

Message 1

A Godly Family for the Church Life

Scripture Reading: 1 Tim. 3:15-16; Gen. 5:22, 25-29; 6:8, 11-14; 7:1;

Matt. 16:18; Rom. 16:3-5; Philem. 1-2

- 1 Tim 3:15 But if I delay, I write that you may know how one ought to conduct himself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and base of the truth.
- 1 Tim 3:16 And confessedly, great is the mystery of godliness: He who was manifested in the flesh, / Justified in the Spirit, / Seen by angels, / Preached among the nations, / Believed on in the world, / Taken up in glory.
- Gen 5:22 And Enoch walked with God after he had begotten Methuselah three hundred years, and he begot more sons and daughters.
- Gen 5:25 And Methuselah lived one hundred eighty-seven years and begot Lamech.
- Gen 5:26 And Methuselah lived after he had begotten Lamech seven hundred eighty-two years, and he begot more sons and daughters.
- Gen 5:27 And all the days of Methuselah were nine hundred sixty-nine years, and he died.
- Gen 5:28 And Lamech lived a hundred eighty-two years and begot a son.
- Gen 5:29 And he called his name Noah, saying, This one will give us rest from our work and from the toil of our hands, which come because of the ground which Jehovah has cursed.
- Gen 6:8 But Noah found favor in the sight of Jehovah.
- Gen 6:11 And the earth was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence.
- Gen 6:12 And God looked on the earth, and behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted its way upon the earth.
- Gen 6:13 And God said to Noah, The end of all flesh has come before Me, for the earth is filled with violence because of them; and now I am about to destroy them with the earth.
- Gen 6:14 Make yourself an ark of gopher wood; you shall make rooms in the ark and shall cover it within and without with pitch.
- Gen 7:1 Then Jehovah said to Noah, Come into the ark, you and all your household, for you alone I have seen to be righteous before Me in this generation.
- Matt 16:18 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.
- Rom 16:3 Greet Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus,
- Rom 16:4 Who risked their own necks for my life, to whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles;
- Rom 16:5 And greet the church, which is in their house. Greet Epaenetus, my beloved, who is the firstfruits of Asia unto Christ.
- Philem 1 Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy the brother, to Philemon our beloved and fellow worker
- Philem 2 And to Apphia the sister and to Archippus our fellow soldier and to the church, which is in your house:

I. Godliness is a living that expresses the divine reality, an expression of God in all His riches—1 Tim. 2:2; 3:16; 4:7-8; 6:3, 6, 11; Titus 1:1; 2:12; 2 Pet. 1:3, 6-7; 3:11:

- 1 Tim 2:2 On behalf of kings and all who are in high position, that we may lead a quiet and tranquil life in all godliness and gravity.
- 1 Tim 3:16 And confessedly, great is the mystery of godliness: He who was manifested in the flesh, / Justified in the Spirit, / Seen by angels, / Preached among the nations, / Believed on in the world, / Taken up in glory.
- 1 Tim 4:7 But the profane and old-womanish myths refuse, and exercise yourself unto godliness.
- 1 Tim 4:8 For bodily exercise is profitable for a little, but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the present life and of that which is to come.
- 1 Tim 6:3 If anyone teaches different things and does not consent to healthy words, those of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the teaching which is according to godliness,
- 1 Tim 6:6 But godliness with contentment is great gain;
- 1 Tim 6:11 But you, O man of God, flee these things, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance, meekness.

- Titus 1:1 Paul, a slave of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ according to the faith of God's chosen ones and the full knowledge of the truth, which is according to godliness,
 Titus 2:12 Training us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly and righteously and godly in the present age,
 2 Pet 1:3 Seeing that His divine power has granted to us all things which relate to life and godliness, through the full knowledge of Him who has called us by His own glory and virtue,
 2 Pet 1:6 And in knowledge, self-control; and in self-control, endurance; and in endurance, godliness;
 2 Pet 1:7 And in godliness, brotherly love; and in brotherly love, love.
 2 Pet 3:11 Since all these things are to be thus dissolved, what kind of persons ought you to be in holy manner of life and godliness,

A. Godliness refers not only to piety but also to the living of God in the church, that is, to God as life lived out in the church—1 Tim. 3:15-16.

- 1 Tim 3:15 But if I delay, I write that you may know how one ought to conduct himself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and base of the truth.
 1 Tim 3:16 And confessedly, great is the mystery of godliness: He who was manifested in the flesh, / Justified in the Spirit, / Seen by angels, / Preached among the nations, / Believed on in the world, / Taken up in glory.

B. The living of the church as the new man should be exactly the same as the living of Jesus; it should be a life according to the reality that is in Jesus—Eph. 4:17-24:

- Eph 4:17 This therefore I say and testify in the Lord, that you no longer walk as the Gentiles also walk in the vanity of their mind,
 Eph 4:18 Being darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance which is in them, because of the hardness of their heart;
 Eph 4:19 Who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lasciviousness to work all uncleanness in greediness.
 Eph 4:20 But you did not so learn Christ,
 Eph 4:21 If indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him as the reality is in Jesus,
 Eph 4:22 That you put off, as regards your former manner of life, the old man, which is being corrupted according to the lusts of the deceit,
 Eph 4:23 And that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind
 Eph 4:24 And put on the new man, which was created according to God in righteousness and holiness of the reality.

1. The *reality is in Jesus* refers to the actual condition of the life of Jesus as recorded in the four Gospels; in the godly life of Jesus there is truth, reality—v. 21, and note 1.

- Eph 4:21 If indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him as the ¹reality is in Jesus,

Note 1 The reality is in Jesus refers to the actual condition of the life of Jesus as recorded in the four Gospels. In the godless walk of the nations, the fallen people, there is vanity. But in the godly life of Jesus there is truth, reality. Jesus lived a life in which He did everything in God, with God, and for God. God was in His living, and He was one with God. This is what is meant by the reality is in Jesus. We, the believers, who are regenerated with Christ as our life and are taught in Him, learn from Him as the reality is in Jesus.

2. Jesus lived a life in which He did everything in God, with God, and for God; God was in His living, and He was one with God—John 14:9-10; 16:32b; 5:30; 6:57; 10:30.

- John 14:9 Jesus said to him, Have I been so long a time with you, and you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how is it that you say, Show us the Father?
 John 14:10 Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me? The words that I say to you I do not speak from Myself, but the Father who abides in Me does His works.
 John 16:32b ... yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me.
 John 5:30 I can do nothing from Myself; as I hear, I judge, and My judgment is just, because I do not seek My own will but the will of Him who sent Me.
 John 6:57 As the living Father has sent Me and I live because of the Father, so he who eats Me, he also shall live because of Me.
 John 10:30 I and the Father are one.

3. We, the believers, who are regenerated with Christ as our life and are taught in Him, learn from Him as the reality is in Jesus—3:3, 5-6; Col. 3:4; Eph. 4:20-21.
 - John 3:3 Jesus answered and said to him, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God.
 - John 3:5 Jesus answered, Truly, truly, I say to you, Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.
 - John 3:6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.
 - Col 3:4 When Christ our life is manifested, then you also will be manifested with Him in glory.
 - Eph 4:20 But you did not so learn Christ,
 - Eph 4:21 If indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him as the reality is in Jesus,

II. Noah's life and work was one that changed the age; Noah came from a godly family and learned from his forefathers all the godly things—Gen. 5:22, 25-29; 6:8:

- Gen 5:22 And Enoch walked with God after he had begotten Methuselah three hundred years, and he begot more sons and daughters.
 - Gen 5:25 And Methuselah lived one hundred eighty-seven years and begot Lamech.
 - Gen 5:26 And Methuselah lived after he had begotten Lamech seven hundred eighty-two years, and he begot more sons and daughters.
 - Gen 5:27 And all the days of Methuselah were nine hundred sixty-nine years, and he died.
 - Gen 5:28 And Lamech lived a hundred eighty-two years and begot a son.
 - Gen 5:29 And he called his name Noah, saying, This one will give us rest from our work and from the toil of our hands, which come because of the ground which Jehovah has cursed.
 - Gen 6:8 But Noah found favor in the sight of Jehovah.
- A. Noah inherited the spiritual blessings from his forefathers to maintain and extend God's way of redemption and life:
1. Noah found grace in the eyes of God (v. 8); born into a godly family (cf. Gen. 5:4-29), he inherited the spiritual blessings from his forefathers and took God's way of redemption and life, including Adam's way of salvation (3:20-21), Abel's way of offering (4:4), Enosh's way of calling (v. 26), all the fathers' way of living and begetting (5:3-28), Enoch's way of walking with God (vv. 22, 24); moreover, by faith he became a righteous man in God's eyes and a perfect man who walked with God in that generation (Heb. 11:7; Gen. 6:9).
 - Gen 6:8 But Noah found favor in the sight of Jehovah.
 - Gen 5:3 And Adam lived one hundred thirty years and begot a son in his likeness according to his image, and he called his name Seth.
 - Gen 5:4 And the days of Adam after he had begotten Seth were eight hundred years, and he begot more sons and daughters.
 - Gen 5:5 And all the days that Adam lived were nine hundred thirty years, and he died.
 - Gen 5:6 And Seth lived one hundred five years and begot Enosh.
 - Gen 5:7 And Seth lived after he had begotten Enosh eight hundred seven years, and he begot more sons and daughters.
 - Gen 5:8 And all the days of Seth were nine hundred twelve years, and he died.
 - Gen 5:9 And Enosh lived ninety years and begot Kenan.
 - Gen 5:10 And Enosh lived after he had begotten Kenan eight hundred fifteen years, and he begot more sons and daughters.
 - Gen 5:11 And all the days of Enosh were nine hundred five years, and he died.
 - Gen 5:12 And Kenan lived seventy years and begot Mahalalel.
 - Gen 5:13 And Kenan lived after he had begotten Mahalalel eight hundred forty years, and he begot more sons and daughters.
 - Gen 5:14 And all the days of Kenan were nine hundred ten years, and he died.
 - Gen 5:15 And Mahalalel lived sixty-five years and begot Jared.
 - Gen 5:16 And Mahalalel lived after he had begotten Jared eight hundred thirty years, and he begot more sons and daughters.

