



September 9, 2018
1 Samuel 1-3
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Regalia: The Rise of the Kingdom

Hi Everyone. My name is Larry Adams and I want to take a moment to thank you for reading this message. At Golden Hills we are committed to exalting Jesus and preaching the Word. Your downloading of this message is a great encouragement to us, as we know that our ministry is going out to spread God's Word all over the world.

We want you to know, too, that in no way do we intend these messages to be a replacement for your involvement in a good local church, where, sitting under the authority of pastors and other teachers, you can learn to worship, grow and serve and be engaged with a body of believers where you can grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.

We realize also, that some of you may be in areas of the world where there is no local church. Therefore, we hope these messages you are using, to gather with your family or other believers, or people from the community that it will be a great encouragement to you, as you hear God speak into your life, helping you to become disciples who are true, reproducing followers of Jesus Christ.

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We're going to start a series today called Regalia. Regalia – people are really excited about that. It looks and sounds cool. A lot of people told me they have no idea what that word means. That's good. That's fine. So I want to explain a little of it. Regalia is the word that is used to describe anything which is associated with a king or kingdom. So think: scepter, crown, throne, prince and princess – all of that kind of thing. We'll be going through 1 and 2 Samuel, studying the historical events that led Israel from a tribal confederacy, where there were the 12 tribes loosely related, how they transitioned from the tribal confederacy into a monarchy, where they were ruled and reigned by a king. So what happened during that transition? As we well unpack this, Larry and I are going to do our best to teach that the people and events and episodes we read about in 1 ad 2 Samuel – all of it is regalia. All of it is associated with God as King and His kingdom. Not just the nation of Israel, but it's the whole thing. So we'll see how king David is really pointing us toward King Jesus. And this morning, how Samuel, as a priest and prophet, is really pointing us to a better priest and a better prophet, whose name is Jesus. So we'll see how Hannah is a beautiful story of a woman who is gifted by God with a son, but how Hannah is actually in anticipation to another woman who is gifted with a son, and that woman's name is Mary and her Son is Jesus. I'm going to show you how all that works.

So we're going to dive into the Bible. My hope is that the Bible would become so much bigger than you ever thought, but also so much smaller – smaller in your confidence to read and have access to it, but bigger in the sense that it is mind-blowing, what God has done.

So that's the aim. I hope we can follow through.

Here we go. In order to understand 1 and 2 Samuel, we really need to understand the historical and theological contexts in which we find ourselves. So I'll start with the context. If we don't understand the context of 1 and 2 Samuel, what's going on historically and theologically, we're going to be doomed from the beginning.

So there is something we may not understand, or know. This might be first information. In the Hebrew Bible, when you read in the Old Testament, you're going to read through the Pentateuch (the first five books) and you'll get to Joshua, then jump into Judges. Then the very next book after Judges is a book called Samuel. It isn't first and second Samuel, there it is just one book called Samuel. When you go from Judges, you jump immediately to Samuel, so the history of Judges leads into the history of Samuel. They are one and the same. From one to the other. In our English Bibles, Judges is interrupted by a book called Ruth. So it goes, Judges, Ruth and then 1 and 2 Samuel. Sometimes we can get bogged down by the chronology, but what I want to do is help us to understand the historical context by taking out the book of Ruth and putting Judges and Samuel together, so you can see how, chronologically, it flows. When we do that, we see that the book of Judges is not a very fun book to read. If you've never read it, you should do it for kicks and see. It's one of those books you read and wonder, how is this even in the Bible? Because the last five chapters, especially, are disgusting. Hard to read! Honestly when you read it, you feel – I don't want to do this.

But we have to realize, when we read the Old Testament, especially, there is something happening there we often don't think about. Not everything in the Bible is prescriptive. The word prescriptive means this is what you should do. But we have to realize the history that is recorded in the Bible is often descriptive, it simply tells us what happened. That's a big difference. This is what happened verses this is what you should do. So when you read things like "Abraham had an illegitimate child, Ishmael with Hagar." You can't assume that's what you should do too. I should have a concubine too. NO! What are you talking about? I mean this in the most loving and nice way – that's what people who are ignorant of what the Bible is, say. Not all the Bible is prescriptive, here is what you should do. Instead, it's descriptive much of the time.

So when you read the book of Judges, you see so much description which will turn your stomach. The author has this one phrase he repeats four times in the last five chapters, trying to make sure we don't miss it. The phrase is found first in Judges 17: 6 (same exact phrase as the last verse of the book.)⁶ "In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes." That last part especially we are very familiar with. We all do what is right in our own eyes, like *What's good for you, is good for you. Don't tell me how to live my life.* All right. When we do that, things like the book of Judges happen.

