

A Mom Who Gave

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[0 : 00] Good morning and happy Mother's Day. We're so glad that you are here with us today. And I know that we all have mothers and we have or have had different expectations of our mothers and what a mother should be. And mother is there when we need them.

Mother's a person that knows everything, or at least if she doesn't, she'll be sure that she finds out the answer to it and finds out the hows and the whys.

Mothering is a very, very difficult job. Reminds me of the frazzled mother who sent her little one to bed and the little boy was mumbling to himself as he went off to bed. He said, how come every time she gets tired, I'm the one who has to take a nap? Or the family who had their fourth child. And they were all under the age of five. And some friends had sent them over a playpen.

And a few days later, the friends received a thank you note that read, thank you so very much for the playpen. It was just what we needed. I sit in it every day and read, and the kids can't even get near me. There's no other job in the world that's as heartbreaking, as rewarding, as motherhood.

And no other job has the influence or the impact as parenting.

Some of the recent research is saying that as many as 90% of teenagers are saying that the ones who influence them the most are their parents. Now, this influence can be a godly one, or it can be a negative or a worldly one. And these days, with the feminist movement, the economic structure, and society that places all kinds of expectations on mothers these days, we know that it can be very, very stressful. A sign posted in a restaurant says it all. And the sign there reads, our pies are like the ones your mother used to bake before she entered the workforce.

[2 : 44] And I know that there are a lot of expectations, a lot of pressures placed on moms. So moms today, we want to be an encouragement. We also want to talk a little bit about what God expects of mothers.

And the three things that are expected of moms that we're going to cover this morning are three characteristics, and that God is pleased with you, and you will be a blessing to your children, and that blessing will be visited to their children, and to their children's children, if you have these three characteristics, at least these three characteristics in your life. And that's the promise of God.

Hannah, in the Old Testament, had these three characteristics that we're going to be looking at this morning. And her husband, Elkanah, nurtured these characteristics in her, and he respected her.

And as a result, their relationship was blessed of God.

Let's take a look this morning. If you have your Bibles, we're going to be in the book of 1 Samuel, chapter number 1. And so we're going to be reading there this morning, beginning in verse number 1.

We'll read the first 12 verses, and then go from there, and go verse by verse. We start in verse number 1. Now, there was a certain man of Ramathaim, Zophim, of the mountains of Ephraim, and his name was Elkanah, the son of Jeroham. I'm not sure if I'm getting these names right. The son of Elihu, the son of Tohu, the son of Zoph and Ephraimite. And he had two wives. The name of one was Hannah, and the name of the other was Penina. Not sure if I'm getting that name right, but she's not here to correct me, so that's what we're going to go with this morning. Penina had children, but Hannah had no children.

This man went up from his city yearly to worship and sacrifice to the Lord of hosts in Shiloh. Also, the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, Phinehas were the priests of the Lord, and they were there. And whenever the time came for Elkanah to make an offering, he would give portions to Penina, his wife, and to all her sons and daughters. But to Hannah, he would give a double portion, for he loved Hannah, although the Lord had closed her womb. And her rival also provoked her severely to make her miserable, because the Lord had closed her womb. So it was, year by year, when she went up to the house of the Lord, that she provoked her. Therefore she wept and did not

eat. Then Elkanah, her husband, said to her, Hannah, why do you weep? Hannah, why are you crying? Why do you not eat? And why is your heart grieved? Am I not better to you than ten sons? So Hannah arose after they had finished eating and drinking in Shiloh. Now Eli, the priest, was sitting on the seat by the doorpost of the tabernacle of the

[6 : 28] Lord. And she was in bitterness of soul, and prayed to the Lord, and wept in anguish. Then she made a vow and said, 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 male child, then I will give him to the Lord all the days of his life, and no razor shall come upon his head. Here she was making a vow. And it happened, as she continued praying before the Lord, that Eli watched her mouth. Let's take a moment and pray.

Our Father, this morning, please teach us, help us to understand your word, and understand these three characteristics of the mother like Hannah. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.

