

1 Samuel 1:1-11

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[0 : 00] So hopefully you have turned to 1 Samuel. We're going to begin a series in Samuel today and as I think we said last week the aim is to spend the next five weeks in 1 Samuel while Ray and Sharon are away.

And then when he's back I intend to continue this series once a month. So it's going to take some time to get through the book of Samuel. And I say the book of Samuel because it was originally one book.

And hey, everyone likes a long project. So I have no idea how far we're going to get today. I can tell you that there's an upper limit which is at the end of Hannah's song in chapter 2.

I don't think we're going to get quite that far. So, you know, I guess we'll see. Father God, would you bless this time? Father, I really want to pray that this is a useful study in your word.

Lord, I've got no desire or interest to show how thorough my study was over the last week. Lord, what I pray rather is that you by your Spirit would teach us, teach me, teach us in this place, Lord God, what you have for us in this wonderful book.

[1 : 23] Lord, I pray, God, that I would diminish, I would decrease. Lord, that you would by your Holy Spirit cause Jesus Christ to be preeminent. Lord, that you would be glorified and you bring glory to yourself, Lord.

Lord, that we, all of us in this room as students of your word, would hear your voice and that we would leave transformed by your word. I pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Alrighty. So, 1st and 2nd Samuel. Named after one of the principal figures in the book.

And again, it was originally one single book. A long book. I spent ages counting them all up for you and there's 1,500 verses.

Not really. I asked an AI tool to do it for me. 1,500 verses. Too long to fit on a scroll, right?

[2 : 22] So, like many longer books, it got split. Longer than Isaiah. Longer than Jeremiah. I think the Psalms is longer. That's split into five.

I think Genesis is longer as well and that didn't get split. I don't know. Maybe they had a longer scroll parchment for that one. But anyway, a long book split into two for our convenience.

And in terms of the authorship, we just don't really know. It's anonymous. It would appear, based on 1 Chronicles 29, verse 29 to 30, to have been a compilation of works by Samuel, Nathan and Gad.

All three of those gentlemen are prophets of the Lord. And you can check that verse out if you want to see what it says there. That was 1 Chronicles 29, 29 to 30. Samuel took records, you see, as did many of the prophets.

And those were then assembled together. Another interesting point of note is that in the Septuagint, which is a very ancient translation of the Hebrew into Greek, done before Christ came, it's actually combined into, there's actually four books, first, second, third, fourth kingdoms, which we know is 1 Samuel, 1 Kings.

- [3 : 50] Confused? You will be, especially if you pick up a Bible that has a book called 1 Kings, and then it turns out to be 1 Samuel. It does happen. Historical setting.
- Well, I wanted to set the scene. I thought I might read a little bit from Acts, actually. If you want to turn there, then this is a reading from Acts 13. And this is Paul speaking in Antioch.
- And it's Acts 13, verse 16 through 23. And, you know, we've read Acts recently. We know the story Paul's preaching.
- They're in Antioch. And Acts 13, verse 16 and forwards. Paul stood up and, motioning with his hand, said, Men of Israel and you who fear God, listen.
- The God of this people Israel chose our fathers and made the people great during their stay in the land of Egypt. And with an uplifted arm, he led them out of it. For a period of about 40 years, he put up with them in the wilderness.
- [4 : 56] When he had destroyed seven nations in the land of Canaan, he distributed their land as an inheritance, all of which took about 450 years. After these things, he gave them judges until Samuel the prophet.
- Then they asked for a king, and God gave them Saul, the son of Kish, a man of the tribe of Benjamin for 40 years. And after he had removed him, he raised up David to be their king, concerning whom he also testified and said, I have found David, the son of Jesse, a man after my heart, who will do all my will.
- From the descendants of this man, according to the promise, God has brought to Israel a saviour, Jesus. And I thought, awesome. Paul's just given me a little outline there, and now I don't have to come up with one of my own.
- That's the context, right? We've got, you know, and just to colour it a little bit, so we know we've got the Torah, those first five books, all about how God created, all humans descend from Adam and Eve, all humans derived through Noah's three sons, Shem, Ham, Japheth, and Genesis 10, all of the nations of the world descend from those guys.
- And we've read about how sin enters the world, and that is because of willing obedience to Satan, rather than to God. But then God will provide a deliverer, and that's the whole overtone of the Old Testament.
- [6 : 25] God will provide a deliverer. And we see in Samuel, that's starting to get focused down. Already we've seen it focused through Abraham and Sarah. The promise is going to be for those two.
- They need to start a family, which they do, and we know the story. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, twelve sons. They go down into Egypt as a family of about 70 people, and they come out of Egypt as a nation.
- In Paul's words, made the people great. Big. Lots. Maybe, probably over a million. Maybe close to two million. And then God led them out through Moses, showing great power over them, that set the whole world in fear of God and Israel.
- And this is important, because as we go through 1 Samuel, we'll read, you know, this is what, 400 years later from the Exodus? If not more? Anyway, let's say it's 400 years.
- The Philistines are still like, we remember what God did to Egypt. We remember what God did. And the echoes of that event are still reverberating 400 years later.
- [7 : 35] I mean, what happened 400 years ago from now? Hmm. This was a major, major event. And then, of course, we've read, we read in Joshua about how the land is apportioned.
- But actually, importantly, the key, one important thing from Joshua is not all of the land was taken. And because of that, we start to see problems in certain areas, particularly where the Philistines are, because that land wasn't taken.

