

1/8/23 - 1 Sam. 1:1-2:11 - "Note to Self: God Cares"

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Date: 08 January 2023

Preacher: Brenton Beck

[0 : 00] I will be reading from 1 Samuel, chapter 1, going to chapter 2, verse 12. That's going to be page 225, if you're using the church's Bibles that we have.

So I'll be reading from that. I'll give you a second to get there. Okay.

There was a certain man of Ramathim Zophim, of the hill country of Ephraim, whose name was Elkanah, the son of Jeroham, son of Elihu, son of Tohu, son of Zuth, and Ephrathite.

He had two wives. The name of the one was Hannah, and the name of the other, Peninnah. And Peninnah had children, but Hannah had no children. 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.

On the day when Elkanah sacrificed, he would give portions to Peninnah, his wife, and to all her sons and daughters. But to Hannah he gave a double portion, because he loved her, though the Lord had closed her womb.

[1 : 25] And her rival used to provoke her grievously, to irritate her, because the Lord had closed her womb. 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. 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?

After they had eaten and drunk in Shiloh, Hannah rose. Now Eli the priest was sitting on the seat beside the doorpost of the temple of the Lord. She was deeply distressed and prayed to the Lord and wept bitterly.

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.

As she continued praying before the Lord, Eli observed her mouth. Hannah was speaking in her heart. Only her lips moved and her voice was not heard. Therefore Eli took her to be a drunken woman.

[2 : 34] And Eli said to her, How long will you go on being drunk? Put your wine away from you. But Hannah answered, No, my Lord, I am a woman troubled in spirit. I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but I have been pouring out my soul before the Lord.

Do not regard your servant as a worthless woman for all along. I have been speaking out of my great anxiety and vexation. Then Eli answered, Go in peace, and the God of Israel grants your petition that you have made to him.

And she said, Let your servant find favor in your eyes. Then the woman went her way and ate, and her face was no longer sad. They rose early in the morning and worshipped before the Lord.

Then they went back to their house at Ramah, and Elkanah knew Hannah his wife, and the Lord remembered her. 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.

The man Elkanah and all his house went up to offer to the Lord the yearly sacrifice and to pay his vow. But Hannah did not go up, for she said to her husband, As soon as the child is weaned, I will bring him, so that he may appear in the presence of the Lord and dwell there forever.

[3 : 49] Elkanah, her husband, said to her, Do what seems best to you. Wait until you have weaned him. Only may the Lord establish his word. So the woman remained and nursed her son until she weaned him.

And when she had weaned him, she took him up with her, along with a three-year-old bull, an ephah of flower, and a skin of wine, and she brought him to the house of the Lord at Shiloh. And the child was young.

Then they slaughtered the bull, and they brought the child to Eli. And she said, O my Lord, as you live, my Lord, I am the woman who is standing here in your presence, praying to the Lord.

For this child I prayed, and the Lord has granted me my petition that I made to him. Therefore I have lent him to the Lord. As long as he lives, he is lent to the Lord.

And he worshipped the Lord there. And Anna prayed and said, My heart exalts in the Lord. My horn is exalted in the Lord. My mouth derides my enemies, because I rejoice in your salvation.

[4 : 49] There is none holy like the Lord, for there is none besides you. There is no rock like our God. Talk no more so very proudly. Let no arrogance come from your mouth, for the Lord is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed.

The bows of the mighty are broken, but the feeble bind on strength. Those who were full have hired themselves out for bread, but those who were hungry have ceased to hunger. The barren has born seven, but she who has many children is forlorn.

The Lord kills and brings to life. He brings down to Sheol and raises up. The Lord makes poor and makes rich. He brings low and he exalts. He raises up the poor from the dust. He lifts the needy from the ash heap to make them sit with princes and inherit a seat of honor, for the pillars of the earth are the Lord's.

And on them he has set the world. He will guard the feet of his faithful ones, but the wicked ones shall be cut off in darkness, for not by might shall a man prevail. The adversaries of the Lord shall be broken to pieces against them.

He will thunder in heaven. The Lord will judge the ends of the earth. He will give strength to his king and exalt the horn of his anointed. That is the word of the Lord.

[6 : 04] Amen. I think we need to finish that last verse there. No cheating. This is also the word of the Lord.

Then Elkanah went home to Ramah, and the boy was ministering to the Lord in the presence of Eli the priest. There we go. There it is.