So what do we first learn about Hannah? Well, the first thing I think we see about Hannah is that Hannah was a woman of prayer. The first characteristic that I believe is pleasing to God when it comes to moms. She was praying. She was a praying woman. She was a woman of prayer. We see that in verse number 12. And it happened as she continued praying before the Lord. She was a woman of prayer, we're told here in verse 12. We're also told that she continued in prayer. It wasn't just a breathing a short prayer, and then she stopped and went on to something else. Scripture says she continued praying. She prayed over and over. And so much so that the priest observed her, and he noticed that she was praying. Her lips were moving, and nothing was coming out. She was praying silently. And he was watching her. And obviously, from what we see here in Scripture and what she said that she prayed and the vow that she made, she wasn't praying. Just some mundane prayer.

Or some repetitive prayer. She was passionately praying. She was coming before the face of God, and she was asking him something very, very passionately. As a matter of fact, in verse number 10, we're told that she was in bitterness of soul. She wept, and she prayed, and her soul was bitter. She was sad. And as a result of that, she was praying to God very, very passionately. So much so that Eli thought she was drunk, and he chastised her in verses 13 and 14. So our question is, why was Hannah praying so fervently? Because she knew that Elkanah wasn't the source of children. [9 : 48] God was. So she was praying to God. She knew that children were an heritage of the Lord. They were a gift from God. And Hannah knew that. She knew Scripture. She knew where, ultimately, who was the one that gave the gift of children. And she desperately wanted that gift of God. She wanted children. She wasn't able to have children. So she prayed, but she prayed specifically.

She prayed for a male child. And her vow was an unusual vow. Now, when moms, you might pray that today, I don't know that we necessarily mean what Hannah meant, but she literally said, and we're going to find out in just a moment how literal she meant that prayer, but she said, he is going to be the Lord's gift. She was going to give God the gift of that male child. So she prayed. The first thing that we see is that Hannah was a woman of prayer. Mom, do you find yourself praying for your family, praying for your children, praying for their future, praying for yourself, praying for your family that you would be a good mentor, that you would be a good model for your children, that you model Christ in your life? Are you praying that they would grow up to be a servant of Jesus, grow up to be one that would honor and please God, praying for their future mate, praying for all of these things for which we long for our children? Are you a praying mom? So that was the first thing that we see in Hannah's life. And obviously it was very, very pleasing to God. The second thing that we see is that Hannah was a woman of faith. She prayed that prayer. She had faith that God would answer that prayer. We see in verse number seven, so it was year by year when she went up to the house of the Lord.

She went up to Shiloh. She went up to worship. Every year she went with her husband there to worship. So Hannah had a believing and worshiping husband. She faithfully went with him every single year, even though Peninnah was provoking her so much so that she wept and she wasn't hungry. She went without food. She was so distraught because of all the teasing and the bullying that she got from Peninnah.

Now they had that common bond, Hannah and her husband, worshiping the same God. Now we see here in scripture that Elkanah wasn't perfect. As a matter of fact, he was a polygamist.

Polygamy was not condoned in the Old Testament, but it was culturally accepted. And we're told

here that Elkanah loved Hannah. Most likely she was his first wife. And when it was discovered that she wasn't going to have children, it's possible that Elkanah married a second wife in order to have children, because his children were very important in this Eastern culture and the culture that Hannah and in which Hannah and Elkanah lived. But he loved Hannah. And we're told here that when Elkanah gave gifts, he gave gifts to Peninnah's children, but he didn't give anything to Hannah's children because she didn't have children. So we see that he gives her in verse number five, according to verse five, he gives her a double portion, showed that he loved his wife Hannah and he respected her. So you see,

[14:12] I believe he felt obligated to Peninnah, but he loved Hannah. And Hannah didn't have to go to the temple with her husband, but she decided to, she did every year. The Bible says she made that journey despite Peninnah, and she worshiped there with her husband. And another area where we see the faith of Hannah is in verse number 18, where it said, she said, let your maidservant find favor in your sight.

So the woman went her way and ate and her face was no longer sad. After praying and receiving Eli's blessing, we're told that Hannah went her way. She wasn't sad anymore. And she got hungry because her sadness had lifted. And so it said that she ate something and her face was no longer downcast.

She didn't look sad. Why? She believed. She had the faith that she prayed for the male child. Eli blessed her and said it would be so. And because she believed God, she decided God will come through.

No reason to be sad. I'm just waiting for the fulfillment of the promise. She had the faith that God was going to give her the son for which she asked. And so she went away. She ate and she was no longer sad.