So what are some of the things that are happening in the book of Judges? I don't have time to go through the whole thing, but let me tell you these last five chapters – they are really telling. Starting in Judges 17, we're introduced to a Levite. A Levite is from the tribe of Levi, which means he is a priest, from the priestly tribe. So the Levites were tasked with the responsibility of teaching God's people God's word. Except for this particular Levite actually carves an image and puts it on his fireplace mantle and worships it. We all know that the nation of Israel has the Ten Commandments and the first commandment is – you shall have no other gods before Yahweh, the Lord. So here's this levitical priest who has his own little god that he is worshipping. Uh-oh. This isn't good.

Not only that, but the tribe of Dan, in the Northern Region, they come by the city where this Levite is a priest and they hire him to become their priest! That means the tribe of Dan takes on this little idol god and their god. So they have this little god that was carved out of wood or whatever, and they worship it with the Levite as the priest. So right from the beginning you realize – uh-oh. There is no king in Israel, and everyone is doing what is right in their own eyes. This is not good.

Then it gets worse. Chapter 18, 19 and 20 introduce this horrific story. I'll summarize it as quickly as I can. There is a man who has a concubine, a wife, who is from Bethlehem in Judah. She is unfaithful to him, so he dismisses her. She goes back to her father's house in Bethlehem. After four months, he decides he wants his wife back, so he travels to Bethlehem and stays with his father-in-law for a

number of days. Finally, they decide they will go back to their home. So, they head out. Except that they left late in the day. So as the sun was beginning to set, they were worried about sleeping outside under the stars. So they go to a city called Jerusalem. As they go into Jerusalem, they go to the city square. Now, it's the custom that in the city square, you go and wait for somebody to invite you into their home, for a little hospitality. Eventually an older man comes and welcomes them because he was from the same region as this man. So they head to the older man's home. Late at night, there is a knock on the door. The men of the city are demanding that this traveller come out because they want to rape him. So, of course that is like no, no, no. So the old man says you should never do such a wicked thing. So instead, they throw out his concubine. They ravage and rape her, all night long and eventually kill her. They leave her dead on the door step. He wakes up the next morning, sees his wife laying there, lifeless. He picks her up and takes her home. He cuts her into 12 pieces and sends her to the 12 tribes of Israel and says, look what you have done. So they want to know who did this, and it was the tribe of Benjamin. So all of Israel, the 11 other tribes, decided to war against Benjamin for what they did to this concubine. They almost wiped out the entire tribe of Benjamin. So much so, that there were only men left, and no wives. So they couldn't repopulate. To multiply and be fruitful is a theme throughout scripture. They couldn't do it. So the people of Benjamin decided that they were going to go and kidnap some women and make them, by force, their wives. So they developed a plan and that's exactly what they did. They were in a city called Shiloh, which we'll see in a little bit. They go and kidnap these women and forcibly make them their wives. Then, the book of Judges concludes with this same little phrase, (21:25) "In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes."

Do you notice the downward spiral of immorality and horrific wickedness, and it is exemplified in the treatment of women. See that? So I hate it when some of the more feminist-type folks say that the Bible encourages the mistreatment of women. NO. The Bible is depicting what happens when you fail to let God be king. That's what it is depicting – women are degraded, not elevated when God is pushed out of the picture.

It's beautiful because, in our English Bible, what comes after that verse where these women have been mistreated? What's the next book? Ruth! A woman! She is godly. It's like God is saying, "Look at how horrible these people are treating the women who are mine – but look at this woman! Mm, a woman after My heart." It's good.

So that's the historical context that we find for 1 Samuel. It's a horribly decadent, despicable, wicked place.

But there is also a theological context. The theological context is this: Israel has been anticipating a kingly offspring since its beginning. Genesis 3:15, when God is cursing Satan because of the fall of Adam, God says,

¹⁵ I will put enmity between you and the woman,
and between your offspring and her offspring;
he shall bruise your head,
and you shall bruise his heel."

It's telling us that there is coming a day when an offspring of the woman will conquer Satan, and with Satan, He will conquer evil, death and sin. It's going to be an offspring, a seed of the woman.

Then we see, when God calls Abraham. He makes a covenant with Abraham in Genesis 17: 6-7

⁶ I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make you into nations, and **kings** shall come from you. ⁷ And I will establish my covenant between me and you and your offspring after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you.