Gen 5:17 And all the days of Mahalalel were eight hundred ninety-five years, and he died.

Gen 5:18 And Jared lived a hundred sixty-two years and begot Enoch.

Gen 5:19 And Jared lived after he had begotten Enoch eight hundred years, and he begot more sons and daughters.

Gen 5:20 And all the days of Jared were nine hundred sixty-two years, and he died.

Gen 5:21 And Enoch lived sixty-five years and begot Methuselah.

Gen 5:22 And Enoch walked with God after he had begotten Methuselah three hundred years, and he begot more sons and daughters.

Gen 5:23 And all the days of Enoch were three hundred sixty-five years.

Gen 5:24 And Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him.

Gen 5:25 And Methuselah lived one hundred eighty-seven years and begot Lamech.

Gen 5:26 And Methuselah lived after he had begotten Lamech seven hundred eighty-two years, and he begot more sons and daughters.

Gen 5:27 And all the days of Methuselah were nine hundred sixty-nine years, and he died.

Gen 5:28 And Lamech lived a hundred eighty-two years and begot a son.

Gen 5:29 And he called his name Noah, saying, This one will give us rest from our work and from the toil of our hands, which come because of the ground which Jehovah has cursed.

Gen 3:20 And the man called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living.

Gen 3:21 And Jehovah God made coats of skins for Adam and for his wife and clothed them.

Gen 4:4 And Abel also brought an offering, from the firstlings of his flock, that is, from their fat portions. And Jehovah had regard for Abel and for his offering.

Gen 4:26 And to Seth also a son was born, and he called his name Enosh. At that time men began to call upon the name of Jehovah.

Heb 11:7 By faith Noah, having been divinely instructed concerning things not yet seen and being moved by pious fear, prepared an ark for the salvation of his house, through which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.

Gen 6:9 These are the generations of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his generations; and Noah walked with God.

2. Therefore, he maintained and extended God's way of life so that God could carry out His plan on the corrupted earth according to His desire.

B. The ark built by Noah eventually not only saved him from God's judgment but also saved his family from that evil generation—vv. 11-14; 7:1; Matt. 24:37-39:

Gen 6:11 And the earth was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence.

Gen 6:12 And God looked on the earth, and behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted its way upon the earth.

Gen 6:13 And God said to Noah, The end of all flesh has come before Me, for the earth is filled with violence because of them; and now I am about to destroy them with the earth.

Gen 6:14 Make yourself an ark of gopher wood; you shall make rooms in the ark and shall cover it within and without with pitch.

Gen 7:1 Then Jehovah said to Noah, Come into the ark, you and all your household, for you alone I have seen to be righteous before Me in this generation.

Matt 24:37 For just as the days of Noah were, so will the coming of the Son of Man be.

Matt 24:38 For as they were in those days before the flood, eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day in which Noah entered into the ark,

Matt 24:39 And they did not know that judgment was coming until the flood came and took all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.

1. This is a type of Christ's salvation that not only delivers us out of eternal perdition but also saves us from the corrupted generation—Acts 2:40; cf. Gal. 1:4.

Acts 2:40 And with many other words he solemnly testified and exhorted them, saying, Be saved from this crooked generation.

Gal 1:4 Who gave Himself for our sins that He might rescue us out of the present evil age according to the will of our God and Father,

2. Whoever is saved will by no means perish; however, we need the further and higher salvation that saves us from the corrupted generation; this salvation is the corporate Christ whom we are building—Gen. 6:11-14; 7:1; Acts 2:40-42; 1 Cor. 12:12; Eph. 4:16.

Gen 6:11 And the earth was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence.
Gen 6:12 And God looked on the earth, and behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted its way upon the earth.
Gen 6:13 And God said to Noah, The end of all flesh has come before Me, for the earth is filled with violence because of them; and now I am about to destroy them with the earth.
Gen 6:14 Make yourself an ark of gopher wood; you shall make rooms in the ark and shall cover it within and without with pitch.
Gen 7:1 Then Jehovah said to Noah, Come into the ark, you and all your household, for you alone I have seen to be righteous before Me in this generation.
Acts 2:40 And with many other words he solemnly testified and exhorted them, saying, Be saved from this crooked generation.
Acts 2:41 Those then who received his word were baptized, and there were added on that day about three thousand souls.
Acts 2:42 And they continued steadfastly in the teaching and the fellowship of the apostles, in the breaking of bread and the prayers.
1 Cor 12:12 For even as the body is one and has many members, yet all the members of the body, being many, are one body, so also is the Christ.
Eph 4:16 Out from whom all the Body, being joined together and being knit together through every joint of the rich supply and through the operation in the measure of each one part, causes the growth of the Body unto the building up of itself in love.

III. Among us in the Lord's recovery the most important unit is the church; after the church, the most important unit is the family—1 Tim. 3:15-16; Titus 1:5-9; 2:3-5:

1 Tim 3:15 But if I delay, I write that you may know how one ought to conduct himself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and base of the truth.
1 Tim 3:16 And confessedly, great is the mystery of godliness: He who was manifested in the flesh, / Justified in the Spirit, / Seen by angels, / Preached among the nations, / Believed on in the world, / Taken up in glory.
Titus 1:5 For this cause I left you in Crete, that you might set in order the things which I have begun that remain and appoint elders in every city, as I directed you:
Titus 1:6 If anyone is unreprouvable, the husband of one wife, having believing children, not accused of dissoluteness or unruly.
Titus 1:7 For the overseer must be unreprouvable as a steward of God, not self-willed, not quick tempered, not an excessive drinker, not a striker, not greedy for base gain;
Titus 1:8 But hospitable, a lover of good, of a sober mind, righteous, holy, self-controlled;
Titus 1:9 Holding to the faithful word, which is according to the teaching of the apostles, that he may be able both to exhort by the healthy teaching and to convict those who oppose.
Titus 2:3 Older women likewise to be in demeanor as befits those who engage in sacred things, not slanderers, nor enslaved by much wine, teachers of what is good,
Titus 2:4 That they may train the young women to love their husbands, to love their children,
Titus 2:5 To be of a sober mind, pure, workers at home, good, subject to their own husbands, that the word of God would not be blasphemed.

- A. Next to the church, the family is the most important unit in society; without a proper family life, there would be no way to have a healthy society or country; a nation is constituted of families as the basic factors.
- B. We fully realize that without a proper family life it is difficult to have an orderly church life; we also realize that without a proper church life it is difficult to have a normal and proper family life; we are here for the church and also for the family.

IV. Apart from the book of Proverbs, the Old Testament does not seem to give us

much teaching concerning parenting, but there are some good examples—Exo. 12:3-7; Deut. 6:7-9, 20-21; 11:18-21; Psa. 78:5-7; Joel 1:3:

- Exo 12:3 Speak to all the assembly of Israel, saying, On the tenth of this month each man shall take a lamb according to his fathers' house, a lamb for a household.
- Exo 12:4 And if the household is too small for a lamb, then he and his neighbor next to his house shall take one according to the number of the persons in the houses; according to each man's eating you shall make your count for the lamb.
- Exo 12:5 Your lamb shall be without blemish, a year-old male; you may take it from the sheep or from the goats.
- Exo 12:6 And you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of this month; then the whole congregation of the assembly of Israel shall kill it at twilight.
- Exo 12:7 And they shall take some of the blood and put it on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses in which they eat it.
- Deut 6:7 And you shall repeat them to your children, and speak about them when you sit in your house and when you journey on the way, and when you lie down and when you rise up;
- Deut 6:8 And you shall bind them on your hand as a sign, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes;
- Deut 6:9 And you shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.
- Deut 6:20 When your son asks you in the future, saying, What is the significance of the testimonies and the statutes and the ordinances that Jehovah our God commanded you?
- Deut 6:21 Then you will say to your son, We were Pharaoh's slaves in Egypt, and Jehovah brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand.
- Deut 11:18 Therefore you shall lay these words of mine on your heart and on your soul; and you shall bind them on your hand as a sign, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes;
- Deut 11:19 And you shall teach them to your children, speaking about them when you sit in your house and when you journey on the way, and when you lie down and when you rise up;
- Deut 11:20 And you shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates;
- Deut 11:21 That your days may be multiplied, as well as the days of your children, upon the land which Jehovah swore to your fathers to give them, as long as the days of heaven are above the earth.
- Psa 78:5 Indeed He has established a testimony in Jacob / And appointed a law in Israel, / Which He commanded our fathers / That they should make them known to their children;
- Psa 78:6 That the generation to come, / The children to be born, may know them, / Who should arise and relate them to their children;
- Psa 78:7 That they might set their hope in God, / And not forget the deeds of God, / But observe His commandments;
- Joel 1:3 Tell your children about it, / And let your children tell their children, / And let their children tell the next generation.

