**The Model of a Godly Mother**

*1 Samuel 1-2*

**Context**

The scripture is replete with examples of exemplary mothers. And, motherhood is God’s design and is held in high regard. Examples of godly mothers started in the Old Testament with Sarah, who is a model of faith in God and obedience to her husband. It continues with Rachel, who died in child birth to Deborah, who is identified as a mother to Israel. She led the whole of the sons of Israel to victory. Ruth was a sweet and gentle spirit who loved and sacrificed and who became the mother of Obed. Obed bore Jesse, and Jesse bore David. David was the seed of Messiah.

In the New Testament, we have the examples of godly women in Elizabeth as well as Mary. Additionally, there were the faithful examples in Timothy’s life of his mother and grandmother.

**2 Timothy 1:5**—*For I am mindful of the sincere faith within you, which first dwelt in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and I am sure that it is in you as well.*

Of all these women, Hannah is an especially noteworthy mother. She is a model of faith in the Lord. She first appears as a childless woman in 1 Samuel but ultimately becomes a mother as God does an amazing work in her life—most notably, through the birth of her son Samuel.

**Setting:** At the time of Hanna’s life, it was the period of the judges in Israel (1105 BC). The patriarchal period has passed (Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph). The time of the kings has not yet come (Saul, David, Solomon, etc). It is the period of time where the judges ruled in Israel (Barak, Deborah, Gideon, and Samson). It is a time of confusion and turmoil. There is a lot of spiritual corruption—for the priesthood, for the people, and for the nation. The temple of the living God has been desecration morally. It really is a very sad and tragic time in the history of Israel.

**1 Samuel 3:1**—*Now the boy Samuel was ministering to the Lord before Eli. And word from the Lord was rare in those days, visions were infrequent.*

A Godly woman

1. **A right relationship with \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

***1 Samuel 1:1-8****—Now there was a certain man from Ramathaim-zophim from the hill country of Ephraim, and his name was Elkanah the son of Jeroham, the son of Elihu, the son of Tohu, the son of Zuph, an Ephraimite.****2****He had two wives: the name of one was Hannah and the name of the other Peninnah; and Peninnah had children, but Hannah had no children.* ***3****Now this man would go up from his city yearly to worship and to sacrifice to the Lord of hosts in Shiloh. And the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were priests to the Lord there.****4****When the day came that Elkanah sacrificed, he would give portions to Peninnah his wife and to all her sons and her daughters;****5****but to Hannah he would give a double portion, for he loved Hannah, but the Lord had closed her womb.****6****Her rival, however, would provoke her bitterly to irritate her, because the Lord had closed her womb.****7****It happened year after year, as often as she went up to the house of the Lord, she would provoke her; so she wept and would not eat.****8****Then Elkanah her husband said to her, “Hannah, why do you weep and why do you not eat and why is your heart sad? Am I not better to you than ten sons?”*

1. A godly mother flourishes in having a right relationship with her husband

* How is that possible here?
* One man, two wives
  + - 1. Polygamy was part of the culture
         1. It is never promoted, nor approved in the scriptures
         2. Every time it is, there is heartache and pain
         3. It brings God’s judgement
      2. God is patient in overturning this issue in the culture
      3. Priority is His saving word
      4. Principle: the priority of making a commitment to God first and then instructions on principles for marriage

1. They worshiped together

**v3a**—*Now this man would go up from his city yearly to worship and to sacrifice to the Lord of hosts in Shiloh.*

* + - 1. Elkanah worshiped God
         1. He was not perfect
         2. He did have a heart toward God and was obedient
         3. Went to Shiloh 3 times a year (**Exodus 23**)

At this time, Shiloh was the location where God was worshipped

The Arc of the Covenant was there

God’s presence was there

The priests of the Lord were there (Eli’s sons: Hophni and Phinehas)

This was what was required

* + - 1. Hannah responds well to his leadership
         1. Even when her husband is not perfect
         2. A wife can flourish under less than ideal circumstances
         3. Resource: *When Sinners Say "I Do": Discovering the Power of the Gospel for Marriage* by Dave Harvey
         4. A believer must not marry an unbeliever (**2 Cor 6:14**)