Now, that's a great attribute. She had faith. She came to God. She worshipped. She wept. She prayed. And she believed. And she went away. No longer sad. Now, moms, we are not promised in this world that we're going to have everything we want. In this world, we're going to be faced with difficulties that we may not even see the way out.

[16:18] We may wonder if there can even be a better future. When you pray, are you praying in faith?

Are we praying in faith, believing that God hears our prayer and will answer that prayer? We know from our promise of Scripture. The promise of Scripture says that as a follower of Jesus Christ and as a part of the family of God, God will hear our prayer. He says, He who believes will receive. And so we can pray in faith, knowing that God hears and knowing that God will provide our needs, that for which we ask. And God knows what's best for us. So Hannah was a mom of prayer. She was a woman of prayer. She was a woman of faith. And then thirdly, she was a woman of integrity. What she said she was going to do, she followed through with it. Her word was her bond. She had integrity. We see in verse number 24, now when she had weaned him, when she had weaned this male child, she took him up with her, with three bulls, 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. Notice in verses 27 and 28, she said, For this child I prayed, and the Lord has granted me my petition, which I asked of him. Therefore, I also have, and I want us to key in on these words. What did she say? She said, I was going to give him, I'm going to give him to you, Lord. But here, she says, I have lent him to the Lord. And what do we do when we give our children to Jesus, when we give our children to God? And one of the pictures of that is when we come together as the body of Christ, and we have a baby dedication service. That is, that's a picture of parents saying, God, we surrender this child to you. We are literally giving this child to you, and we trust that you will do what is right for this child as this child grows. But we, we're giving this child to you. And so Hannah says, I lent him to the Lord. As long as he lives, he shall be lent to the Lord. So they worshiped the Lord there. Hannah says, I prayed for this child, and God promised, God gave me what I promised him. So now I'm coming through, and I am making good the promise that I made. So I will give him to the Lord for his whole life. He will be given over to the Lord. And the best part of the story, the part of the story that really encourages me the most, did you notice that it wasn't when Hannah had Samuel? We see that in these verses between between verse 24, verse 27, in the verses here in chapter one, that it wasn't exactly when she had

Samuel, but it was when she gave him to the Lord and followed through on her promise that she rejoiced. And she sang this song and prayed this prayer. We're just told that when he was born, she

named him Samuel, because she asked of the Lord for him. Samuel, his name, by the way, means heard of God.

It was when she gave Samuel to the Lord. It was when she followed through with that vow, with that promise, when we have the record of her breaking out in joyful praise and joyful song to the Lord, when she fulfilled her promise to the Lord, there was great, great joy. Now, can you imagine how painful it must have been for Hannah to do that? Can you imagine bringing your, he must have been maybe three, four years old. He had already been weaned. She brings him to the temple, to the priest, and says, here you go. And she leaves and goes home. She probably sees him maybe three times a year when they went up for these times every year when they had to, had to go up to fulfill their, their times of worship. Difficult. I can, I can only imagine leaving a young child there, but she rejoices that she's fulfilled the promise of God because God has answered her prayers. Now, mom, what kind of pressures are you feeling today? What kind of expectations are you feeling? And, and maybe the pressures that are on you, what are you trying to live up to? What, what type of expectations? Well, I trust that as we, we come to a close this morning, that first of all, you're a woman of prayer. You're a woman that prays. And then secondly, a woman of faith, a woman that prays, a mom that prays, believing that God will answer your prayer. And thirdly, a woman of integrity, a woman that will stand for what is true, stand for what is right, and be a person of their word.

[22 : 15] No matter who's looking, you're going to be a person of integrity. May God bless you. May God bless your family. May God bless your future and the future of your family. Let us pray.

Father God, this morning, I thank you so very much for these moms that are listening today. And when they get a chance to listen to this message, I pray for families. I pray, dear God, that you would help each one to be the godly influence that you want them to be. And not only women of prayer, but men of prayer, and men and women of faith, and men and women and parents of integrity, who will bring their children up in the nurture and the admonition of the Lord, teaching them, training them, discipling them to honor and please you in everything that they do, that they may be able to reach this world for Jesus before our Lord returns. Thank you, Father.

We thank you for this time together. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. And God bless. And again, happy Mother's Day.