A. Adam and Eve were saved, and they passed on the word of salvation to the following generation; we also must share these things with our own children, telling them the sad story of man's fall and proclaiming to them the good news of God's salvation—Gen. 3:21; 4:4.

Gen 3:21 And Jehovah God made coats of skins for Adam and for his wife and clothed them.

Gen 4:4 And Abel also brought an offering, from the firstlings of his flock, that is, from their fat portions. And Jehovah had regard for Abel and for his offering.

B. "By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice"; since Abel had such faith, exercised this faith, and offered a sacrifice to God in accordance with this faith, he must have heard the preaching of the glad tidings from his parents—Heb. 11:4.

Heb 11:4 By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained the testimony that he was righteous, God testifying to his gifts; and through faith, though he has died, he still speaks.

C. In the preparation of Moses, God prepared godly parents who infused him with godly thoughts after his birth; through the infusing of his parents, Moses had the godly thought and concept that he needed to rescue the children of Israel—Exo. 2:7-9; Heb. 11:24-25.

Exo 2:7 Then his sister said to Pharaoh's daughter, Shall I go and call a nurse from the Hebrew women for you that she may nurse the child for you?

Exo 2:8 And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, Go. And the girl went and called the child's mother.

- Exo 2:9 And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, Take this child away and nurse him for me, and I will give you your wages. So the woman took the child and nursed him.
- Heb 11:24 By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter,
- Heb 11:25 Choosing rather to be ill-treated with the people of God than to have the temporary enjoyment of sin,

D. With the exception of Joshua and Caleb, those who were qualified and ready to take possession of the good land were younger ones, the second generation—Num. 14:29-31, 38; Deut. 1:35-36:

- Num 14:29 Your corpses shall fall in this wilderness, and none of you who were numbered, according to the number you counted from twenty years old and upward, who have murmured against Me,
- Num 14:30 Shall come into the land, in which I swore to settle you, except Caleb the son of Jephunneh and Joshua the son of Nun.
- Num 14:31 But your little ones, whom you said would become plunder, I will bring in, and they will know the land which you have rejected.
- Num 14:38 Only Joshua the son of Nun and Caleb the son of Jephunneh remained alive out of those men who went to spy out the land.
- Deut 1:35 Not one of these men, this evil generation, shall by any means see the good land which I have sworn to give to your fathers,
- Deut 1:36 Except Caleb the son of Jephunneh; he shall see it. And to him I will give the land on which he has trodden, and to his children, because he has fully followed Jehovah.

1. The second generation did not pass through as much as the first generation did, but they received the benefit of what the first generation experienced—11:2-7; Josh. 1:1-3.

- Deut 11:2 And realize today that I am speaking not with your sons, who do not know and who have not seen the discipline of Jehovah your God, His greatness, His mighty hand and His outstretched arm;
- Deut 11:3 And His signs and works, which He did in the midst of Egypt against Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, and against all his land;
- Deut 11:4 And what He did to Egypt's forces, to their horses and to their chariots, when He caused the water of the Red Sea to flow over them while they were pursuing you; and Jehovah made them perish to this day;
- Deut 11:5 And what He did for you in the wilderness until you came to this place;
- Deut 11:6 And what He did to Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, the son of Reuben, when the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up and their households and their tents and all their substance that went with them, from the midst of all Israel.
- Deut 11:7 But it is your eyes that have seen all the great work of Jehovah which He did.
- Josh 1:1 After the death of Moses the servant of Jehovah, Jehovah spoke to Joshua the son of Nun, Moses' attendant, saying,
- Josh 1:2 Moses My servant is dead; now then arise, and cross over this Jordan, you and all this people, into the land which I am giving to them, to the children of Israel.
- Josh 1:3 Every place on which the sole of your foot treads I have given to you, as I promised Moses.

2. The principle is the same with us in the Lord's recovery today; what the older ones have experienced is being passed on to the younger ones and will be very effective in building them up and preparing them to fight with God and for God—2 Tim. 2:2.

- 2 Tim 2:2 And the things which you have heard from me through many witnesses, these commit to faithful men, who will be competent to teach others also.

V. The New Testament gives examples of households, which clearly show us that the unit of God's salvation and service is the household:

A. In the New Testament we see many sweet households, such as the household of Caesar (Phil. 4:22), the household of Cornelius (Acts 10:22-24), the household of Lydia (16:13-15), the household of the jailer (vv. 29-34), and the household of Crispus (18:8).

- Phil 4:22 All the saints greet you, and especially those of Caesar's household.

- Acts 10:22 And they said, Cornelius, a centurion, a righteous man and one who fears God and is well attested to by the whole nation of the Jews, was divinely instructed by a holy angel to send for you to come to his house and hear words from you.
- Acts 10:23 So he called them in and lodged them. And on the next day he rose up and went away with them; and some of the brothers from Joppa accompanied him.
- Acts 10:24 And on the next day they entered into Caesarea. And Cornelius was awaiting them, having called together his relatives and intimate friends.
- Acts 16:13 And on the Sabbath day we went outside the gate by the river, where we supposed there would be a place of prayer; and we sat down and spoke to the women who had come together.
- Acts 16:14 And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple-dyed goods from the city of Thyatira who worshipped God, was listening, whose heart the Lord opened to give heed to the things being spoken by Paul.
- Acts 16:15 And when she was baptized, as well as her household, she entreated us, saying, If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house and abide. And she constrained us.
- Acts 16:29 And the jailer asked for lights and rushed in; and trembling, he fell down before Paul and Silas.
- Acts 16:30 And leading them outside, he said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?
- Acts 16:31 And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus, and you shall be saved, you and your household.
- Acts 16:32 And they spoke the word of God to him together with all those in his house.
- Acts 16:33 And he took them with him in that very hour of the night and washed their wounds. And he was baptized immediately, he and all his household.
- Acts 16:34 And he brought them up into his house and set a table before them; and he exulted because he had believed in God with all his household.
- Acts 18:8 And Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed in the Lord with his whole household; and many of the Corinthians, when they heard, believed and were baptized.
- B. In addition, there were houses in which the meetings were held, such as Aquila and Prisca's house (Rom. 16:3-5; 1 Cor. 16:19) and the house of Philemon (Philem. 1-2).
- Rom 16:3 Greet Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus,
- Rom 16:4 Who risked their own necks for my life, to whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles;
- Rom 16:5 And greet the church, which is in their house. Greet Epaenetus, my beloved, who is the firstfruits of Asia unto Christ.
- 1 Cor 16:19 The churches of Asia greet you. Aquila and Prisca greet you much in the Lord, with the church, which is in their house.
- Philem 1 Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy the brother, to Philemon our beloved and fellow worker
- Philem 2 And to Apphia the sister and to Archippus our fellow soldier and to the church, which is in your house:

VI. From the beginning of the Lord's recovery in China, Brother Nee pointed out that the church needs to be built up with the household as a unit:

- A. "I would like to say emphatically that the family life of our next generation has much to do with the church life of our next generation...The church life of the next generation will be strong only if you take care of this matter well. If our next generation has terrible families, the church will suffer many drawbacks...In the coming days may God bestow His grace to the church so that many young families will be raised up in which both the husband and the wife serve the Lord and walk in His way together in one accord. How beautiful such a picture will be!"—*The Collected Works of Watchman Nee*, vol. 49, p. 497.
- B. "A good church life is maintained through good families. The husbands have to be good and the wives also have to be good. Then the church life will be free of problems"—p. 518.

VII. The church life is the purpose of the Christian life, and it is a great reality in

**the universe; hence, our family life should be brought into the church life—
Matt. 16:16-19; Philem. 1-2:**

Matt 16:16 And Simon Peter answered and said, You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.
Matt 16:17 And Jesus answered and said to him, Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in the heavens.
Matt 16:18 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.
Matt 16:19 I will give to you the keys of the kingdom of the heavens, and whatever you bind on the earth shall have been bound in the heavens, and whatever you loose on the earth shall have been loosed in the heavens.
Philem 1 Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, and Timothy the brother, to Philemon our beloved and fellow worker
Philem 2 And to Apphia the sister and to Archippus our fellow soldier and to the church, which is in your house:

A. We need to realize that in the sight of God, nothing compares with the church; thus, apart from the church life, our family life is vanity; only when our family life is brought into the church life will it be reality—Matt. 13:45-46; Acts 20:28; Eccl. 1:2:

Matt 13:45 Again, the kingdom of the heavens is like a merchant seeking fine pearls;
Matt 13:46 And finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.
Acts 20:28 Take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among whom the Holy Spirit has placed you as overseers to shepherd the church of God, which He obtained through His own blood.
Eccl 1:2 Vanity of vanities, says the Preacher; / Vanity of vanities; all is vanity.