Then God speaks to Jacob, who eventually became Israel. His name was changed. Genesis 35:10-12

¹⁰ And God said to him, “Your name is Jacob; no longer shall your name be called Jacob, but Israel shall be your name.” So he called his name Israel. ¹¹ And God said to him, “I am God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply. A nation and a company of nations shall come from you, and **kings** shall come from your own body. ¹² The land that I gave to Abraham and Isaac I will give to you, and I will give the land to your offspring after you.”

When God pulls the nation of Israel out of slavery in Egypt, He says this to them (Exodus 19:5-6)

⁵ Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession among all peoples, for all the earth is mine; ⁶ and you shall be to me a **kingdom of priests** and a holy nation.’ These are the words that you shall speak to the people of Israel.”

So right from the very beginning of humanity, there was this concept for human beings, there will come someday an offspring of this woman named Eve, and eventually through the line of Abraham – will come a king. There will be a kingdom, and we see in Exodus, it’s kind of like a crescendo, a big apex of the whole thing – there will come a day where the people of God will be a nation, a kingdom, of priests. That means priests serving God, being in the presence of God. A king having authority.

Now, in the church according to 1 Peter 2, we are called “a royal priesthood.” That’s one of those things that unites the entirety of scripture from Genesis to Revelation, the concept of kingly offspring or a royal priesthood. The people of God are called to be royal priests.

Now, many people when reading 1 Samuel improperly read it as though the great sin of Israel was to ask for a king. That’s not true. God said that there would be a king through Abraham. God said there would be a king through Israel. God said that there would be a king in Exodus, because it’s going to be a kingdom of priests. In fact, Deuteronomy 17 is where Moses talks about this very fact, that Israel is allowed to have a king. Let me read this. (17:14-15)

¹⁴ “When you come to the land that the LORD your God is giving you, and you possess it and dwell in it and then say, ‘I will set a king over me, like all the nations that are around me,’ ¹⁵ you may indeed set a king over you whom the LORD your God will choose. One from among your brothers you shall set as king over you. [Notice that the offspring has to be from among your brothers.] You may not put a foreigner over you, who is not your brother.

And Deuteronomy 17:18-20

¹⁸ “And when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, he shall write for himself in a book a copy of this law, approved by the Levitical priests. ¹⁹ And it shall be with him, and he shall read in it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the LORD his God by keeping all the words of this law and these statutes, and doing them, ²⁰ that his heart may not be lifted up above his brothers, and that he may not turn aside from the commandment, either to the right hand or to the left, so that he may continue long in his kingdom, he and his children, in Israel.

So there is a provision, written by Moses, that you are allowed to have a king. The only thing is, that king better be committed to God's word. And if that king ever decides that he is going to divorce himself from the word of God, that is his downfall. We see that time and time again as you read the books of 1 and 2 Kings and 1 and 2 Chronicles. It's one evil king after another, and why were they so evil? Because they disobeyed the word of God. That's until you meet a man named Josiah, who discovers the Law. Then there is a widespread revival, because the king and the word of God come together.

So the people of Israel always knew that they were to have a king. They knew that his reign would be a delegated authority, always in submission to God as the true king. And the people were always to be the people of the Book. So the people were to be a kingdom of priests and they had this hope as their identity, that one day a kingly offspring would come who would right every wrong, and sin, death and Satan would be vanquished when he arrived. That's their hope.

So why should we study 1 and 2 Samuel? Historical, theological context, but why? Why bother with this old book? Let's just do the gospel! No, here's why. We learn about the greatness of God and His redemption when we read 1 and 2 Samuel.

Acts 3 actually mentions Samuel. It says this (3:24), this is Peter preaching about the coming of Jesus and what this all means. He says: ²⁴ "And all the prophets who have spoken, from Samuel and those who came after him, also proclaimed these days." In other words, the apostle Peter says, Samuel (the Samuel of this book) proclaimed the days of Jesus' death and resurrection. We say, what? Yes, he did. So as a church, we will ask and answer the question, "How?" How did 1 and 2 Samuel proclaim the days of Jesus? How? The apostle Peter clearly thinks it happened.

So the second reason why we should study this book is obviously associated with that, which is – we get to learn more about Jesus when we study 1 and 2 Samuel. Jesus taught that the whole Old Testament was ultimately about Him. This is in Luke 24:27, speaking to the disciples on the Emmaus Road, ²⁷ "And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself." So He takes the whole Old Testament and He goes – "guys, check this out!" He opens the scriptures and points on different pages, "Here I am! Here I am, Here I am!" Not only that but when Jesus was speaking to the Pharisees in John 5, look at what He said to them (5:39-40) –

³⁹ You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life;

The idea was that they thought that somehow you get saved by memorizing verses. No, that's not what saves you.

and it is they [the Old Testament scriptures] that bear witness about me, ⁴⁰ yet you refuse to come to me that you may have life.

