It Takes a Mother

1 Samuel 2:18-21

Sermon Outline

A. To Never Give Up (Vs. 18-19):

1. Minister – Samuel served as a minister for the Lord under the leadership of Eli.

   a) The corruption of the tabernacle at Shiloh by Eli’s sons is contrasted with the faithful ministry of young Samuel. Whereas Hannah’s son “ministered before the LORD,” the sons of Eli “had no regard for the LORD.” Eli’s servants had contempt for the Lord’s offerings, and his sons engaged in temple prostitution. Yet young Samuel, as it would be said of Jesus (Luke 2:52), grew in “favor with the LORD and with men.”\footnote{Mathews, K. A. (1998). The Historical Books. In D. S. Dockery (Ed.), Holman concise Bible commentary (p. 110). Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers.}

2. Before — Samuel also served in the presence of the Lord which means he was intricately involved in the ongoing needs of the temple therefore he was around Eli’s sons.

3. Before — Samuel served in the inner areas of the temple.

4. Before — Samuel service was done with a consciousness of God.

5. Lord – Samuel saw himself serving under the authority and power of God but understood that everything he did was because of God’s desire to have a relationship with his people.

6. Lord – Samuel was willing to serve God’s desire to have a relationship with His people.

7. His mother would make – Hannah, Samuel’s mother, year after year, would work hard to faithfully carefully create from scratch a linen ephod. She probably did this
until she was physically unable to do so. This highlights how long she remained involved in Samuel’s life.

a) **You would think that these first two chapters would talk about Eli or how Hannah’s husband grew his son to be a priest and prophet but it does not. In order to discuss Samuel, since Eli’s sons were wicked, it talked about how Samuel became who he was because of his mother.**

b) **Three times a year every Israelite male was required to appear before the Lord at the central sanctuary** (Ex. 23:14-19; 34:23; Dt. 16:16-17). The festival referred to here was probably the Feast of Tabernacles, which not only commemorated God’s care for his people during the desert journey to Canaan (see Lev. 23:43) but more especially celebrated, with joy and feasting, God’s blessing on the year’s crops (see Dt. 16:13-15). On such festive occasions Hannah’s deep sorrow because of her own barrenness was the more poignant.

8. **His mother would make** – Hannah, year after year, remained involved in her son’s service to God.

9. **Ephod** - The ephod was a scanty garment (2Sa 6:14) worn by inferior priests, Levites, judges, and eminent persons for religious purposes. 2[2]

a) The linen ephod is a garment reserved for the priesthood (see 2:28), so this is an indication that Samuel has become involved in an apprenticeship. The ephod was most likely a type of apron. Linen was the basic material, though higher ranking priests would have had gold thread woven into the fabric. 3[3]

10. **Bring** – Hannah man a point to bring the ephod with her when she came worship. This highlights once more how much Samuel stayed on her mind as she prepare each year, not just an animal for worship, but a ephod for her son.

11. **Bring** – Hannah worked year-round to make sure Samuel was properly dressed.

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12. **Came up** - Hannah’s trip to the temple was purposeful. No longer only to pray and offer sacrifices but also for family reunions (she came with her husband) and to encourage her son’s service in the temple.

13. **Came up** – Even though Hannah gave her son to God Hannah never stopped being His mother.

14. **Offer** – Hannah traveled with an animal as well so that she and her husband had a ‘slaughter for sacrifice.’ Hannah demonstrates a consistent desire to faithfully worship God as directed by the Levitical law (1 Samuel 1:3-13, 24-28).

15. **Sacrifice** – Hannah honored God along with her husband by bringing a bull for sacrifice so that the blood of the bull (burnt offering or peace offering) can be sprinkled on her and her family while they worshipped at the altar. She was a sincere faithful worshipper of the Lord. This obviously transferred to Samuel because Eli’s sons did not get it from him (2:12-17).

### B. To Gain God’s Attention for a Child (vs. 20):

1. **Blessed** – Eli made a special effort to bestow God’s favor on Elkanah and Hannah. He bestowed on them God’s favor for prosperity, happiness and goodwill on their family.

2. **Blessed** – Hannah’s love for God, for family, and her faithfulness to service her son, who faithfully served the Lord and Eli, blessed her family before God. This was something he was completely committed to do each time they would come to worship God.

3. **Said** – Eli made a point to speak to Elkanah and his wife Hannah. Not Elkanah’s other wife (not Peninnah 1:4) only Hannah.

4. **May the Lord give** - Based on the authority and power of the Lord Eli anointed Hannah to have more children. This blessing came as a result of her coming year after year after year faithfully serving her son. It did not take place immediately after she brought her son to Eli. Her faithful service to God, her husband and her only son led to God’s using Eli to bestow on her his blessings. Eli’s desire was that God would do this continuously with no end in sight.

5. **Dedicated, require, ask, questioned** – The word dedicated means to seek direction from God and then to faithfully execute what God said. This is achieved through prayer as we saw Hannah do in chapter 1:9-11. So we see that Hannah prayed this prayer because she believed that this is the direction God was leading her in.
6. **Dedicated, require, ask, questioned** – It was Hannah’s constant desire to please God that led to her being blessed.

7. **Lord** – Hannah’s gave Samuel to God because she truly respected God’s authority, power and desire to have a sincere relationship with His people.

8. **Went, go up** – Elkanah going to their home is an indication that they believed that God would bless them especially since God did so in the case of Samuel.

9. **Went, go up** – Hannah was a woman of faith.

**C. To Impact a Child’s Heart (Vs. 21):**

1. **Lord** – It is very interesting that ‘Lord’ is used throughout this story rather than God. It seems to demonstrate that Hannah desired a relationship with God not just His blessings. Her faithful worship, dedication to her husband is definitely an indication of it. Her desire to have a sincerely relationship with God (1:16) led to God visiting her.

2. **Visited; Untouched** – Hannah’s faithful worship, faithful relationship with her husband, faithfulness as a mother results in action from God to touch her womb. Without this act of God Hannah most likely would still have continued to serve God, her husband and her son because even though she had more children she still continued to do the same.

3. **Visited; Untouched** – This visit is God’s decision and God’s timing.

4. **Grew; greater, full-grown** – Samuel’s love for God and dedicated service to God, in contrast to Eli’s sons, became more and more magnified year after year after year in the eyes of the people (1 Samuel 2, especially verse 1; 12:1-7, 18, 23).

5. **Grew; greater, full-grown** – It is interesting that after the text spends most of the time talking about the faithfulness of Hannah it then states how Samuel grew.

   a) **Samuel grew up “in the presence of the Lord,” literally, “with Yahweh.”**

   This Hebrew phrase is used in the Torah to describe Moses’ position when he received the Decalogue (Exod 34:28). In Psalms (130:7) “with Yahweh” is said to be a place of “unfailing love” and “full redemption.” **In the present context it**
seems to suggest that Samuel enjoyed a childhood marked by divine favor and a lifestyle evidencing a Moses-like relationship with the Lord.⁴

6. **Grew: greater, full-grown** – Hannah's faithfulness leads to her son's growth.

7. **Before the Lord** – Samuel's growth took place because he reverences God's desire to have a relationship with His people and the fact that the Lord has all authority and power forever (Psalm 128).