

Raising Up Children

Part 6

“9 Once when they had finished eating and drinking in Shiloh, Hannah stood up. Now Eli the priest was sitting on his chair by the doorpost of the LORD’s house. 10 In her deep anguish Hannah prayed to the LORD, weeping bitterly. 11 And she made a vow, saying, “LORD Almighty, if you will only look on your servant’s misery and remember me, and not forget your servant but give her a son, then I will give him to the LORD for all the days of his life, and no razor will ever be used on his head.” (1Samuel 1:9-11)

The above was part of the prayer of Hannah to the Lord asking him to give her a son. She was in deep anguish because she was living in a culture that it is disgraceful for a woman who is married and not having children. However in her prayer there was interested thing that the Lord is pleased with. She promised the Lord that if He will give her a son she will do the following: ***“then I will give him to the LORD for all the days of his life, and no razor will ever be used on his head.”*** The Lord is glad to hear that someone was committed to give his child to the Lord and to raise him up in the fear of God.

Indeed the Lord fulfilled His promise to her ***“20 So in the course of time Hannah became pregnant and gave birth to a son. She named him Samuel, saying, “Because I asked the LORD for him.” (1Samuel 1:20)*** So here Hannah dedicated her child to the Lord, and we need to observe here that the dedication of Samuel started with the commitment of his mother even before she got conceived of him. Such awareness of whatever the Lord would be going to give need to be dedicated to Him should be in the mind of every married man or woman. Hannah dedicated her child to be given to the Lord in the following manner:

1- I will give him to the LORD for all the days of his life: His whole life he will live and serve the Lord.

2- And no razor will ever be used on his head: She means the child will be a Nazarite, vowed and dedicated to the Lord and separated from the world unto the Lord. ***Numbers 6*** describes to us the rules of the Nazarites: ***“1 The LORD said to Moses, 2 “Speak to the Israelites and say to them: ‘If a man or woman wants to make a special vow, a vow of dedication to the LORD as a Nazirite, 3 they must abstain from wine and other fermented drink and must not drink vinegar made from wine or other fermented drink. They must not drink grape juice or eat grapes or raisins. 4 As long as they remain under their Nazirite vow, they must not eat anything that comes from the grapevine, not even the seeds or skins. 5 “ ‘During the entire period of their Nazirite vow, no razor may be used on their head. They must be holy until the period of their dedication to the LORD is over; they must let their hair grow long. 6 “ ‘Throughout the period of their dedication to the LORD, the Nazirite must not go near a dead body. 7 Even if their own father or mother or brother or sister dies, they must not make themselves ceremonially unclean on account of them, because the symbol of their dedication to God is on their head. 8 Throughout the period of their dedication, they are consecrated to the LORD.” (Numbers 6:1-8)*** Nazirite they look strange from the people around them; they have long hair, abstinence from grape and wine, and not touching a dead body. So they are different from others around them and they live in a different way. In the same way our children whom we dedicate to the Lord they should be different from the children of other people around them. For example, not watching TV, playing video and computers games, going to parties and functions, and not living in a sinful way of life. Through our prayers and our commitment to the Lord to work with Him to bring them as godly offspring serving Him, the Lord will make a way for them to be raised as God’s servant.

Samuel was born and raised up in a critical period in the life of the people of God. His birth and his raising up as a man of God who would lead revival, were needed for the following reasons and circumstances.

1- Period of corruption even in the office of the priest: “12 Eli’s sons were scoundrels; they had no regard for the LORD. 13 Now it was the practice of the priests that, whenever any of the people offered a sacrifice, the priest’s servant would come with a three-pronged fork in his hand while the meat was being boiled 14 and would plunge the fork into the pan or kettle or caldron or pot. Whatever the fork brought up the priest would take for himself. This is how they treated all the Israelites who came to Shiloh. 15 But even before the fat was burned, the priest’s servant would come and say to the person who was sacrificing, “Give the priest some meat to roast; he won’t accept boiled meat from you, but only raw.” 16 If the person said to him, “Let the fat be burned first, and then take whatever you want,” the servant would answer, “No, hand it over now; if you don’t, I’ll take it by force.” 17 This sin of the young men was very great in the LORD’s sight, for they were treating the LORD’s offering with contempt.” (1Samuel 2:12-17) Even in the church today, many today are corrupting God’s ways; they are using the Lord’s house to make living and to live easy and luxurious life, fattening themselves with gatherings and functions that are rich with food and good complements. Therefore there is much need today to raise up godly children to be godly leaders, like Samuel, who will serve God with pure and honest motive.

