

A Mother's Place In Child Rearing

Today's society in America, Britain, Australia and South Africa contains many career women. The term "*professional*" seems glamorous to women.

Somehow they feel a career outside the home is very important, so they farm out their children to day nurseries while they pursue their careers.

Divorce lawyers say that a woman's "*emancipation*" is a major reason why many marriages fail.

Today the very word "*housewife*" is an apology. Not to have a career is considered unglamorous and unattractive. There are many books and magazine articles telling wives how unfulfilled they are without a career.

No wonder modern woman flinches at the thought of just being a housewife.

Not many decades ago a girl did not have to worry all through high school trying to decide which career to train for. She had a definite and tremendously important place in society which satisfied her ego and gave her most of the fulfilment she needed: that of a wife and mother.

Some Christian women fail to realise the monumentous importance that her Creator God places on the job of wife and mother.

Titus 2:1-5 [New King James] "*But as for you, speak the things which are proper for sound doctrine: that the older men be sober, reverent, temperate, sound in faith, in love, in patience; the older women likewise, that they be reverent in behaviour, not slanderers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things, that they admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, homemakers, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be blasphemed.*"

Grandmothers teach young mothers to be home-makers.

How important is this? "*That the Word of God may not be blasphemed.*"

Blasphemed by a Christian woman giving a wrong example to all non-Christians she comes into contact with in day-to-day life.

We need to recapture these true values. True Christian women need to realise just how important their God-given occupation as wives and mothers really are. This is a job far superior to the greatest "*career woman.*" They would have renewed zeal for the greatest life task that a woman can ever experience.

God lays child-rearing equally upon both parents working together for proper child rearing. The woman's part is equally important as the man's, whom God has placed the ultimate authority in the home.

[Please download and study with this article one on the website with the title '*Christian Manhood*' listed under the main heading '*Family*'.]

God's law for the rearing of children, given to Ancient Israel, shows that both parents are responsible for the right or wrong rearing of their children.

Deuteronomy 21:18-20 [New King James] "*If a man has a stubborn and rebellious son who will not obey the voice of his father or the voice of his mother, and who, when they have chastened him, will not heed them, then his father and his mother shall take hold of him and bring him out to the elders of*

his city, to the gate of his city. And they shall say to the elders of his city, 'This son of ours is stubborn and rebellious; he will not obey our voice; he is a glutton and a drunkard.'"

When we read the next verse we can imagine the impact the outcome of **verse 21** would have on all the other children in the nation.

Result of only one parent being responsible for the children's upbringing most of the time is illustrated by the life of Samuel, a prophet of God and a judge in Ancient Israel.

1 Samuel 7:15-16 [New King James] *"And Samuel judged Israel all the days of his life. He went from year to year on a circuit to Bethel, Gilgal, and Mizpah, and judged Israel in all those places."*

Samuel was a very busy man. He spent much of his time on the road in his job. Samuel was the highest authority in Israel and many cases of judgement came to him from the local city elders who felt they were not qualified to judge a certain case.

[Please download and study the article with the title 'Ancient Israel's Legal System' listed under main heading 'Judgement'.]

Thus Samuel had to be away from his home much of the time in the service of the Creator God.

1 Samuel 7:17 [New King James] *"But he always returned to Ramah, for his home was there. There he judged Israel, and there he built an altar to the LORD."*

Even when at home he was busy working for God.

1 Samuel 8:1-2 [New King James] *"Now it came to pass when Samuel was old that he made his sons judges over Israel. The name of his firstborn was Joel, and the name of his second, Abijah; they were judges in Beersheba."*

Samuel was old and wished the work he had dedicated his life to, the service of his God, would continue through his own sons, a natural human desire of any human father.

Samuel thought they were respectable, honest young men. He would not have appointed them as judges if he did not feel they were men of integrity.

But do not forget, Samuel was not at home all the time.

Samuel as a man of God would have carried out God's instructions in child rearing, and his children must have obeyed these rules when he was there.

Yet Samuel's sons did not quality to carry on Samuel's work for God.

