

Giving to God What Is His

"Therefore also I have lent him to the Lord; as long as he liveth he shall be lent to the Lord." I Samuel 1:28

The narrative of I Samuel opens with Hannah, the mother of Samuel, pleading with the Lord to give her children. God answers her prayer, and her firstborn is returned to the Lord for His service. This is Hannah's response; she says that she is lending Samuel to the Lord.

We have no record of God communicating to Hannah or her husband that they should give Samuel to the Lord. From start to finish, it seems that it was their idea. Nor do we know the degree to which her husband, Elkanah, was consulted. We learn from I Samuel 1:2 that Elkanah had two wives. Possibly, he did not care one way or the other, as verse 23 seems to indicate. I can find no further contact recorded between Samuel and his father.

The word for "lent" is interesting. It means, "to give back what was asked." Hannah asked God for a son and when God answered her request she gave her son back to God. Thus we have a beautiful picture of our relationship with Jesus Christ. We asked Him for life and give back to Him what He gave us. Paul states it eloquently in II Corinthians 5:15: "And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again."