

A New Coat

“Moreover his mother made him a little coat, and brought it to him from year to year” (1 Sam.2:19).

Both of our grandsons, Thomas and Samuel, received much needed new coats as gifts this past Christmas. Compared to their other popular, high-tech, noisy gifts, the coats were simple, ordinary, and non-exciting items. It interested me, and pleased me as well, that while the boys couldn't play with their coats; they still seemed very appreciative of them. Before the winter is past I'm sure they will appreciate them even more.

Because her child was given in answer to earnest prayer, Hannah named him “Samuel,” which meant “asked of God.” After being barren so long, she was so grateful for this evident blessing from the Lord that she gave her son back to the Lord. Although it was a great sacrifice and required much self-denial, after little Samuel was weaned she brought her firstborn to the house of the Lord in Shiloh and left him with Eli the priest.

Every year when Hannah and her husband, Elkanah, returned to worship and to offer to the Lord their yearly sacrifice, she brought Samuel a new coat. While this account affords us many spiritual lessons, Samuel's new coat might represent the New Year that is set before us. Like a garment that has never been worn, a new twelve-month period has been presented to us. In that light, here are a few comparisons and practical applications from the concept

Like Samuel's new coat, the New Year is a special gift! As his mother lovingly invested her time and energy to produce the unique garment, so God has graciously granted to us another year. It is not a coat that we devised or created. It is not even one we have chosen and purchased. The entire year—every minute, every day, every week, and every month—is a wonderful gift from God! Out of His wisdom and grace He has given it to us.

Like Samuel's new coat, the New Year is a personal provision! Perhaps others appreciated the beauty of the coat and even talked about it, but it was claimed and worn by Samuel. It was his coat. Similarly, others may appreciate and converse about the twelve months set before us; you and I, however, must see the New Year as God's personal provision for us. It is our new coat, one made for us.

Like Samuel's new coat, the New Year cannot be worn forever! Eventually the little coat became tattered and faded and a new one was provided for him. This New Year will not be ours to enjoy for long. It will soon be tattered, faded, and laid aside. Anew one will be given to take its place. Therefore, while we have it may we enjoy it to its fullest. May we wear it in a way that will glorify Him.