1 Samuel 8:3 [New King James] *"But his sons did not walk in his ways; they turned aside after dishonest gain, took bribes, and perverted justice."*

They did **not** respect their father, his job or his teachings.

Proverbs 22:6 [New King James] *"Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it."*

A promise from God, but Samuel's children did depart from God's way of life.

What had caused this lack of right character in Samuel's children?

The answer is that without Samuel's male support, his wife was unable to uphold her duties in child rearing, by allowing the children to ignore the proper guidelines and rules for child ruling laid down by her husband.

What happens when one parent disciplines while the other is lax and negligent?

It all depends on which parent has the greater influence on the child.

Both parents need to have equal right influence over the children in both discipline and time spent with them as an adult example, otherwise the child soon learns to become a hypocrite. That is, that they can get away with certain things when only one parent is present, true character is **not** ingrained in them.

Samuel's children obeyed only when Samuel was present, but they did not believe his ways. They did not take on his true character. Thus when they were on their own their hypocrisy was exposed.

True character is attained when a child is sincere, really believes the God-given principles that both parents teach and diligently enforce within a loving atmosphere.

All husbands should take heed of the example of Samuel and **not** leave all the child rearing to the wife, for God in the end holds the husband responsible, as head of the home, [**Ephesians 5:22-29**].

The Creator God has recorded the lives of many of the kings of Judah as examples of how a mother can influence the son of a king who will eventually take the place of his father as king.

Why is it that the son of a righteous king often turned out to be evil?

Or the son of an evil king turned out to be righteous?

2 Chronicles 26:4 [New King James] *“And he did what was right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his father Amaziah had done.”*

Uzziah began his long reign following the example of his father Amaziah, until his physical success caused his pride to step outside of his kingly responsibilities and seek to take on the unordained job of a priest, [**2 Chronicles 26:16-19**] and ended his life, cut off from the rest of the nation as a leper.

Jotham was 25 years old when he took over as king of Judah.

Note two related facts, Jotham's mother's name was recorded and Jotham did what was right in God's eyes, [**2 Chronicles 27:1-2**] continuing the good things that his father Uzziah had done, but did **not** follow his example of stepping outside the extent of his authority.

But the influence of Uzziah's pride still was found in the people who acted against God's laws.

However when Jotham died, his son, Ahaz, reigned in his place, but did **not** follow in his father's example, [**2 Chronicles 28:2-4**].

Why did Ahaz turn out so wrong?

God's Word leaves us a clue. The mother of Ahaz is not mentioned.

After the death of Ahaz, his son, Hezekiah, reigned in his place.

2 Chronicles 29:1-2 [New King James] *“Hezekiah became king when he was twenty-five years old, and he reigned twenty-nine years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Abijah the daughter of Zechariah. And he did what was right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his father David had done.”*

Note again Hezekiah was in harmony with God's way of life and his mother's name is recorded.

Hezekiah turned out to be one of the most righteous kings Judah ever had; his faith in God preserved the nation of Judah in the face of ominous threats from the powerful Assyrian army.

So outstanding was Hezekiah as king that God added 15 years to his life, [2 Kings 20:1-6].

With the death of Hezekiah, Manasseh, his son, succeeded to the throne.

2 Kings 21:1 [New King James] *“Manasseh was twelve years old when he became king, and he reigned fifty-five years in Jerusalem. His mother’s name was Hephzibah.”*

Since Manasseh was under age, his mother gave him much counsel, advice and teaching, as did the top aides and officials of Judah.

Note Manasseh was only 12 years old when his father died so he was the product of Hezekiah’s extra 15 years of life, and during those years his father must have given him a marvellous example to follow.

What went wrong?

Manasseh became the worst king Judah ever had, [2 Kings 21:2-7, 16].

How could he go so wrong having a righteous father like Hezekiah.

Again the answer is obvious! His mother was chiefly responsible for his rearing and the start of his reign. His mother’s name is mentioned in God’s Word but in ignominy! For she was responsible for rearing the worst king of Judah.