"They" – the whole entirety of the Old Testament bears witness about ME!

So what's the point of 1 and 2 Samuel? Ultimately, Jesus is the point. But I want to show you how. I want to show you how 1 and 2 Samuel helps us to anticipate typologically and a foreshadowing way, that Jesus is the greater prophet, Jesus is the greater priest, Jesus is the greater king, Jesus is the greater – you name it! Hopefully, by the end of the next four months, you'll have a better grasp of this.

So. With that, 1 Samuel chapter 1. I'll read just the first 8 verses to set the context for us. And because I have limited time, and because I'm going to preach on the first three chapters, you can do the math. I

can't read every verse. So I am going to cherry pick the verses to read. I'll highlight those, and make connections with the New Testament, and the person and work of Jesus as we go.

There was a certain man of Ramathaim-zophim of the hill country of Ephraim whose name was Elkanah the son of Jeroham, son of Elihu, son of Tohu, son of Zuph, an Ephrathite. ² He had two wives. The name of the one was Hannah, and the name of the other, nah. And Peninnah had children, but Hannah had no children.

³ Now this man used to go up year by year from his city to worship and to sacrifice to the LORD of hosts at Shiloh, where the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were priests of the LORD. ⁴ On the day when Elkanah sacrificed, he would give portions to Peninnah his wife and to all her sons and daughters. ⁵ But to Hannah he gave a double portion, because he loved her, though the LORD had closed her womb. ⁶ And her rival used to provoke her grievously to irritate her, because the LORD had closed her womb. ⁷ So it went on year by year. As often as she went up to the house of the LORD, she used to provoke her. Therefore Hannah wept and would not eat. ⁸ And 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 more to you than ten sons?"

God, would You help us now? Having said all the things we've said so far, it's just setting the context for what we want to hear. And ultimately, we want to hear You. So God would You speak and would You give us eyes to see Jesus in this text. Would You give us hearts to believe that You are a God who not only makes promises, but keeps them. Would You give us ears to hear how beautiful, wonderful You really are. Do these things for us, we pray, in Jesus' name, amen.

If you notice from this text, Hannah is completely powerless to change her circumstances. If you notice why Hannah does not have children, it's because the Lord has closed her womb. It tells us right from the beginning that the author of Samuel really does believe that God is sovereign over all things. God is why Hannah can't have children. So Hannah is powerless to change her circumstances. She can't become pregnant on her own. The Lord has closed her womb.

Then we read in vs 6-7 that because the Lord had closed her womb, that Hannah wept. She would not eat. I don't know if you've ever been in that position where you've been so grieved and so emotionally distraught, that you have lost your appetite. That's where she is at. Devastated. Yet, one thing we know about God is this: as you read 1 Samuel, go to the left. What you'll find as you work your way that direction, is – God loves to work amongst those who are weak and needy. He loves that. In fact God worked through the barrenness of Sarah, the barrenness of Rachael (remember that in Genesis?). God worked through the out-numbered led by Gideon (remember in the book of Judges). God is described as one who is for the powerless and the poor. God describes Himself as the defender of the widow and orphan. God says that He demands justice for those who are oppressed. He promises blessing to the meek and blessing to the poor in the Beatitudes. He does all of this so that, in the midst of someone who is weak and needy, that He would get the glory and that we would be humbled by His provision. That we would see His graciousness, His justice, His love, His care, and in that we would be humbled to the point of declaring that I am not much or nothing at all – and God is everything! So God loves to work in the midst of the weak and needy.

In fact, in the New Testament, we see that being a Christian is based upon that very principle. 1 Corinthians 1:26-31, Paul writes:

²⁶ For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. ²⁷ But God chose what is foolish in the

world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; ²⁸ God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, ²⁹ so that no human being might boast in the presence of God. ³⁰ And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption, ³¹ so that, as it is written, “Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.”

See? The very fact that we are Christians, those of us who are Christians here, it's because we were weak and needy but God saved us. God does not save us when we are at our best. God does not save us when we are at our most moral, or are functioning at full capacity. In fact, to think that we are at our best, functioning at full capacity, and being incredibly moral – those are the very conditions which exclude you from being saved by God! Because every Christian starts with need. If you think you have no need, then you have no need for Christ.