2- Period of moral decay in the office of the priest: “Now Eli, who was very old, heard about everything his sons were doing to all Israel and how they slept with the women who served at the entrance to the tent of meeting.” (1Samuel 2:22) The children of the priest were committing adultery and having extramarital affair with the women who were serving at the entrance to the tent of meeting. Even today many workers and pastors having affairs and extramarital relationships and adultery are condoned by many who are involved in God’s service. Practices of boy friend and girl friend, courting and dating that would lead to adultery are honoured and not condemned in many churches. Therefore there is much need today to raise up godly children who are shielded from these evil practices and led into family life through godly marriage and good preparation. Such kind of godly children who pass through God’s will and form godly families are suitable leaders who will impart godliness and holiness to the Church of God.

3- The Word of God and God’s vision were rare: “The boy Samuel ministered before the LORD under Eli. In those days the word of the LORD was rare; there were not many visions.” (1Samuel 3:1) Even the same now, many churches are without vision or purpose of God. The messages are diluted and of human origin and not based on or supported with Scriptures. Corrupted leaders need to be replaced with a Godly one, so that God would start to speak and send visions once again

4- The father of Samuel was committing adultery: “1 There was a certain man from Ramathaim, a Zuphite from the hill country of Ephraim, whose name was Elkanah son of Jeroham, the son of Elihu, the son of Tohu, the son of Zuph, an Ephraimite. 2 He had two wives; one was called Hannah and the other Peninnah. Peninnah had children, but Hannah had none.” (1Samuel 1:1-2) Elkanah the Father of Samuel was a Levite, who knows the word of God that tells he should have one wife. But Elkanah disobeyed God and married Peninnah because Hannah was barren. So even the father of Samuel was in sin; but Samuel was raised up as a godly man because his mother Hannah committed her life to God that her son Samuel would be raised up to serve God. So even you today, might be a father or mother whose partner is in sin and with other spouse; you can still raise up your child in a godly way as you commit your life and cause to dedicate your child unto the Lord.

5- The people of God were idol worshippers: “3 So Samuel said to all the Israelites, “If you are returning to the LORD with all your hearts, then rid yourselves of the foreign gods and the

Ashtoreths and commit yourselves to the LORD and serve him only, and he will deliver you out of the hand of the Philistines.” 4 So the Israelites put away their Baals and Ashtoreths, and served the LORD only.” (1Samuel 7:3-4) At the time of Samuel the Israelites they were serving their own idols in addition to their service and worship unto God. In the same way now, many Christians they are still in the world worshiping and serving their own ambitions, plans, their greed and lust, their worldliness and their pleasures. Therefore there is increasing demand for godly leaders who can be a model to the people of how to be faithful to the call of God.

In the mid of that atmosphere that Samuel was born, you would say, how he can be grown up as godly child and minister? The truth that God worked through the commitment of his mother and her dedication to raise him as a godly child. Let us read the following Scripture to observe how God made Samuel grow and answer the prayer of his mother Hannah.

