

GOD IN THE GAPS

(1 Samuel 2:18-20, 26)
(Luke 2:41-52)

Intro: Children grow up so fast.

-First.

#You have a babe in arms.

-Next thing you know.

#They're:

*Toddlers.

*Teenagers.

*Grown and gone.

I. Jesus Was No Different.

A. It Seems Like Only A Few Days Ago.

1. He was a baby.

a. Snuggled in his mother's arms.

b. Lying in a manger.

c. Looking cross-eyed at shepherds.

-Who came to make a fuss over him.

2. Come to think of it.

a. That was just a few days ago that we celebrated Christmas.

b. Now Jesus is:

-12 years old.

-Sitting in the Temple.

-Discussing theology with the teachers.

-Driving his parents crazy.

B. Where Did The Years Go?

1. Between:

a. Jesus' birth.

b. His pilgrimage to Jerusalem.

-At the age of 12.

2. We have no other Biblical stories about:

a. Jesus' youth.

b. Learning:

-To crawl.

-To walk.

-To talk.

-To throw a baseball.

-To use a hammer.

- c. His first:
 - Tooth.
 - Day of school.
 - Report card.
 - d. Questioning:
 - “Why do I have to be home before dark?”
 - “May I sleep over at Benjamin’s house?”
 - “Where do baby’s come from?”
 - “Do I have to go to Sabbath School today?”
 - *“I know all of that stuff already.”
3. There is a huge gap in the Biblical account of Jesus’ life.
- a. Apocryphal gospels try to fill in those gaps.
 - Jesus making birds out of clay.
 - #Sending them flying.
 - Jesus resuscitating a childhood playmate.
 - Jesus working in his father’s carpenter shop.
 - #Stretching a 2x4 to make it fit the project at hand.
 - b. All the Scriptures tell us:
 - Jesus grew up.
 - #Physically.
 - #Intellectually.
 - #Spiritually.
 - #Socially.
 - *Luke 2: 51.
 - His mother treasured all of these things in her heart.
 - #Luke 2: 52.
4. There would be another gap.
- a. Between:
 - Jesus in the Temple at the age of 12.
 - His baptism and the beginning of his ministry.
 - #At about the age of 30.
 - *Luke 3: 21-23.
 - b. What happened during those years?
 - Was he in school?
 - Was he apprenticed in the carpenter shop?
 - Did he travel?
 - Did he ask to borrow the family donkey?
 - c. Scriptures are silent about these periods in Jesus’ life.
 - My Jerusalem Bible calls them:
 - # *The Hidden Life of Jesus of Nazareth.*
 - Luke simply says:
 - #Jesus grew up.
 - #Mary treasured all these things in her heart.
 - d. But what’s in the gaps?

II. There Must Have Been Gaps In The Life Of Samuel.

A. At Least As Far As His Mother Was Concerned.

1. Hannah's story is told:

a. 1 Samuel 1-2.

b. Hannah was married to a man named Elkanah.

-Elkanah had two wives.

#Hannah.

#Peninnah.

*Peninnah had children.

*Hannah did not.

#Peninnah would taunt Hannah.

*Because she had no children.

-Elkanah would try to make things better.

#When he offered a sacrifice.

*He would give portions:

+Peninnah.

+Her children.

*He would give a double portion.

+Hannah.

=Because he loved her more.

#But that didn't do much for Hannah.

*She wanted a baby.

+Not more food.

*She would:

+Cry.

+Cry.

+Cry.

+Cry.

-Elkanah didn't get it.

#He said:

*"What's the matter?"

*"Why are you crying?"

*"Why aren't you eating?"

*"Am I not more to you than ten sons?"

#Then Elkanah really got it.

*More weeping and wailing.

c. One day Hannah was weeping and wailing.

-In the sanctuary.

#At Shiloh.

-Eli.

#Priest.

#Heard her.

#Thought she was drunk.

