

IT TAKES A MOTHER TO REAR A CHILD
1 Cor. 1:27-31

Mother's Day is a very special, holy day for me, because of the enormous impact of my mother upon my life. I wish to mention three powerful ways my mother influenced me:

1. She set me apart in her womb before my birth – unto God's glory – Jer. 1:6.
2. She taught me more about preaching than my many professors did. She said, "Preach on a 3rd grade level and maybe the college graduates will understand you." I have honored this request and God has honored the plain simple truth I have preached.
3. She taught me a principle of life which has influenced me immensely. She said, "It is a sin to make a 'B' in life when you are capable of making an 'A'." Stated in spiritual terms or it would be applied to a mother "It is a sin to be a good mother and not a great mother." What is the difference? A good mother cares for her children – all of their physical, educational, social needs, even takes them to church occasionally, but she does not bring them up for the glory of God. A great mother does all these things but also regards her children as gifts from God and rears them for His glory and not hers, and releases him into God's service no matter where.

Who is an example of the great mother? The mother of Jesus and Hannah in the Old Testament. But do you realize that Mary modeled her life after the example of Hannah? (compare Luke 1:46ff with 1 Samuel 2:1-11). So today I want to show how Hannah was not just a "good" mother but a "great mother". Hannah was a great mother because of the three great loves in her life in this order:

I. Hannah loved her Savior, Jehovah God with all her soul, mind and strength.

She obeyed the first commandment – to love the Lord with all your being (Matthew 22:37). She did what is commanded in Col. 3:2, "Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth," and Romans 12:1-2, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, *which is* your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what *is* that good and acceptable and perfect will of God." Her fervency for the Lord was evidenced especially in two ways:

- (a) **Hannah internalized the Word.** She did know the Word by diligent study. She did stow the Word in her heart by memorization

and meditation. She did show the Word in her life by obeying its teaching.

She could then sow the Word in her witness, especially in the rearing of her children.

- (b) **Hannah had intimacy with Jehovah God through prayer.** Hannah stayed before the Lord in prayer, day and night, even in deepest sorrow, pouring out her heart unto the Lord. The carnal High Priest Eli upon observing how she prayed, charged her with being drunk (1 Sam. 1:14 – the same charge the mob made against the apostles on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:13). Yes, she was drunk, but drunk on the Holy Spirit.

A great mother will always be a woman of the Word and a woman of prayer.

II. **Hannah loved her Spouse more than any person on earth.** The most important

relationship in a home is not the relationship of the parents to the children, but the relationship of the parents to one another. The husband should love his wife first more than any other person; the wife should love her husband above all. Hannah and Elkanah loved each other deeply (1 Samuel 1:8). Fathers, the finest thing you can do for your children is to love their mothers, and mothers, the finest things you can do for your children is to love their dad.

Illus.: My oldest son said to me recently, “Daddy, the one thing which has impacted my life more than anything is the way you loved mother more than you loved us.” Listen parents: Your children learn all the great lessons of life by noting how you treat each other: the meaning of real love, compassion, integrity, forgiveness, kindness, patience, etc.

III. **Hannah loved her Son for the glory of God, and not her own glory.**

Hannah was barren for a time and vowed to the Lord in 1 Samuel 1:11 that if He would give her, His servant, a man child she would do 2 things she promised:

- (c) I will rear him to live a holy life, even the life of a Nazarite
(d) And then I will give him to the Lord for the rest of his days.

Hannah kept her promises to a “T.”

- (a) She **RECEIVED** her child from the hand of the Lord. She did not name him to honor someone in the family, or for some movie star, or human hero. She named him Samuel, meaning “received of the Lord” (1 Samuel 1:20). So every time she looked in his face or called his name, she was reminded that her son was a gift from the Lord, the greatest gift she ever received, beside salvation. She knew the truth of Psalm 127:3, “Behold, children *are* a heritage from the LORD, The fruit of the womb *is* a reward”. She kept the

commandment of Proverbs 22:6, “Train up a child according to his God-given bent and when he is old, he will not depart from it.”

- (b) Having received her son, she **REARED** him as she had promised – for the glory of the Lord. She confined herself to her home for 3 years. She was the model “stay at home” mom. Mothers, I urge you to do the same. Never work outside the home while rearing young children unless you have to do so in order to pay your living expenses – never for luxuries. Hannah would not even leave her son long enough to go to the annual Atonement Day in Jerusalem (1 Samuel 1:22).
- (c) When the child was three years old and ready to be weaned, she **RELEASED** him to the Lord for all the days of his life. She then delivered him into the hand of the wicked High Priest Eli, trusting the Lord to watch over him. Then she said to Eli, “For this child I prayed and my petition was granted. Therefore, I will give or loan him to the Lord all the days of his life” (1 Sam. 1:27-28). I quote these verses every time I dedicate an infant to the Lord. She saw Samuel only annually when she would bring him a little robe she had made (1 Samuel 2:18).

What were the results? Samuel grew up to be a mighty man of integrity and powerful prophet of the Lord. It was Samuel who anointed Saul, the first King of Israel, and the great King David. In a word, Samuel saved Israel from destruction.

What does this moving scenario teach us for today?

- (a) Great Men are made through God’s grace by their mothers.
- (b) And great men are the architects of the future of any nation which survives and does well. If a nation is not led by godly leaders, developed in godly homes by godly mothers, woe unto the future of that nation (Prov. 29:2).

History proves this truth:

1. St. Augustine has made the greatest impact on the Christian church of any person, since Paul. And Augustine was prayed into the kingdom of God by his great and godly mother, Monica. Augustine says in his “Confessions” that she prayed for him and cried that he might be saved as she would have cried at the death of her closest loved one.
2. John Wesley and his teachings saved England from revolution in the 18th century, which plagued France at the same time. And Wesley was reared by his godly and great mother, Susanna Wesley, who mothered 19 children, rearing them for the glory of God.
3. I talked to the mother of Billy Graham a short time before she died. I asked her many questions concerning Billy. She prefaced every statement with these words, “To the glory of God I brought Billy into the world, taught him the catechism, etc.” and what have been the results from the life of this plain, farm boy reared on a dairy farm in what is now

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the city of Charlotte, N. C. Billy has preached to more people than anyone in the history of the world.

Mothers, it is good to be a “good” mother. But what the world is dying for are “great mothers” who will rear great men who can lead our homes, schools, government, etc. in the ways of the Lord (Proverbs 22:6) “When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice; but when the wicked beareth rule, the people mourn” (Proverbs 29:2).

Would you chose to be a “great mother” by the grace of God. Hannah did but only through His grace. Her very name means “Grace.” And by His grace, you can be a Great Mother and fulfill the highest calling this side of eternity. Would you make that decision to do so on this special date dedicated to your honor?