Funnily enough, the same land that has problems today. And then we had the time of the judges, which we indeed read not so long ago. And we saw that cycle of sin, oppression by enemies, God raises up a judge to deliver them.

And these judges were men and women who had God's anointing and power to save. But they also had this ongoing office of sort of arbitration, I suppose, and guidance.

And they weren't kings in that sense, but they had the authority to decide cases and to guide. But what we saw in judges is this decline in spiritual and moral health.

[8 : 51] The last judge, Samson, good guy, bad guy. We remember Samson, right? Oh my gosh. He was not a good guy. And yet, I don't know if God was thinking, I guess he'll have to do.

You know, the ways of the Lord are, I'm sure I shouldn't. Sorry, Lord. But you know, Samson was not a good guy, right? He was a womaniser.

He was self-serving. He was, he made very, very light of God's anointing power on him. And you're thinking, is this really, is this the people God chose?

Well, things are turning. The times, they are a change in. As Samuel comes on the scene. Now, according to 1 Samuel 7, which we'll get to, Samuel did judge Israel.

So, Samson wasn't the last prophet. Sorry, the last judge. Samuel is the last of the judges. Interestingly enough, if you've taken those, also Eli, whom we will be introduced to, is also mentioned as a judge, or that he judged Israel.

[10 : 04] But Samuel is the last. And then, but he's also the first. He's the first of the prophets. Acts 3, 24, Peter says that, likewise, all the prophets who have spoken from Samuel, and his successors onwards, have announced these days.

So, Samuel was the first of this new generation of men called prophets. prophets. And Samuel, the book of Samuel, introduces us to them, and it is that transition.

Interestingly, it is actually, in the Hebrew Bible, the first of the prophets' books. With the, Isaiah and Jeremiah and all those, those guys, they're called the later prophets.

Samuel was one of the former. So, introduction to prophets. Also, introduction to the monarchy. Of course, this is a key point. You'll remember the last verse in Judges, something of a refrain for the book, really.

In those days, there was no, what? There was no king in Israel and everyone did what was right in their own eyes. No king.

[11 : 16] Everyone just did what they thought best. And contrary to secular opinion today, doing what is best in your own eyes, things don't generally work out so well if you do that.

So, that's where we are. And again, for us, we had that lovely little book of Ruth as a nice interval between Judges and Samuel. For the Hebrew Bible, originally, Ruth, the book of Ruth is one of the writings, Tehillim, right down at the end.

And so, it goes straight on in. And actually, the very first letter in Samuel is Vav, which means and. So, the book begins on an and, people, which our translators have changed to a now.

But it was. It's just a straightforward flow, straight out of, so you can think of the last verse, the previous verse, we've just read this, in those days, there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in their own eyes.

And there was a man from Ramathiam. So, that's how we should think of this book. This is where we come in. So, the book of Samuel, one of the major themes, of course, is the installation of a monarchy.

[12 : 25] And, you know, as we read the book, we may come to an impression that God didn't actually intend there to be a monarchy in Israel.

You know, because when the people are sort of clamouring, Samuel, give us a king. Samuel's like, God, this isn't, you hear what these people are saying, and God says, it's cool, it's not you they're rejecting, it's me they're rejecting.