**Deuteronomy 7:1-4***—“When the Lord your God brings you into the land where you are entering to possess it, and clears away many nations before you, the Hittites and the Girgashites and the Amorites and the Canaanites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites, seven nations greater and stronger than you,****2****and when the Lord your God delivers them before you and you defeat them, then you shall utterly destroy them. You shall make no covenant with them and show no favor to them.****3****Furthermore, you shall not intermarry with them; you shall not give your daughters to their sons, nor shall you take their daughters for your sons.****4****For they will turn your sons away from following Me to serve other gods; then the anger of the Lord will be kindled against you and He will quickly destroy you.”*

**Joshua 23:11-13**—*So take diligent heed to yourselves to love the Lord your God.****12****For if you ever go back and cling to the rest of these nations, these which remain among you, and intermarry with them, so that you associate with them and they with you,****13****know with certainty that the Lord your God will not continue to drive these nations out from before you; but they will be a snare and a trap to you, and a whip on your sides and thorns in your eyes, until you perish from off this good land which the Lord your God has given you.*

**Ezra 9:12**—*So now do not give your daughters to their sons nor take their daughters to your sons, and never seek their peace or their prosperity, that you may be strong and eat the good things of the land and leave it as an inheritance to your sons forever.*

**Ephesians 6:4**—*Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.*

1. They loved each other

**vv4-5**—*When the day came that Elkanah sacrificed, he would give portions to Peninnah his wife and to all her sons and her daughters;****5****but to Hannah he would give a double portion, for he loved Hannah, but the Lord had closed her womb.*

* 1. Whenever a sacrifice was made, a portion would go to God, and other portions of it would be kept and eaten at a feast
  2. A double portion of what was kept was given to Hannah
     1. Signifying honor and respect
     2. She therefore was the most honored guest at his table
  3. Even in spite of not having children
  4. Even as she is feeling inferior to Peninnah
  5. His love for her resulted in actions (not simply an emotion)

**Ephesians 5:25**—*Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her,*

* 1. Perhaps the struggles she faced (anxiety and frustrations) put her in a position to better understand the anxiousness of a child’s heart
  2. Elkanah becomes a source of strength for her as he loves her

1. Peninnah provoked Hanna relentlessly

**v6-7**—*Her rival, however, would provoke her bitterly to irritate her, because the Lord had closed her womb.****7****It happened year after year, as often as she went up to the house of the Lord, she would provoke her; so she wept and would not eat.*

1. When they were at Shiloh to worship, Hannah goes before the Lord
   1. She fasted and prayed
   2. Her husband again tries to console her, v**8**

**v8**—*Then Elkanah her husband said to her, “Hannah, why do you weep and why do you not eat and why is your heart sad? Am I not better to you than ten sons?”*

1. **A right relationship with \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**1 Samuel 1:9-20**—*Then Hannah rose after eating and drinking in Shiloh. Now Eli the priest was sitting on the seat by the doorpost of the temple of the Lord.****10****She, greatly distressed, prayed to the Lord and wept bitterly.****11****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 son, then I will give him to the Lord all the days of his life, and a razor shall never come on his head.”* ***12****Now it came about, as she continued praying before the Lord, that Eli was watching her mouth.****13****As for Hannah, she was speaking in her heart, only her lips were moving, but her voice was not heard. So Eli thought she was drunk.****14****Then Eli said to her, “How long will you make yourself drunk? Put away your wine from you.”****15****But Hannah replied, “No, my lord, I am a woman oppressed in spirit; I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but I have poured out my soul before the Lord.****16****Do not consider your maidservant as a worthless woman, for I have spoken until now out of my great concern and provocation.”* ***17****Then Eli answered and said, “Go in peace; and may the God of Israel grant your petition that you have asked of Him.”****18****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.* ***19****Then they arose early in the morning and worshiped before the Lord, and returned again to their house in Ramah. And Elkanah had relations with Hannah his wife, and the LORD remembered her.****20****It came about in due time, after Hannah had conceived, that she gave birth to a son; and she named him Samuel, saying, “Because I have asked him of the Lord.”*

