

# 1 Samuel (Quality: Average)

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Preacher: Cottingham, Peter (1947 - 2014)

[ 0 : 00 ]     Titanium This is my grace, and I will pray you.

Seeking the Lord's gracious help, I donate your thoughts to the first book of Samuel, chapter 1, and the first part of verse 27.

First book of Samuel, chapter 1, and the first part of verse 27. For this child I prayed.

For this child I prayed. I've been rather tossed this morning as to the word that I must come with for a journey here this morning.

There was one that was upon my spirit, and then after the prayer meeting, another came into my thoughts, and then in our opening hymn, this account and this word came upon me.

[ 2 : 00 ]     So I seek to venture, and to venture wholly upon the Lord, with this word now, for this child I prayed.

Well, we have the accounts then of this family. there was the husband, and there were the two wives.

I know that they were different times, different customs, and perhaps we may not be able to understand the way that they carried on, the paths that they were permitted to walk in.

Let us never question these things. They are recorded here in the word of God. They are set forth for an example. And I believe that there is a teaching here that is very apt to the paths and the experiences of the Lord's people.

There was one of those wives, upon whom everything was poured out, the desires of her heart in a natural way.

[ 3 : 23 ]     And then there was Hannah, who seemed to be left out. She had cried unto the Lord time after time, and there was that desire that she wanted, just for a child.

But there was also her enemy, that taunted her. How have you known what it is?

You believe that the Lord will appear for you, you believe that the Lord will perform a certain thing, and the enemy has taunted you, and said, where is your faith?

Where is your hope? Where do your prayers stand? There is no answer. I feel that the Lord works in all these things.

To give to a child of God, a poor, needy sinner, a feeling wretch indeed, all those exercises over reality in their own soul.

[ 4 : 40 ]     The Lord permits their enemy to taunt them. Now this may seem to us to be so strange.

But remember this, the Lord is a sovereign in his dealings with each one. And what a mercy it is. Oh, what a mercy it is. Have you seen those strange paths?

Have you known those strange afflictions? Have you known those strange trials and temptations in your path? And you have had to say, I'm not as others are.

Others have those blessings. Others have those favors. They do not seem to have those temptations and those trials that I have. I have often said this, oh, we can look at others, but don't try to measure up ourselves by their path, by their path, their experience.

The Lord is very gracious in his dealings with every one of his. And he leads them in that path that is right.

[ 5 : 54 ] He leads them in that path that is good for them. Paths of teaching, paths of blessing, those paths where the Lord is pleased to pour out those blessings from heaven.

Now we know in this account, and we read of that song of rejoicing that was found in the heart of Hannah. We know in this account that the end was good, that the Lord granted her her request, that she poured out before the Lord.

But how many years, how many times, had she pleaded in like manner before the Lord?

You know what it is? In some matter. I know it's a matter. I feel that what Hannah pleaded before her God, it was that matter that concerned his name.

She felt that this concerned his glory. His name indeed would stand or fall in this and perhaps you have found in your pathway that your hope, your religion, your faith, your trust, those things that you have believed in and rested upon in over many years hangs upon this matter.

[ 7 : 25 ] hangs indeed upon this one thing. Oh, if the Lord does not appear, where then will I stand?

but I believe that the Lord brings into that pathway sweet submission to his holy will.

for if you are anything like me, for if you are anything like me, you find that there are those things that are of your own self that are mixed up with his purposes.

Do you know what I mean? you have to prove that there are those things that have been of self. Oh, you have been exercised over it, you have prayed over it, but I feel as it was in the case of Hannah here.

If the Lord had said to her that the children of the barren shall be more than the children of those that have many, that she would have been content there to leave all in his kind and gracious hands.

[ 8 : 48 ] But if you know what it is that you have taken hold of these things by faith before the Lord that you have said before him I will not let thee go except thou bless me a blessing thou shalt bestow.

Oh, we know here that Hannah could rejoice at the end of the day as we might say in what the Lord had done.

But what did she have to pass through? There was the temptations, there was the trials, there was the work and the speech of her enemy against her.

There was all that she had to pass through. But what could be said in it? She clave unto the Lord her God.

Oh, what a mercy indeed it is. If we know, well, shall we say, the Lord grants grace and grants strength.

[ 10 : 01 ] If we know what it is to cleave unto the Lord in these things. we cannot in our own way, we cannot in our own strength, but as he grants that grace sufficient for our day, yes, to cleave to his word, to his promises, to those things that he has spoken, those things that he has sealed home upon our soul, that the Lord himself will bring to pass.

And it will redime to his honor and to his glory. Oh, what a mercy it is. When we see the Lord perform, when we see the Lord work, and it brings us low, low at his feet.

And perhaps there is a need to be in your path at this time, a taking away of everything that is of flesh and of self.