But that isn't to say that God didn't intend or want for them to have a king. Actually, Genesis 17, verse 6, and verse 16 together, Genesis 17, 6 and 16, in those two verses, God says to Abraham and Sarah, respectively, kings are going to come from you.

So, definitely always on plan. And then, of course, the key passage is Deuteronomy 17, verse 14 to 15, which I'll skip reading, but the passage says, this is, you're going to appoint a king, when you want a king, you can appoint one, and this is how you should do it.

If you didn't get the reference, sorry, Deuteronomy 17, 14 to 15. Actually, you can read on through there, actually. But what Moses does there is he says, this is how the king should reign.

[13 : 45] He shouldn't multiply riches, he shouldn't take loads of wives, actually, he should do this thing. He should read the Bible every day, and he should write out his own copy.

Can you imagine if we had leadership today? that did that. Read the Bible, write it out for yourself, live by it. That was the monarchy that God intended to appoint, and I believe that's what ultimately is, well, ultimately, to some extent, to the greatest extent, that is fulfilled in David.

But ultimately, in the true king of Israel, of course, Jesus Christ. Christ. So, it's a turning point. It is a turning point in the history of Israel. And I thought I would say a little bit on that, because, you know, and actually it was deliberate that we sang Great is Thy Faithfulness today, because it calls out, it quotes James 1.17, that song, where it speaks of God having no shadow of turning.

God doesn't change. There's no hint of God changing. If you want a technical term for it, it is God is immutable. There you go, some theology for you.

What does that even mean? It means God doesn't change, okay? That's all it means. He is, and I guess it's not that he doesn't, it's not just merely that he doesn't change. By definition, it's impossible that he should change, because he is an eternal God.

[15 : 10] God never changes. As he was, so he is, so he forever will be. And praise God, that how he is, is kind and good and gracious and loving and just and merciful and all those things that, well, we celebrate those things and he will never change.

But, how he is working, what he is doing, does change. Throughout scripture, we see how God works will change.

The covenant that God made with Noah is different from the one that he made with Abraham. It's different from the one that was with Moses and so on and so on. Different periods of time, or if you prefer dispensations, there are these different periods in which God is working in different ways.

God is always loving, God is always showing grace, grace, he always desires to save from sin, and salvation is always by grace through faith. Habakkuk 2.4, just at the end of that verse, it says, the righteous one shall live by his faith.

I think it's the King James, the traditional rendering of that is the just will live by faith, so you may know it like that. So that's always the case. The one who is right before God, who desires to be right in God's sight, is someone who lives by faith, what does that look like?

[16 : 42] Well, it varies, because for the Jews of this period, to live by faith meant to live in adherence to the law of Moses, completing the feasts and the sacrifices, doing the things that were commanded.

For the church, it is faithfulness to Christ, it is dependent on his grace and the Holy Spirit. The works never save, but the works work out from faith in different ways.

God never changes, the way that he works in our lives does. And I think we do well to ponder what is it that God is doing in our lives right now?

We have seasons in our lives. The things that we are praying for vary day to day, week to week, month to month, and year to year as our lives roll forwards, and the issues and the challenges that we and our families face.

sins that we struggle with change, don't they? Sometimes our lives can be relatively peaceful, other times things are hard, and life can feel heavy, which we will see for Hannah.

[17 : 51] And I think that we do well to remember in these times that God does not change. change. And I think that what God is always asking of us is that we would live in faith.

I think that he's always asking and saying, hey, do you trust me? Do you love me? Am I your top priority?

Or is there something that's more important to you than me? There are things that never change. How we work that out varies. Anyway, let's move on to verse 1.

Alright, yes, indeed. 1 Samuel chapter 1, verse 1. Now, there was a man from Ramathim Zophim, from the hill country of Ephraim, and his name was Elkanah, the son of Jeroham, the son of Elihu, the son of Tohu, the son of Zuf, an Ephraimite, and he had two wives.

The name of one was Hannah, and the name of the other Penina. Penina had children, but Hannah had no children. Elkanah, Elkanah, however you say his name, pick one.

[19 : 15] Elkanah is introduced, and five of his forefathers are named. And I'm like, thank you for doing that, because that allows us to cross-reference with 1 Chronicles, and I can tell you that Elkanah is actually a Levite.