B. While we need to bear the responsibility of taking care of our family, we need to see that the church is a treasure in God's heart—1 Tim. 3:2, 4, 12; Titus 2:4-5; Matt. 13:45-46.

1 Tim 3:2 The overseer then must be without reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, of a sober mind, orderly, hospitable, apt to teach;
1 Tim 3:4 One who manages well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity
1 Tim 3:12 Deacons must be husbands of one wife, managing their children and their own houses well.
Titus 2:4 That they may train the young women to love their husbands, to love their children,
Titus 2:5 To be of a sober mind, pure, workers at home, good, subject to their own husbands, that the word of God would not be blasphemed.
Matt 13:45 Again, the kingdom of the heavens is like a merchant seeking fine pearls;
Matt 13:46 And finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.

Excerpts from the Ministry:

**THE GREAT MYSTERY OF GODLINESS—
GOD MANIFESTED IN THE FLESH**

According to the context [in 1 Timothy 3], godliness here [1 Timothy 3:16a: “And confessedly, great is the mystery of godliness”] refers not only to piety but also to the living of God in the church, i.e., to God as life lived out in the church. This is the great mystery confessed universally by believers in Christ. (*Holy Bible Recovery Version*, 1 Tim. 3:16, footnote 2)

According to unconfirmed historical accounts, these six lines of poetry [in 1 Timothy 3:16] made up a song that the saints in the early church loved to sing. *He* refers to Christ, who was God manifested in the flesh as the mystery of godliness. The transition from *the mystery of godliness* to *He* implies that Christ as the manifestation of God in the flesh is the mystery of godliness (Col. 1:27; Gal. 2:20). This mystery of godliness is the living of a proper church, and such a living also is the manifestation of God in the flesh. (*Holy Bible Recovery Version*, 1 Tim. 3:16, footnote 3)

[“Taken up in glory” in 1 Timothy 3:16] refers to Christ's ascension into glory (Mark 16:19; Acts 1:9-11; 2:33; Phil. 2:9). According to the sequence of historical events, Christ's ascension preceded His being preached among the nations. However, it is listed here as the last step in Christ's being the

manifestation of God in the flesh. This must indicate that the church too is taken up in glory. Hence, it implies that not only Christ Himself as the Head but also the church as the Body are the manifestation of God in the flesh. When a church is well taken care of according to the instructions given in the first two chapters [of 1 Timothy]...the church will function as the house and household of the living God for His move on the earth, and as the supporting pillar and holding base of the truth, bearing the divine reality of Christ and His Body as a testimony to the world. Then the church becomes the continuation of Christ as the manifestation of God in the flesh. This is the great mystery of godliness—Christ lived out of the church as the manifestation of God in the flesh! (*Holy Bible Recovery Version*, 1 Tim. 3:16, footnote 9)

NOAH

Genesis 6:9 tells us that Noah walked with God. Undoubtedly, Noah inherited all the spiritual blessings from his forefathers, such as Adam, Abel, Enosh, Enoch, etc. and he followed his great grandfather, Enoch, to walk with God in a crooked, perverse, and adulterous generation. I do believe that he was much influenced by hearing of his great grandfather Enoch's godly walk. Noah stood for a strong continuation of the line of life and, with much development, he carried it on further...

Genesis 6:8 says, "But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord." Finding grace in the eyes of the Lord is not a small thing. What does "finding grace" mean? Notice that this verse does not say that God was gracious to Noah, or that the Lord granted grace to Noah. No, it says that Noah found grace. Remember that Genesis is a book filled with spiritual seeds. Here, in 6:8, we have the first mention of grace in the Bible. Noah was able to be what he was because he found grace in the eyes of the Lord.

Hebrews 4:16 tells us to come boldly to the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy and find grace in time of need. When I was young, nearly every day in my prayers I would say, "Lord, I am coming to the throne of grace. At Your throne of grace I find grace for my timely need. Lord, I need Your grace every minute. I not only need Your grace every year, every week, every day, and every hour, but every minute. Without Your grace, I simply cannot bear anything." Today I still need the Lord's grace every minute. Perhaps in a few minutes my folks will give me a difficult time, or else one of the brothers will come to bother me. Perhaps I will receive a phone call from a sister. So, I keep on telling the Lord, "Lord, I need Your grace every minute. I know that You are gracious and that You have grace ready for me. Lord, since grace needs my cooperation, I kneel before the throne of grace to find grace to meet my need." Many times we simply cannot stand our situation and we cannot face what is happening to us. However, there is a place called the throne of grace. Come boldly to the throne of grace that you may find mercy and grace for your time of need.

Do you believe that, by himself, Noah was able to find grace in the eyes of the Lord? I do not believe that he did this by himself. The flood came 1,656 years after Adam was made. Adam lived for nine hundred thirty years. This leaves seven hundred twenty-six years from the year Adam died to the year the deluge came. When Adam was six hundred twenty-two years of age, Enoch was born and he lived as a contemporary of Adam for three hundred and eight years. After Adam died, Enoch still lived another fifty-seven years before he was taken by God. Sixty-nine years later Noah was born. So, Noah was born only one hundred twenty-six years after Adam's death. When Enoch was sixty-five, he begat Methuselah and then lived for another three hundred years before he was taken away. Methuselah lived for nine hundred sixty-nine years, dying in Noah's six hundredth year, the year the deluge came. Undoubtedly, Enoch learned the things of God from his forefathers, perhaps even learning directly from Adam. The fact that Enoch named his son "Methuselah," which means "when he is dead, it shall be sent," proves that he taught his son concerning God. Methuselah must have taught his son, Lamech, and Lamech his son, Noah. Noah came from a godly family and learned from his forefathers all the godly things. Thus, he came to realize his need for grace. His generation was corrupt and filled with violence. The human race had become flesh. Noah lived in a crooked, perverse, and evil generation. Nevertheless, his parents and grandparents taught him the things of God, and he realized that he

needed God's grace. (*Life-Study of Genesis*, msg. 28, pp. 374-376)

Noah was born into the human race that was corrupt to the uttermost, and he lived among that race. At that time, men abused their fallen bodies and became flesh. They were full of lusts (Gen. 6:3a, 5). As a result, the fallen angels joined themselves to man through illegal marriage, so that the human race was no longer pure but became a mixture of the human nature with fallen spirits (Gen. 6:2, 4). That was the most evil thing in the eyes of God, and He could not tolerate it.

But Noah found grace in the eyes of God (Gen. 6:8). Born into a godly family (cf. Gen. 5:4-29), he inherited the spiritual blessings from his forefathers and took God's way of redemption and life, including Adam's way of salvation, Abel's way of offering, Enosh's way of calling, and Enoch's way of walking with God. Moreover, by faith he became a righteous man in God's eyes and a perfect man who walked with God in that generation (Heb. 11:7; Gen. 6:9). Therefore, he maintained and extended God's way of life so that God could carry out His plan on the corrupted earth according to His desire. (*Truth Lessons*, Level Two, vol. 2, ch. 17, p. 44)

The ark saved the whole family of Noah from the pounding and drowning of the flood. This is a type of the salvation of Christ that saves God's elect from God's punishment. In the days of Noah, people were befuddled by eating, drinking, marrying, and giving in marriage; they did not know that judgment was coming, until the flood came and destroyed them all (Luke 17:26-27). Likewise, people today are befuddled by the necessities of this life and do not know that God's judgment will come upon them by the Lord's appearing. Just as Noah was saved by the ark that was built by his work, so we must also work out our own salvation (Phil. 2:12) that at the Lord's coming we may be saved from God's punishment and not suffer the plagues that the world will suffer.

The ark built by Noah eventually not only saved him from God's judgment but also saved his family of eight from that evil generation. This is a type of Christ's salvation that not only delivers us out of eternal perdition but also saves us from the corrupted generation. Whoever is saved will by no means perish. However, we need the further and higher salvation that saves us from the corrupted generation. This salvation is the corporate Christ whom we are building. We need not only to preach the individual Christ but also to build the corporate Christ, the church. This Christ may be considered today's ark. Through this Christ as salvation thousands of people have been saved not only from God's judgment but also from the crooked and perverted generation...

The ark saved Noah and his whole family from the evil generation and ushered them into a new age that they might live an altogether new life for God and before God. In like manner, Christ's salvation also saves God's chosen people from the corrupted generation and ushers them into a renewed age, into the new realm of resurrection. Noah and his household passed through the flood waters by being in the ark. After the flood, the ark rested on the mountain of Ararat. Their passing through the flood was a type of baptism; the ark's resting upon the mountains was a type of Christ's resurrection; and the living of Noah's family of eight after the flood was a type of the church life. Through baptism we buried the old community and the old society, and in resurrection we have entered into another community, another society, which is the church life. (*Truth Lessons*, Level Three, vol. 1, ch. 4, pp. 42-44)

THE FOCUS OF THE CHANGE IN SYSTEM— THE HOUSEHOLD

The focus of the change in system is the household. In the New Testament we see many sweet households, such as the household of Caesar (Phil. 4:22), the household of Cornelius (Acts 10:22-24), the household of Lydia, a seller of purple-dyed goods (16:13-15), and the household of the jailer whose name is unknown (vv. 29-34). There was also the household of Stephanas (1 Cor. 1:16) and the household of Crispus (Acts 18:8). In addition, there were houses in which the meetings were held, such as Aquila and Prisca's house (Rom. 16:3-5; 1 Cor. 16:19), the house of Nymphas (Col. 4:15), and the house of Philemon (Philem. 1-2). These examples clearly show us that the unit of God's salvation and

service is the household.