A- From his infancy Samuel worshipped the Lord: “20 So in the course of time Hannah became pregnant and gave birth to a son. She named him Samuel, saying, “Because I asked the LORD for him.” 21 When her husband Elkanah went up with all his family to offer the annual sacrifice to the LORD and to fulfill his vow, 22 Hannah did not go. She said to her husband, “After the boy is weaned, I will take him and present him before the LORD, and he will live there always.” 23 “Do what seems best to you,” her husband Elkanah told her. “Stay here until you have weaned him; only may the LORD make good his word.” So the woman stayed at home and nursed her son until she had weaned him. 24 After he was weaned, she took the boy with her, young as he was, along with a three-year-old bull, an ephah of flour and a skin of wine, and brought him to the house of the LORD at Shiloh. 25 When the bull had been sacrificed, they brought the boy to Eli, 26 and she said to him, “Pardon me, my lord. As surely as you live, I am the woman who stood here beside you praying to the LORD. 27 I prayed for this child, and the LORD has granted me what I asked of him. 28 So now I give him to the LORD. For his whole life he will be given over to the LORD.” And he worshiped the LORD there.” (1Samuel 1:20-28) Our dedicated attitude toward God and our commitment to raise up our children in a godly way would bring them ultimately to worship God.

B- Samuel ministered before the Lord from His childhood: “18 But Samuel was ministering before the LORD—a boy wearing a linen ephod.” (1Samuel 2:18) Samuel was born in a Levite family but now he is promoted to be a priest, serving and ministering before the Lord under the Eli the priest. Our children whom we dedicate unto the Lord will ultimately minister before God even from their childhood.

C- Samuel raised up as attested prophet of God: “19 The LORD was with Samuel as he grew up, and he let none of Samuel’s words fall to the ground. 20 And all Israel from Dan to Beersheba recognized that Samuel was attested as a prophet of the LORD. 21 The LORD continued to appear at Shiloh, and there he revealed himself to Samuel through his word. 1 And Samuel’s word came to all Israel.” (1Samuel 3:19-4:1a) Samuel raised up as attested minister of God who was rich with God’s word, prophetic messages and God’s visions. He was anointed with the Holy Spirit of God who was speaking to him and directing him in the affairs of the Kingdom through His Word. In the same way our children as we care for them spiritually they will be raised up as attested servant of God who are rich with God’s word and God’s visions to feed and to lead the Church of God.

D- Samuel anointed two Kings: He anointed Saul “1 Then Samuel took a flask of olive oil and poured it on Saul’s head and kissed him, saying, “Has not the LORD anointed you ruler over his inheritance?” (1Samuel 10:1) And he anointed David “13 So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers, and from that day on the Spirit of the LORD came powerfully upon David. Samuel then went to Ramah.” (1Samuel 16:13) In the same way our children will anoint others to serve God.

E- Samuel established a group of prophets: “19 Word came to Saul: “David is in Naioth at Ramah”; 20 so he sent men to capture him. But when they saw a group of prophets prophesying, with Samuel standing there as their leader, the Spirit of God came on Saul’s men, and they also prophesied. 21 Saul was told about it, and he sent more men, and they prophesied too. Saul sent men a third time, and they also prophesied. 22 Finally, he himself left for Ramah and went to the great cistern at Seku. And he asked, “Where are Samuel and David?” “Over in Naioth at Ramah,” they said. 23 So Saul went to Naioth at Ramah. But the Spirit of God came even on him, and he walked along prophesying until he came to Naioth. 24 He stripped off his garments, and he too prophesied in Samuel’s presence. He lay naked all that day and all that night. This is why people say, “Is Saul also among the prophets?” (1Samuel 19:19-24) It seems like a school for the prophets that Samuel had established. Our children through the anointing of the Holy Spirit will be effective disciples multipliers, who will establish authenticated ministries to train and raise up godly servants to serve the Lord.

My Dear and Beloved: Be inspired with the message, and do not be discouraged with what is going on around you. Instead commit your life and cause to God, to raise up Godly children who would ultimately bring the deliverance, the healing and the salvation of God to others as you agree to pray.

My Prayer: Father God thank for your word that you sent to me. Thank you for your Son Jesus Christ, who brought me hope in you and who saved me from my sins and gave me eternal life. Lord I commit myself to raise up my child/children _____, in a godly way to be your servants and ministers; to be the one to lead revival, healing and deliverance for your church and for those who are not yet knew you. Lord upholds me with your grace, provide for me, protect me and sustain me to do this good work of yours, this is my prayer in Jesus name. Amen.

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