

Worship – Hannah’s Praise

One of the most beautiful and confounding acts of worship that I find in the bible is in I Samuel 1-2. We see a woman, Hannah, go from the deepest point of despair to a place of adoration and worship. In chapter one, we find Hannah bringing her worship to the Lord in the form of a lament. She offers her earnest longing, her deep hurt to the Lord. She presents it to Him and begs for intercession. Her act of worship is to recognize that she needs the Lord. She is helpless to change her situation, but God is not. She comes to Him desperate and isolated because of her barrenness. God hears her cries and answers her request with a resounding “YES!”

In her pleas to God, she promised to offer her firstborn son back to God if He would grant her request. When God gives her a child, she does not forget her promise. As tempting as it would be to think, “God knows I didn’t really mean that I would give up my son” or “God wouldn’t expect me to give up my firstborn,” Hannah follows through on her promise to give her son back to God. I just cannot fathom the emotions that she must have felt. The sorrow of giving up a son that she had longed for and waited years to see, then cared for until he was weaned. The worship she offers along with the gift of her son shows no trace of sorrow or bitterness at the Lord for following through on her promise. Instead it shows a renewed confidence in the Lord and His sovereignty. She seems almost overjoyed in her generous gift. It’s as if she knows the depths of the Lord’s generosity to see her in her distress and answer. Listen to her words from I Samuel 2:1-10:

“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. There is no one holy like the Lord; there is no one besides you; there is no Rock like our God. 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 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 hunger no more. She who was barren has borne seven children, but she who has had many sons pines away. 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. For the foundations of the earth are the Lord’s; upon them he has set the world. He will guard the feet of his saints, but the wicked will be silenced in darkness. It is not by strength that one prevails; those who oppose the Lord will be shattered. He will thunder against them from heaven; the Lord will judge the ends of the earth. He will give strength to his king and exalt the horn of His anointed.”

Hannah is confident in the Lord’s sovereignty to fulfill her deepest longing. She is confident in His strength and ability to deliver from her from an extremely difficult situation. She TRUSTS in her Lord.

So we see Hannah worship in her cries of desperation, giving her child back to the Lord, and trusting Him once again to replace the emptiness caused by giving her child back to Him.

What extremely difficult situation do you find yourself in? Maybe it’s a crumbling relationship, difficulties with a child, a job loss, or failing health.

How can you worship God in the place you find yourself, whether seemingly good or bad?

If you are on the other side of a hard situation, how can you worship God for His care and concern over you?

Can you identify with Hannah's words? Why or why not?

What gift of generosity can you offer to God out of your love and devotion for Him and His goodness?