Mothers Like Hannah

May 19, 2013 · PM · https://letgodbetrue.com/sermons/2013/mothers-like-hannah/

Introduction:

1. Last Sunday was Mother's Day, but we are preaching this a week later due to God's leading, not the calendar.
2. On Wednesday night we made a fast review of the book of Esther marveling at God's providence in her life.
3. While fathers are the primary trainers of children, mothers have a large role, and we want to fully know them.
4. Mothers are emphasized in formative years due to raising infants (0-3), fathers the years of instruction (3-20).
5. Behind a great man is a great woman, his mother; Elkanah was very wise to marry Hannah for his children.
6. Like King Lemuel's mother, they have more to offer than three squares, a clean bed, and clothes (Pr 31:1-2).
7. With the birth of an Anna (Greek), we had occasion to consider the name Hannah (Hebrew); both mean grace.
8. My goals are to (a) provoke parents to be better, (b) instruct our youth to marry high spiritually, (c) prepare couples that do not yet have children, and (d) build zeal for Christ's kingdom as most important goal in life.
9. If you feel crushed by this subject due to it being too late for you, then join this grandfather with no children at home in exploring every other avenue possible to help grandchildren and/or encourage church families.

HANNAH'S SITUATION

A. Israel had been in the land of Canaan around 400 years living under various judges God raised up.

B. Her husband Elkanah was a polygamist, so she had another wife to deal with on a daily home basis.
   1. He was a good man by noting his worship habits, love for Hannah, and approval of her vows.
   2. It is sickening when American wives complain about life. They cannot even imagine hardship.
   3. They blow off polygamy by saying they would not have allowed it – but they could not stop it.
   4. The Bible is plain enough about this folly; it is detrimental to raising a godly seed (Mal 2:15).

C. The other wife, Peninnah, had at least four children for Elkanah (1:4), but Hannah had none at all.
   1. In such agricultural times, many children, especially sons, were valuable and desired (Gen 30:1).
   2. God had closed up her womb (1:5-6). It is always important that God chose your circumstances.

3. It was not enough that Hannah saw Peninnah's children every day, the other wife provoked her.
4. Especially at the annual sacrifice, when Elkanah gave Hannah more, Peninnah provoked her.

D. Though Elkanah loved Hannah more than Peninnah, this caused jealousy and did not equal children.
1. Elkanah greatly loved Hannah and thought his love for her should be better than ten sons (1:8).
2. Yet there is a burning desire in women for children, which is not easily satisfied (Prov 30:15-16).

E. The annual trek to Shiloh for worship was in keeping with thanksgiving feasting of Deut 14:22-27.
1. Hannah would not eat at this annual event because of Peninnah's increased provoking (1:7-8).
2. There will be reference to slaying a bullock later that was part of this annual feasting (1:25).

F. In the grief of her soul at one of these annual festivals, Hannah vowed to give any son to the LORD.
1. Rather than eating and drinking, she poured out her soul and vowed a real sacrifice to her God.
2. She vowed that she would give any son God gave her to serve the LORD for his entire life.
3. She committed that she would raise any son God would give her as a Nazarite from the womb.
4. Eli the priest saw Hannah praying and assumed her drunk from feasting (1:12-14; Deut 14:26).
5. Hannah explained herself to Eli, and he promised her request from the God of Israel (1:15-17).
6. Believing the man of God, she ate of the abundance nearby and was no longer sad in her grief.

G. They returned home to Ramah and had marital sex, and God granted conception to Hannah (1:19).
1. Hannah gave birth to a son and called his name Samuel, meaning asked of the LORD (1:20).
2. Hannah did not accompany the family on their visits to Shiloh until he was weaned (1:21-22).
3. Note here that Hannah lived in Ramah, where Samuel would live and judge (1:1,19; 2:11; 7:17).

H. When Hannah weaned Samuel, she took him to Shiloh and gave him to Eli to serve the tabernacle.

I. The age of Samuel's weaning is important, for it gives an indication of Hannah's and his character.
1. What is weaning? It is when a child ends all nursing from its mother and lives on other foods.
2. At what age did weaning occur in the Bible? Probably between 3 and 5 (II Chr 3:16; Lev 27:6).
3. By comparing promises to Abraham of 430 years (Gen 12:1-4 cp Gal 3:17) and 400 years (Gen 15:13; 21:1-13; Acts 7:6; Gal 4:28-31), checking Abraham's age, Isaac was weaned at five.
4. Therefore, we assume that Samuel was about five years old when weaned to live at Shiloh.
5. At what age did weaning occur in other cultures? Any time between 18 months and 72 months.
6. Nature and health conscious mothers even in America will sometimes nurse to around age five.
7. Your children may be well beyond this character-formation age, but you press on as a parent.