Man, it's really great to be gathered and have that public reading of Scripture. We're trying out some new things, as you can see, and getting the cooperative involvement of the church congregation more like a church service, not like a pastoral presentation.

This is a corporate gathering. So, I think that that is so beautiful to be reading Scripture. Thank you for reading God's Word. And as you might know, we're in 1 Samuel now.

And this is a new sermon series that we're entering into. And this is the book of the chronological sort of series that we've been in.

[7 : 23] Years ago, we finished through the book of Judges, which was a very challenging text and a challenging book. We also continued into Ruth about a year and a half ago.

And now we will continue to chip out the historical books, and we enter into 1 Samuel. And 1 Samuel is actually kind of linked with, like, it's going into this sort of kingship time and theme within the nation of Israel.

And 1 and 2 Samuel are very closely linked to 1 and 2 Kings. Septuagint often kind of clumps these together thematically into calling them the books of the kingdom and whatnot.

So, thematically speaking, we're entering into sort of this new season in the nation of Israel. While that's all great and true, what's the point of the book?

Now that's a little bit more tricky to define. I believe that if you get 10 people in here to state what the book of 1 Samuel is about, you'll probably get 10 different varying answers, but along one same premise.

[8 : 35] And I would define the point of this book as being mankind yearning for a king. Mankind yearning for a king. Yearning for leadership.

I mean, it's true that when a group of people are assembled, whether it's a dozen or just three people, it would require leadership if you want to assemble in an organized fashion, and leadership is needed.

In fact, leadership is actually good. Leadership is good. That's a countercultural narrative in our day-to-day. And in the church, actually, leadership is very good through pastors and elders as overseers of the church, as long as those leaders are living in subordination to the supreme leader,

Jesus Christ.

And like the book of Judges, and of all time, even true for the church, certainly leaders will come and leaders will go. However, the nation of Israel yearned for something.

They yearned for a leader. They yearned for a king. They wanted to be like all the other nations all around. They wanted to appear strong, organized, mighty.

[10:04] They wanted to be led. They yearned for it. And up to this point, the nation of Israel kind of operated as this regional confederacy. They kind of didn't have a true location at this time.

They were less of a united monarchy. And now, kingly leadership is something that we might not be accustomed to, to understand fully in our day.

But they wanted a monarch. They wanted a king. A sovereign head over a kingdom. A sovereign head over the state. And typically ruled by a king and a queen.

And now this is a little bit different than the United States. You might say, well, I understand. Yeah, we have a president. Well, this isn't a monarchy. This is a democracy where we actually vote for elected officials.

Well, a monarchy, it's all by bloodline. It's all by inherited rights. And so, a monarchy and a democracy all fall short.

[11:07] And it's actually interesting because when you have a democracy and a monarchy, while those are good and true and they hold a lot of weight of organizing complete countries and whatnot, we can't fail to realize that God uses a democracy, monarchy, whatever you want to say, but ultimately God operates on a theocracy.

That all the leaders chosen within a democracy or monarchy, however that is assembled, is all determined by the will of God, actually. And so, that's important, especially for the next election coming up for everyone.

So, we enter into this uncertain time in the nation of Israel. And if you could remember or if maybe you're familiar with the book of Judges, it sort of ended in quite a tizzy.

Quite a tizzy. Our series in Judges ended in chapters that had unsettling accounts of kidnapping, of gang rape, of slaughtering of tribes and cities and civil war within God's people.

And it ended with a statement a very bleak statement in Judges 21-25 that kind of encapsulates the spiritual condition of this state.

[12:33] It says, In those days, there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes. And so, we enter into this new series and we're entering into a point in Israel's history that is at an all-time low.

Okay? You feel that. You know that. And it's a book whose very recipients just a couple generations later, things actually start going well for Israel.

But what ends up happening towards the end of 2 Kings? They go into exile. Again. Another all-time low. Which I would argue would be the original recipients of this letter.

An all-time low writing to an all-time low. In other words, having a message from the lost written to the lost.

It's a historical record of God's people wandering, being tangled in sin, often wondering in their uncertainty, does God care about us?

[13:45] Does God see our pain? Does God hear our cries? Maybe you found yourself asking those very questions walking into this building today.

Maybe in your own personal life, of what's occurring in your own personal life, or maybe just turning on the news. Maybe looking at the condition of Youngstown often, with shootings, basically every other day.