He is not an Ephraimite, he is a Levite, that is to say he is of Levitical descent, that is to say the line of the priesthood. And that might seem a small point, but when we get on to reading about how Samuel is offering sacrifices, and he rebukes Saul for offering a sacrifice, this is why, because actually Samuel is a Levite, and therefore he is eligible.

So it is important, but the author says that he's an Ephraimite, well, no, Ephraimite means that he dwells in Ephraim, he dwells in the territory, the land appointed to Ephraim, and of course, we know that the tribe of Levi had no inheritance, the Lord is their inheritance, and therefore they dwelt in amongst the other tribes.

Elkanah is one of those guys. Got it? Good. This place, Ramathayim, Zophim, I am delighted to tell you this is the only place it's called that.

Everywhere else it's just called Ramah, which is way easier to say. And we'll see that later on even in our text today if we get that far. It's just called Ramah, that's where his house is. And Elkanah's got two wives.

[20 : 46] Danger. The Bible is clear that God intends marriage to be monogamous. Right? One man, one woman.

Now, pick a commentary off the shelf that talks about first hand meal and it will tell you, oh dear, okay, now you've gone all wrong and he shouldn't have two wives. Yes, that is true generally speaking.

However, it is also possible that this is, for example, a Levirate marriage. It's also possible that he has been obliged to marry a brother's, a deceased brother's wife who had no children and bearing in mind Hannah is barren so that's entirely possible or he may also have just fancied two wives.

We don't know but I thought I'd call that out just to say something other than all the commentators who are like, bad guy. the name Hannah, beautiful name, I named my daughter that, it means grace, Hannah means grace and Penina, not so clear, it seems to derive from the word that means corner or cornerstone, just if you're taking notes but that seems to me entirely irrelevant so we'll move on.

And we learn that Elkanah and Penina have no problems having children, not a problem, Hannah, barren.

[22 : 17] So there can be no doubt as to who is infertile. It's a hard thing and when you read passages like Deuteronomy 28 where those passages they led to this prevailing wisdom that children are a blessing and evidence of being right and therefore barrenness, evidence of the curse of God and rejection.

And of course that's not what the text says. And there are plenty of saints who have dealt with barrenness. I mean we've already read, well in our narrative we would have already read Abraham and Sarah, barren, Isaac and Rebecca, struggled to have children.

Isaac had to pray for Rebecca. And of course Rachel, Jacob and Rachel, they struggled. That's three for three right in the patriarchs. But in spite of that history it was still a very hard thing culturally for Hannah to bear.

I mean it's a very difficult thing even today. It goes against the maternal instincts. It's hard. It's a hard thing. But in Hannah's day where there remained this stigma around it where it must be your fault.

Search your heart you sinner. You must be cursed of God. Hard things. And I, well let's read on. But as we read, just notice as we read how many adjectives that there are to describe how Hannah feels.

[23 : 52] Just, you'll see them. Verse three. Now this man would go up from his city yearly to worship and to sacrifice to the Lord of armies in Shiloh. or Shiloh.

And the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were priests to the Lord there. When the day came that Elkanah sacrificed, he would give portions to his wife Peninnah and to all her sons and daughters, but to Hannah he would give a double portion because he loved Hannah.

But the Lord had closed her womb. Her rival, moreover, would provoke her bitterly to irritate her because the Lord had closed her womb. And it happened year after year, as often as she went up to the house of the Lord, that she would provoke her.

So she wept and would not eat. And then Elkanah, her husband, said to her, Hannah, why do you weep? And why do you not eat? And why is your heart sad? Am I not better to you than ten sons?

Wow. Let's talk about Shiloh for a moment. Jerusalem. This is, it became a key site in Israel under Joshua. It's about 25 miles north of Jerusalem.

[25 : 01] It's in the tribal allotment of Ephraim, so nice and local for Elkanah. And in Joshua 18, that's where the tabernacle was sent up. The tabernacle, of course, is the tent of God, the tent of meeting.

It is the place during the Exodus where God was. The Ark of the Covenant was there, is there, in the context of this story. The mercy seat with the two cherubim where figuratively and perhaps in some sense with the Shekinah glory actually, God dwelt.

Shiloh. It's God's house. The tabernacle was there and Elkanah goes up regularly. And Eli the priest and his two sons there are presiding.

Now, in the Torah God had decreed that when people wanted to worship and offer sacrifices, they should go to the tabernacle where the presence of God was to do it.