So even there, Hannah couldn't control her circumstances. God is ultimately sovereign, and He loves to work in the midst of those who are weak and needy. So what is Hannah going to do? Well, (v 9) After they had eaten and drunk in Shiloh, Hannah rose. What did she do? She goes in verse 10 and begins to pray. She was deeply distressed. She prayed to the Lord as she wept bitterly.

My question is, why in the world was Hannah so upset? Like, there are so many people, especially newly married people in their twenties who would lament the fact that they would be pregnant. They think kids are a nuisance. They spend your money. You can't go on vacation. You can't live in a cool little apartment in some hipster neighborhood in the city. Kids are just ---- Get a dog! (laughter).

So what is Hannah's deal? Does she not know that she could be a self-contained, self-motivated, self-actualized woman of the world? Have a career? What's wrong with this girl? Well, if you remember the theological context of the nation of Israel, it was going to come through an offspring, that God would save and rescue fallen humanity.

Not only that, but there would come a priestly, kingly, prophetic offspring who would rescue and ransom and save fallen humanity. So if everyone stopped having children, not only would that disobey the very first commandment to be fruitful and multiply, but it also would not continue what God has promised, that through an offspring salvation would come.

So that's why she is grieving. She wants to be a part of what God is doing.

So she weeps. She prays. Here is what she prayed (vs 11) –

¹¹ And she vowed a vow and said, “O LORD of hosts, if you will indeed look on the affliction of your servant and remember me and not forget your servant, but will give to your servant a son, then I will give him to the LORD all the days of his life, and no razor shall touch his head.”

Lord, I'm praying that You would give me a son so that way, I could go neener-neener to Peninnah. And I will have him for myself and I will treasure him, and I will become a helicopter parent that I know I need to be. And every time he rides his bike, I will catch him before he falls. Every time he gets a bad grade, I will email his teacher and chew her out.

Notice – that's NOT how she prayed. Lord, if you were to give me this son, I'm going to return the gift to it's original giver. He is given back to you. Whoa. Well, what happened to Hannah when she does that? Look at verse 18. She is praying in front of the priest, Eli, who accuses her of being a drunkard and a worthless woman. But she goes, what are you talking about? I am pouring out my heart! So she says:

¹⁸ And she said, “Let your servant find favor in your eyes.” [Don’t think badly of me.] Then the woman went her way and ate, and her face was no longer sad.

Ok, so what happened between sad and no longer sad? She prayed. Did she receive what she prayed for which caused her to go from sad to no longer sad? No. You see, it wasn’t the reception of an answered prayer that caused her to do this. Look at verse 19, “¹⁹ They rose early in the morning and worshiped before the LORD.” She did not worship and change her demeanor because God answered the prayer, she worshipped God, changed her demeanor because she knew God was the kind of God that hears prayer and answers it however He wishes. He is sovereign. It’s the very act of prayer, where you entrust to God your circumstances, knowing that He is powerful, though we are powerless. It changes your demeanor.

So when I hear Christians say, Man, my prayer life is horrible, yeah, it will probably show in your demeanor and your perspective on the world. Don’t you realize we have a God? We are not an atom of the universe that is beyond His control? That should put you at ease. God has me.

When Hannah was weak, God was working. When Abraham and Sarah were weak, God worked. When Israel was weak in their slavery in Egypt, God worked. When we are weak and needy in our own sin, and cannot please God and worship God as we ought to (Romans 5:6) For while we were still weak, at the right time, Christ died for the ungodly. Our very salvation is because we are weak, needy and powerless to save ourselves. God showed His love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

So God doesn’t redeem us or rescue us or restore us when we are at our best, running at full strength, firing on all cylinders with our goodness. God redeems and restores and rescues us precisely because we are weak and needy. God saves sinners in the most unlikely way. He saves sinners, not by coming as a king, but coming as a servant. God came as a lowly human being, born of a woman, with armpits. Just think about that. The God of the universe with nostrils and eye boogers. God of the universe – came, not to be served, but to serve and give His life as a ransom for many. Who would have guessed that the God of the universe would hang on a cross, bloodied and beaten? Naked and exposed. Who would have guessed that?

God loves to work in unexpected ways. God was about to work in Hannah, in a totally unexpected way. How can this barren woman have an offspring? How? God intervenes. 1 Samuel 1:19-20 –

¹⁹ They rose early in the morning and worshiped before the LORD; then they went back to their house at Ramah. And Elkanah knew Hannah his wife, and the LORD remembered her. ²⁰ And in due time Hannah conceived and bore a son, and she called his name Samuel, for she said, “I have asked for him from the LORD.”