J. God blessed Elkanah and Hannah with five more children – three sons and two daughters (2:20-21).

K. The evidence is that Samuel returned home to live and judge from Ramah when older (2:11; 7:17).

HANNAH'S CHARACTER

A. She won the heart of a godly man, for he is shown as such in this biography (1:1-3,21-22; 2:18-20), and it is wise to remember that he could have undone her vow to God very easily (Num 30:6-8).

B. She was of such traits her husband loved her more than the wife with many children (Pr 11:16; 31:28-31),

which means that she did not let polygamy affect her love to her husband (Pr 31:10-12).

C. Elkanah's response to her crying and sorrow indicates that she did it in a godly and mature manner.
D. When her spirit was grieved and overwhelmed, she went to the Rock higher than she (Psalm 61:2).
E. Her prayer for a child was in humility to God and His sovereign might toward her as a handmaid.
F. Her prayer was a bold prayer in that she asked for a man child, not just any child, for her vow (1:11).
G. She vowed a great vow to the Lord in her appeal for mercy, which is an act of worship (Ps 76:11).
H. Her vow was not just to turn a delinquent over to Shiloh at 17, but to keep him a Nazarite from birth.
I. She believed the man of God (Eli) when he told her that God would give her the request of her heart.
J. She named him Samuel to give her God the glory and praise for hearing her prayer for a son (1:20).
K. She paid her vow, though the emotional price and temptation would have been very great (Ps 15:4).
L. Consider her prayer, for it matches any by great men, and its content is glorious in praising Jehovah.
M. God gave her five more children (three sons), which He would not have if foolish (II Chr 32:25).

HANNAH'S PRAYER

2:1 God saved her in a practical way, and she was lifted up in her heart, her authority, and her speech.

2:2 She moved from the third person to the second, but the purpose was one – to exalt her holy God.

2:3 She thanked God for silencing Peninnah and made an appeal to God's judgment of character.

2:4 Though men may gird themselves and gather weapons for war, God can overthrow them easily.

2:5 God shows His power and His mercy by reversing the life situations of both the good and the bad.

2:6 He is sovereign over all men, and He can do the very opposite in one life that He does in other.

2:7 The great benefits of life are under His control and rule, and He gives and withholds accordingly.

2:8 God is totally in charge of all earthly authority (pillars), and He raises up His men from nowhere; this description here may be prophetic of Samuel either in ignorance or knowledge (compare 1:23).

2:9 He guides and protects the paths of His own, but kills the wicked; there is no strength against Him.

2:10 Hannah swelled in her praise to reach to Messiah the Prince and His victory over all His enemies.

HANNAH'S MOTHERING

A. How much character is formed by five for the point here to have value? Evidence says the majority!
    1. Studies have shown that individual, personality impulses at 3-5 will typically last throughout life.
    2. Consider habits, attitude, discipline, temperance, compassion, calmness, cleanliness, neatness, promptness, thankfulness, submission, obedience, respect, focus, perseverance, contentment, etc.
B. Hannah committed to God before conception that her son would be trained the strictest from birth.
C. David in prophecy of Christ (applicable to both, if likely) spoke of hope even in nursing (Ps 22:9).
D. He was ready at weaning (5 years) to work and serve the priests at Shiloh (1:22-28; 2:18-19; 3:1), for Hannah did not intend and Eli would not have accepted babysitting by the high priest of God.

E. He was ready at weaning (about 5 years young) to worship the LORD his God in Shiloh (1:28), which is this author's favorite fact in the whole narrative. Have you so trained your child by five?
F. It is common to discover children that cannot leave their parents for overnight at this age or beyond, even with grandparents or family, yet this young lad was left permanently with an old, total stranger.
G. Samuel had been taught the full spectrum of loving God and neighbor for the favor of both (2:26).
H. Who taught him to run in response to a request by his master after everyone had gone to bed (3:1-5)?
I. Who taught him to humbly follow instructions perfectly in a very intimidating situation (3:8-10)?
J. Who taught him discretion about his vision but perfect obedience, though fearful about it (3:11-18)?
K. Who prepared this little boy to grow into a man God walked with and revealed Himself to (3:19-21)?
L. Samuel had a ministerial spirit to intercede for Israel as one of five great men (Jer 15:1; Ezek 14:14).
M. How great is a man, and his mother, to end his career with godliness after being rejected (12:20-25)?
N. Many more good things could be written about Samuel endorsing his mother, but these are enough.

Conclusion:

1. Why did you have children? It is not a commandment; it is not a necessity; it is a distraction; why did you?
2. Everything in your heart, in your mind, in your life should be directed to the glory of God and His kingdom.
3. I fear when I hear and see all the emphasis on things in your children's lives that amount to next to nothing.
4. Where can you do better toward your children? Forget them doing better toward you. When will you change?
5. If it is too late, for your children are gone from your home, you can still pray for them, encourage them as you have opportunity, do damage control, influence any grandchildren, and encourage younger church families.