with P so you can remember them. They don't start with "P" in the Bible. I just made them start with "P" so you could remember them. Number one, passion for God's best...passion for God's best. The first thing you see about Hannah in kind of chronicling her godliness was that she really had a passion for God's best and in her mind God's best for a woman was to have children and she was right. Generally speaking, that is God's best. A woman shall be saved in childbearing. It is God's plan that women effect society toward God by virtue of bearing godly seed.

In Deuteronomy chapter 28, verse 1, it says, "It shall come to pass if thou shalt harken diligently to the voice of the Lord thy God, observe and do all His commandments which I command thee this day, that the Lord thy God will set thee on high above all nations on the earth. And all these blessings shall come on thee and overtake thee if thou shalt harken to the voice of the Lord thy God. Blessed shalt thou be in the city and blessed shalt thou be in the field. Blessed shall be the fruit of thy body." Now God right there said, "When you are obedient to me, I will fulfill you in motherhood." That's exactly what he's saying...or fatherhood. Children then are a blessing from God and Hannah believed that and Hannah knew that.

In Psalm 113 in verse 9, it says, "He makes the barren woman to keep house and to be a joyful mother of children. Praise ye the Lord." In other words, children are a blessing from God. Children are a joy to a woman and children are a cause for praise. In Psalm 127 and verse 3, "Lo, children are an heritage from the Lord and the fruit of the womb is His reward. As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man so are children of one's youth. Happy is the man who has his quiver full of them." In other words, children are a heritage of God. Children are a blessing. Children are a source of happiness. In Psalm 128, verse 3, "Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine by the sides of thine house, thy children like olive plants round about thy table. Behold that thus shall the man be blessed who fears the Lord." In other words, God blesses with children.

And so she was really saying, "God, what have I done wrong that I should have no children? I seek Your will. I seek Your glory. I seek Your best. And I seek Your response to that...a child. Show me." She is not selfish. She desires the child as a sign of God's love and blessing and as a fulfillment of that which is God's highest calling for a woman. And I would say that this is something very basic to any godly mother. A truly godly mother is never a reluctant mother, but one with a passion for children, who sees them as a gift from God, who sees them as a blessing of His love, who sees them as a divine fulfillment of the creation for woman. A godly mother seeks to have children, not on a whim, not to hold some man, not to indulge herself, not to prove her womanhood, but because she knows that this is God's best for a woman and that this is the way they contribute to the godliness of the next generation. And so Hannah's heavenly relationship was characterized first of all by a passion for God's best.

Secondly, her godliness can be seen in prayer. Verse 9, "Hannah rose up after they had eaten in Shiloh and after they had drunk...the feast was over...Now Eli the priest sat on a seat by a post of the temple of the Lord"...and you'll notice he keeps introducing Eli and Hophni and Phinehas, his sons, intermittently through this whole text. "And she was in bitterness of soul and prayed unto the Lord and wept bitterly." Now here we see another manifestation of her godly character; she prayed. The first response of Hannah was to go to God. She understood that God alone was the One who could alter sterility, that children were a gift of a God, that children are not some whim, that children are not some accident, but they are God's gift, God's heritage. You see, that's why abortion is such a horrible

thing. That is God's to-do, to give life and to take life and He has His own ways of aborting that child which He does not want to be born and His own purpose for such a thing. Her distinctive virtue was she said, "God, You're the one who gives children. You are the only one who can change." And so she prayed.

In verse 12, it says, "She continued praying before the Lord and Eli watched her mouth moving." She totally surrendered her heart to God. She said, "This is something that only You can do." It's no different than Sarah. Sarah and Abraham pleaded with God to give them children. You read Genesis 25 and Genesis 30 and you'll find the other patriarchs who pleaded with God to give them children. And there was Zacharias and Elizabeth in Luke 1 who pleaded with God to give them a child and God gave them John the Baptist. Children are a gift of God. In Psalm 139, "For thou hast possessed my inward parts. Thou hast covered me in my mother's womb. I will praise Thee for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Marvelous are Thy works and that my soul knows right well. My substance was not hidden from Thee when I was made in secret and intricately wrought in the lower parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance yet being unformed and in Thy book, all my members were written which in continuance were fashioned when as yet there was none of them." In other words, he sees here God creating life in the womb...Psalm 139. This is not something to be tampered with. This is an act of God and Hannah knew that and so she sought God. Her passion turned where all passion for God's best must turn. It turned to prayer.