Amazing. God provides. Then, after he is weaned, they headed back to Shiloh to worship. After a couple years, Hannah goes to Eli the priest and says, “Here is the little boy that I was praying for many years ago. He is now lent to the Lord in fulfillment of my vow and promise. Here he is. So Eli takes Samuel into his home and teaches him how to be a priest and how to serve the Lord. They worshipped God there (1:28).

Then we get into chapter 2. The response now is worship. This is Hannah’s prayer (or it could be a song).

We're going to do something unique, ok? I'm going to ask you to do something. Might be tough for some folks. You are going to look with your eyes to the screen. We'll put Luke 1 up there. Luke 1 is Mary's song, where Mary visited Elizabeth when Elizabeth was pregnant with John the Baptist. I want to show you how Hannah's song is in anticipation, or is a foreshadowing of Mary's song. So I'm going to read chapter 2:1-7, but you're going to look at Luke 1. Your task is to see similarities.

1 Samuel 2:1-7

2 And Hannah prayed and said,

“My heart exults in the LORD;
my horn is exalted in the LORD.
My mouth derides my enemies,
because I rejoice in your salvation.

²“There is none holy like the LORD:
for there is none besides you;
there is no rock like our God.

³Talk no more so very proudly,
let not arrogance come from your mouth;
for the LORD is a God of knowledge,
and by him actions are weighed.

⁴The bows of the mighty are broken,
but the feeble bind on strength.

⁵Those who were full have hired themselves
out for bread,
but those who were hungry have ceased to
hunger.

The barren has borne seven,
but she who has many children is forlorn.

⁶The LORD kills and brings to life;
he brings down to Sheol and raises up.

⁷The LORD makes poor and makes rich;
he brings low and he exalts.

Luke 1:46-55

⁴⁶ And Mary said,

“My soul magnifies the Lord,
⁴⁷ and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
⁴⁸ for he has looked on the humble estate of his
servant.

For behold, from now on all generations will
call me blessed;

⁴⁹ for he who is mighty has done great things for
me,
and holy is his name.

⁵⁰ And his mercy is for those who fear him
from generation to generation.

⁵¹ He has shown strength with his arm;
he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of
their hearts;

⁵² he has brought down the mighty from their
thrones

and exalted those of humble estate;
⁵³ he has filled the hungry with good things,
and the rich he has sent away empty.

⁵⁴ He has helped his servant Israel,
in remembrance of his mercy,

⁵⁵ as he spoke to our fathers,
to Abraham and to his offspring forever.”

Did you see anything? Think about this concept. If Hannah and Mary are similar, and Hannah has Samuel, and Elizabeth has John the Baptist, who comes after Samuel? Well, we have Saul, but the next great person is King David! So Samuel is to David as John the Baptist is to – Jesus! He is coming. He is the kingly offspring. He is coming. See the connection! That gives me goosebumps!

So Hannah's prayer anticipates a coming king.

Let's look at 1 Samuel 2:10, where she sings or prays:

The LORD will judge the ends of the earth;
he will give strength to his king
and exalt the horn of his anointed.”

The word “anointed” is “messiah” or Christ. The Lord will give strength to His king and exalt the strength of Messiah. When she is praying this, there was no king in Israel yet. But she knows that God is a promise-making God, and a promise-keeping God. So if God said there was coming an offspring who will be a king, there is about the be an offspring who will be a king! Because God’s word never returns void. Wow.

Then we are introduced to Eli’s sons. 1 Samuel 1:3, we know that it is Phineas and Hophni. It says in 1 Samuel 2:12 : “¹² Now the sons of Eli were worthless men. They did not know the LORD.” So if you read the next section in chapter 2, all the way down to verse 25, you’ll see how wicked these men were. They were extorting the worshippers. They were defacing the worship of God. They were wicked. In verse 2:17, it actually says that they treated the offering of the Lord with contempt. And because of that wickedness, Hophni and Phineas would be judged by God and the whole household of Eli would be rejected. And you see this in 2:22, “²² Now Eli was very old, and he kept hearing all that his sons were doing to all Israel, and how they lay with the women who were serving at the entrance to the tent of meeting.” Imagine such a thing!

So God says this in 2:31, “³¹ Behold, the days are coming when I will cut off your strength and the strength of your father’s house, so that there will not be an old man in your house.”

