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1 SAMUEL 2:1-10

1 Samuel Series

This is the final minutes of the sermon on 1 Samuel 2.

You're picking up the message as Pastor Scott brings the application to a personal close.

She who has had many sons pines away. So the person who invests their life in their family here goes away saying, "I don't have what I need deep inside of my heart." But the person who didn't have any children goes away saying, "I found God. I found what I need in my life." So there's a contrast being made there in the midst of that picture. We'll come back to that illustration in a few minutes.

It's a powerful one for me in my own life as I try to evaluate how can I best be used of God? Is it through my own strength or is it somehow through God's greatness, or His grace, or something in the midst of that? It's a continual question that I believe we need to be asking ourselves and I need to be asking myself.

Now verse 6 is going to take us into this passage that talks about God's sovereignty. He's in charge. He's in control. We need to understand that God is in control and He's the one working through these things in life.

Verse 6 – *"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."*

It's God who provides whatever we think we have. So if you think or if I think that we have somehow reached some level because of our grand skills and performance then we're missing out on something very important in our theology that God is the one that provides these things. We recognize that. It keeps us humble.

That humility is the ticket to receive God's grace. We need God's grace in order to be the people, in order to be successful, to be able to move forward. We need that grace and that comes by recognizing who we are and how we stand in life. It's an understanding of God's sovereignty, I believe, that allows us to have good mental health, good emotional health, and certainly good spiritual health. Understanding that God is in control and that He's orchestrating the life events is essential to handle tough situations in our lives.

Look at the next phrase in the passage in verse 8. It says – *“For the foundations of the earth are the Lord’s; on them he has set the world.”*

So the description that Hannah is using here is that God created a foundation for this building and He put the whole world on it. What she means by that is that God has orchestrated how our life works and how relationships happen, how we handle our finances, how we handle our jobs, how we handle our families, how we handle our own personal lives and temptation. There’s a plan that God has outlined that we need to be in touch with because God outlined this.

That’s why it’s so important for us to study God’s word. When we study God’s word we come to an understanding of how to think rightly about these things. Because God’s the one who created the foundation. If we’re off on our own foundation then we find ourselves in a challenge of some kind.

Verse 9 – *“He will guard the feet of his faithful servants, but the wicked will be silenced in the place of darkness. It is not by strength that one prevails; those who oppose the Lord will be broken.”* Isn’t that interesting. *It is not by strength that one prevails; those who oppose the Lord will be broken.*

She ends the song with these last four lines. *“The Most High will thunder from heaven; the Lord will judge the ends of the earth. He will give strength to his king.* (You have to realize there are no kings yet in Israel. God is going to establish a king. They’ve talked about it in the law when you have a king, this is what you are to do, but in this passage it’s almost prophetic that Samuel is going to be anointing a king. That’s many years down the road.) *He will give strength to his king and exalt the horn of his anointed.”*

And exalt the horn of his anointed. I’ve just been meditating on those last two lines this week. Who does He give strength to? He gives strength to His anointed. That’s really important to me.

This is why: In my teenagers years I realized that God had gifted me in some very specific ways. He gifted me with high intelligence and with the ability to make decisions quickly and a lot of energy. So those three things together allowed me to accomplish a lot in a short amount of time. So I went through school rather quickly, did very well, and progressed quickly into my goal, which was to be a pastor. So I was a pastor at a young age and I really enjoyed that.

But there was a point in my twenties where I came to a place where I realized that all these skills I had weren’t worth very much without the grace of God. There are people who are movie stars or athletes or rich people who find themselves in rehab or find themselves in the headlines in a negative way. It’s not those skills that make someone successful in life. It’s the investment certainly in character, but in this passage what it’s talking about is being anointed. In my personal life I want to be anointed by God because I know that that is the ticket for me to be successful in life.

I want this church to be an anointed church. Because that is its ticket. A lot of you folks are really intelligent and you’re very skilled. I’m really honored that God would bring you to this church and I really enjoy the relationships that we have and the friendships that we have. It’s a

cool church, a great group of people that we enjoy quite a bit. But the most important thing that we can ask of God is that He would anoint us. Not that He would use our skills to do this or that, or money that we have to do that. It's the anointing of God where the strength comes from. That's what Hannah is recognizing and needing.

Let me just give you a preview because some of you know about this story as it continues on in the book of 1 Samuel. We come to a king, his name is Saul. The Bible tells us about Saul that he is *head and shoulders above everybody else*. He had the human capacity that everybody looked up to. "Wow, that guy is going to make it. If anybody is going to make it in life, it's going to be Saul. He's head and shoulders above other people."

Many of us are head and shoulders above our peers. We've got the skills and the talents and the abilities that other people like and admire. Those things are great, but Saul never made it. He ends up committing suicide in the last chapter of our book. I hate to give the ending away, but that's where we're going here at the end of the book. It's a sad story about a guy who relied on his own strength, made decisions on his own that were against God's decisions. He wasn't anointed. But in the midst of this book we're going to find another man who was.

David was anointed by God and he was successful at killing a giant. This is a huge guy that we're going to read about. I mean he's successful in so many areas. Why? Because he is anointed. That's really the message.

If we're going to stay on target in our lives, it's not about being skillful or having a position of some kind. It's about being anointed. So I want to ask you to pray with me that God would anoint us. That we would be Spirit-filled, that we would be empowered by the strength of God, because it's that strength that comes in our weakness that He's able to use in a powerful way.

Let's pray together.

[PRAYER] Heavenly Father, I come before you now and thank you for your word and the power that it has to humble us and to remind us who we really are. I ask that you would give each person here, including myself, the ability to rely on you. Fill us with your Spirit, empower us with your strength, and anoint us to do the work you've called us to do as a church. We come together to serve this community and share the light of your message, but to be anointed in our families, in our business, be anointed in our personal lives, or in our finances. Lord, we ask that you would anoint our friendships. To that end, Lord, we give ourselves to you and ask that you would work deeply in our lives. In Jesus' name, amen.