And if you want to read about that, that would be Deuteronomy and chapter 12. So Elkanah does right to go there. Now, actually, though, there are three mandatory feasts of pilgrimage.

[26 : 12] Passover, Shavuot, which is the Feast of Weeks, and Sukkot, which is the Feast of Booths. And the Feast of Weeks is 49 days, seven weeks after Passover.

So it's possible that they would go up and camp out, but Sukkot is in the autumn. So I think in order to be in full obedience to the feast laws, he should have been going up twice.

So I think we're seeing partial obedience, but hey, there's some obedience there at least. So that's Shiloh, that's why he's going up. Now, let's talk about these family dynamics then.

So two wives, Hannah and Penina. Hannah's life is extremely hard because there's a rhythm to it of going up once a year, and every time she gets this expression of love from Elkanah, double portion of meat, but she can't enjoy it because of the hardship, the double hardship, I suppose, of being barren, and then being provoked by the delightful Penina.

Provoked bitterly to irritate. I thought that was a wonderful turn of phrase. Provoked bitterly to irritate. Hebrew is provoked with provocation.

[27 : 42] Poke, poke, poke. She's trying to wind her up. She's trying to make her angry. She's trying to provoke. I think she's trying to provoke Hannah to an unrighteous response of anger or whatever.

I think that's what she's trying to do. And then of course we have Elkanah. Hey man, why so sad when you've got me? Because I mean I'm pretty awesome.

I'm like ten sons. What's up with you? Wow. Hannah has this great grief and great sadness.

She's got this rival wife deliberately to provoke her. And then you've got Elkanah who has a complete lack of emotional intelligence. And I don't know whether he's ignorant of how Hannah feels or whether he is simply not equipped to support her.

In either way we would call that lacking emotional intelligence. He doesn't know his wife. And there indeed we have an application point which is husbands love your wives.

[28 : 51] And that's the thing. The text says that he did love her which he expressed in the giving of this double portion but he just didn't seem to know her. 1 Peter 3 7 is a verse that says this.

It says you husbands in the same way live with your wives in an understanding way as with someone weaker since she is a woman and show her honour as a fellow heir of the grace of life so that your prayers will not be hindered.

And I discussed this first with Ali wondering to what extent to go into it. And there's obviously a whole study here to really understand what Peter is saying.

But the key thing that I wanted to pull out for us here is we are commanded, I am commanded as a husband to understand my wife.

I am commanded to know her. How does she feel? What is it that's concerning her?

[29 : 55] What does she hope for? How can I bless and encourage her? I have a command. All of us men who are married have a command to know and to know in every sense of the word.

The Greek of the verse is to live together according to knowledge which actually I think has a sense of mutuality that the English translation doesn't bring out. And so I highlight that there is a mutual sense to this.

We should seek to know one another. Got that. Marriage is intended to be the number one, bar none, most intimate relationship between humans.

Thoughts, emotions, hopes, worries, prayers all shared together. Something I wish I had learned 10, 15, 20 years ago. Hey, I know it now at least. So there's that.

So, application is, husbands and wives, how are you making time to know and understand your spouse? What space and time are you setting aside to really talk and share?

[31 : 06] And are there things that you struggle to honestly discuss together? Is there a part of your life that you don't feel that you can fully open up to your spouse? That's something to pray about and ask yourself why.

Ask the Lord why. Because I am certain your marriage will be enriched if you do share it. Elkanah, he's rubbish. Don't be like Elkanah.

And Hannah, of course, is a model for enduring hard times. She shouldn't have to suffer hard times, but she does, and the way that she endures it is admirable.

And we'll read on and look a bit more about how she does that, but I want to just highlight one more thing from this text before we move on, because it is important. This is stated twice, verse 5 and verse 6.

What is it? It says, the Lord had closed her womb. Now, this is different from Sarah, of whom it is said, I think she was barren, or she couldn't have children, or whatever it is.

[32 : 04] This is saying, the Lord has closed her womb. Twice stated, just in case we missed it. Hannah's barrenness is an active and deliberate act on behalf of God.

That's what it says. That's what it says. The Lord has done it. Why? Why? Well, I think we'll find out, but we need to come to terms with the fact that God here is withholding a good thing from her.