How pride must be brought down to nothing. Completely and absolutely nothing. I've often used this as a touchstone as to the reality of those things that we are exercised in.

Oh, if there is anything that feeds our pride. Let me put it this way.

[ 11 : 38 ] There's something that you want to do. Perhaps you say, well, I've been exercised in it by the Lord. I believe the Lord has spoken to me and revealed to me that he will bring this to pass, that this is right, that I must do this.

And you say, oh, may you examine yourself and see whether there is anything that feeds pride.

Well, if it is all of self, if it is feeding our pride, there is one thing that we can be sure of. It's not of the Lord. It's not of the Lord.

If it pleases our flesh, if we feel that we will be brought into a certain place, a certain position, that we should be taken note of, oh, how solemn that is indeed.

Especially if we try to push it forward. If we try to put our hand to it, it will come to naught. I warn you, it will come to nothing.

[ 12 : 50 ] But, there might be those things that the Lord has laid upon our spirit. Well, let us look at it in the case of Hannah here.

At the beginning, and we're not told really how long this went on for this trial, this exercise, this felt need. But at the beginning, was there that, that she wanted a son and she felt that if the Lord granted her a child, that she would feel indeed then that she was a true woman, that the Lord had blessed her?

Was there perhaps a little pride mixed up in it? Perhaps you feel this. And after what I said just now, you've begun to question as to whether it has been of the Lord or not.

well, if you know anything of your own heart, how that there is such a contradiction within.

Oh, what a contradiction there is. When you would seek to do those things that are right, and yet you, you find yourself doing them completely in the wrong way.

[ 14 : 14 ] your motive may be right, but it's mixed up with your own desires and the pride of your heart. But the Lord will humble those that are proud.

maybe then with Hannah here at this time. There is that needs be that she must go up to Shiloh year after year.

And we might say that each year her situation got worse. for she felt will the Lord ever appear in this.

Oh, has he forgotten to be gracious as he turned aside from my prayers? Has he forgotten his mercy?

Is his mercy cling gone forever? And when those souls are brought to cry in this way, they all know that the mercy of the Lord is not taken away from them.

[ 15 : 25 ] What is taken from them? Well, as it was with those three that were cast into the burning fiery furnace, they lost their bonds but nothing else.

What did they gain? Christ. the presence of Christ. Oh, what a mercy indeed to know that when we're in the fiery trial, when we're in the affliction, when we're brought into those paths, that we have not chosen for it himself, that the Lord has taken away those things that are fine.

and all you will know, you will know his gracious presence, for it upholds and it strengthens and it brings through.

for this child I prayed. What was her prayer?

What was her exercise? It was before the Lord. We read that when she went into the temple, that it came to pass as she continued praying before the Lord, then Eli marked her mouth.

[ 16 : 56 ] Now Hannah, she spake in her heart, only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard. Therefore, Eli thought she had been drunken, misunderstood, perhaps even scorned, by loved ones and by those around us.

Oh, you've had that trouble in your soul. You've had that distress in your pathway, when you've poured out the exercises of your soul before the Lord.

Oh, you've gone about your daily concerns and duties perhaps with a heavy, very heavy heart. And it's been noticed by those that are around you.

Perhaps they've misunderstood, perhaps they've spoken unkindly to you. you've felt wounded in your soul.

Oh, you've felt wounded that where you would have sought for comfort or for relief, perhaps even in the house of God. Oh, you've come, you've loved the ministry of your pastor, but you've been in soul trouble.

[ 18 : 24 ] You've come seeking for a portion for your soul. And it seems as if your pastor or one of the Lord's servants has wounded you, has spoken in that way that you feel, well, is there anything to be found, anything right to be found within you?

Oh, there's been that bringing down of all those things perhaps that you've hoped and rested upon. well then, was there a look into their arm of flesh, to man?

Was there a leaning upon those things that we should not lean upon? Oh, let me speak carefully here. I would exhort you as a people, but especially in those things that concern your path and your case, pray for your pastor, pray for the Lord's servants that they might be led into your pathway and experience and to speak those words from the Lord.

Are we reading the word of God? I think of one that came to his servant, King David, and he sent his servant to him with that parable.

that brought David down to this point where he said, I have sinned against thee and thee only have I sinned.

[ 20 : 06 ] Sinned against his gods, but the Lord's servant there was sent with that solemn truth.

You may have felt sometimes that the Lord's servant has known all about you and has spoken directly at you and you felt perhaps in your heart a little angry that the Lord's servant has spoken in such a way you feel that you have been shown up.

Let me tell you this, many, many times the Lord's servants have to speak in a particular way that they do not know what's going on in your heart, but the Lord does.

And the Lord sends his servants with those words that prove to be words in season. I find it very difficult sometimes as you go to these places where there are but a few people.