Even in the Old Testament, in the two great types of salvation, the household is the unit of salvation. The first is the type of the flood, in which the eight members of the house of Noah entered into the ark and were thus saved from God's judgment on the world (Gen. 7:1; Heb. 11:7; 2 Pet. 2:5). The second is the type of the passover, in which each Israelite household took a lamb, killed it, put the blood on the doorposts and the lintel of the house, and ate the flesh of the lamb. It was not a lamb for each person but a lamb for each household as a unit (Exo. 12:3-8). In the past we have ignored these clear truths of the Bible; we were influenced by Christianity and were distracted and carried away.

From the beginning of the Lord's recovery in China, Brother Nee pointed out that the church needs to be built up with the household as a unit. I received this matter from him and brought the practice to Taiwan. In addition, I introduced the practice of the "groups." However, in 1984 when I returned to Taiwan, these two practices were almost non-existent. We were under the influence of the nations and were following their customs (2 Kings 17:33) to walk in the way of the denominations in Christianity by copying their practice of big meetings, in which one man speaks while all the rest listen. This practice brings forth the "clergy" and the "laity," which prevents the functioning of the saints. Seeing this, I want to bring out a specific way for our practice at this crucial time. (*CWWL, 1986, vol. 3, "The Furtherance of the New Way for the Lord's Recovery," ch. 1, pp. 488-489*)

BRINGING OUR FAMILY LIFE INTO THE CHURCH LIFE

The church life is the purpose of the Christian life, and it is a great reality in the universe. Hence, our family life should be brought into the church life. We should help all the members of our family to be not only saved but also brought into the church life. This is a matter of spiritual warfare.

We need to realize that in the sight of God, nothing compares with the church. Thus, apart from the church life, our family life is vanity. Only when our family life is brought into the church life will it be reality. While we need to bear the responsibility of taking care of our family, we need to see that the church is a treasure in God's heart.

In order for the saints in the church life to meet the Lord's requirements, they need to realize that in the sight of God, the genuine church life is the kingdom of God. Romans 14:17 says, "The kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit." Because the context here deals with the church life in the present age, this verse is a strong proof that, in a practical sense, the proper church life is the kingdom of God.

Although many Christians appreciate the Lord's charge in Matthew 6:33 to seek first the Father's kingdom and His righteousness, few realize that the kingdom of God in this age is the church life. This is confirmed by the Lord's word in Matthew 16:18-19, which says, "Upon this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. I will give to you the keys of the kingdom of the heavens." In these verses kingdom of the heavens is used interchangeably with church, indicating that the genuine church is the kingdom of the heavens in this age. For this reason Matthew 18:17 reveals that the believers are to obey the church. If a brother sins, we first need to deal with him in love (v. 15), then by two or three witnesses (v. 16), and finally through the church with authority. Verse 17 says, "If he refuses to hear them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to hear the church also, let him be to you just like the Gentile and the tax collector." If a believer refuses to hear the church, he will lose the fellowship of the church. The Gospel of Matthew, a book on the kingdom, reveals that the church life is the practical kingdom of God on earth in the present age. If we are sincere with the Lord about seeking first the kingdom of God, we must be in the church life. Apart from the church life we cannot be in the kingdom of God in a practical way.

Furthermore, the church meetings are crucial because the church life is practically expressed by the church meetings. Without the church meetings, the church is something ethereal; it cannot be manifested in a practical way. The church meetings constitute the practical church life. Thus, we should not come to the church meetings empty-handed. Rather, we should come with a portion of

Christ and offer it to God and share it with others by functioning in the meetings. (CWWL, 1982, vol. 1, "Miscellaneous Messages in Anaheim," ch. 7, pp. 29-30)

References and Further Reading:

1. *Life-Study of 1 Timothy*, msg. 6.
2. *Holy Bible Recovery Version*, 1 Timothy 3:16 and notes; Ephesians 4:21 and note 1.
3. *Life-Study of Titus*, msg. 5.
4. *Life-study of Genesis*, msg. 28.
5. *Truth Lessons*, Level 2, vol. 2, ch. 17.
6. *Truth Lessons*, Level 3, vol. 1, ch. 4.
7. *Raising Up the Next Generation for the Church Life*, ch. 6.
8. *The Collected Works of Watchman Nee*, vol. 49, "Messages for Building Up New Believers (2)," chs. 20, 23, 31.
9. *The Collected Works of Witness Lee*, 1986, vol. 2, "Crucial Words of Leading in the Lord's Recovery, Book 1," chs. 5, 12.
10. *The Collected Works of Witness Lee*, 1986, vol. 3, "The Furtherance of the New Way for the Lord's Recovery," ch. 1.
11. *The Collected Works of Witness Lee*, 1982, vol. 2, "Miscellaneous Messages in Anaheim," ch. 7.

Message 2
(LESSONS FOR THE SISTERS— Lesson 34)

**Patterns and Examples of Women
in the Old Testament (8)—Hannah**

Scripture Reading: 1 Sam. 1:1–2:11

- 1 Sam 1:1 Now there was a certain man from Ramathaim-zophim, from the hill country of Ephraim, and his name was Elkanah, the son of Jeroham, the son of Elihu, the son of Tohu, the son of Zuph, an Ephrathite.
- 1 Sam 1:2 And he had two wives; the name of one was Hannah, and the name of the other was Peninnah. Now Peninnah had children, but Hannah had no children.
- 1 Sam 1:3 And this man went up from his city year by year to worship and to sacrifice to Jehovah of hosts in Shiloh. And the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, priests of Jehovah, were there.
- 1 Sam 1:4 And when the day came that Elkanah sacrificed, he would give portions to Peninnah his wife and to all her sons and her daughters.
- 1 Sam 1:5 But he would give a double portion to Hannah, for it was Hannah whom he loved; but Jehovah had shut up her womb.
- 1 Sam 1:6 And her rival provoked her bitterly to irritate her, because Jehovah had shut up her womb.
- 1 Sam 1:7 And so it happened year after year; when she went up to the house of Jehovah, the other provoked her this way; and she wept and would not eat.
- 1 Sam 1:8 And Elkanah her husband said to her, Hannah, why are you weeping, and why do you not eat? And why is your heart sad? Am I not better to you than ten sons?
- 1 Sam 1:9 Then after the eating and drinking in Shiloh, Hannah rose up. Now Eli the priest was sitting on his seat at the doorpost of the temple of Jehovah.
- 1 Sam 1:10 And she was bitter in soul and prayed to Jehovah and wept much.
- 1 Sam 1:11 And she made a vow and said, O Jehovah of hosts, if You will indeed look upon the affliction of Your female servant and remember me and not forget Your female servant, but give to Your female servant a male child, then I will give him to Jehovah for all the days of his life, and no razor will come upon his head.
- 1 Sam 1:12 And while she continued praying a long time before Jehovah, Eli watched her mouth.
- 1 Sam 1:13 And Hannah was speaking in her heart; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard. So Eli thought that she was drunk.
- 1 Sam 1:14 And Eli said to her, How long will you be drunk? Put away your wine from you.
- 1 Sam 1:15 And Hannah answered and said, No, my lord. I am a woman oppressed in spirit. I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but I have been pouring out my soul before Jehovah.
- 1 Sam 1:16 Do not take your female servant for a worthless woman; for out of the greatness of my anxiety and provocation I have been speaking all this time.
- 1 Sam 1:17 Then Eli answered and said, Go in peace, and may the God of Israel grant your request that you have requested from Him.
- 1 Sam 1:18 And she said, Let your servant find favor in your sight. And the woman went her way; and she ate, and her countenance was sad no more.
- 1 Sam 1:19 And they rose up early in the morning and worshipped before Jehovah; and they returned and came to their house in Ramah. And Elkanah knew Hannah his wife, and Jehovah remembered her.
- 1 Sam 1:20 And in due time Hannah conceived and bore a son; and she called his name Samuel, For, she said, I asked for him of Jehovah.
- 1 Sam 1:21 And the man Elkanah went up with all his house to offer the yearly sacrifice to Jehovah and his vow.
- 1 Sam 1:22 But Hannah did not go up, for she said to her husband, When the child is weaned, then I will bring him up, so that he may appear before Jehovah and stay there forever.
- 1 Sam 1:23 And Elkanah her husband said to her, Do what is good in your sight; stay until you have weaned him. Only, may Jehovah establish His word. So the woman stayed and nursed her son until she weaned him.
- 1 Sam 1:24 And as soon as she weaned him, she brought him up with her, along with three bulls and one ephah of flour and a skin of wine; and she brought him to the house of Jehovah in Shiloh, although the child was young.
- 1 Sam 1:25 And they slaughtered the bull and brought the child to Eli.
- 1 Sam 1:26 And she said, Oh, my lord, as your soul lives, my lord, I am the woman who stood here by you, praying to Jehovah.
- 1 Sam 1:27 It was for this child that I prayed, and Jehovah has granted me my request that I requested from Him.
- 1 Sam 1:28 Therefore I, for my part, have lent him to Jehovah; all the days that he lives, he is lent to Jehovah.

