

July 4, 2006  
Encouragement for Today

### **"Weaving a Robe of Success"**

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[http://proverbs31.gospelcom.net/speaker\\_van.htm](http://proverbs31.gospelcom.net/speaker_van.htm)

#### **Key verse:**

1 Samuel 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." (NAS)

#### **Devotion:**

The bible story of Hannah and Samuel is one of my favorites (1 Samuel 1-3). Each time I read it I learn a new lesson. Hannah's story is laced with both joy and grief. I cannot begin to imagine giving up my child for someone else to rear! Hannah promised God that if He blessed her with a baby, she would give her son to His service. God answered her prayer and she was faithful to keep her promise to Him. Hannah took her first born to Eli, an old priest who hadn't done a very good job of raising his own sons. In blind faith, she left Samuel with Eli where Samuel grew to be a judge, a priest, and a well known man of God.

I want my sons to be just like Samuel. I do not necessarily envision my boys sitting in a court room wearing black robes and pounding a gavel, bringing the court to order. I do, however, want them to make wise judgments and honor God with their lives. The church where our family worships does not have priests so it would be unusual for my sons to become priests. But I do read in the Bible that we are all priests to one another in that we are called to serve God, lead by a Christ-like example and pray for one another. Scripture even says, "Greater love has no one than this; that he lay down his life for his friends." (John 15:13 NIV) We are challenged to make sacrifices so that others may come to Christ. I want my children to experience kingdom living. Samuel was a well known man of God. I pray that the young men who have grown up in my care will have a reputation that sets them apart from others. I hope that what others see in my sons is their willingness to follow the King of the universe and not the prince of darkness. How can these hopes become realities?

As I read this story I ask myself, "How did Samuel grow to be such a strong key figure?" His mother had little influence and Eli was not a good parent. A close study of this scripture has led me to believe that the secret to having such an outstanding son is found in a pattern of truths woven together, much like the robe that Hannah made for Samuel every year.

The **'R'** that was woven into Samuel's robe was the **radiance** of a mother - Hannah's radiance. She couldn't help but exude love and joy when she saw her son at the temple steps. As Hannah placed the new robe on the shoulders of her son I am certain that Samuel looked into his mother's eyes and saw there the same unconditional love that God has for each one of us.

The **'O'** that was woven into the robe might have been the **opportunities** that this mother offered her son. Hannah could have selfishly kept him home. Instead, she allowed him to grow up in the temple, in Jerusalem, where he was exposed to culture, education, and daily worship.

The **'B'** that was woven in the robe was like a **bit**, the mouth piece of a bridle used in training horses. People are like horses in many ways but one thing is certain – they are born destined for a specific purpose. They may be racers, workers, performers, or transporters. A horse in the wild appears to be just that – wild. However, if you catch and bridle him the animal will settle down and accept the control of a rider or trainer. A horse, like a child, is meant to be bridled, not broken. Every child needs loving direction just as a horse needs a bit.

The **'E'** that was woven in the robe was **expectation**. An important part of a parent's job is to glorify God by offering spiritual, educational, and cultural opportunities as well as by giving specific, daily direction to each child. Once we have carefully guided our sons and daughters we can stand back in joyful confidence, expecting them to become young men and women of strength and character.

Parenting is the highest calling on earth. May we - like Hannah – practice personal obedience to God in order to guide our children to true success in the eyes of God.

**My prayer for today:** Father, I pray that my children's lives will be marked with wise choices, servant hearts, sacrificial attitudes, and righteous living. Help me to teach them and guide them in the paths You have planned for their lives. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

**Application Steps:**

Welcome your child with a smile every time you see him.

**Reflection Points:**

As you offer opportunities to your children, are you purposefully introducing them to God's kingdom?

As you teach and guide your child, are you a controller?

Do you know your child well enough to know his/her personality, learning styles, and passions?

Remember that the investments you make in your young child's life will determine the teenager and young adult he or she will become. Write down several life verses to pray for each child.

**Power verses:**

Proverbs 15:30, "A cheerful look brings joy to the heart; good news makes for good health." (NLT)

Proverbs 19:16, "Discipline your son while there is hope." (NASB)

Proverbs 6:20-22, "My child, observe the commandment of your father, and do not forsake the teaching of your mother; bind them continually on your heart; tie them around your neck. When you walk about they will guide you..." (NASB)

Proverbs 19:20, "Listen to counsel and accept discipline, that you may be wise the rest of your days." (NASB)

1 Corinthians 2:9, "Things which the eye has not seen and ear has not heard, and which have not entered the heart of man, all that, God has prepared for those who love Him." (NASB)

**Additional resources:**

Being a Great Mom – Raising Great Kids by Sharon Jaynes.

[http://proverbs31.gospelcom.net/newresources\\_greatMom.htm](http://proverbs31.gospelcom.net/newresources_greatMom.htm)

The Five Love Languages of Children by Gary Chapman

[http://proverbs31.gospelcom.net/newresources\\_fiveLoveLangChild.htm](http://proverbs31.gospelcom.net/newresources_fiveLoveLangChild.htm)

*Be Your Child's Greatest Cheerleader*, ETC Corner August 2004

<http://proverbs31.gospelcom.net/etcAug04.htm>