You may know something about them and the Lord may lead your thoughts into certain paths and you feel, well they will feel that I'm getting at them.

[ 21 : 28 ] Oh, far from it. We have to be instant in season and out of season. We have to speak of those things that the Lord would lead us into.

And not to fear the frowning of man or seek his smile, but to tremble before the Lord and seek his smile and approbation upon all that we do.

To be faithful in other words, faithful to the charge that the Lord has placed upon us and faithful to those never dying souls that are found before us.

When we have to speak those words, sometimes it wounds us in our heart first that we have to speak them.

Oh, it does. And yet, I've often felt this. If I spoke only comforting words, if I only spoke those things that pleased you and were pleasing to you, that you thought well of me, and then I visited you on your dying bed, and you said to me, but you never warned me, you never warned me, how solemn indeed that would be.

[ 23 : 13 ] So then, there is that need to be faithful, oh, how faithful to never dying souls. Now, I believe this, your pastor is such a man that the hand of the Lord is upon him, that he is a faithful, faithful servant of God, and an under-shepherd that the Lord himself has placed over you.

Now, I do not know what his exercises are regarding those precious souls that he finds before him, Sabbath after Sabbath, but I feel that I can say this, for those that are young, those that are in the midst of life, and those that are near the end of their lives, that this is his exercise for each one of you, that you might be taught of God, taught what?

Your fallen state, your lost condition, your need before a holy God, the condemnation then to each one of us face under the holy law of God, that the soul that sinneth, it must surely die, that each one of you, each one of us, there is no justification before a holy God in our own works, our own righteousness, or anything that is fine of self, that our only hope is in Christ.

Perhaps he feels for you in this way, you have been brought up unto the truth, to come to the word of God, but there is no salvation to be found there.

Oh, what a mercy it is, if we have been brought to the house of God from a little child, what a mercy it is, if we have been camped, coming to the house of God and not turned aside as some have.

[ 25 : 51 ] Oh, what a mercy it is, but there is no salvation to be found in such things.

But with your pastor, I feel that we can say this, that for many of you here, it is for this child I pray.

And there are others here, I'm sure of it, that we would speak of as mothers in Israel, that travel for souls.

And it is in secret, and this is where we would seek to emphasize in our subject this morning, it is before the Lord.

Oh, it is before the Lord. If you've known, any of you, what it is for that to come out in the open, shall we say, when perhaps you were led to put on Christ by an open profession, to come before the church of Christ here below, and speak of those things that you trust the Lord have done for your soul and has done, that then there have been one and another that have spoken in such a way that they have traveled for your soul.

[ 27 : 23 ] How humbling that is. Oh, how humbling it is. But if the Lord has laid upon any of you here, that exercise one for another, oh, you'll be Hannah-like.

You'll go up to the house of God. You'll plead before the Lord for this child, and it will be before the Lord.

What an exercise, what a burden it is. Do you know a little then of what that exercise and burden of your pastor is? as he pleads before his God.

As he comes before you week after week. As he is led to speak of those things, and perhaps he feels himself, there are those things that I can, and there are those things that I cannot speak.

Perhaps sometimes he feels there is that constraint upon him. That's why when I come amongst you, I desire that there might be sweet liberty that is given.

[ 28 : 33 ] Sweet liberty in speaking of those things that there might be a constraint that is placed upon your pastor. Have you felt this sometimes?

Perhaps he is troubled about it. Perhaps you are troubled about it. There are those things that he does not speak that concerns your path and your case, and yet you have to say and to acknowledge that the Lord has brought him to speak in certain ways, that the word has been blessed to your soul.

Well, I feel that I can say this, that with your pastor there is this concern, the concern that was in the heart of our karma.

What do we read of him? He gave to Penina his wife, to all her sons and her daughters portions, but unto Hannah he gave a worthy portion, for he loved Hannah.

God, I do not believe that there are any here, that the Lord's servant would single eyes in a special way.

[ 30 : 08 ] Oh, perhaps you feel this, do you? Does this trouble you? Do you feel sometimes that he passes you by?

That one particular service he did not speak to you? Perhaps you felt hurt. I've seen him go straight out there, desiring to speak to each one of you, he would not miss one of you out.

But you may feel slighted, you may feel hurt. Let me tell you this, I believe with that tenderness that is found in his heart, that he would never knowingly ignore or turn aside from any one of you.

Do you remember what I said to you a few years ago when I came here? I said this, I do not want to hear of any of you speaking against your pastor, the Lord's servant.

Touch not mine anointed and do my prophets no harm. So then, let me say this, I know, I am fully persuaded that the Lord has settled your pastor here amongst you.

[ 31 : 34 ] Oh, that love may bind you together. See, that was the word that I felt in the vestry that I must come with. For the love of Christ constraineth us.