1. Wanting the Lord’s best
   * + 1. For her, Yahweh’s best was for a woman to have children

**Deuteronomy 28:1-4**—*“Now it shall be, if you diligently obey the Lord your God, being careful to do all His commandments which I command you today, the Lord your God will set you high above all the nations of the earth.”****2****All these blessings will come upon you and overtake you if you obey the Lord your God:* ***3****“Blessed shall you be in the city, and blessed shall you be in the country.* ***4****“Blessed shall be the offspring of your body and the produce of your ground and the offspring of your beasts, the increase of your herd and the young of your flock.*

**Psalm 113:9**—*He makes the barren woman abide in the house as a joyful mother of children. Praise the Lord!*

**Psalm 127:3-5a**—*Behold, children are a gift of the Lord, The fruit of the womb is a reward.* **4**Like arrows in the hand of a warrior, So are the children of one’s youth. **5**How blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them

**Psalm 128:3-4**—*Your wife shall be like a fruitful vine Within your house, Your children like olive plants Around your table.* ***4****Behold, for thus shall the man be blessed Who fears the Lord.*

* + - 1. She is seeking the Lord’s glory
      2. She desires the child as a sign of God’s love and blessing
      3. Fulfillment of that which is God’s highest calling for her
      4. Mothers contribute to the godliness of the next generation

1. Heartfelt prayer

***vv9-12****—Then Hannah rose after eating and drinking in Shiloh. Now Eli the priest was sitting on the seat by the doorpost of the temple of the Lord.****10****She, greatly distressed, prayed to the Lord and wept bitterly.****11****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 son, then I will give him to the Lord all the days of his life, and a razor shall never come on his head.”* ***12****Now it came about, as she continued praying before the Lord, that Eli was watching her mouth.*

* + - 1. She understood that only God can open the womb
      2. He is the only One that could give her a child

**Genesis 25:21**—*Isaac prayed to the Lord on behalf of his wife, because she was barren; and the Lord answered him and Rebekah his wife conceived.*

**Genesis 30:1-2**—*Now when Rachel saw that she bore Jacob no children, she became jealous of her sister; and she said to Jacob, “Give me children, or else I die.”****2****Then Jacob’s anger burned against Rachel, and he said, “Am I in the place of God, who has withheld from you the fruit of the womb?”*

**Luke 1:13***—**But the angel said to him, “Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your petition has been heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will give him the name John.*

**Psalm 139:13-16**—*For You formed my inward parts; You wove me in my mother’s womb.* ***14****I will give thanks to You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Wonderful are Your works, And my soul knows it very well.* ***15****My frame was not hidden from You, When I was made in secret, And skillfully wrought in the depths of the earth;* ***16****Your eyes have seen my unformed substance; And in Your book were all written The days that were ordained for me, When as yet there was not one of them.*

1. Vowed a vow, **v11**
   * + 1. She saw her lack of children as an affliction
       2. Directness of her prayer included a Nazirite vow
          1. What is a Nazirite vow?
          2. Nothing to do with Nazareth
          3. Nazir (meaning consecrated)—When a Jew wanted to give himself totally to God, he vowed to drink no strong drink, not cut his hair (take no care for his appearance)
          4. He was totally dedicated to God (Cf. **Numbers 6**)
          5. Only three persons took this vow in scripture: Samson, JTB and Samuel
          6. This shows the devotion of Hannah’s heart
2. Purity of devotion, v**12**
   * + 1. Devoted in silent prayer, but moving her mouth
       2. Eli mistook her for being drunk
       3. The Hebrew word conveys the meaning “*A worthless, profitless, no-good nothing*”
       4. The intensity of her heart to illicit Eli’s reaction is noteworthy
       5. Pure in her intentions

Cf. **Proverbs 31**

**Titus 2:3-5**—*Older women likewise are to be reverent in their behavior, not malicious gossips nor enslaved to much wine, teaching what is good,****4****so that they may encourage the young women to love their husbands, to love their children,****5****to be sensible, pure, workers at home, kind, being subject to their own husbands, so that the word of God will not be dishonored.*

1. Patiently waiting on the Lord in faith, v**18**
   * + 1. She believed the man of God
       2. She believed the Lord would answer her prayer
       3. *Then they arose early in the morning and worshiped before the Lord (v****19****)* and went home
2. Praises the Lord (Hannah’s Song of Thanksgiving, **2:1-10**)

**1 Samuel 2:1**—*She prayed and said, My heart rejoices in the Lord, mine 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.* [Et al.]

