

CHILD DEDICATION

It is a time when you as parents give back to God what belongs to Him.

1 Samuel 1:26-28 A godly woman named Hannah had been unable to bear children for many years and was weeping before the Lord. As she was weeping she made a vow to God saying if He gave her a son, she would give him to the Lord. God answered Hannah's prayer and she remembered her vow: "As surely as you live, my Lord, I am the woman who stood here beside you praying to the Lord. I prayed for this child, and the Lord has granted me what I asked of him. So now I give him to the Lord. For his whole life, he will be given over to the Lord. And he worshipped the Lord there."

In Luke chapter 2, following the birth of Jesus, Mary and Joseph took the infant Jesus to the temple and dedicated Him.

In both of these biblical references, the parents entrusted their child completely to God; beautiful examples of what our attitudes should be towards our children and their relationship to Him.

It is a time for parents to offer their child to the Lord publicly and to dedicate themselves to raising their child to the glory of God.

Deuteronomy 6:5-9 describes God's plan for how a parent should raise up a child:

"And you must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your strength. And you must commit yourselves wholeheartedly to these commands that I am giving you today. Repeat them again and again to your children. Talk about them when you are at home and when you are on the road, when you are going to bed and when you are getting up. Tie them to your hands and wear them on your forehead as reminders. Write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates."

And Proverbs 22:6 adds, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it." We are to do the most we can to "set apart" our children to God until they can make their own choice. If we instruct our children while they are young in God's ways, our children will grow in His ways for a lifetime.

It is an act of worship, thanksgiving, dependence, trust, and commitment.

"Sons are a heritage from the Lord, children a reward from Him." Psalm 127:3

Dedication is a way to publicly thank God for your child while declaring your dependence on Jesus Christ to give you the grace and wisdom you need on this journey.

What Child Dedication is Not

Salvation.... This ceremony is not a substitute for the child's ultimate personal responsibility before God. It does not guarantee salvation or serve as a substitute for the personal need for children to accept Jesus Christ as their Savior when they are old enough to understand the gospel. *Jesus said, "I am the way the truth and the life. No one comes to the father except through me." John 14:6*

Baptism...According to Acts 8:12-13 *believers* are to be baptized. Therefore, we do not baptize people who have not first chosen to accept Jesus Christ as their savior. In the Bible, we find parents bringing their children to Jesus. He held them, prayed for them, and told us to welcome them. But He did not baptize them and he did not tell anyone else to baptize them.

When the Lord blesses us with a child, He entrusts us with the responsibility of raising that child in His ways. We hope this information helps you recognize the extent of this commitment that you will be making.