

LIFE LESSONS – 1 SAMUEL: Dedicating Life to Godⁱ 1 Samuel 1:21-2:11

INTRODUCTION:

Good morning, Trinity! It is good to see you here this morning. If you are a guest with us, thanks for joining us on this Lord's Day. We would love the opportunity to get to know you more. You can help us connect with you by texting the keyword, TBCMP, which stands for Trinity Baptist Church Mount Pleasant, to the number 94-000. When you send that keyword, a link will be sent back to you and that will take you to a short form. When you submit that form, it notifies me, and I look forward to following up with you.

Or feel free to swing by our information center located in the fellowship area. There we have a gift we would love to put in your hands as a way of saying thank you for being our guest today. We are thrilled you have chosen to worship with us today.

ANNOUNCEMENT:

Last week I mentioned to you about our plans to celebrate our 40th anniversary as a church. I want to be sure to touch on that again this week before we jump into our study.

By way of reminder, if you were with us last week, we have planned 3 ways to celebrate 40 years of ministry: Serve week, Celebration Dinner, and Sunday Celebration. My challenge to you is to be a part of all three.

Serve week is something we have put together to serve our community. We have worked with our local missions partners to identify projects that will mobilize our church to serve in key areas of our community. Our goal is to have 250 people, from our church, participate in serve week. I believe we are up to 76 people signed up so far. You can sign up for a project by either stopping by the table in the fellowship area, scanning that QR code, or visiting trinitytx.org/serve. And remember, you get a free t-shirt for signing up. And also mark your calendar for Sunday, January 22 for our Serve Week kickoff rally.

Secondly, we are going to celebrate with dinner on Saturday, January 28 from 5-7pm. That will be held at the Pilgrim Hangar out at Mt. Pleasant airport. Tickets are available for purchase for \$10 each. You can purchase your ticket

at the table in the fellowship area or online. We can help you with that. That dinner will be a blast. Good food, good music, and good fellowship.

The third way we are planning to celebrate our 40th anniversary is on Sunday morning, January 29. We will meet at our regular times, 9:30 and 11am. Our church's first pastor, Dr. Reggie McNeal, will be preaching that morning. You don't want to miss hearing from him. We will also have other special guests with us that day as well.

I'm looking forward to it. You guys?! Alright!

SERIES OVERVIEW:

A few weeks ago, we launched a new teaching series called, "Life Lessons." We are working our way through the book of 1 Samuel.

This week's message is entitled, "Dedicating Life to God." So, I want to invite you to take your bibles and turn with me to 1 Samuel, chapter 1. We will begin in verse 21 and work our way through chapter 2, verse 11 this morning.

Last week we studied Hannah and her prayer. As a part of her prayer, she vowed a powerful vow to God. She promised to give her son back to The Lord's service should God give her a child. Today we are going to see the fulfillment of that vow as God did give her a son. Hannah named him Samuel, which means, "Asked of God."

As we study our passage this morning, we are going to look at Hannah's Answer to God's work and her Adoration of God. Then we will look at 3 life lessons we learn from Hannah here.

MESSAGE:

Let's begin by looking at...

1) Hannah's Answer

Hannah answered, she responded, to The Lord's faithfulness to give her a son. Follow along with me in your copy of God's Word. 1 Samuel 1, beginning in verse 21. *²¹The man Elkanah and **all his house** went up to offer to the Lord the yearly sacrifice and to pay his vow. ²²But Hannah did not go up, for she said to her husband, "As soon as the child is **weaned**, I will bring him, so that he may appear in the presence of the Lord and **dwell there forever.**" ²³Elkanah her*

husband said to her, “Do what seems best to you; wait until you have weaned him; only, **may the Lord establish his word.**” So the woman remained and nursed her son until she weaned him.

Now, by way of timeline, it was the previous yearly sacrifice that Hannah prayed for a son. So, in a year’s time, Hannah had Samuel and then the next yearly sacrifice occurred.ⁱⁱ That’s what we read about in verse 21.