- And he worshipped Jehovah there.
- 1 Sam 2:1 And Hannah prayed and said: / My heart exults in Jehovah; / My horn is exalted in Jehovah; / My mouth is enlarged against my enemies, / Because I rejoice in Your salvation.
- 1 Sam 2:2 There is none holy like Jehovah, / For there is none besides You; / Nor is there a rock like our God.
- 1 Sam 2:3 Talk no more so very proudly; / Do not let arrogance go forth from your mouth; / For Jehovah is a God of knowledge, / And actions are weighed by Him.
- 1 Sam 2:4 The bows of the mighty men are broken, / And those who stumbled are girded with strength.
- 1 Sam 2:5 Those who were full have hired themselves out for food, / And those who were hungry are not so any longer. / She who was barren has borne seven, / And she who had many children languishes.
- 1 Sam 2:6 Jehovah kills and makes alive; / He brings down to Sheol and brings up.
- 1 Sam 2:7 Jehovah makes poor and makes rich; / He makes low and also lifts up.
- 1 Sam 2:8 He raises the poor from the dust, / From the ash heap He lifts the needy, / That He may seat them with princes / And cause them to inherit the throne of glory. / For the pillars of the earth are Jehovah's, / And He has set the world upon them.
- 1 Sam 2:9 He will keep the feet of His faithful ones, / But the wicked will be silenced in darkness; / For not by strength shall any man prevail.
- 1 Sam 2:10 Those who strive with Jehovah will be shattered; / Against them He will thunder in heaven. / Jehovah will judge the ends of the earth; / And He will give strength to His king / And exalt the horn of His anointed.
- 1 Sam 2:11 And Elkanah went to Ramah to his house. And the child ministered to Jehovah before Eli the priest.

I. First and 2 Samuel unveil to us, from the beginning, that God's accomplishment of His economy needs man's coordination and cooperation; the first illustration is Hannah, the mother of Samuel:

- A. The birth of Samuel involved Hannah's cooperation with God; her case shows us the kind of persons God expects to have today:
1. The old priesthood had become stale and waning, and God wanted to have another beginning; for Samuel's birth, God initiated things behind the scenes.
 2. On the one hand, He shut up Hannah's womb; on the other hand, He prepared a provoker—1 Sam. 1:5-7.

1 Sam 1:5 But he would give a double portion to Hannah, for it was Hannah whom he loved; but Jehovah had shut up her womb.

1 Sam 1:6 And her rival provoked her bitterly to irritate her, because Jehovah had shut up her womb.

1 Sam 1:7 And so it happened year after year; when she went up to the house of Jehovah, the other provoked her this way; and she wept and would not eat.
 3. This forced Hannah to pray that the Lord would give her a male child; in her prayer she made a vow and said, "O Jehovah of hosts, if You will indeed look upon the affliction of Your maidservant and remember me and not forget Your maidservant, but give to Your maidservant a male child, then I will give him to Jehovah for all the days of his life, and no razor will come upon his head"—v. 11.
 4. This prayer was initiated not by Hannah but by God; God chose Hannah because she was willing to cooperate with Him; God answered her prayer and opened her womb, and Hannah conceived and bore a son—v. 20.

1 Sam 1:20 And in due time Hannah conceived and bore a son; and she called his name Samuel, For, she said, I asked for him of Jehovah.
 5. Then according to her vow, she offered her son to God, placing him in the custody of Eli.
 6. From this we see that Hannah, Samuel's mother, was one who cooperated very much with God.
- B. We need to be impressed with the fact that the fulfillment of God's economy requires our cooperation; to cooperate with God means to be bound together with God; we may use a three-legged race as an illustration.
- C. Today many continents and countries are open to the Lord's recovery; there is the need for some to make a vow like Hannah; we hope that many of the young people will make such a vow:

1. You need to say, “Lord, I am Yours. I just lend myself to You.”
2. God will take your heart and accomplish something to fulfill what you vow to Him.

II. In the midst of the chaos of the degraded Israel, Elkanah and Hannah remained in the line of life ordained by God for His eternal purpose:

- A. The line of life is a line to bring forth Christ for the enjoyment of God's people that on earth God may have His kingdom, which is the Body of Christ, the very organism of the Triune God.
- B. God's salvation is mainly for our benefit, whereas God's purpose is related to the fulfilling of God's desire:
 1. We need to ask ourselves whether we are here for our profit or for God's purpose.
 2. Today on this earth everyone is concerned for his own profit.
- C. Under God's sovereign dealing, Hannah was suppressed in her soul with a burden in her spirit to pour out before Jehovah; this was God's move; because of God's moving in her, Hannah could not have peace until she prayed for a son.
- D. God could motivate Hannah as a person who was one with Him in the line of life; as long as He can gain such a person, He has a way on earth:
 1. We hope that at least some of us will be today's Hannahs and say, “Lord, if You have anything on Your heart to accomplish for Your purpose, I am here. I am remaining in the line of life for the carrying out of Your economy.”
 2. “If you do this, I have the full assurance that you will be the ones whom God will move. He will come to you and motivate you. God needs many Hannahs, persons who can bring forth some Samuels to turn the age”—*Life-study of 1 Samuel*, p. 11.

III. The origin of Samuel was especially his God-seeking mother with her prayer (vv. 9-18); her prayer was an echo of the heart's desire of God; her prayer was a human cooperation with the divine move for the carrying out of God's eternal economy:

- 1 Sam 1:9 Then after the eating and drinking in Shiloh, Hannah rose up. Now Eli the priest was sitting on his seat at the doorpost of the temple of Jehovah.
- 1 Sam 1:10 And she was bitter in soul and prayed to Jehovah and wept much.
- 1 Sam 1:11 And she made a vow and said, O Jehovah of hosts, if You will indeed look upon the affliction of Your female servant and remember me and not forget Your female servant, but give to Your female servant a male child, then I will give him to Jehovah for all the days of his life, and no razor will come upon his head.
- 1 Sam 1:12 And while she continued praying a long time before Jehovah, Eli watched her mouth.
- 1 Sam 1:13 And Hannah was speaking in her heart; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard. So Eli thought that she was drunk.
- 1 Sam 1:14 And Eli said to her, How long will you be drunk? Put away your wine from you.
- 1 Sam 1:15 And Hannah answered and said, No, my lord. I am a woman oppressed in spirit. I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but I have been pouring out my soul before Jehovah.
- 1 Sam 1:16 Do not take your female servant for a worthless woman; for out of the greatness of my anxiety and provocation I have been speaking all this time.
- 1 Sam 1:17 Then Eli answered and said, Go in peace, and may the God of Israel grant your request that you have requested from Him.
- 1 Sam 1:18 And she said, Let your servant find favor in your sight. And the woman went her way; and she ate, and her countenance was sad no more.
- A. We should no longer pray old prayers in a formal way; instead, we need to pray something that is an echo of what is on God's heart; this means that what we say in our prayer is exactly what God wants to speak; such a prayer is the speaking out of God's heart.
 - B. Hannah's prayer was like this; God wanted a Samuel, yet He needed Hannah's cooperation to pray to Him, saying, “Lord, I need a son.”
 - C. After such a prayer as Hannah prayed, it was easy for God to do something, because man's cooperation had become a base on which He could move.

- D. God's move in response to Hannah's prayer was in keeping with the principle that God needs man's cooperation with His move in His economy; this is the principle of incarnation.
- E. God's move with His answer to Hannah's prayer was to produce a Nazarite who was absolute for the fulfilling of His desire; a Nazarite is one who is consecrated to God absolutely:
 - 1. We need to be impressed with Samuel's origin, with his source; because he came out of such a strong source, he could not be an ordinary, worldly person.
 - 2. Rather, he was the one who replaced the waning priesthood and brought forth David, who brought forth Christ.
- F. The sisters especially should aspire to be like Hannah, praying to bring forth some like Samuel, who will terminate the confused age so that Christ the King may come with His kingdom:
 - 1. In order for us to pray to meet God's need today, we need Christ as the embodiment of God and the reality of the offerings—vv. 4-5.
 - 1 Sam 1:4 And when the day came that Elkanah sacrificed, he would give portions to Peninnah his wife and to all her sons and her daughters.
 - 1 Sam 1:5 But he would give a double portion to Hannah, for it was Hannah whom he loved; but Jehovah had shut up her womb.
 - 2. We also need the fulfillment of the Tent of Meeting, which is the church as God's dwelling place; Hannah did not pray her prevailing prayer in her home—vv. 9-11.
 - 1 Sam 1:9 Then after the eating and drinking in Shiloh, Hannah rose up. Now Eli the priest was sitting on his seat at the doorpost of the temple of Jehovah.
 - 1 Sam 1:10 And she was bitter in soul and prayed to Jehovah and wept much.
 - 1 Sam 1:11 And she made a vow and said, O Jehovah of hosts, if You will indeed look upon the affliction of Your female servant and remember me and not forget Your female servant, but give to Your female servant a male child, then I will give him to Jehovah for all the days of his life, and no razor will come upon his head.
 - 3. We need God's embodiment and His full salvation in the church life; then we can pray prevailing prayers for God's goal, to bring in the kingdom.

