

8/31/25 - Order of Worship

Red = Slide Change

Purple = Sound Person Note

Green = PC Person Note

Blue = Note for Speaker

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- **Welcome!**
- **Today's Sermon**
 - Seeking God's Kingdom - Part 2 - The LORD Knows
 - Sermon notes available
- **Church Newsletter:**
 - Church Yard Sale - Friday - Saturday, Sept 12-13.
 - Church Picnic - Sept 28th, after the church service
 - Huffnagle Park in Quarryville
 - Pork BBQ, Bottled water & paper supplies provided by church
 - Please bring 2 sides
 - Rain? Plan B is the church Family Life Center (Gym)
 - Sign up sheet in the church lobby—sign up by Sunday, Sept 14th
- **BIC Life Podcast** - Episode 42: Ai - Is it Ethical? We dive into a recent article from *Christianity Today* on AI in the classroom and reflect on how tools like ChatGPT are shaping education, ministry, and everyday life. Ryan and I both use Ai tools so we're able to explain firsthand what Ai is, and the pros and cons that come with it.
- **Wisdom from the Mountain** - A devotional series that looks at how the New Testament writers were impacted by the teachings found in the Sermon on the Mount. The first devotional will be available this Wednesday in the Church Newsletter (audio & print formats)
- **Connect Cards** - place them in the offering boxes

PRAYER

WORSHIP (3 Songs)

CONGREGATIONAL PRAYER

SCRIPTURE READING

- **Jim Bridge** - check livestream audio - handheld mic

MESSAGE - Seeking God's Kingdom - Part 2 - The LORD Knows

PRAYER

RESPONSE SONG

MESSAGE - Seeking God's Kingdom - Part 2 - The LORD Knows

I brought something with me this morning that I wanted to show you...

[SLIDE 1 - Picture of my sign]

This is a sign a friend gave us when Amanda and I began our journey with kids. It says, *"For this child I have prayed, and the Lord has granted the desires of my heart."* It's a poetic take on what Hannah said when she looked back on how God worked in her life.

And for Amanda and I, this sign serves as a reminder of how God worked in our lives. We cherish our memories, because when we look back on them, we can see how the Lord was near, directing our steps.

We saw that same truth last week in Hannah's story. Despite the trials she faced, **the Lord was near**. And it's that nearness that brought her peace in the storm.

But there's another truth in her prayer that stuck out to me...

[SLIDE 2] 1 Samuel 2:3 - "...for the LORD is a God who *knows*"

That struck me because it's not just that the Lord is *near* in our trials. He also *knows*.

He knows our fears and our failures. He knows what we're going through. And He knows how our story unfolds into His when we follow Him. That truth is incredibly comforting.

It reminds me of what Jesus said...

[SLIDE 3] John 10:14 - "**I am the good shepherd; I *know* my sheep and my sheep *know* me**"

His *knowing* is the source of our comfort.¹ It's the power behind His peace that transcends all understanding. And it's what gives us the strength to *a/ways* rejoice in the Lord, no matter what comes our way.²

This is what we see in Hannah's story.

¹ 2 Corinthians 1:3

² Philippians 4:4-7

Last week we saw her struggle and how the Lord answered her prayer. But...

What happened after Hannah brought Samuel to the tabernacle?

Did she ever see Samuel again? Let's set the stage...

[SLIDE 4 - Picture of Hannah and Samuel]

I know it's not in our passage today, but if you look down at 1 Samuel 2:19, it says that each year Hannah made a little robe and took it to him when she went to the tabernacle for the annual sacrifice.

That's an important detail!

Because that means Hannah remained consistent in Samuel's life. Granted, she didn't get to see him that often. A trip to the tabernacle wasn't easy back then. But she did go *regularly*. And each time she'd bring him one of the most basic things an ancient person needed — their robe.

If you remember in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus said...

[SLIDE 5] Matthew 5:40 - "If anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, hand over your coat as well."

That coat (or robe) was worn all the time, even to bed! In fact, it was so important that there are Old Testament laws that say if you take someone's robe as a pledge, you must return it by sunset, because it might be their only covering.³

And so...

[SLIDE 6] 1 Samuel 2:19 - "Each year his mother made him a little robe and took it to him when she went up with her husband to offer the annual sacrifice."

Notice that Hannah was providing for her son's basic needs in the best way she could. She was still very much part of his life, even if she wasn't able to see him that often. And - this is just my opinion - judging from what we'll see in next week's passage, I would say that **Hannah was probably the most consistent, faithful, and loving person that helped to shape Samuel's life.**

³ Exodus 22:26–27; Deuteronomy 24:12–13

Imagine what Hannah's visits with her son probably looked like. I bet little Samuel asked her to tell the story of how God answered his mom's prayer over and over. And for Hannah, she was excited to see the young man of God he was becoming. Her heart was filled with joy as Samuel shared what he was learning and how he was serving the Lord.