Hannah elected to stay at home while she weaned Samuel. In that day and time, it was a process of about 3 to 5 years.ⁱⁱⁱ Once that had taken place, she planned to fulfill the vow she prayed when asking God for a son. To give him back to God to serve God all the days of Samuel’s life.

We learn that Elkanah was good with that plan. But what’s interesting, according to Jewish Law, Elkanah had the right to null and void Hannah’s vow.^{iv} Which that had to be something they contemplated, right? Here Hannah is, unable to have children, has a miracle baby. Maybe it’s in our best interest to keep this one and go back on our vow. You might not be able to have other children. But they, as we will see, will honor the vow Hannah made to God.

In the process of discussing the plan, Elkanah makes a statement, “**may the Lord establish his word.**” Scholars debate the meaning of this statement. Is the “word” God’s word or Samuel’s word? Just **may the Lord establish his word.** One possibility is that God had already fulfilled His word through the birth of Samuel. But that God would also make good on receiving Samuel into God’s service.^v

This is a powerful scene when you think about it. Elkanah and Hannah seem to be on the same page. He obviously knew Hannah’s desire to have a child. And he saw God work to give her a son. But Samuel wasn’t just Hannah’s son, he was Elkanah’s, too. Yet both parents desired more than anything for The Lord to use their children for His Kingdom. It’s a beautiful picture and I have more on this later.

Verse 24. *24And when she had weaned him, she took him up with her, along with a **three-year-old bull**, an **ephah** [E-Fa] of flour, and a **skin** of wine, and she brought him [Samuel] to the house of the Lord at Shiloh. And the child was young. 25Then they slaughtered the bull, and they brought the child to Eli. 26And she said, “Oh, my lord! As you live, my lord, I am the woman who was standing*

here in your presence, praying to the Lord. [Hannah is identifying herself to Eli the priest. I’m the lady that was praying that you thought was drunk] *27For this child I prayed, and the Lord has granted me my petition that I made to him. 28Therefore I have lent him to the Lord. As long as he lives, he is lent to the Lord.” And he worshiped the Lord there.* What does Hannah mean when she says she has lent Samuel to The Lord?

This phrase can also be translated as, “I have returned him to The Lord.” The Lord gave him to me, I am returning him to God. But, the word, “lent,” means an irrevocable giving.^{vi} She is not lending Samuel to The Lord as we understand lending. She is not allowing God to borrow him. She is giving up her son to God.

After she informs Eli that she is giving Samuel to God, it says, “he worshiped the Lord there.” There is some debate on who is doing the worshiping here. Is it Samuel, Eli or Elkanah? Some even suggest the original language does not use the pronoun “he,” inferring that Hannah is the one that worshiped. Most likely, it is Elkanah as it ties into verse 11 of chapter 2 that we’ll see later.^{vii}

So, Hannah’s answer, her response, to God’s faithfulness in giving her a son is to make good on her promise to give Samuel back to God. Now, let’s look at...

2) Hannah’s Adoration

We have in the opening verses of chapter 2 a beautiful prayer of Hannah. This lady is a woman of prayer, isn’t she?! She poured out her soul to The Lord in chapter 1 and she does it again here in chapter 2. How many of us have benefited from a praying woman in our lives?! I know I have.

But more than a prayer, this is a worship song. She is adoring God. And this song that she spontaneously writes from her heart are her last words recorded in the bible. But they are not the last time we will hear these words. Mary, Jesus’ mother, in Luke 1 prays a prayer after learning of carrying the Messiah. It is a section of Scripture known as the Magnificat. Mary most likely knew Hannah’s prayer as she had studied it as a little girl, and she found herself praying much of her prayer. Mary is in effect praying Scripture.

But more than a prayer and more than a worship song, Hannah’s prayer is also a prophecy. All these components are wrapped up in Hannah’s adoration, her worship, of God for who He is and what He’s done. Let’s look at it.