IV. Hannah's ministry was to bring in the King:

- A. Hannah wept, fasted, prayed, and cried unto the Lord for a son who would be absolutely given to the Lord for His service—1 Sam. 1:10-11, 26-28.
 - 1 Sam 1:10 And she was bitter in soul and prayed to Jehovah and wept much.
 - 1 Sam 1:11 And she made a vow and said, O Jehovah of hosts, if You will indeed look upon the affliction of Your female servant and remember me and not forget Your female servant, but give to Your female servant a male child, then I will give him to Jehovah for all the days of his life, and no razor will come upon his head.
 - 1 Sam 1:26 And she said, Oh, my lord, as your soul lives, my lord, I am the woman who stood here by you, praying to Jehovah.
 - 1 Sam 1:27 It was for this child that I prayed, and Jehovah has granted me my request that I requested from Him.
 - 1 Sam 1:28 Therefore I, for my part, have lent him to Jehovah; all the days that he lives, he is lent to Jehovah. And he worshipped Jehovah there.
- B. This son was the one that brought in the King—1 Sam. 16:13; 1 Chron. 11:3b; cf. Matt. 1:1.
 - 1 Sam 16:13 And Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers, and the Spirit of Jehovah rushed upon David from that day forward. Then Samuel rose up and went to Ramah.
 - 1 Chron 11:3b ...And David made a covenant with them in Hebron before Jehovah, and they anointed David king over Israel according to the word of Jehovah spoken by Samuel.
 - Matt 1:1 The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham:
- C. If these are the last days and God's eyes are on those who can be the means of bringing in the King, let us ask ourselves, "What is our ministry"? Have we any part in this special ministry, this Hannah ministry?
- D. Those who want to be Hannahs must prepare themselves for persecution, scorn, weeping, and fasting; this ministry costs; a price has to be paid because all such ministry comes

through testing and suffering; it has to be wrought into us—1 Sam. 1:6-7.

1 Sam 1:6 And her rival provoked her bitterly to irritate her, because Jehovah had shut up her womb.

1 Sam 1:7 And so it happened year after year; when she went up to the house of Jehovah, the other provoked her this way; and she wept and would not eat.

E. It is not a matter of how many we can save but of God getting His company of overcomers; God wants to get a people who will be able to pray and bring in His kingdom.

F. Hannah's prayer was the means for the birth of Samuel; our prayers should result in the bringing forth of overcomers—Rev. 2:7, 11, 17, 26-28; 3:5, 12, 20-21; 12:5; 14:3-5.

Rev 2:7 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, to him I will give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the Paradise of God.

Rev 2:11 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes shall by no means be hurt of the second death.

Rev 2:17 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, to him I will give of the hidden manna, and to him I will give a white stone, and upon the stone a new name written, which no one knows except he who receives it.

Rev 2:26 And he who overcomes and he who keeps My works until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations;

Rev 2:27 And he will shepherd them with an iron rod, as vessels of pottery are broken in pieces, as I also have received from My Father;

Rev 2:28 And to him I will give the morning star.

Rev 3:5 He who overcomes will be clothed thus, in white garments, and I shall by no means erase his name out of the book of life, and I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.

Rev 3:12 He who overcomes, him I will make a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall by no means go out anymore, and I will write upon him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which descends out of heaven from My God, and My new name.

Rev 3:20 Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, then I will come in to him and dine with him and he with Me.

Rev 3:21 He who overcomes, to him I will give to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat with My Father on His throne.

Rev 12:5 And she brought forth a son, a man-child, who is to shepherd all the nations with an iron rod; and her child was caught up to God and to His throne.

Rev 14:3 And they sing a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders; and no one could learn the song except the hundred and forty-four thousand, who have been purchased from the earth.

Rev 14:4 These are they who have not been defiled with women, for they are virgins. These are they who follow the Lamb wherever He may go. These were purchased from among men as firstfruits to God and to the Lamb.

Rev 14:5 And in their mouth no lie was found; they are without blemish.

G. The son in 1 Samuel 1 is the man-child in Revelation 12, the one who brings in the King and the kingdom—12:5-10.

1 Sam 1 be omitted.

Rev 12 be omitted.

Rev 12:5 And she brought forth a son, a man-child, who is to shepherd all the nations with an iron rod; and her child was caught up to God and to His throne.

Rev 12:6 And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place there prepared by God so that they might nourish her there a thousand two hundred and sixty days.

Rev 12:7 And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels went to war with the dragon. And the dragon warred and his angels.

Rev 12:8 And they did not prevail, neither was their place found any longer in heaven.

Rev 12:9 And the great dragon was cast down, the ancient serpent, he who is called the Devil and Satan, he who deceives the whole inhabited earth; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast down with him.

Rev 12:10 And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, Now has come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ, for the accuser of our brothers has been cast down, who accuses them before our God day and night.

Excerpts from the Ministry:

A CONCLUDING WORD TO THE LIFE-STUDY OF 1 AND 2 SAMUEL

First and 2 Samuel unveil to us, from the beginning, that God's accomplishment of His economy needs man's coordination and cooperation. The first illustration is Hannah, the mother of Samuel. She was seeking God and spontaneously coordinated and cooperated with God. This afforded God the way to replace the waning priesthood under Eli with a new priesthood raised up by God through her son Samuel.

Samuel, the issue of his mother Hannah's coordination and cooperation with God, became a faithful Nazarite according to his mother's desire for God and rendered to God the way to end the corrupted age of the judges and to bring in (1) the age of kingship to replace the governing ministry of the old priesthood and (2) the prophethood to replace the God-speaking ministry of the old priesthood. (*Life-study of 1 Samuel*, msg. 38, p. 247)

THE CENTRAL THOUGHT

The central thought of 1 and 2 Samuel is that the fulfillment of God's economy needs man's cooperation, as illustrated by the history of Samuel's mother Hannah, Samuel, and David, in the positive sense, and by the history of Eli and Saul, in the negative sense. Such a cooperation is related to the personal enjoyment of the good land, which typifies the all-inclusive and all-extensive Christ. Hence, 1 and 2 Samuel are a continuation of Joshua, Judges, and Ruth, giving us the details concerning the enjoyment of the God-given good land. The good land enjoyed by the cooperators with God became the kingdom of God, in which they reigned as kings. This is a type of the New Testament believers' enjoyment of Christ, which issues in their reign in the eternal life (Rom. 5:21).

We need to be impressed with the fact that the fulfillment of God's economy requires our cooperation. To cooperate with God means to be bound together with God. We may use a three-legged race as an illustration. The runners in such a race must run in pairs, with each partner having one leg bound to one of his partner's legs. In order for the partners to run, they must cooperate with each other and not move independently. This is a picture of the proper Christian life. To be a Christian is to be bound together with Christ and to have one living with Him by one life.

The birth of Samuel involved Hannah's cooperation with God. The old priesthood had become stale and waning, and God wanted to have another beginning. For Samuel's birth, God initiated things behind the scenes. On the one hand, He shut up Hannah's womb; on the other hand, He prepared a provoker (1 Sam. 1:5-7). This forced Hannah to pray that the Lord would give her a male child. In her prayer she made a vow and said, "O Jehovah of hosts, if You will indeed look upon the affliction of Your maidservant and remember me and not forget Your maidservant, but give to Your maidservant a male child, then I will give him to Jehovah for all the days of his life, and no razor will come upon his head" (v. 11). This prayer was initiated not by Hannah but by God. God chose Hannah because she was willing to cooperate with Him. God answered her prayer and opened her womb, and Hannah conceived and bore a son (v. 20). Then according to her vow, she offered her son to God, placing him in the custody of Eli. From this we see that Hannah, Samuel's mother, was one who cooperated very much with God. Her case shows us the kind of persons God expects to have today....

Today many continents and countries are open to the Lord's recovery. There is the need for some to make a vow like Hannah. I hope that many of the young people will make such a vow. You need to say, "Lord, I am Yours. I just lend myself to You." God will take your heart and accomplish something to fulfill what you vow to Him. (*Life-study of 1 Samuel*, msg. 1, pp. 5-7)

His God-worshipping Parents

Humanly speaking, Samuel's origin was his God-worshipping parents (vv. 1-8).

Remaining in the Line of Life

Ordained by God for His Eternal Purpose

In the midst of the chaos of the degraded Israel, Elkanah and Hannah remained in the line of life

ordained by God for His eternal purpose. The line of life is a line to bring forth Christ for the enjoyment of God's people that on earth God may have His kingdom, which is the Body of Christ, the very organism of the Triune God.