Does God care? For that, we're going to enter into this bleak season of Israel's history. And I pray that the word of the Lord will speak sharply into our lives today.

And just as we read corporately together, we enter into this traditional narrative structure of rising action and a turning point, and then a resolution.

And I've broken up this narrative into two sections for us today. And this will have a sermon title, A Note to Self, God Cares.

[14:58] Let us revere the task before us knowing this is no ordinary lecture today. This is no ordinary talk. This is God's word speaking today.

So may we submit ourselves to His speaking and submitting ourselves to His word. And so as we do, let's pray, asking the Holy Spirit to help us in our journey through the word.

Let's pray. Father, we thank You for a time where we can gather at this moment. We come with many questions, but let them be answered in Your word today. Let them be answered and not only just answered, but felt. Let the answers from Your word be felt. Let it infiltrate our hearts today. And we pray this, O Lord, in Your name. Amen. Amen? Amen. Amen. So the first section that we're going to see here is experiencing God's silence. It's going to be from, we'll see that section unfolding in the narrative structure from verse 1 to verse 18.

[16:16] And the book begins by introducing Elkanah. It's a man with two wives, Hannah and Peninnah. And they are faithful.

I would say that they're faithful in verses 1 and 2. They're faithful in devotion as they make their annual visits to Shiloh. I mean, from the outside, Elkanah's neighbors are probably like, you know, that family is just, they're at church every time they need to be at church.

I see that garage go up and church starts an hour later. They're there early. They come and greet the church. They read the Scripture at church and they're so involved in all those church things. Right? From the outside, being an observer from the outside, it would look like this family, they're devoted to the Lord making their trip to Shiloh.

However, in verse 3 to 6, there seems to be a silent war regarding childbearing, fertility between Hannah and Peninnah.

[17:29] And we might actually argue that this might prove that nothing good comes out of polygamy. Okay? We'll just put that out there for everyone. Nothing good comes out of polygamy. This happens.

Amen? And so, while polygamy wasn't like the norm of that day, multiple wives and everything, because we know Scripture says that, you know, marriage is between one man and one wife. Amen? Okay. So, it was a desperate measure in this culture. Because if a woman would be unable to bear children, or it might have been the man's fault, we don't want to play favorites here or assume, whatever the reason is, they are one generation from being completely cut off.

So, essentially, the family line had to be continued. And often, man, what does man do? Man provides man-made solutions to a God problem, and that is surely true with polygamy in the Bible. And so, needless to say, this household had a tense situation, had a tense, tense undertone. Ocanah seemed to favor Hannah, which caused Peninnah to ridicule her.

[18:42] He would give her double portions of food. And so, Peninnah would capitalize upon the moments to drive Hannah's humiliation and inability to bear children by constantly nagging her and grievously provoking her and irritating her in verse 5.

Peninnah is identified as Hannah's rival. I could only imagine a dinner table behind closed doors, couldn't you?

With all Peninnah's children gathered round Hannah, maybe child one. I know the curiosity of children. I got four of them.

Very curious. And they ask some very good questions. Sometimes very rude questions at times, too. And I could imagine a child saying, Mom, talking to Peninnah, Mom, when is God going to give Hannah a child?

When are we going to have a brother or sister from Hannah? From the detail that we receive in Scripture, Peninnah would probably take that moment to really drive that nail in the coffin.

[19:51] Well, God hasn't given Hannah a child. God chose not to. Then the other child from across the table.

But doesn't God, does God not care about Hannah? You can hear the voice, you can see the table, right? And Peninnah is saying, no.

Apparently, God doesn't care about Hannah. It's clearly true. Look at you being blessings of the Lord. Clearly, Hannah's flawed.

Couldn't you imagine those passive-aggressive dinner table conversations? That probably wasn't even the worst of it. Personally, I know folks even in our own congregation who are unable to bear children.

And they often will hear the same tone of humiliation as insensitive inquiries are made towards them in the midst of their sorrow.

[20:55] People asking, so when are you going to have kids? Well, that's nice. Well, actually, if you want to get real, we've been trying really hard.

Thanks for rubbing it in. Right? Being insensitive to people's struggles. Or even the struggle of going on social media and seeing all these birth announcements from other people having kids. Your best friends having kids. Everyone's having kids except you. And it's like with every announcement, it's like a nail in the coffin. Does God care about me?