Chapter 2, beginning in verse 1. *1And Hannah prayed and said, "My heart exults in the Lord; my horn [or literally, my might or strength]^{viii} is exalted in the Lord. My mouth derides my enemies [I smile at my enemies]^x, because I rejoice in your salvation. 2"There is none holy like the Lord: for there is none besides you; there is no rock like our God [no other place to put trust in]. 3Talk no more so very proudly, let not arrogance come from your mouth; for the Lord is a God of knowledge, and by his actions are weighed [expression of humility]. 4The bows of the mighty are broken, but the feeble bind on strength. 5Those who were full have hired themselves out for bread, but those who were hungry have ceased to hunger. The barren has borne seven, but she who has many children is forlorn. [Most likely the mentioning of "seven" is in relation to being complete. The number 7 in Scripture often means that. The reason that's important is because we learn in verse 21 that Hannah had 3 more sons and 2 daughters. So, including Samuel that makes 6 kids, not seven.] 6The Lord kills and brings to life; he brings down to Sheol and raises up. [Some scholars see this as a prophecy pertaining to Jesus being crucified, buried, and then raised on the third day.] 7The Lord makes poor and makes rich; he brings low and he exalts. 8He raises up the poor from the dust; he lifts the needy from the ash heap to make them sit with princes and inherit a seat of honor. For the pillars of the earth are the Lord's, and on them he has set the world. 9He will guard the feet of his faithful ones, but the wicked shall be cut off in darkness, for not by might shall a man prevail. 10The adversaries of the Lord shall be broken to pieces; against them he will thunder in heaven. The Lord will judge the ends of the earth; he will give strength to his king [same root word as Messiah. Referring to a Savior, Jesus.] and exalt the horn of his anointed."* Again, God's anointed is the Messiah.

I love what we see here. One pastor I read this week said, "Before she had a child, her prayer was like, why me, Lord? Why am I so bitter? But after God's gift of Samuel to her, Hannah is like, why me Lord? Why am I so blessed? Of all the people, You picked me."^x Do you see her act of worship?

Verse 11. *11Then Elkanah went home to Ramah. And the boy [young man, Samuel] was ministering to the Lord in the presence of Eli the priest."* From this point on, Samuel stayed with Eli and Hannah and Elkanah only got to see him once a year at the annual sacrifice. Hannah's Answer and her Adoration.

LIFE LESSONS:

There are 3 life lessons that I want to point out in the passage we studied today. There are probably more, but I want to focus in on 3 today. With that said, here's my challenge to you. Each week, I want you to spend your personal time with The Lord reviewing the verses we study on Sunday. And it is my prayer that in that time, The Lord will reveal to you different and specific lessons for your life. You know, the beauty of the Bible is that it is always fresh. We can read the same passage and come away with different takeaways every time we read it. But this morning, let's talk about 3 life lessons.

1) Parent with Purpose

Both Elkanah and Hannah demonstrated a desire to raise their children with a purpose. Think about the ways they intentionally raised their kids.

First, Elkanah was the spiritual leader of his family. He faithfully led his family. In chapter 1, verse 3, we see how he and his entire family took the annual trip to Shiloh to worship and to sacrifice. Then again in verse 21 it reads, *"21The man Elkanah and all his house went up to offer to the Lord the yearly sacrifice and to pay his vow.* Then when Samuel was around 3 or 4 years old, he took the trip again. Elkanah desired for his family to be in church. He wanted them to know all about The Lord. Men, lead your family, be in church, and lead them to pursue The Lord.

The second way this couple parented with purpose was in Hannah's desire to "wean" Samuel. The word translated as "wean," literally means to "deal fully with."^{xi} This means way more than weaning him physically. It meant that she was purposeful in the time she had to teach him spiritual truths. I believe when she told Elkanah that she was going to wean him, I think she was telling him, "I'm going to train him. I have a limited time with this child, and I need to pour into him." See the purpose? And parents, the truth is that we have a limited time with our kids before they launch. We must parent with purpose.