Elkanah and Hannah remained in this line of life not merely for God's eternal salvation but for His eternal purpose. God's salvation is mainly for our benefit, whereas God's purpose is related to the fulfilling of God's desire. We need to ask ourselves whether we are here for our profit or for God's purpose. Today on this earth everyone is concerned for his own profit. Even the majority of Christians do not care for God's purpose. I can testify of Brother Watchman Nee that he was a man altogether for God's purpose. I would like to follow his pattern. In the Lord's recovery, we are for God's purpose, remaining in the line of life ordained by God for His eternal purpose, which is to gain the Body, the organism of the Triune God, that He may have a full expression in a corporate way.

*In Cooperation with the Move of God on Earth
for the Accomplishment of God's Economy*

This couple was in cooperation with the move of God on earth for the accomplishment of God's economy. Elkanah and Hannah were not the only ones moving; they were moved by the moving One, by the unique, divine Mover, who was moving secretly behind the scene. Under God's sovereign dealing, Hannah was suppressed in her soul with a burden in her spirit to pour out before Jehovah. This was God's move. Because of God's moving in her, Hannah could not have peace until she prayed for a son. God, the sovereign One, kept moving her and motivating her so that she had to pray, even though Eli, the one taking care of the service in God's house, did not understand her. In her prayer Hannah cooperated with the move of God.

God could motivate Hannah as a person who was one with Him in the line of life. As long as He can gain such a person, He has a way on earth. I hope that at least some of us will be today's Hannahs and say, "Lord, if You have anything on Your heart to accomplish for Your purpose, I am here. I am remaining in the line of life for the carrying out of Your economy." If you do this, I have the full assurance that you will be the ones whom God will move. He will come to you and motivate you. God needs many Hannahs, persons who can bring forth some Samuels to turn the age.

Especially His God-seeking Mother with Her Prayer

The origin of Samuel was especially his God-seeking mother with her prayer (vv. 9-18). Her prayer was an echo of the heart's desire of God. Her prayer was a human cooperation with the divine move for the carrying out of God's eternal economy.

We should no longer pray old prayers in a formal way. Instead, we need to pray something that is an echo of what is on God's heart. This means that what we say in our prayer is exactly what God wants to speak. Such a prayer is the speaking out of God's heart. Hannah's prayer was like this. God wanted a Samuel, yet He needed Hannah's cooperation to pray to Him, saying, "Lord, I need a son." This prayer was very human, yet it was a cooperation with the divine move for God's economy.

**The Moving God with His Answer
to the Prayer of Samuel's Mother**

*According to God's Desire and Intention
for His Move among His Elect*

In a very particular way, the origin of Samuel was the moving God with His answer to the prayer of Samuel's mother (vv. 19-20). After such a prayer as Hannah prayed, it was easy for God to do something, because man's cooperation had become a base on which He could move. The moving God answered the prayer of Samuel's mother according to His desire and intention for His move among His elect.

*In Keeping with the Principle
That God Needs Man's Cooperation*

God's move in response to Hannah's prayer was in keeping with the principle that God needs man's cooperation with His move in His economy. This is the principle of incarnation.

*To Produce a Nazarite Who Was Absolute
for the Fulfilling of His Desire*

God's move with His answer to Hannah's prayer was to produce a Nazarite who was absolute for the fulfilling of His desire. A Nazarite is one who is consecrated to God absolutely. A Nazarite could never cut his hair or drink wine. In the Bible, long hair signifies the headship, the authority. A Nazarite's keeping his hair long was a sign that just as a female takes her husband as her head, he takes God as the Head, considering God his Husband. Thus, a Nazarite is one who submits himself to God, taking God as the Head, the authority. This is why Hannah prayed that if the Lord would give her a boy, no razor would come upon his head (v. 11). In the Bible, to drink wine is to enjoy the worldly pleasures. A Nazarite not only submits to God as the authority but also has no interest in the enjoyment of worldly pleasures. Even before he was born, Samuel was consecrated by his mother to be such a person. This is a great thing, for it was Samuel who brought in a new age.

The New Testament age was brought in by another Nazarite—John the Baptist. The Lord Jesus was a Nazarite, as were Peter and Paul. Actually, everyone who remains in the line of life is a Nazarite. If we would be today's Nazarites, we must take God as our Head and Husband, submitting to Him, and have no interest in worldly pleasures.

We need to be impressed with Samuel's origin, with his source. Because he came out of such a strong source, he could not be an ordinary, worldly person. Rather, he was the one who replaced the waning priesthood and brought forth David, who brought forth Christ.

Supported by His Mother

First Samuel 2:19 indicates that Samuel was supported by his mother. In the Lord's recovery today, we also need support, and we thank the Lord for the many mothers in the church life. (*Life- study of 1 Samuel*, msg. 2, pp. 9-14)

**THE APPLICATION OF THE CASE OF SAMUEL
TO OUR PRESENT SITUATION**

Our present situation and God's need today are the same in principle as the situation and the need at the time of Samuel. Some today need to pray according to God's need, as Hannah did. God needs some like Samuel, who was a Nazarite, a priest, a prophet, and the last judge. Samuel was the last judge because God used him to terminate the confused situation among God's people, who were without a king or a kingdom. God needs such ones who are qualified to terminate the negative situation and bring in the king and the kingdom. The fulfillment of the kingdom is the coming kingdom, which will be brought in by the Lord Jesus, but there is a need today for some like Samuel to cooperate by bringing in that kingdom. In a sense, Christ our King is not here yet, and we are still in a confused situation, just as in the age of the judges. We should aspire to be the last judge. The sisters especially should aspire to be like Hannah, praying to bring forth some like Samuel, who will terminate the confused age so that Christ the King may come with His kingdom.

We need to realize how greatly the Divine Trinity is needed for this to be accomplished. In order for Hannah to pray such a prevailing prayer and receive a definite reply, she needed the tabernacle and the offerings, which typify Christ the Son as the embodiment of God and the reality of all the offerings. Similarly, in order for us to pray to meet God's need today, we need Christ as the embodiment of God and the reality of the offerings. We also need the fulfillment of the Tent of Meeting, which is the church as God's dwelling place. Hannah did not pray her prevailing prayer in her home. We need God's embodiment and His full salvation in the church life. Then we can pray prevailing prayers for God's goal, to bring in the kingdom. This is the experience of the Divine Trinity. (*CWWL*, 1983, vol. 3, "The Divine Trinity as Revealed in the Holy Word," ch. 10, pp. 292-293)

THE HANNAH MINISTRY

Hannah wept, fasted, prayed, and cried unto the Lord for a son who would be absolutely given to the Lord for His service. This son was the one who brought in the King. Hannah had nothing to be proud of. However, Peninnah, had much to boast of. She could point to all her children and say, "I have

this and that, all this and all that, etc.” I want to say a word to you out of my heart. If you are still in the realm of the judges, you can be blessed and have results, but God's eyes are not on you. If these were not the last days, we would hope that Peninnah might have many more children. But if I am right, these are the last days and God's eyes are on those who can be the means of bringing in the King. Let us ask ourselves, “What is our ministry? Have we any part in this special ministry, this Hannah ministry?” Some have no other thought but revival. They think that the principle of the judges will continue to the end. But there is the more important ministry of bringing in the King.

Hannah's way was not an easy way, and it was made even more difficult because of Peninnah's comparisons and tauntings. Those who want to be Hannahs must prepare themselves for persecution, scorn, weeping, and fasting. This ministry costs. A price has to be paid because all such ministry comes through testing and suffering; it has to be wrought into us. Others can eat and drink and look at their children, but here was one who fasted and wept. It is not a matter of how many we can save but a matter of God getting His company of overcomers. God wants to get a people who will be able to pray and bring in the kingdom.

Hannah's prayer was the means for the birth of Samuel. Our prayers should result in the bringing forth of overcomers. What have we done in this respect? Some who have worked much and have many children will say, “It seems that you are not doing anything. In the past you could lead revival meetings and do this and that. What are you doing now?” Even Eli, God's priest, did not understand Hannah. He said, “What are you doing? You are drunk.”

From the birth of Samuel we see a line of prophets who could also be priests to bring in the King. Hannah bore a son—a prophet. God had done quite much with Hannah; He led her through all sorts of difficulties. As a result, He was able to find one who could put eating and drinking and all else aside. She came to the point where she could not go on without a son; she came to a point where she had to have a son. The son in 1 Samuel 1 is the man-child of Revelation 12, the one who brings in the King and the kingdom. (CWWN, vol. 46, ch. 172, pp. 1179-1180)

Study Questions:

1. In what way did Hannah coordinate and cooperate with God for the accomplishment of His economy? How does her case show us the kind of persons God expects to have today?
2. What is the “line of life”? How can we, like Hannah, remain in the line of life for the carrying out of God's economy?
3. How can the sisters as today's Hannahs pray prevailing prayers to meet God's need and bring in God's kingdom?

References and Further Reading:

1. *Life-study of 1 Samuel*, msgs. 2 and 38.
2. *The Collected Works of Witness Lee, 1983*, vol. 3, “The Divine Trinity as Revealed in the Holy Word,” ch. 10.
3. *The Collected Works of Watchman Nee*, vol. 46, ch. 172.