1 Samuel 2:34, “³⁴ And this that shall come upon your two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, shall be the sign to you: both of them shall die on the same day.” Because you will not say anything to your kids, or because what you said to your kids was ineffective, your house, Eli, is judged.

You know, God works in amazing ways. In the midst of the judgment, God loves to make sure that there is hope. Look at verse 25. This is where Eli is speaking to his wicked sons:

²⁵ If someone sins against a man, God will mediate for him, but if someone sins against the LORD, who can intercede for him?” But they would not listen to the voice of their father, for it was the will of the LORD to put them to death.

Who can intercede for him? Who could possibly stand between sinful humanity and a holy God? Who could do such a thing? Oh, now we’re seeing it. It’s so prophetic! You see in the Old Testament, they were anticipating, longing for a mediator, an intercessor – someone who can stand between them and God and plead their case. Lo and behold, that person has come, His name is Jesus.

1 Timothy 2:5-6: “⁵ For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, ⁶ who gave himself as a ransom for all, which is the testimony given at the proper time.”

In Jesus, we have someone who is truly God, and truly man. The only person in all of human history who can actually relate to what it means to be human, and yet be at the same time, qualified to enter the presence of God. No one else can do that. Jesus alone is the mediator.

We see that Eli knew that was what was needed, but was not yet provided. Now, Jesus is here.

God works in this pattern of judgment and hope. You see it in Genesis 3:15, remember when He said

¹⁵ I will put enmity between you and the woman,
and between your offspring and her offspring;
he shall bruise your head,
and you shall bruise his heel.”

He is judging Satan. At the same time, He is providing hope. There is coming a day when an offspring will conquer Satan, conquer sin, conquer evil, and conquer death. In the midst of judgment, there is always the glory of God and hope.

So we see, in the midst of this judgment and condemnation of Eli's household, here is this hope, found in 2:35. God says:

³⁵ And I will raise up for myself a **faithful priest**, who shall do according to what is in my heart and in my mind. And I will build him a sure house, and he shall go in and out before my anointed forever.

That's language of someone who is going to live a really long time, like forever.

So, who could this be? Well immediately God is going to provide the fulfillment of this promise in the person of Samuel, but you would see that even Samuel is going to die, so where is this priest? Where is this faithful priest who will be in the presence of God forever? Samuel will be dead. So who is it?

Then we read in Hebrews 2:17-18, where the author of Hebrews says:

¹⁷ Therefore he [Jesus] had to be made like his brothers in every respect [He is truly God and truly man], so that he might become a merciful and **faithful high priest** in the service of God, to make propitiation [to appease the wrath of God and satisfy God's justice] for the sins of the people. ¹⁸ For because he himself has suffered when tempted [the judgment is that Jesus suffered], he is able to help those who are being tempted [there's the hope].

Because Jesus suffered the judgments of God, you now are made available to receive the hope of God. That's good.

Notice that Samuel was growing. We see this is 2:26, this Samuel who was given to Eli, ministering before Eli in the temple. It says, “²⁶ Now the boy Samuel continued to grow both in stature and in favor with the LORD and also with man.” Have you heard that phrase before? That sounds eerily familiar. Hmm. . .

Luke 2:39-40 – it says that Jesus was in the temple . . .

³⁹ And when they had performed everything according to the Law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. ⁴⁰ And the child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom. And the favor of God was upon him.

And Luke 2:52 “⁵² And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man.”

So when the nation of Israel was encountering Jesus, and they were seeing in Luke 2 what was going on, you'll notice that in their minds, they were thinking, *Oh, my goodness! He is growing in stature and favor with God and man, just like Samuel!* Now Samuel was the priest that was promised, but he died. Now, this is the new priest, the better priest, the everlasting priest! This is the one who is going to make atonement for sin! Here He is!

And where did Jesus grow? In the temple. He was in the temple, growing. Now, where was Samuel? 1 Samuel 3:1-3

Now the boy Samuel was ministering to the Lord in the presence of Eli. And the word of the Lord was rare in those days. There was no frequent vision. At that time, Eli, whose eyesight had begun to grow dim so that he could not see, was lying down in his own place. The lamp of God had not yet gone out. But Samuel was lying down [where?] in the temple of the Lord, where the ark of God was. [The ark of the covenant.]

When you jump down to 1 Samuel 3:19-21 it says:

¹⁹ And Samuel grew, and the LORD was with him and let none of his words fall to the ground.

²⁰ And all Israel from Dan to Beersheba knew that Samuel was established as a prophet of the LORD. ²¹ And the LORD appeared again at Shiloh, for the LORD revealed himself to Samuel at Shiloh by the word of the LORD.