But the neat thing is, as the years passed by, Samuel witnessed his mother's faithfulness. She didn't just drop him off at the door one day only to never see him again. That would've been unthinkable for any good mother! Instead, she remained very much part of his life.

And this actually makes her faith even more striking. Because her original prayer — the one where she made a vow to the LORD — that wasn't a one-off mountaintop experience. **She lived it out, faithfully, year after year.**

But here's another interesting point... out of the 1,189 chapters in the Bible...

[SLIDE 7] Hannah's only mentioned in 2! 1 Samuel chapters 1 & 2.

So why include her story at all?

I suspect Samuel included his mother at the beginning because that's how much of an impact her faith in the LORD had on his life! Think about it...

Her story is highlighted on the very *first* page of the larger story that records Israel's struggle to return to the LORD. 1 & 2 Samuel and 1 & 2 Kings form one continuous story that traces the era of Israel's kings. It's an incredibly important historical record for the nation of Israel. And whose story is brought front and center? Hannah's!

The larger story of 1 Samuel is about Israel's unfaithfulness and God intervening to bring them back. But the smaller story that kicks the whole thing off is Hannah's steadfast faith.

Her faithfulness in the Lord was shining bright when the rest of the Israelite nation chose darkness; or as Jesus would say, her faith was shining like *a city on a hill*.⁴ And even though she's not mentioned beyond chapter 2, her heart for the LORD is what sets the tone for the rest of the book. Because...

⁴ Matthew 5:14–16

She not only knows God, but she's *known* by Him. And that fact is what turned her heart from tears of pain, to tears of joy.

Look at the first couple verses...

[SLIDE 8] 1 Samuel 2:1 - Then Hannah prayed and said: “My heart rejoices in the LORD; in the LORD my horn is lifted high. My mouth boasts over my enemies, for I delight in your deliverance.”

This is a very different start from her last prayer!

Last time she was praying to be noticed by God. She said, “LORD, if you will only look on your servant’s misery and remember me...”

But now she’s rejoicing! She said her “horn” is lifted high. The ram horn symbolizes strength and victory in the Bible. She’s saying the LORD has lifted her strength! Her mouth boasts over her enemies...

That’s not to say she’s bragging or even getting Peninnah back for all her insults. The Hebrew phrase literally says, “My mouth has been enlarged against my enemies.” In other words, she can finally speak boldly.

The woman who had been publicly humiliated and couldn’t say a word through her painful tears, now is strengthened with a voice of joy. She’s not mocking her rival...

[SLIDE 9] Hannah’s praising the LORD in front of her rival because the LORD didn’t forget her. She’s *known* by Him.

And unlike many people in her day, she knows the LORD! Look at how she continues her prayer...

[SLIDE 10] 1 Samuel 2:2 - There is no one holy like the LORD; there is no one besides you; there is no Rock like our God.

These are truths from scripture that are written on her heart. She’s affirming what Israel forgot: There is no god that compares to Yahweh God. There’s no god that can stand beside Yahweh in power and authority. That’s why I call the gods of the

nations “little-g gods.” They’re nothing compared to Yahweh God — He’s the LORD Almighty —Creator of Heaven and Earth — He’s above all!⁵

And the best part?

God is our Rock.⁶ He’s our refuge in the storm. He’s the source of our strength and peace.

And so Hannah says...

[SLIDE 11] 1 Samuel 2:3 - Do not keep talking so proudly or let your mouth speak such arrogance, for the LORD is a God who knows, and by him deeds are weighed.

The direction of her prayer here took an almost prophetic turn. This isn’t her getting back at Peninnah. She just went from praising Yahweh God to warning *anyone* that would oppose Him. She’s saying:

Don’t get cocky. Don’t think you can hide behind your pride. The God who lifted me up is the God who sees everything. And He doesn’t just see our actions, He sees our hearts—He knows why we do what we do. So those who continue in arrogance—those who lift themselves up with their words—will be brought low by the power of Yahweh God.

This isn’t just a personal warning. It’s a warning for the entire nation—her nation that had forgotten the LORD.

And... remember this moment... because, I think it’s pretty clear that this is where Samuel gets his boldness!

And she’s not done. She continues...

[SLIDE 12] 1 Samuel 2:4-5 - The bows of the warriors are broken, but those who stumbled are armed with strength. Those who were full hire themselves out for food, but those who were hungry are hungry no more. She who was barren has borne seven children, but she who has had many sons pines away.

Do you see the pattern?

⁵ Deuteronomy 32:39

⁶ Genesis 49:24; Deuteronomy 32 (multiple examples from the song of Moses)

Those that fight on their own strength are broken.

—The weak who stumble and stagger are given the Lord's strength.

Those who have plenty can't seem to get enough.

