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Being The Hands of Jesus In Our Homes

The Sacrifices of a Godly Mother

1 SAMUEL 1:19-28

Introduction

1. Someone has said, "Home is where the heart is."
2. Dorothy, in "The Wizard of Oz," said, "There's no place like home."
3. Many of us are the people we are today because of the home in which we were raised.
4. As we continue our theme this year of "Being the Hands of Jesus," I would like for us to consider how we can be those hands in our homes.
5. As you know, today is considered "Mother's Day," and many will honor their mothers for the role those women have played in their lives.
6. Let me take just a moment and share with you a few quotes from various individuals about the importance of mothers:
 - a. "The future of society is in the hands of the mothers." (de Beaufort)
 - b. "Men may build cities and railroads; they span rivers and tunnel mountains. But the mothers of men are the builders of civilization." (C.A. Stewart)
 - c. "Mothers write on the hearts of their children what the world's rough hand cannot erase." (Anonymous)
7. You and I cannot say enough today about good mothers or the sacrifices which they make on behalf of their children.
8. There is one woman in Scripture whose sacrifices on behalf of her son I would like for us to take special note.
9. Her name is Hannah, and her story is not only one of humiliation and ridicule, but also one of perseverance, love, sacrifice and blessings from God.

10. It is found in the first two chapters of 1 Samuel.

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I. A Woman Humiliated

A. PENINNAH'S PAINFUL REMINDER

1. Elkanah was a godly man, but as we soon learn, he had two wives: Hannah and Peninnah.
2. "Peninnah had children, but Hannah had no children" (1 Samuel 1:2).
3. Each year Elkanah took his family to Shiloh where the Tabernacle had been located since the days of Joshua.
4. They made this journey in order to worship and offer sacrifices to the Lord.
5. As I said earlier, Peninnah had children, but Hannah did not.
6. For the women of Israel the ability to bear children was a sign of God's blessing, whereas the inability to do so was considered a source of shame.
7. Peninnah was jealous of Hannah because Elkanah loved Hannah more than he loved her.
8. She became Hannah's rival and used Hannah's barrenness as an opportunity to taunt her.
9. She continued to do this to Hannah year after year, causing Hannah to become so upset that she would not eat (vv. 6,7).
10. Each time, Elkanah tried to comfort her, but to no avail.
11. In spite of Peninnah's mistreatment, Hannah never retaliated.

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B. HANNAH'S PERSISTENCE IN PRAYER

1. In the midst of her great distress, Hannah did the only thing she knew to do — she prayed.
2. It was as Elisha Hoffman wrote in a hymn many years ago:

I must tell Jesus all of my trials;

**I cannot bear these burdens alone;
In my distress He kindly will help me;
He ever loves and cares for His own.**

3. I would like to encourage those of you who are mothers,
 - a. when you have burdens which you just cannot bear alone,
 - b. when there are distresses which weigh your soul down
. . . go to Him in prayer.
4. He can help you, because as the hymn reminds us in the next stanza, **“He is a kind, compassionate Friend.”**
5. When Hannah poured out the bitterness of her soul before the Lord, as you can imagine, the tears came pouring forth.
6. As she prayed, she made a vow to the Lord, “O Lord 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 the Lord all the days of his life, and a razor shall never come on his head.” (1 Samuel 1:11)

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C. ELI’S FALSE ASSUMPTION

1. Eli, the high priest, watched her as she prayed.
2. He noticed that her lips moved, but there was no sound coming from them (1:13).
4. You and I know, from what we are told in verse 13, that she was speaking in her heart to the Lord.
5. However, Eli assumed that Hannah was drunk, so he reprimanded her, “How long will you make yourself drunk? Put away your wine from you.” (1:14).