Hannah's life was surrounded in that constant mocking. In fact, verse 7 says that she wouldn't even eat because of God's silence.

And leave it to Elkanah to be good is useless in consoling Hannah. Any one of us men who are married, you know, we have a problem with consoling our wives.

[22 : 03] Maybe it's just me who needs to attend a marriage conference, possibly. But we always console the wrong ways. Leave it to us and leave it to Elkanah.

He tries to remedy her deep sorrow by dwelling on their love. But you have me, dear, right? Isn't that as good as having children? I swear, men, come on.

Come on. Clearly, Israel did have a leadership problem. But the glimpse of barrenness here, this situation of humiliation going on in this household, it's actually an image of Israel's, the nation of Israel's spiritual state at large.

They had no king. They were completely humiliated among the other nations. And so, it was a dark time for Hannah and despite her devotion to God, she lays at bed at night wondering, does God care?

And verse 9 sort of takes us into this part of the narrative of Hannah removing herself from that toxic dinner table of which she did not participate.

[23 : 22] It says that they ate and she left in verse 10, deeply distressed in prayer as she wept bitterly.

Do you feel her pain reading this text? It's in this moment of brokenness she's hungry although she did not eat, she was actually hungry for God.

And she made a vow. She made a vow at this time period which was very common contractual agreement in these days.

We should not mistakenly see this moment as a desperate plea in verse 11 of bargaining with God. You know, I'll do this if you do this and then I'll do this. Which is kind of like you might perceive as a selfish way of structuring your prayer life.

as if you just need to pray harder in order to get something from God. Maybe raise the stakes, right? I'll sell my house if you give me a child. Right?

[24 : 35] No. I think the context within Judges tells you that it doesn't end well when you try to stiff arm God and His will. But she does do something here and I want you to understand what she does and that's much different than what you might perceive as selling your house if a child would come.

Hannah was entering into a transaction in which she would not gain a single thing other than hearing God.

She would not gain a single thing except experiencing God breaking through the silence. That is what she desired to gain.

She never gained a single thing physically in this life. It was a spiritual gain. In fact, it was by way of this vow that God would speak to the nation through the vow that she makes through Samuel who is up and coming as we read today.

Hannah's heart yearned for just a gentle breeze from God to know that he does exist, that he cares, that he sees, that he hears. And she just wanted God.

[26 : 01] You see that? So verse 12, after a little embarrassing, little emotional mix-up, they go to Shiloh. She removes herself from the table.

She's weeping bitterly. Here comes another guy, another expression of Israel's leadership problem, I would say.

He thinks that this weeping woman uttering a prayer, not speaking, is drunk and tries to kick her out of the place. Clearly, Israel had a leadership problem.

Now, we're not trying to rag on men, but it is a situation that Israel got themselves into. Hannah explained her turmoil to Eli.

And Eli, even though being flawed, even though being very wrong about the situation, Eli was chosen by God, by a theocracy. And he still had a job to do.

[27 : 02] And Eli mediated her request. This was huge. Because this was a turning point in the storyline for Hannah. Why?

Look in verse 18. What did she do? She ate. This interaction with the prophets of this temple turned her whole situation around and she was able to eat once again.

You see, she had faith in God's word, whom Eli was the mouthpiece of, being a prophet. prophet. She didn't have faith in her wonderful husband, okay, and as lovely as he may have been in her relationship.

She didn't run to relationships. She couldn't have faith in her relationships. She couldn't even have faith in her piety of religiousness, of going to Shiloh each and every, being on time for church. She couldn't relate any of that as being as important to her as having faith in God's word. But a prophet in these days, regardless of what you might perceive as being a prophet today, a prophet in these days were never wrong.

[28 : 21] There were never contingency plans. What they said was what it was and what it would be. And they are spokesmen, mouthpieces of God, and their prophecies came true, or else they would die.

Okay? So you can throw your preconceived notions of prophets from the church around the corner. They can do what they want. We're responsible here. But a prophet in these days was literally delivering God's word.

And after receiving God's word, she ate. Amen. What came true for Hannah, though? It wasn't just like miraculous, pop, there's a baby.

No. She was filled by God's word, regardless of what would come. She had faith in His word that what He said was true.

And she became confident that God sees, that God hears, that God cares. What an important reminder for the recipients of this book, being at an all-time low, in exile, after going through this kingdom, monarchy building, all to be destroyed and wandering as sojourners.