We need to see that and accept it. And God has a purpose in it, and actually I will say this, how does the author know all of this great stuff about how Hannah feels, what Hannah's going to pray?

I'm convinced it's because Hannah, told her son Samuel in the future, and she said, I have no doubt it was worth it in the end to have you and to see the Lord working in my life through you.

But here, in this time, you need to see that. Okay, verse nine. Verse nine, right. Then Hannah got up after eating and drinking in Shiloh.

[33 : 15] Now, Eli the priest was sitting on the seat by the doorpost in the temple of the Lord. She, greatly distressed, prayed to the Lord and wept bitterly, and she made a vow and said, Lord of armies, if you will indeed look on the affliction of your bond servant and remember me, and not forget your bond servant, but will give your bond servant a son, then I will give him to the Lord all the days of his life, and a razor shall never come on his head.

So, now let's talk about Eli, the priest. I always find it odd that we're introduced to his sons with reference to Eli before Eli is introduced as a priest, but I have no answer for that, so we'll talk about Hophni and Phileas next week, and we'll learn how awesome or not they are.

But for now, we're looking at Eli. Where is Eli? Well, he sat on a seat. He sat on a seat by the doorpost of the temple of the Lord. Hang on, hang on, temple of the Lord?

Wait a minute. We all know, of course, this is not the temple in the sense of Solomon. Solomon, we speak of Solomon having built the first temple, but I think that's maybe a little bit of a misnomer, because the tabernacle of God is what is in view here, and it was also the temple of the Lord.

Earlier in our text, it was called the house of the Lord. It is where God dwells. And Eli there is sat on a chair, and actually, just to colour this a bit more, we're going to read about how Samuel and Eli sleep there.

[34 : 55] There seems to be some kind of sleeping quarters that have been erected there by the tabernacle, because there ain't no way they'd have been sleeping inside. So a structure, maybe temporary, who knows, probably still tents, I would have thought.

But there is something resembling a sort of a campus, I guess, around the tabernacle. But there's this seat there. There's a seat.

And you can read all through the furnishings for the tabernacle in the Torah, and you will not find reference to any seats, because actually, theologically speaking, there should be no seat, because the priest's job is never done.

and hence the theological significance of Jesus Christ sitting down in the heavenlies, because his sacrifice was once for all. Earthly priests, you don't get to sit.

And here he is, sat down, on a seat by the doorpost. And actually, if you go ahead and take that Hebrew word for seat, and you say, gee, let me look at all of the other places where this word is used.

[36 : 01] It's throne. throne. It's a throne. It's a seat of honour. And I think we are right to picture Eli, man, I'm the priest of God.

Yeah, check me out, man. Check out my seat. Check out my throne. And, you know, whether that was explicit or just kind of in his heart, certainly it corrupted his sons, as we will see.

There was a sense of, I'm somebody. I'm important. Don't you know, I'm the priest of God, man. Don't you know who I am? Well, the priests are not important, per se.

I am preaching the word to you, but I'm nobody. It is God, and it is his word that's of importance. And if somebody who stands in place for God has any kind of puffed-upness or my seat of honour problem, fix that.

That's wrong. So, Eli, at best, at best we can say that Eli is naive and foolish.

[37 : 09] And certainly his legacy is corrupt. Corrupt sons. Eli, where did you go wrong, man?

So then we turn our attention to Hannah. And again, check out those adjectives. Greatly distressed. distressed. Not just a bit distressed. Greatly distressed. A soul filled with grief.

And I don't think that the author is overstating dear Hannah's sorrow. This is a heartache that's lasted years, probably lasted her entire adult life, made even harder to bear by the provocation of Panina.

And so where does she go? She goes to the Lord. The Lord of hosts. Lord of armies.

God of armies. And actually we saw that title in verse 3 and I kind of skipped over it. But this is the first time we see this title being used and we do see it ongoing throughout the Old Testament.

[38 : 15] God of armies. Lord of hosts. And it is a title that magnifies the sovereignty of God. God. He is Lord of all creation.

He is God over all human armies, angel armies, all created things. And we'll see that magnified in Hannah's song, which we definitely aren't going to get to today now.

She goes to the one who has closed her womb. And she makes a vow and she says, Lord if you will give me a son, then I will surrender him to you.

I will surrender him right back to you. I don't want this son just for me. I want it for you.

