

12 Jan 2025 – 1 Samuel 1 – Hannah’s heart after God

We’re starting a new series today – 1 Samuel “Shaping Hearts, Shaping a Nation”. The history of God’s people as they come together as a nation. As we let God shape our hearts, we can shape the nation too.

Samuel is one of the Key figures of the OT, A great man, but we’ll look first at his mother, Hannah. We don’t know anything about her background or family. Sometimes God uses unknown/unimportant people to play a BIG part in his plans. What about you?

Hannah’s story is very emotive and covers really sensitive issues. We pray that you will hear from God as you seek him through this passage, however this might affect you.

Read 1 Sam 1:1-8

Polygamy - Elkanah had two wives. God’s plan since Adam and Eve was for one man to be joined to one woman. There are times in the bible where men take multiple wives (according to the culture) but it always causes trouble and pain. Seek God and do it his way, whatever the issue.

We don’t always understand God – It’s easy for us to come to the bible feeling like we know it all, and ignore bits we don’t like or understand. Like v5 “The Lord had closed her womb”, that’s difficult! But remember;

- Praise God that He can open anything that is closed! See the end of this story.
- Sometimes we don’t know or understand God’s ways, His purposes or how He works.
- Life in this broken world can be tough. That’s why Jesus came – to make all things new.

Seek God to understand his ways – Seek God to find ways through difficulties

Every life is precious - I’m realising that life is more fragile than I used to think. Fragile, precious and a gift from God; Beyond my control, not to be taken lightly and in God’s hands.

That fact is under attack in our culture today – whether that’s end of life or beginning of life. If that stirs you up,

- Write to our MP and have your say
- Support Hospices and those who foster and adopt.

If you take a moral stance on something, you must also be willing to make a corresponding practical response.

Seek God and stand for his ways

Read 1 Sam 1:9-20

Life was tough for Hannah “*your servant’s misery*” “*remember me, and not forget your servant*” v11.

Object lesson in prejudging - To top it all Eli the priest thinks she’s drunk when actually she praying. An object lesson in not prejudging. Let’s not be quick to jump to conclusions (however discerning we think we are). Be good at asking questions...

Key turning point - This whole story pivots around verse 15 (its physical centre) “*I was pouring out my soul to the LORD*”. Breakthrough comes when I’m honest with God. God can handle our pain, anger and longings - Read Psalms! But by v18, she’s changed “*Then she went her way and ate something, and her face was no longer downcast.*” Breakthrough doesn’t happen when the results happen and a baby is born, breakthrough comes when she knows she’s been heard by God.

To see breakthrough, there’s a place of faith and peace we must come to with God, before we see it in the flesh!
When we need to see breakthrough, seek the Lord with all your heart.

Read 1 Sam 1:24-28

Hannah gave back to the Lord what the Lord had given to her – what a sacrifice! God is seeking a people who don’t just desire stuff, but desire it for his glory. Because Hannah dedicated Samuel’s life to the Lord, great blessing flowed into the whole nation and the Kingdom of God advanced. What are you seeking?

- If we seek God – we can find purpose in our trials
- If we seek God - we can see breakthrough
- Let’s dedicate ourselves to God again today. Read 1 Samuel 2:1-11

Questions

1. How have you seen blessing in your life by doing things God’s way?
2. When have you been able to pour your heart out to God?
3. What are you seeking breakthrough in? Pray for each other.