[29 : 43] How important for those recipients. And for anyone who experiences exile or this darkness in their life, what might you depend on?

Would you depend upon your perfect church attendance? You've made every members meeting that we've had? Maybe the people in your life depend upon your spouses, your husbands, your wives, or your friends, or your boyfriends, or your girlfriends, or your pets.

You live in a pet day, pets. Piety in people will never satisfy. Ever.

this is certainly true for exile Israel. How much more true for us today? We got the book. We got the beginning and the end.

How much more true is that for us today? You see, when seasons in life seem to be unfruitful and barren in our own lives, causing inner turmoil and depression to well up within us, to whom do we run?

[30 : 58] To whom do we trust? Do we trust our works? Just making every Bible study? Being on time for church?

Trusting in people? Well, seasons often come when hope seems completely lost. I think everyone should have experienced a season like that.

If not, the season will come where hope seems lost. Maybe you're living in a consequence of past failures. It's like this ripple effect in your life of, yep, you made some bad decisions last year and now you're facing possibly some court dates and some fines.

Maybe you're living in the consequence of past failures. Well, we know one thing is for certain. We do not need a new house. We don't need a new job.

You don't need a new boyfriend, girlfriend, new spouse. You don't need new relationships in your life. You don't even need a new church. We need to be reminded of God's Word.

[32 : 06] Increased church attendance, attending Bible studies, participation, they alone won't do, but it surely might help a little bit to do that. We don't need a new thing.

We don't need a new relationship. We don't need a new sport to get into. We don't need to go buy a set of golf clubs and take up golfing to sort of alleviate our seasons that we're in.

We don't need to change our city. We don't need to change our relationships. We don't need to change our church. Why? Because you can never escape the season that God has put you in.

You cannot escape it. Running away to anything else than God during turmoil is in fact running away from God.

It's rebellion. For Hannah, the object of her hope was the word of God. In verse 17, she reveals her cards here. Verse 17, go in peace, Eli says, and the God of Israel grant your petition that you have

made to him.

[33 : 17] See, her devotion to seek and hear God made all the difference. In church, the same is certainly true for us today. The word of man fails, but the word of God fills.

Okay? It is God's word that we must turn to as a reminder that God cares, that God sees, and that God hears.

And so the narrative continues into the second section, turning point has transpired. And look, experiencing God's breakthrough, and it continues in verse 19.

Hannah returns home. Sure enough, the prophet Eli was right. As flawed and shallow as he was, as flawed and shallow as Elkanah was, she still bore a son, God grants Hannah's petition.

Behold, a baby boy, born into the darkness of man, born to speak the word of God as a light, as a beacon in their darkness, just as we kind of saw in Hannah's situation.

[34 : 45] creation. And here we receive an image of Jesus Christ's miraculous birth as well. Different, but still similar and a type in comparison.

Born of, who Jesus was born of a virgin, born into darkness with a mission to speak God's word and complete God's work upon the cross of whom is a mediating prophet, capital P prophet and capital P priest.

For us today. Through the mediation of Jesus Christ, even a feeble plea of forgiveness is received and paid in full. How much more certain are we to trust in the promise of God's word?

But wait. Don't forget about the other side of receiving from God, right? Might our reception of answered prayer actually only be the first of two pictures.

In other words, God's faithfulness to us requires faithfulness back to Him. Verse 19, for Hannah, the narrator of this story actually creates this tension between verse 19 and 23.

[36 : 07] She clung tightly to Samuel for the first few years until he was weaned. It's almost like she's holding this baby, she's holding that petition, she's holding this thing that she desired and finally received, knowing that she can get back to Peninnah, that evil Peninnah, and say, look at me.

And holding that baby so tightly, it's almost like, what's she going to do? Is she really going to wean him? Or is she going to head for the hills?

The one thing that she asked for was in her arms. But the vow remains, which required her to give Samuel up to service in the temple as she vowed.

And the same is true for us Christians. God's faithfulness will require our own sacrifice of desires and dedicate our lives in service to God.

Too often Christians, I believe, look upon this legal pardon of sin, just being released of the legal pardon by God's grace. And they sort of forget about the other side of things, that there's actually a legal binding of following in God's grace.

[37 : 37] Yes, God grants our pardon of sin. However, the path of which we are called to follow is not a choice. It's not a decision. It's a requirement.