Hannah's desire comes from a command in the Scriptures. Deuteronomy 6, verses 4-9 say, *"4Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. 5You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. 6And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. 7You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. 8You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and*

they shall be as frontlets between your eyes.⁹You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.” Elkanah and Hannah took seriously the command to be purposeful in their parenting.

Listen, parents, you need to know and understand that if you are not discipling your kids, someone is. And that someone may not be the influence you want on them. It is God’s desire that we be purposeful in our parenting.

A third way they parented with purpose was in their willingness to give Samuel back to The Lord. They recognized that children are gifts from The Lord and they are on loan to us to shepherd and invest in them so that they can follow The Lord’s lead in their lives. Hannah’s prayer was not that Samuel would be really smart, get a scholarship, excel in athletics, and make lots of money. Not that there’s anything wrong with that. But her prayer was first and foremost that her child would be in God’s service all the days of his life? Do we want for our kids what Hannah wanted in Samuel?

Another way these parents demonstrated purpose in parenting is by presenting Samuel to the priest. This is where we get the precedent for Family Dedication. Elkanah and Hannah came to Eli and dedicated Samuel to The Lord. At least twice a year, we have Family Dedication services where parents stand before their church and make a commitment, under God, to raise their children in the nurture and admonition of The Lord. And while there is nothing magical about that dedication service, in other words, it doesn’t seal the child’s salvation, it does posture parents to be purposeful in raising their kids.

Psalm 127, verses 3-5, says, *“³Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord, the fruit of the womb a reward. ⁴Like arrows in the hand of a warrior are the children of one’s youth. ⁵Blessed is the man who fills his quiver with them! He shall not be put to shame when he speaks with his enemies in the gate.*”

Two things I want to mention in this Psalm. First, the word heritage can be viewed as an assignment. In other words, children are an assignment from God. God expects us to parent them with a purpose.

Secondly, our kids are, “like arrows in the hand of a warrior.” What do we do when we shoot a bow and arrow? We aim at a target. There is a destination for that arrow, a purpose. And then we deploy the arrow. Listen, mom and dads, God has given us a target by which we are to deploy our kids. That target is

Jesus and obedience to Jesus! We must parent with purpose. The second life lesson is to...

2) Live Generously

Consider the generosity of Elkanah and Hannah. Look again with me at verse 24 of 1 Samuel 1. *²⁴And when she had weaned him, she took him up with her, along with a **three-year-old bull**, an **ephah** [E-Fa] of flour, and a **skin** of wine, and she brought him [Samuel] to the house of the Lord at Shiloh. And the child was young. ²⁵Then they slaughtered the bull, and they brought the child to Eli.*

This couple brought gifts when they came to present Samuel. We’re told they brought a three-year-old bull, a ephah of flour, and a skin of wine. Scholars debate as to whether or not it was 1 three-year-old bull or 3 one-year-old bulls. Several of the commentaries I read think it was three bulls instead of one. The reason they think this is because the required sacrifice was 1 bull, three tenths of an ephah of flour, and a half a hin of wine.^{xii} The reason scholars believe it was 3 bulls is because the other elements they brought were three times the required amount. Whether it was three bulls or one, the principle remains the same here because a 3-year-old bull was considered more valuable than a 1-year-old bull. The principle we learn here is that they were extremely generous.

And beyond the gifts they brought, their generosity was further proven by leaving Samuel behind. They quite literally gave him to The Lord. You see their generosity, right? They lived open handedly. Everything I have is Yours, Lord.

Now, I think there is something that we need to be clear about here. Elkanah and Hannah were not being generous in order to get something from God. They were not trying to manipulate God for a blessing in return. How do we know that? Well, God had already given Samuel to them.

Listen, you can’t out give God. And our generosity back to God is not to get something from Him. Giving is a response to Him and what He has already given us. Everything we have is from God. We give back to Him a portion of what He has given us as an act of worship for His goodness toward us. See, the motivation to live generously is the generosity God has already shown us. We not only see it in what we have, but also in the giving of Jesus!