- Hannah said:
 - # "I'm not drunk."
 - # "I'm just pouring out my soul to the Lord."
 - Eli got it.
 - # Said:
 - * "May God give you your heart's desire."
 - d. Hannah got it.
 - Baby.
 - # Boy.
 - # Named him Samuel.
 - * Because she had asked the Lord for him.
 - She offered:
 - # Song.
 - # Prayer.
 - * 1 Samuel 2: 1-10.
 - * Became:
 - + Model.
 - + Inspiration.
 - = For the *Magnificat*.
 - Luke 1: 46-55.
 - She gave Samuel back to God.
 - # To serve in the Temple.
 - * At Shiloh.
 - # To learn from Eli.
 - * Priest.
 - + Whose own sons were dirty rotten scoundrels.
 - + Who had tried to comfort and encourage Hannah.
 - = When she was overcome with despair.
2. Hannah saw her son only once a year.
 - a. When she and Elkanah.
 - Would go to Shiloh.
 - # To offer their yearly sacrifice.
 - b. Eli would ask God to bless.
 - Elkanah.
 - Hannah.
 - # With other children.
 - * For giving Samuel into the service of the Lord.
 - # They were blessed:
 - * Three sons.
 - * Two daughters.

- c. Hannah would make Samuel a little robe.
 - To wear with his priestly garment.
 - #Ephod.
 - My mom used to make me a pair of pajamas every year.
 - #But she had me around:
 - *To measure.
 - *To see how big I was getting.
 - Hannah didn't have Samuel around.
 - #To measure.
 - #To see how big he was getting.
- d. There were gaps.
 - In Hannah's relationship with Samuel.
 - #Samuel was not:
 - *At summer camp.
 - +For a couple of weeks.
 - *At boarding school.
 - +For a few months.
 - #Hannah had given him up to the Lord.
 - Year-long gaps.
 - #Gaps not filled with day-to-day details.
 - #Gaps filled with the vaguest generalities.
 - *He grew up.
 - +1 Samuel 2:26.
 - *He grew:
 - +Physically.
 - +Spiritually.
 - +Socially.

B. What Do You Suppose Belongs In The Gaps?

1. For Jesus.
 - a. For Mary to treasure in her heart.
2. For Samuel.
 - a. For Hannah to treasure in her heart.
3. For us.
 - a. Maybe not to treasure in our heart.
 - Like only:
 - #Parent.
 - #Grandparent.
 - *Can do.
 - b. But to satisfy our curiosity.
 - What did Jesus do?
 - #What did Samuel do?
 - What was childhood like for Jesus?
 - #What was childhood like for Samuel?

4. But maybe the more important question:
 - a. Not:
 - What belongs in the gaps?
 - b. But:
 - Who belongs in the gaps?

C. God Belongs In The Gaps.

1. For Samuel.
 - a. Eli.
 - Whose name means:
 - # "Yahweh is exalted."
 - # "God is exalted."
 - b. For Hannah.
 - For any mother.
 - # Who cannot care for her child.
 - * Day by day.
 - # Who cannot watch her child.
 - * Grow.
 - * Learn.
 - * Mature.
 - What better substitute could one have?
 - # Than someone who can lift up God.
 - c. God was in the gaps for Samuel.
 - Who became the first of God's prophets.
2. For Jesus.
 - a. God was in the gaps.
 - Those "hidden" years.
 - Those unreported years.
 - b. Jesus was about his Father's business.
 - Growing in favor with God.
 - # Luke 2:52.
 - c. When Jesus hung in the gap.
 - On the cross.
 - Between:
 - # Life.
 - # Death.
 - To whom does Jesus cry out?
 - # "My God, my God!"
 - * Matthew 27:46.
 - * Mark 15:34.
 - God was in the gap.

- d. When Jesus lay in the gap.
 - In the grave.
 - Between:
 - #Good Friday.
 - #Easter.
 - Who was there to bring?
 - #Life out of death.
 - #Resurrection out of crucifixion.
 - God was in the gap.
- 3. For us.
 - a. Sometimes we are in a gap.
 - Physically.
 - #When our health begins to fail.
 - Financially.
 - #When we encounter unforeseen expenses.
 - Emotionally.
 - #When our world feels all topsy-turvy.
 - Spiritually.
 - #When we begin to question.
 - *"Is God for real?"
 - *"Is my sin too big or too bad?"
 - Congregationally.
 - #When we accept the facts:
 - *"Good old days are not coming back."
 - *"We're not sure what the future holds for us."
 - b. God is in the gaps.
 - Healing.
 - Supporting.
 - Calming.
 - Forgiving.
 - Renewing.

Concl: We live in a gap.

- Between:
 - #Jesus' ascension into heaven.
 - #His return at the end of time.
- God is in the gap.
 - #Water and Word.
 - #Bread and wine.
- God is in the gaps.
 - #Treasure these things in your heart.

