



Prayer Resources

Online Articles

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How To Pray For Your Children

For this child I prayed; and the Lord hath given me my petition which I asked of him. 1 Samuel 1:27

In the midst of our self-indulgent lifestyles, our prayers for our children are predominantly need-oriented and our prayers with our children are usually nothing more than rearranging stock phrases to fulfill a spiritual obligation. Because of this type of praying, we have so little influence upon their future and their personal walk with the Lord. As God begins to record the spiritual life of the nation of Israel and the rule of her various kings, He chooses to lay down precise principles for parents praying for and with their children through the lives of Hannah, Samuel, and Eli. It is as though God is communicating that all that happens spiritually in the life of the nation of Israel is foundationed by the prayers of parents for and with their children. In this article we are exploring the principles of praying for your children as exemplified by Hannah. We will explore the principles of praying with your children as exemplified by Eli in a separate article.

Pregnant women seem to have a spiritual instinct to spend time in Hannah's prayers. When Mary learned of her pregnancy with Jesus, she obviously spent time in I Samuel 1 and 2. When she arrived at the home of her cousin Elisabeth and Zachariah, she burst forth in a prayer that is much too similar to Hannah's prayers to be coincidental. Mary prayed for Jesus applying the same principles that Hannah did in her prayers for Samuel.

Hannah's prayer focused on the path of her son. (*I will give him unto the Lord all the days of his life; and there shall be no razor come upon his head. I Samuel 1:11; I have lent him to the Lord; as long as he liveth he shall be lent to the Lord. I Samuel 1:28*) Hannah's son Samuel was a direct answer to her prayers. She prayed specifically for a male child. Her name choice for him was a daily reminder that he was "Samuel" meaning "asked of God." Even before his birth, Samuel's mother prayed that he would be set on a path of purpose. Her prayer concerning no razor touching his head implied his path would be one of purity and of holy, separated living. Both Samuel's childhood and adult life were established by the prayers of his mother. Even in the ungodly environment of his early childhood with Eli's sons, Samuel remained pure. In his adult life, he contested the idolatry of his day with power and authority, he instituted the ministry of the prophets of God, and he anointed the kings of Israel. He never veered from the path of purpose and of purity established by his mother's prayers. Are the present and future paths of your children's lives established by your prayers, or are they vulnerable to the deception of the world, the flesh, and the devil?

Hannah's prayer focused on the peers of her son. (*Mine horn is exalted in the Lord; my mouth is enlarged over mine enemies. I Samuel 2:1*) Hannah poetically refers to her son Samuel as "her horn."

He is her opportunity to have an influence upon God's kingdom. In Hebrew culture, horns

were used to call to worship and to call to assembly for battle. Hannah saw her son as one to motivate others to worship and to battle against evil, but she knew that the influence of enemies could disable that purpose in his life. She asked God that her prayers (*my mouth*) would be more powerful (*enlarged*) than the evil people that Samuel would encounter throughout his life. Through her prayers, Samuel was protected by the evil influence both of Eli's sons as a boy and of King Saul as a man. His peers were not allowed to destroy his purpose. Do your children enjoy the protection from evil peers through your prayers or are they constantly changing to suit the appetites and styles of their peers?

Hannah's prayer focused on the partner of her son.

(so that the barren hath borne seven. I Samuel 2:5)

As Hannah contrasts her previously barren state with her wonderful current state of motherhood, she poetically refers to having seven children. The number seven in Scriptures is always used poetically to describe fullness and completion. She had in her prayerful mind that Samuel would have a mate and have children that would increase her number of descendants to fullness and completion. Samuel did have a wife, sons who were judges, and at least one grandson who served as a singer of praises to the Lord in David's tabernacle. Samuel's children allowed him to extend his purpose beyond his years. Are you praying for the future mates of your children that they might produce godly generations, or is your desire

focused on mates who are beautiful, successful, and wealthy by the world's standards?

Hannah's prayer focused on the protection of her son.

(By strength shall no man prevail. The adversaries of the Lord shall be broken to pieces. I Samuel 2:9-10)

Throughout his life, Samuel was pressed on all sides by the enemies of God and circumstances that could have easily brought him to defeat, but Hannah's prayer that no enemy against her son would prevail provided him with a shield of protection that rendered the opposition ineffective. Hannah's prayers did not give protection from the presence of enemies and painful circumstances, for that was not her focus. She prayed that these negative things in her son's life would not be a hindrance to Samuel's accomplishing God's purposes for his life. Do your prayers protect your children from destruction of character and purpose by the enemies and painful circumstances of their lives, or do you vainly pray for them to escape all that is unpleasant and all that makes them unhappy?

Hannah's fourfold prayer focus for her son's path, peers, partner, and protection allowed her to fulfill her covenant with God that her son would be lent to Him for as long as he lived. May God deliver us from praying for our children in such a way that they are lent to our selfish whims, or their own selfish whims, or the selfish whims of the world or the devil. For His name's sake, may our prayers for our children cause them to be lent to God!