So, we learn to parent with purpose and live generously. Thirdly, ...

3) Pray Passionately

We've already looked at Hannah's prayer in chapter 2. But I want you to consider the components of her passionate prayer. Her first words are praise to God (verse 1). She then thanks God for overcoming the enemy (verses 3-5). She sees her story in God's story (verse 8). She repeats God's character (verses 2, 10). And she expresses her joy in God's coming salvation – a coming king (also verse 10).^{xiii}

This is a completely different Hannah from chapter 1. She has moved from emptiness to fullness. She moved from pain to praise. She went from mourning to joy.^{xiv} Listen, spending time with God in passionate prayer changes us. That is the case because in those moments of pouring out our souls before God, He meets His people. Hannah experiences God in a radical way.

I think the depths of our prayers reveal our true understanding of the God to whom we pray. If we truly understood to who is it that we pray, wouldn't we spend more time in prayer? Myself included. And wouldn't we grab ahold of God and not let go until the God of the universe moved?

3 life lessons: parent with purpose, live generously, and pray passionately.

CONCLUSION:

We are going to have a time of response. Do you have a relationship with Jesus? The kind of relationship where you commune with Him? Have you been born again unto a relationship with Jesus? If not, or if you have questions about that, you come this morning. Our elders will be here ready to receive you. Just come and say three words, "I need Jesus."

Where are you in need of prayer this morning? We would love to join you by praying with you and over you. Whatever is burdening your heart.

I'm going to pray, we will stand and sing, but let's respond. [PRAY]

ENDNOTES:

ⁱ Works consulted in preparation for this message: Robert D. Bergen, *The New American Commentary: 1, 2 Samuel, Vol. 7*, B&H Publishing: Nashville, 1996; Heath Thomas and J.D. Greear, *Christ-Centered Exposition: Exalting Jesus in 1 & 2 Samuel*, Holman: Nashville, 2016; Bill T. Arnold, *The NIV Application Commentary: 1 & 2 Samuel*, Zondervan: Grand Rapids, 2003; Ray Fowler, "Dedicated to God," sermon published by Ray Fowler, accessed online: <http://www.rayfowler.org/sermons/1-samuel/dedicated-to-god>; Jon Gruss, "1 Samuel 1:21-28," published by FaithLife, accessed online: <https://sermons.faithlife.com/sermons/436565-1-samuel-1-21-28-and-2-1-11>; William Higgins, "Hannah's Gift," published by Christian Teaching, August 23, 2016, accessed online: <https://williamshiggins.net/2016/08/23/hannahs-gift-1-samuel-121-28-211a-2>; J.D. Greear, "Hannah's Hope," sermon preached at Summit Church on June 26, 2022, accessed online: <https://summitchurch.com/message/hannahs-hope>; Skip Heitzig, "Expound: 1 Samuel 1-2:25," message taught at Calvary Church on Wednesday, May 12, 2021, accessed online: <https://calvarynm.church/connectwithskip/teachings/#!/series/314/sermon/4569/play>; Skip Heitzig, "Why me, Lord?," sermon preached at Calvary Church on March 13, 2002, accessed online: <https://calvarynm.church/connectwithskip/teachings/#!/series/66/sermon/988>.

ⁱⁱ Arnold, page 58.

ⁱⁱⁱ Skip Heitzig.

^{iv} Bergen, page 72.

^v Discussion on this presented by Higgins and Heitzig.

^{vi} Heitzig.

^{vii} Bergen and Higgins seem to agree here.

^{viii} Strong's Concordance, 7161.

^{ix} Ibid, 7337.

^x Taken from Skip Heitzig.

^{xi} Strong's, 1580.

^{xii} Bergen, page 73.

^{xiii} Pointed out by Thomas and Greear, page 56.

^{xiv} Ibid.