There's a third indication of her devotedness to God and that is what I call "presentation." Look at verse 11. She vowed a vow and said, "O Lord of hosts, if Thou wilt indeed look on the affliction of Thine handmaid." And she saw this as an affliction, her inability to have a child. "And remember me and not forget Thine handmaid but wilt give unto Thine handmaid a male child." Notice the directness of her prayer. "Then I will give him unto the Lord all the days of his life and there shall no razor come upon his head." Now some mother today might say, "Yikes, that's exactly what I don't want. _____ raise some kid like that." The first thing you tell your kid, "Cut your hair, kid. Shave." Well, this is different.

She said, "I really pledge him to the Nazarite vow." You remember back in Numbers 6 the Nazarite vow, "nazir" meaning consecrated? It has nothing to do with Nazareth. "Nazir" means consecrated and when a Jew wanted to give himself totally to God, he vowed to drink no strong drink. He vowed not to cut his hair, that is to take no care for what he looked like. He was totally devoted to God, totally away from the feasts and the festivals and the activities and the fun and the parties. He was totally consecrated to God. Now there were only two other people in the Bible who were Nazarites for life, Samson and John the Baptist. This is the third one.

And she says, "I'll give him to You and he'll have no concerns for the things of this world, no concerns for the pleasures of this society. He will belong to You." And you see, this shows the honest devotion of her heart. She didn't want a child just to compete with Peninnah. She didn't want a child just to

show off to everybody. She wanted a child to give to God because she recognized this was a token of His blessing. She just wanted God's best. Incidentally, she vowed a vow and a woman could never vow a vow unless her husband agreed with her. And so Elkanah, bless his heart, behind the scenes is in wonderful agreement with his wife Hannah.

A godly mother presents her child to God. When you bear a child, ladies, that child belongs to God as much as Hannah's child did. That child is a heritage from the Lord, not your own, but a treasure which you manage for His glory, but a godly seed from which you are to influence society from the bottom up. Women don't need to be president. Women don't need to be congresswomen. Women don't need to be the head of the corporations. Women don't need to run the church. All women need to do is raise godly children and they'll affect society in a way they never could any other way. And that's what Hannah said. "I'll give him to You."

I think about that, which my Dad related to you what my Mother said last week, that before I was born, she gave me to the Lord and told my Dad, "I don't know why or for what reason, but my heart tells me that this child will be a boy and that he will wind up in the ministry." That was her commitment before I was ever born. That needs to be the commitment of many of us, of all of us, for the children God gives us. Not that they should all be ministers but they should all be God's.

She was characterized by passion, prayer, presentation. Fourth, by purity. Verse 12, she's in there praying and Eli comes in and he sees her mouth moving and she's praying silently in her heart but her lips are moving. "Now Hannah spoke in her heart; only her lips moved but her voice wasn't heard. Therefore, Eli thought she was drunk." Listen, let me tell you something about Eli; absolutely rotten judge of character. The guy was the worst, just the worst. And Eli said to her, "How long have you been drunk? Put away your wine from you." And Hannah answered and said, "No, my lord, I am a woman of a sorrowful spirit. I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink but have poured out my soul before the Lord." Verse 16, "Consider not thine handmaid as a wicked woman, for out of the abundance of my complaint and grief have I been speaking. And Eli answered and said, 'Go in peace and the God of Israel grant thee thy petition that thou hast asked of Him.' And she said, 'Let thine handmaid find grace in thy sight.' So the woman went away and did eat and her countenance was no more sad." Eli mistook her for being drunk and he mistook her for being...in the Hebrew, it says, "a worthless, profitless, no-good nothing."

But interesting it is that the agonizing and the action and the verbalizing in her heart and the movement of her lips were so impassioned and so out of control that he thought she was drunk. That's how concerned she was in seeking God. And so she says, "No, Eli. I'm not a wicked woman." Purity. Listen, a godly mother is not only passionate, prayerful, presenting her children to God, but a godly woman is pure. She is the woman of Proverbs, the virtuous woman, who is more valuable than rubies. She is the godly wife. She is the wife of Titus 2 who teaches the younger women to be chaste, keepers at home, lovers of their husbands, those who care for their children. That's the kind

of woman she is. She is a godly woman, a virtuous woman, a pure woman. She doesn't get drunk. She keeps her senses that she might pour out her soul to God.