—Those who had nothing were satisfied by the Lord.

Then she flips it...

She who was barren is now made complete (7=completeness).

—But she who had many sons (like Peninnah), fade away into history.

So, Hannah's praising God for His power—because...

[SLIDE 13] When God is near and known, He has the power to flip the script! Lives change.

Her prayer ought to cause us to pause and reflect on our own lives.

How has God flipped the script for you?

This week I was reminded of my cousin's son, JD. He was suffering from a life threatening heart condition. His doctors did all they could, but ultimately were out of options. So my cousin's family went and got a second opinion from a doctor in Florida willing to take his case. That doctor prescribed a new medication... that was three years ago.

On Friday I saw this post from my cousin:

[SLIDE 14 - Picture of JD]

This is a picture of her son, JD, taken three years ago, just before he was about to take his new heart medication for the first time. I'm happy to report that JD is still doing well!

My cousin said in her post on Friday: [This was] "3 years ago today — [we're] so blessed to have been able to get JD the help he desperately needed.

#Godisgoodallthetime #Godisfaithful"

This reminded me of Hannah's situation because both stories move from deep desperation to unexpected deliverance.

Hannah's chances of having children were basically zero, yet God provided her a son. JD's prognosis didn't look good, yet God provided a way forward. Both stories show God flipping the script on what seemed like a hopeless situation.

And what I love about this is that, not only is it a victory story like Hannah's, but they give God the glory. They know the Lord, and despite the valley they walked, they trusted Jesus was near, strengthening them to press on.

This isn't to say that things always work out.

They've certainly experienced extreme hardship - that's another story. But whatever the circumstances, it all comes down to whose kingdom we're seeking. Things may or may not work out, but regardless, we stand on the truth that God is *near* and He is a God who *knows*.

Not only that, He is in control.

Look at what Hannah prays next...

[SLIDE 15] 1 Samuel 2:6-8a - "The LORD brings death and makes alive; he brings down to the grave and raises up. The LORD sends poverty and wealth; he humbles and he exalts. He raises the poor from the dust and lifts the needy from the ash heap; he seats them with princes and has them inherit a throne of honor."

I look at this and I'm just like... Samuel's mom is no joke!

This isn't a prayer that someone who casually follows the LORD would pray. She's a prayer warrior! She's 100% grounded in the LORD's faithfulness; and her words here reflect that trust.

She's saying that the LORD is in control. He has the power to flip the script. He reverses life circumstances!

He breaks bows.

He strengthens stumblers.

He fills the hungry.

He empties the full.

He raises the poor from the dust,

And places them with princes.

None of this is random. This is the LORD being *active* according to His knowledge and justice. Again, the LORD is a God who *knows*.

But does that mean the LORD is the cause of every hardship? After all, verse 7 says: *The LORD sends poverty...* What do we make of that?

Well, a super literal Hebrew translation of verse 7 says, *“The LORD makes poor and makes rich; He brings low, yes, He also exalts.”*

In other words, **the LORD has the authority and the power to reverse circumstances.** Hannah always believed this. But now she’s experienced it.

That’s why she can pray with confidence...

[SLIDE 16] 1 Samuel 2:8b-9a - “For the foundations of the earth are the LORD’s; on them he has set the world. He will guard the feet of his faithful servants, but the wicked will be silenced in the place of darkness.”

So what does it mean when Hannah says the LORD will guard the feet of His faithful ones? *Guard them from what?*

It’s not from things like sin, failure or even humiliation. He’s promising that their path won’t end in ruin. He steadies their steps, securing their feet. But the wicked? Their steps end in silence and darkness...

In fact, in verse 3 the proud are warned to stop speaking with arrogance. Here in verse 9, arrogant voices like Peninnah and others are shut down by the LORD.

Compare that to verse 4, which says those who stumble are armed with strength. Hannah was the one who staggered under shame and the LORD steadied her steps with His peace. He’s guarding her feet so that she could walk a secure path.

And this is something He continues to do for His people—including us! And who better to have walking beside us than the all-powerful Creator-God? This is why Hannah loudly proclaimed: *“the foundations of the earth are the LORD’s; on them he has set the world.”*

It’s like she’s lifting her eyes from her own story and fixing them on God’s larger story. Which then brings her to conclusion—the climax of her prayer:

[SLIDE 17] 1 Samuel 2:9b - “It is not by strength that one prevails”

The Hebrew literally says, “*For not by strength will a man be strong.*” This is a timeless, universal truth — meaning that it’s just as true for us as it was for Hannah.

In fact, I read that every empire and nation throughout history has believed the idea that strength secures peace. We see this in the Bible too...