1. **A right relationship in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**
2. Although Elkanah went up with all his household to worship, Hannah stayed back with the boy
3. Dedicated to her children
   * + 1. Not sure if that was the wisest move
       2. It was approved of by Elkanah
       3. One commentator says: the greatest act of worship she could offer God was to care for the life He gave her[[1]](#footnote-2)
       4. She would remain with the child until he was weaned

(Cf. **Proverbs 13**—a contrast between the upright and the wicked)

**Proverbs 22:6**—*Train up a child in the way he should go, Even when he is old he will not depart from it.*

**Proverbs 22:15**—*Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child; The rod of discipline will remove it far from him.*

**Proverbs 29:15**—*The rod and reproof give wisdom, But a child who gets his own way brings shame to his mother.*

1. Dedicated the child to the Lord

**v24-28**—*Now when she had weaned him, she took him up with her, with a three-year-old bull and one ephah of flour and a jug of wine, and brought him to the house of the Lord in Shiloh, although the child was young.****25****Then they slaughtered the bull, and brought the boy to Eli.****26****She said, “Oh, my lord! As your soul lives, my lord, I am the woman who stood here beside you, praying to the Lord.****27****For this boy I prayed, and the Lord has given me my petition which I asked of Him.****28****So I have also dedicated him to the Lord; as long as he lives he is dedicated to the Lord.” And he worshiped the Lord there.*

* + - 1. Sidebar: The sweetness of a mother…

**2:19**—*And his mother would make him a little robe and bring it to him from year to year when she would come up with her husband to offer the yearly sacrifice.*

1. The result: a godly child

**2:11**—*Then Elkanah went to his home at Ramah. But the boy* ministered to the Lord*before Eli the priest.*

**2:18***—Now Samuel was ministering before the Lord, as a boy wearing a linen ephod.*

**2:21***—The Lord visited Hannah; and she conceived and gave birth to three sons and two daughters. And the boy Samuel grew before the Lord.*

**2:26***—Now the boy Samuel was growing in stature and in favor both with the Lord and with men.*

**3:1***—Now the boy Samuel was ministering to the Lord before Eli. And word from the Lord was rare in those days, visions were infrequent.*

**3:19**—*Thus Samuel grew and the Lord was with him and let none of his words fail.*

1. In contrast to two other children: Hophni and Phinehas (Eli’s kids)

**1:3**—*Now this man would go up from his city yearly to worship and to sacrifice to the Lord of hosts in Shiloh. And the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were priests to the Lord there.*

**2:12**—*Now the sons of Eli were worthless men; they did not know the Lord*

* + - 1. There is no mention of their mother in the narrative
      2. Eli neglected his children

1. He did not admonish them
2. He did not raise them; they raised themselves
3. They were worthless (v**12**)

**v17**—*Thus the sin of the young men was very great before the Lord, for the men despised the offering of the Lord.*

**2:22**—*Now Eli was very old; and he heard all that his sons were doing to all Israel, and how they lay with the women who served at the doorway of the tent of meeting.*

**2:26**—*Now the boy Samuel was growing in stature and in favor both with the Lord and with men.*

**4:17-18**—*Then the one who brought the news replied, “Israel has fled before the Philistines and there has also been a great slaughter among the people, and your two sons also, Hophni and Phinehas, are dead, and the ark of God has been taken.”****18****When he mentioned the ark of God, Eli fell off the seat backward beside the gate, and his neck was broken and he died, for he was old and heavy. Thus he judged Israel forty years.*

**Conclusion**

We see in Hannah a woman who honored the Lord and prayed fervently for a child. The Lord blessed her with multiple children. Children are a gift from the Lord. Her oldest son, Samuel grew in the fear and admonition of the Lord. That came at the good hand of the Lord, but it also came out of the desire of a godly mother.

1. John MacArthur [↑](#footnote-ref-2)