And then sixthly, we see about Hannah that she has not only exhibited these characteristics but a sixth one, patient faith. Verse 18, "So she went her way and did eat...and she hadn't up to then...and her countenance was no more sad." You see, it changed. Why? You say, "Did she get pregnant? No. It changed because she believed God. She was a woman of great patient faith. All of these virtues, all of these characteristics, presented themselves to God and God looked at her and said, "This is a godly woman. This is the woman I choose to bring forth the child that shall be one of the greatest people who ever lived, Samuel." And that's exactly what happened.

Verse 19, "They rose up in the morning early and they worshipped before the Lord...Elkanah and Hannah did...and returned and came to their house at Ramah and Elkanah knew Hannah, his wife." They had marital relationships. "And the Lord remembered her." Right the day after the prayer, she became pregnant. "Wherefore, it came to pass, when the time was come after Hannah had conceived, she bore a son and called his name Samuel." You know what "Samuel" means? Heard of God. Because Samuel was God's answer to prayer, the voice of God. "...called his name Samuel because I asked him of the Lord," and the Lord heard and sent this answer.

And then we find a seventh mark. Chapter 2, verse 1, praise, praise. Her godly character could be seen in her praise. "She prayed and said, 'My heart rejoices in the Lord. My horn is exalted in the Lord. My mouth is enlarged over mine enemies because I rejoice in the Lord. There is none holy like the Lord. There is none beside Thee, neither is any rock like our God.'" And she says, "Don't talk to me anymore proudly. Don't let arrogance come out of your mouth for the Lord is a God." In other words, nobody is to exalt anything at any time but God. She just really praised God. And all through verse 10, she praises God. Her broken heart is gone and everything is joy. It's not unlike Mary's wonderful praise in Luke 1. So you see a godly woman. She had a right husband relationship. She had a right heavenly relationship and that is obvious from all those characteristics.

And thirdly and last, she had a right home relationship and here we get to how she dealt with the child in the home, Samuel. Go back to verse 21, chapter 1. "And the man Elkanah and all his house went up to offer to the Lord the yearly sacrifice and his vow." He just kept on worshipping the Lord, just kept on doing it. "But Hannah went not up, for she said to her husband, 'I will not go up until the child is weaned and then I'll bring him that he may appear before the Lord and there abide forever.'" She said, "Look, I'd like to go up but I can't go up because I wouldn't leave little Samuel." She had a right home relationship. Number one, she was dedicated to her child. She was dedicated to her child. For her, that was life. You say, "But she should certainly go and worship."

Listen, the greatest act of worship she could offer God was the care for the life He gave her. You know, going to worship God is not any excuse for leaving your child to be ill raised to His glory. She

was totally committed to stay with that child until that child was weaned. She was nursing that child and wouldn't leave. And in those days, they nursed their children from between two and three years and those are the times of an infant's life when psychologists tell us 90 percent of his person is formed, 90 percent. Totally committed to stay in the home with that little life, training, loving, instructing, so that when 90 percent of that little life was formed by the age of three, that little life was committed to God. Fulfilling Deuteronomy 6 to teach your children the things of God. Fulfilling Proverbs 13 to give instruction to your children, such a vital thing. Proverbs chapter 19 in verse 18, "Chasten thy son while there is hope and let not thy soul spare for his crying." It's good, isn't it? Hit him and if he cries, keep hitting him anyway. Discipline, training, instruction. Proverbs 22, verse 6, "Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old, he will not depart from it." Verse 15, "Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child but the rod of correction will drive it far from him." In other words, there had to be correction and love and instruction. Even though the child was so small yet that instruction could take place.

You see, when a mother does that, this is not going to happen. Verse 15 of Proverbs 29, "The rod and reproof give wisdom but a child left to himself brings his mother to shame." You leave a child to himself and he'll bring you to shame. You spend the time with the child and he'll bring God glory. That's the commitment. Hannah was dedicated to the child second. And lastly, she dedicated the child to the Lord. Verse 24, "And when she had weaned him, she took him up with her with three bullocks and one ephah of flour and a skin of wine and brought him to the house of the Lord in Shiloh and the child was young. And they slew a bullock and brought the child to Eli. And she said, 'Oh, my lord, as thy soul lives, my lord, I am the woman who stood by thee here, praying to the Lord.'" I am the woman who was here three years ago. "'For this child I prayed and the Lord hath given me my petition which I asked of Him. Therefore, also I have lent him to the Lord. As long as he lives, he shall be lent to the Lord.' And he worshipped the Lord there."