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D. ELI’S PETITION ON HANNAH’S BEHALF

1. He soon learned that he was mistaken.
2. Hannah was not drunk, she had a broken heart and was deeply troubled.
3. She told Eli that she had “drunk neither wine nor strong drink,” but that she had been “pouring out [her] soul before the Lord” (v. 15).
4. She added that she had spoken out of her “great anguish and grief” (v. 16, NIV84).
5. Eli realized that he had misjudged the situation and told Hannah to “go in peace and may the God of Israel grant you what you have asked of Him” (v. 17, NIV84).

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II. Hannah’s Sacrificial Love

A. A DIFFICULT TRIP TO SHILOH

1. In due time God answered Hannah’s prayer by giving her a son.
2. She named him Samuel, because as she had said, “I have asked him of the Lord” (1:20).
3. Can you imagine the joy she must have felt to finally have the child she had longed for and for whom she had so diligently prayed.
4. No longer could Penninah taunt her.
5. No longer would others consider her cursed of God.
6. However, there lay a task before her, perhaps the most difficult she would ever undertake in her life.
7. She had promised God that she would give Samuel to God all the days of his life.
8. She might have reasoned in her heart that God would certainly not expect her to keep such a vow.
9. Surely He would not deprive her of the joy of watching her only son grow

into a man.

10. If she considered such thoughts, we are never told.
11. When it came time for her husband Elkanah to go up to Shiloh the next year in order to worship and offer the yearly sacrifices, Hannah chose not to go.
12. She told Elkanah, “I will not go up until the child is weaned; then I will bring him, that he may appear before the Lord and stay there forever.” (1 Samuel 1:22)
13. It is very likely that Elkanah doubted her resolve, because he said, “Do what seems best to you. Remain until you have weaned him; only may the Lord confirm His word” (1:23).
14. When Hannah had finally weaned Samuel, she made the most difficult journey of her life — she took Samuel to Shiloh to serve the Lord from that day forward.
15. Only those of you who are mothers can understand what she must have felt as the sacrifices were offered, and she gave Samuel to Eli, and said, “I prayed for this child, and the Lord has granted me what I asked of him. So not I give him to the Lord. For his whole life he will be given over to the Lord” (1:27-28, NIV84).
16. How hard it must have been for Hannah to start home knowing that her only child would not be going with her.

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B. A MOTHER’S LOVE

1. Our story does not end here.
2. Like any mother who loves her child, Hannah did not forget Samuel.
3. Each year she would make him a little robe which she brought to him when she and Elkanah went up to offer the yearly sacrifice.
4. Each year, don’t you know, there were joyful tears shed when she saw her son.

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III. Abundant Blessings

A. ELI'S BLESSING

1. For Hannah, no child could ever take the place of Samuel, he was her firstborn.
2. However, Eli did the only thing he knew to do.
3. He spoke a blessing over Elkanah and Hannah, "May the Lord give you children from this woman in place of the one she dedicated to the Lord" (2:20).

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B. THE LORD'S VISITATION

1. God remembered Hannah's sacrifice and listened to Eli's prayer.
2. He blessed Hannah with three more sons and two daughters.
3. Perhaps the most fitting statement is the one we find at the end of 1 Samuel 2:21, "And the boy Samuel grew before the Lord."

Conclusion

1. The greatness of Samuel reflects the faithfulness of his mother, Hannah.
 - a. He led Israel in its first great revival.
 - b. He drove the Philistines back into their territory.
 - c. He re-established the worship of the Lord.
 - d. He set up the kingdom of Israel.
 - e. He anointed David as king.
2. Mothers, never underestimate your influence in the lives of your children when it comes to their faithfulness before God:
 - a. Let them see you as a person who is a student of God's Word.
 - b. Let them come to know you as one who is devoted to prayer.

- c. Teach them to serve the Lord by serving those around them.
 - d. Sing God's praise in their presence.
3. How many of us are where we are today because of the sacrifices of a mother who devoted herself to the Lord.
 4. If you are such a person, take the time to thank God for providing such a dedicated example before you.
 5. Thank your mother for her faithfulness to God and to the task of motherhood.
 6. Most of all, honor her every day by following the example she set before you.