It's a command to follow God. Lest the fruit in our life prove that our faith is a sham, a complete sham. And so maybe that's you today, and I would call you to repentance, to live according to God's word, according to God's commands, to live set apart from the world, to not live for the worldly desires of sin and sensuality.

I would call you to repent. You see, the road of obedience is required of every Christian. temptation. And those who travel such a road will require sacrifice to God's way in their life.

There is no other way around it. And thankfully for Hannah in verse 24, she has certainly followed through. The tension is released as she heads for Shiloh, carrying that baby boy named Samuel.

He was weaned and she presented him to Eli. And what does she do? This is important, church. What does she do in verse 26? She remembers.

[39 : 05] She remembers, oh, my Lord, as you live, my Lord, I am the woman who was standing here in your presence, praying to the Lord.

For this child I prayed, and the Lord has granted me my petition that I made to him. Therefore, I have lent him to the Lord. As long as he lives, he is lent to the Lord.

If only we might remember as well God's grace in our lives so that we might rightly surrender our lives in service to him. Not the things that are easy to surrender, but the things that are difficult. Not the 99.99999% but the 100% of our lives. No hidden sins in your closets are left unrevealed.

You see, obedience is sacrifice. In our obedience, we remember the obedience of Jesus Christ, the one whose works of righteousness satisfied the wrath of God upon the cross and atoned for our sin. [40 : 18] Who are we to carry it, to continue to carry and bear our sin in this life? Church, how could we not hold up to our end of the bargain? Jesus Christ withheld nothing, and who are we to withhold from him?

Well, God came through for Hannah. And considering the exiled Israel reading this manuscript, the time of the promises of God seem very dimly lit in the time of exiled Israel towards the end of 2 Kings.

How much more vital is it for us knowing that we have the beginning and the end to remember, to inventory God's faithfulness of the past, to scour the pages of God's Word for us, making a note to ourselves that God cares.

While life may never be perfect, we don't need to create this happy-go-lucky, up-to-shiloh facade. We don't need to create our own happy little facade of a Christian life and act like everything's perfect.

It's okay to not be okay. It's okay. And we can embrace the seasons of pain. We can embrace the seasons of sorrow because we know beyond a shadow of any doubt, God cares.

[41 : 51] You see, if God places you in the darkness, it is the faithfulness found in His Word that shines the light as a beacon of hope. As it were for Hannah, so it is for us today.

Church, you know I deeply love you. You know I deeply care for you. I often work myself to exhaustion for you. And I want you to know this.

You do not have to waste your seasons of struggle. You may have every reason in your life to doubt and to be upset in this life, but you have not a single reason not to have hope.

Okay? Stop looking for a fast remedy to alleviate the bleak, dark seasons in our lives and simply and confidently turn to God alone.

May our dark seasons actually call us to seek God all more diligently. Why? Because in uncertainty, we must turn to what we know, not what we feel in those times.

[43 : 08] So as we close, Hannah, after giving Samuel away, returned home. Could you see her?

I can visually see her in my mind. Could you see her with her hands empty? Returning home, hands of surrender, though with a heart full.

She prayed. In verse 1 of chapter 2, My heart exalts in the Lord. My horn is exalted in the Lord.

My mouth derides my enemies because I rejoice in your salvation. There is none holy like the Lord. For there is none beside you.

There is no rock like our Lord God. Talk no more so very proudly. Let not arrogance come from your mouth.

[44 : 07] For the Lord is a God of knowledge. And by Him actions are weighed. The bows of the mighty are broken, but the feeble bind on strength.

Those who were full have hired themselves out for bread. But those who were hungry have ceased to hunger. The barren has born seven.

But she who has many children is forlorn. The Lord kills and brings to life. The Lord brings down to shale and raises up.

The Lord makes poor and makes rich. He brings low and He exalts. He raises up the poor from the dust. He lifts the needy from the ash heap to sit them with princes and inherit a seat of honor.

For the pillars of the earth are the Lord's. And on them He has set the world. He will guard the feet of His faithful ones.

[45 : 12] But the wicked shall be cut off in darkness. For not by might shall a man prevail. The adversaries of the Lord shall be broken to pieces. Against them He will thunder in heaven.

The Lord will judge the ends of the earth. He will give strength to His King and exalt the horn of His anointed.

Church, may our hands be empty and our hearts be full. Fully surrendered to a sovereign God. God does indeed care. God sees and God hears. Let's pray.