She gave him to God. She kept her part of the promise. She said, "I lent him to the Lord." Actually, the Lord lent him to her but I like that mother's attitude. Even though she gave him to the Lord, she never, ever really gave him. She always held him in her heart. And if you were to look at chapter 2, verse 19, you'd see a beautiful little statement; 2:19. "Moreover his mother made him a little coat and brought it to him from year to year when she came up with her husband to offer the yearly sacrifice." She said, "I give you to the Lord," but she never really gave him away and every year as he grew a little bit, she made him a coat the next size and brought it to him. She dedicated the child to the Lord but she was dedicated to taking care of the child, too, and that never changed. You say, "Well, that's exciting and what was the result?" The result was a godly child, wasn't it? The result was a child like Samuel who was an incredible child.

Look at chapter 2, verse 11. "And the child did minister unto the Lord before Eli the priest." Two, verse 18, "But Samuel ministered before the Lord." Two, verse 21 at the end, "And the child Samuel grew before the Lord." Two, 26, "And the child Samuel grew on and was in favor both with the Lord

and also with men." Chapter 3, verse 1, "And the child Samuel ministered to the Lord." Verse 19, "And Samuel grew and the Lord was with him and did let none of his words fall to the ground and all Israel from Dan to Beersheba knew that Samuel was established to be a prophet of the Lord. And the Lord appeared again in Shiloh for the Lord revealed Himself to Samuel in Shiloh by the Word of the Lord."

What a child! From the time he was three, he ministered to the Lord throughout his entire life and what made the difference in his life was a godly mother. You know, the Holy Spirit does an interesting thing in this passage. I'm going to close with this but I want you to listen because this is the climax of everything. He constantly talks about Samuel and splattered through this are two other children, Hophni and Phinehas, and we never hear the name of their mother, which is probably good for her sake lest she be held in ill repute all her life. But as a contrast in chapter 1, verse 3, it just says, "And the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, the priests of the Lord were there." And then later on in chapter 2, verse 12, "Now the sons of Eli were worthless men, sons of Belial, wicked men, and they knew not the Lord." You see, here's Hophni and Phinehas. Nothing mentioned about their mother. Their father neglected them. The Bible says that Eli did not admonish his children. He failed to admonish his children. Nobody raised them; they raised themselves. And they came to worthless.

Verse 17, "The sin of the young men was very great before the Lord for they hated the offering of the Lord." They hated the whole idea of offering to God. Verse 22 of chapter 2, "Eli was very old and heard all that his sons did unto all Israel and how they lay with the women who assembled at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation." They had sexual relationships with women at the door to the temple...vile, evil men, woven through. And contrasted verse 26, "And the child Samuel grew on and was in favor with the Lord and also with men."

And God warns Eli that his sons are going to die, that He's going to kill them, and He does. In chapter 4, verse 17, a messenger comes to Eli and says, "Your two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, are dead. The Ark of God has been stolen." And when that message got to Eli, he fell off the seat, verse 18 says, "backward by the side of the gate and broke his neck and died." And his daughter-in-law, Phinehas' wife, who was pregnant, heard the news about the Ark being stolen and her husband and his brother and her father-in-law were all dead. She bowed herself, travailed...that is had birth pains...she gave birth to a child. She died in giving birth. She named the child Ichabod, the glory is departed. Now there's an ugly story, woven between the words about Samuel.

The heart of the matter is Samuel had a godly mother. You say, "What is the application of this?" Well, I think it's obvious. For those of you who are women, are you a godly mother? For those of you who have not yet had children, are you preparing to be a godly mother? For those of you who have had children, are you teaching other women to be a godly mother? What about men? Are you creating the environment for your wife to be that godly mother? Are you raising sons who will be the

right husband to their wives to make them godly mothers? Young people, are you honoring your mother? Are you honoring your father? The Bible says if you do, you'll be blessed. I guess on Mother's Day, we ought to commit ourselves to all of these things that God may be glorified.

Let's pray. Father, we thank You for the fact that we trust You. We trust You with our lives and the lives of our children born and yet unborn but who are already known to You, as the Psalmist said. Father, make us the kind of parents we need to be. Thank You for those godly parents You've given to many of us. Teach the women of this congregation to take the responsibility to be and to produce godly mothers and the men to produce the environment in which godly mothers can grow and the young people to honor their mothers and fathers that it might be well with all of us and that we might influence the world because we raise up godly seed like Samuel was, not children like Hophni and Phinehas. So help us to build our lives on the firm Rock, the Lord Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen.

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