After Manasseh’s death, his son, Amon, reigned. He continued the way of his father Manasseh. So evil and vile was Amon that his servants killed him in his own house, [2 Kings 21:19-23]. The mention of his mother’s name indicates the influence she had on her son.

After Amon was killed his young son, Josiah, began to reign and his mother’s name is mentioned, [2 Kings 22:1]. Josiah owed his promotion to *“the people of the land”* who put to death his father’s assassins, [2 Kings 21:24; 2 Chronicles 33:25].

Josiah as an eight-year-old boy was not ready to reign as king, he needed training, counselling and tutoring. Along with top officials, aides and teachers, his mother was responsible for his success or failure as king.

In Josiah’s case, it was an overwhelming success, [2 Chronicles 34:1-2]. Josiah walked in the ways of King David his forefather and the God of King David, [verses 2 and 3].

Josiah’s mother [2 Kings 22:1] must have been greatly responsible for his success as king. She taught him to look to God and seek Him with all his heart as King David did, also taught him about the laws of God and about the Book of the Law.

2 Kings 22:11 [New King James] *“Now it happened, when the king heard the words of the Book of the Law, that he tore his clothes.”*

When the Book of the Law was found in the Temple he had commanded to be refurbished, Josiah was moved emotionally because of what his mother had been teaching from memory.

Prior to school our children today spend many hundreds of hours under the direct supervision of their mother. The mother has tremendous influence on them. She teaches them proper habits, cleanliness and personal discipline.

A mother is setting the stage for the future habits in their life.

Properly carried out, the mother's discipline can help ready her child for years to come. **Wrong rearing will make it much harder for the child in later life.**

Children will either love and respect their mother and her authority or will come to relegate it to insignificance or, worse still, despise it.

Josiah's example shows the good influence of a mother over her son.

King Manasseh was the product of lack of discipline, a wrong influence.

Do **not** assume that your children will follow God's ways automatically, as you are a Christian mother.

Check up! Ask yourself, 'have I taught my children to come when called? To sit still when told? To answer respectfully when spoken to? To obey immediately in everything? To respect their elders no matter who they are? Know exactly the meaning of the word 'No'?'

Proverbs 29:15 [New King James] *"The rod and rebuke give wisdom, but a child left to himself brings shame to his mother."*

Why "the mother"? Because when a child is left alone it is the mother's fault, when a father has to work away from home. When not with their father a child should be in the care of the mother.

The richest, most rewarding work there is for a woman is her God-given job as a wife and mother!

Jedidah did not have her name in coloured lights or on an office desk, but her name is in God's Word, the Christian Bible, because she helped to produce a righteous king.

Her accomplishments were greater than any professional career women.

Here are a mother's teaching of the King Lemuel, the king of Massa.

Proverbs 31:1-9 [New King James] *"The words of King Lemuel, the utterance which his mother taught him: What, my son? And what, son of my womb? And what, son of my vows? Do not give your strength to women, nor your ways to that which destroys kings. It is not for kings, O Lemuel, it is not for kings to drink wine, nor for princes intoxicating drink; lest they drink and forget the law, and pervert the justice of all the afflicted. Give strong drink to him who is perishing, and wine to those who are bitter of heart. Let him drink and forget his poverty, and remember his misery no more. Open your mouth for the speechless, in the cause of all who are appointed to die. Open your mouth, judge righteously, and plead the cause of the poor and needy."*

A mother's instructions concerning good government and the dangers of sensuality and over-indulgence of alcohol at the wrong time.

Such a woman is far above the price of rubies, [Proverbs 31:10-12].

The description then goes on to show how she is greatly to be praised and honoured, [Proverbs 31:13-31].

Where do righteous kings and leaders come from?

They are the product of diligent parents who apply God-given rules of child rearing.

What a responsibility for all parents.

How foolish for fathers to neglect their family in pursuit of their jobs!

How foolish for mothers to be bored with homemaking and motherhood.

The world tomorrow will soon come when mothers will **not** kiss their children goodbye at the nursery door, and fathers will **not** neglect their families in pursuit of other interests. All will learn from the great Creator God the divine purpose of parenthood.