I'll give it right back. A razor will never come on his head. This is to say the Nazarite vow, number six, if you want to jot that down. Number six is actually the prescription for one who wishes to choose to live a separate, sanctified or Nazarite life, a life dedicated to God.

[39 : 33] Generally, that would be for a period. During that period, the vower would not take anything of the vine, no alcohol, no wine or grape juice, and he or she would never cut their hair.

And hence the razor. But Hannah here is making a vow on behalf of the child that she's praying for.

Lord, I will set him apart for you forever. He'll be yours. Oh, man. This is what I spent a bit of time on this morning because there's an application point here.

And I think, yeah, we'll read this bit and then we'll close. Probably. 40 minutes, yeah. So the Lord has closed her womb.

And I think this is the why of that. The Lord wanted to lead Hannah to a point of total surrender. Samuel was going to be a Nazarite from birth, a man set apart, dedicated to God forever.

[40 : 46] And it's actually, it may call to mind for you, John the Baptist. Because he was also a son born to a childless Levite couple.

Now in their case, they didn't get Zachariah and Elizabeth. Now they didn't have Hannah's moment here and actually what happened is they got old until an angel showed up.

And I wonder, I do wonder, I mean, you know, I'm probably a bit off-piste when I say this, but I do wonder that if, if, um, Zachariah and Elizabeth had come to Hannah's point of surrender, that things would have come to pass earlier for them.

Don't know, don't know. Um, and I don't think it's helpful to ponder those kind of questions for too long. But what we have here is Hannah does come to that point of surrender.

In her sadness, in her grief, she doesn't rage against God, she doesn't, um, do you know what, stuff it? What's the point of being righteous? I don't get what I want anyway.

[41 : 51] What she does is she comes to this point of total surrender. Lord, if you do, give me a son. He is yours. 100% dedicated to you. This isn't for me.

This is for you. The son I wanted, the thing that I saw and prayed for, the thing my heart aches and yearns for every day, every month.

If you do give one to me, I give him right back to you. And then Hannah also repeatedly refers to herself as a bond servant.

In your, um, if you've got a 1995 NASB, it's maidservant, which the 2020 edition is, uh, updated to bond servant. It is a, uh, a word for servant that is in a feminine form, hence maid servant, uh, but it's, it's, it's bond servant.

It is to say, uh, she regards her life as not her own, but from God and for God. And a servant, a bond, a servant doesn't really have self-interest and self-desires.

[43 : 05] A servant doesn't really have personal goals other than to do and please the master, to do for the master and to please the master. Everything that a servant has and does is for God, for the master.

And, and for you and me, we are to consider ourselves as bond servants to God. This is the, what was modeled for us by the early church, by the apostles.

The scriptures say that we are not our own. We are bought at a price. And, and when there are things that we strongly desire, the example that Hannah gives to us is surrender.

Surrender to God, confessing, it's not for me, it is for you. And man, I wish it was as easy as that. Because for Hannah, she has got to this point.

She has, she is praying that prayer in complete, in complete honesty and forthrightness. This is what she wants.

[44 : 16] Lord, this is yours. And she's still weeping. She is still a woman despairing in spirit, even though that decision has been made in her heart.

But this is where our truest and deepest fulfillment is found, in realizing that God is God and we are his workmanship, created for good works.

We are created to worship and serve him and he will give us everything necessary to do that and much more besides because he is generous. But our, the application point for this is, is that we should prayerfully seek to align our wills and desires to his.

And pray that the Lord will help us to do that because it's hard. Oh, Father. Father, I thank you, Lord, for these things.

Lord, I thank you that you are the great God and master. And Lord, so often we do, Lord God, so often we do desire things for ourselves.

[45 : 24] And Lord, and often with the things that we desire, like Hannah, they're good things. And Lord, I pray that you would do a work in our hearts such that our desires would be fully surrendered to you.

And I pray, Lord God, that you would, Lord, in your way minister to us that you are all that we truly need and that in you is found all sufficiency.

see. And I pray, Lord God, that you would give us a holy contentment and joy in being bond servants of God. And when we perceive lack in our lives, Lord, we would pray into it, but we would surrender it to you, knowing and trusting that everything that we need is found in you.

Oh, God, we thank you, Lord, for this word. Lord, we thank you for Hannah and her precious godly example. Lord, may your word minister to us today, this week.

In Jesus' name, amen. Amen. Amen.