- Babylon trusted in its military strength and wealth.⁷
- Egypt trusted in its chariots and horses.⁸
- Assyria bragged about its strength.⁹
- Rome embodied the idea of peace through conquest — their idea of peace was to render their enemies unable to fight.¹⁰
- Even Israel fell into the same trap by trusting in their own military strength.¹¹

And so, modern slogans like “peace through strength” are really just the latest version of an ancient posture. But Hannah’s line cuts across all of it.

“It is not by strength that one prevails.”

True peace, justice and security come from the LORD, not human strength. Jesus even reinforces this upside down posture in the Sermon on the Mount when He said: “*Blessed are the poor in spirit... the meek... and the peacemakers.*”

That’s the exact opposite posture of any other human power in history.

So what about our nation’s “peace through strength” posture?

Here’s how I frame it in my own mind...

I love my country, and I highly respect those that have served.
But at the end of the day, I’m a follower of Jesus before anything else.

⁷ Isaiah 47:7-11; Daniel 4:30

⁸ Isaiah 31:1

⁹ Isaiah 10:12-14

¹⁰ the Pax Romana (27 BCE - 180 CE). Rome’s idea of “peace” wasn’t the absence of war. It was a peace achieved by rendering their opponents unable to fight.

¹¹ Jeremiah 17:5-7; (opposite) Psalm 33:16-17

My “pledge of allegiance” is first and foremost to Jesus.
Everything else is secondary.

David himself had to learn this the hard way. Listen to what he wrote...

[SLIDE 18] Psalm 20:7 - Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the LORD our God.

May the same be true of us. Because as Hannah reminds us:

The LORD breaks the bows of warriors,
—but He feeds and strengthens those who stagger.
He lifts up the poor and the humble,
—and places them on a throne of honor with princes by their side.

This is the upside down Kingdom Hannah seeks.

Her eyes were locked on God’s larger story, and her words continue to echo all the way into the New Testament, with Mary. When Mary was carrying the Messiah in her womb, like Hannah, she offered a prayer of praise to the LORD. It’s often called “Mary’s Song.”

I’m going to read her prayer. And as I do, listen for Hannah’s voice singing alongside her...

[SLIDE 19] Luke 1:46-49 - And Mary said: “My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant. From now on all generations will call me blessed, for the Mighty One has done great things for me—holy is his name.

[SLIDE 20] Luke 1:50-52 - His mercy extends to those who fear him, from generation to generation. He has performed mighty deeds with his arm; he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts. He has brought down rulers from their thrones but has lifted up the humble.

[SLIDE 21] Luke 1:53-55 - He has filled the hungry with good things but has sent the rich away empty. He has helped his servant Israel, remembering to be merciful to Abraham and his descendants forever, just as he promised our ancestors.

Did you hear Hannah’s heart?

Both were rejoicing in the same God.

Both were seeing their story in God's larger, upside down Kingdom story.

Mary rejoiced because God's King had come.

Hannah rejoiced, because she was looking ahead toward God's King. Look at the last line of her prayer...

[SLIDE 22] 1 Samuel 2:10 - "those who oppose the LORD will be broken. The Most High will thunder from heaven; the LORD will judge the ends of the earth. He will give strength to his king and exalt [lift up] the horn [strength] of his anointed [messiah]."

Hannah probably didn't grasp the fullness of what she was saying, because that last line is incredibly significant. Hannah was the first person in the Bible to link the Hebrew word "*messiah*" to a king. Moses pointed forward to a prophet-messiah and a future king, but Hannah linked the two!

She was guided by the LORD's divine providence as she pointed forward to the true Messiah-King, Jesus!

In the New Testament, just after Mary's Song, Zechariah made a connection from Hannah's prayer as well. He said...

[SLIDE 23] Luke 1:68-69 - "Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel, because he has come to his people and redeemed them. He has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David."

He's talking about Jesus.

He's our Messiah.

He's our God that draws near.

He's our God that knows us.

He's our God that strengthens us.

He's our God that has the power to flip the script in our lowest moments.

And He's our God that saves us from our sins when we put our faith and trust in Him.

And so as we go about our lives this week — there might be moments when we feel like Hannah: weak, unseen, and without hope...

But remember Hannah's prayer, Mary's song, and Zechariah's truth:

[SLIDE 24] It's not by our own strength that we prevail.

I think that's the main takeaway from Hannah's story. There's a lot there for sure! But as we've seen, her faithfulness has been echoing throughout history. And I believe God preserved her story as an encouragement to keep our eyes on Him — Keep seeking His Kingdom — no matter what comes our way.

And so I'll leave you this morning with one final thought that comes straight out of the hearts of people like Hannah and Mary — people that have experienced God's faithfulness in the storm...

[SLIDE 25] Our strength is not in ourselves — it's in Jesus, our Messiah-King, who's near, who knows, and who saves.

Let's Pray

The Lord's Prayer:

[PRAYER 1] Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

[PRAYER 2] Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us.

[PRAYER 3] And lead us not into testing, but deliver us from evil. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.