See, how Samuel grew was by being in the presence of God, and being revealed by the word of God. God was revealed by the word of God. Think about where Jesus was growing. He was growing in the temple of God. What was He doing in the temple of God, in the outer courts when He was 12 years old? He was talking about the word of God. And when they heard Jesus speak, they would wonder where a boy of 12 got such learning. He was revealing Himself as God, through His words.

The ark of the covenant is a significant thing in this whole experience. The word of the Lord is HOW God revealed Himself to Samuel. In 3:7 it says, "⁷ Now Samuel did not yet know the LORD, and the word of the LORD had not yet been revealed to him." Then from verse 8-18, God reveals Himself to Samuel, calling out, "Samuel! Samuel! Samuel!"

He wakes up, goes to Eli and asks, "What do you need?"

Eli says, it's not me. Go back and lie down.

This happens three times. Finally, the fourth time, "Samuel, Samuel!"

Samuel says, "Speak, for your servant is listening."

God reveals Himself to Samuel through His word. Beautiful.

But the ark of the covenant is important. That's where Samuel was. What is so significant about the ark of the covenant? God said in Exodus 25:21-22, about building the ark of the covenant:

²¹ And you shall put the mercy seat on the top of the ark, and in the ark you shall put the testimony that I shall give you.

There, on top of this box, God will meet with them. On top of the box with the two angels with their wings overlapping one another. There, I will meet with you.

²² There I will meet with you, and from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim that are on the ark of the testimony, I will speak with you about all that I will give you in commandment for the people of Israel.

You see the ark of the covenant of God is where the Mosaic Covenant was stored, the word of God that was written down. It's the place where the High Priest would speak on behalf of the people. It's the place where the sprinkling of blood would take place for the atonement of sins. Samuel was in the temple, lying down by the ark of the covenant, where God speaks to His people, where God meets with His people, and where the word of God is stored. No wonder why Samuel is growing in the Lord! The ark is so significant. It's the place in which God is enthroned.

Psalm 80:1-3, 7, 19

Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel,
you who lead Joseph like a flock.
You who are enthroned [kingly language] upon the cherubim, shine forth.
² Before Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh,
stir up your might
and come to save us!

³ Restore us, O God;
let your face shine, that we may be saved!

⁷ Restore us, O God of hosts;
let your face shine, that we may be saved!

¹⁹ Restore us, O LORD God of hosts!
Let your face shine, that we may be saved!

Where God is enthroned, above the ark of the covenant, He is shining in brilliance and glory. That is the place that God has chosen to reveal Himself, speaking, meeting with and atoning for the sins of the people. Brilliant, glorious salvation!

That's a good description of Jesus! John 1:1, 14, 18 says it like this:

¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

¹⁸ No one has ever seen God, the only God, who is at the Father's side. He has made God known.

John 1:5 ⁵ "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it." The true light. It shines that we may be saved. John 1:9-13

⁹ The true light, which gives light to everyone, was coming into the world. ¹⁰ He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. ¹¹ He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. ¹² But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, ¹³ who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

1 John 1:9-2:2 --

⁹ If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. ¹⁰ If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

² My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. ² He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.

The person of Jesus is the word of God, who reveals God. It's the place in which we meet God, where you hear God speak to you. He is the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. He is the prophet of God who speaks the word of God, and none of His words fail. He is the priest of God who stands before God's holiness for you, and advocates for you as your intercessor. He is Jesus, whose blood was sprinkled for your sins. Jesus is the ultimate promised, merciful and faithful High Priest. Jesus is the prophet of God who fulfills God's word. Jesus is the word of God by which we know God. Jesus is the light that shines in darkness to bring restoration and salvation. Jesus is the better ark of the covenant, where we meet God and speak with God. Jesus' blood is a better atonement for sins. Jesus is who we plead to for the forgiveness of sins. Jesus is our mediator. Jesus is our advocate. Jesus is our better Samuel. Jesus is the better king. Jesus is the better prophet. Jesus is the better priest!
(applause)

So we read 1 and 2 Samuel because we want to know Jesus.

God, thank You for sending Your Son, Jesus to rescue us from sin and death. I pray that You would be faithful to Your people, to continue to reveal Yourself to us through Your word, the written word, the scriptures, so that we may behold the wonder and glory of the incarnate word, Jesus Christ, the righteous one, in whom there is salvation. God, we give You thanks for all that You've done and all that You've accomplished, in Jesus' name, amen.