Well, with Elkanah here, what do we read in that phrase there? For he loved Hannah.

Do you have this? But the Lord had shut up her womb. Do you feel sometimes that the Lord has shut you up, shut up your womb?

What I mean is this, there was a time when you could feed upon the word and upon the ministry of it. There were those times when you felt that your soul was blessed.

What is it not in the words of one of our hymns, where is the blessedness I knew when first I saw the Lord? Where is the soul refreshing view of Jesus and his word?

[ 32 : 43 ] Oh, you remember the times as we speak of it as the time of your esposa. When you fed unto the ministry and unto the truth week after week. Your soul seemed to receive that.

but the weeks, the months and the years have gone by and you feel to be dead. You feel you come and there's nothing.

Oh, you can agree with those things that are said. You say there is truth there but you say, Lord, I feel that need of a portion for myself but the Lord had shut up her womb.

There was that time when you traveled for this or that one. But you feel, oh, there's nothing there now.

You have to give up. You have given up perhaps. I feel that this is one of the hardest things for a poor needy sinner, for a child of God to bear, that the Lord has shut them up.

[ 33 : 59 ] They cannot pray, they cannot receive, they cannot hear, they cannot read. Oh, there are those many, many things that you were favored with in times past and now you feel to be so barren in the things of God.

Perhaps you cried unto the Lord regarding a certain matter that he would appear. And oh, how you've asked that the Lord would give you an answer, yes or no.

Oh, you, in that exercise, you desire that the Lord might say yes to you, that the door might be opened, that the way might be made plain, that you can go for it.

But you have been made willing in it, that if the Lord says no, there to wait and there to watch his appearing, and what he might do.

Be made willing to say, truth, Lord, I am not worthy to be found in such a place or position. I am made willing to do whatever they will with this silence.

[ 35 : 15 ] It's the hardest thing I feel to bear with an exercised child of God. When the Lord has shut up your way and there is silence that there is no answer, and Satan comes in, oh, Hannah, she was sorely tried by her enemy in this, sorely tried, and so are you.

You know not what the outcome will be, and you feel that everything that concerns you, your hope, your trust, your faith, your religion, everything, holds on this point.

And the Lord answered her not a word, and the Lord answered her not a word, for this child I pray.

You see that woman that came unto the Lord, she had that exercise for her daughter, she came in that felt need. Now as it was with Hannah here, as it was with that woman that came to the Lord, regarding her daughter, when the Lord answered her not a word, when she cried unto the Lord, and even the disciples said send her away, for she crieth after us, for she troubleth us.

Everyone seems to be against you. And the Lord answered her not a word, a worthy portion, and Alcana gave her a worthy portion, for he loved her.

[ 37 : 05 ] God, oh, the Lord permits these things, brings them to pass, in great love and tender mercy, that his name might be glorified, and that it might be established, in your path, in your experience, in your soul, that this has been the Lord's work.

Oh, it has been the Lord's work. What a mercy it is, when we see the Lord fulfill and bring these things to pass, that he has wrought it all out, although we may have desired to put our hand to it, and yet the Lord has said, no, touch it not.

he has put our hands, shall we say, down by our side, that we have had to be still, and watch his work, his fulfilling, his ways, seeing that there is a perfection, in what he will fulfill.

Well, as we, our thoughts have been led to, that woman that cried unto the Lord, what happened? She received the blessing that she sought for, but more than this, she received that portion, I believe, in her own soul.

Yes, indeed, as it was here also with Hannah. She was blessed with that son, but she had that portion in her own soul, and that knowledge that the Lord himself had heard her cry, her many, many cries, unworthy though she felt to be to receive it, and yet the Lord abundantly blessed her.

[ 39 : 16 ] Where was the woman then that came to the Lord, seeking for that help for her daughter? when she cried and said, have mercy upon me.

What did the Lord say to her when he eventually said something to her? it is not mean to take the children's bread and to cast it unto dogs.

Oh, and she could say truth, Lord. You found yourself to be so unworthy of his notice, and yet there is one that you must come to. You must plead again and again at the throne of grace.

You must cry unto the Lord that he will appear in this way. Oh, you feel that there is everything, as we might say, hangs upon it, that the Lord will appear. Well, you will say, and oh, may there be those souls that are exercised here for others, but at the end of the day, for this child I prayed.

For this child I prayed. I believe we mentioned in prayer at the prayer meeting about a praying people.

[ 40 : 45 ] Oh, may it prove to be, yes, we pray for the children. Oh, how we pray for them. That they might be kept, that they might be taught of God, they might be kept by the power of God, that they might be given that grace, to keep, to sustain, to preserve.

There are many temptations, many evils, many things that are found, right, about, that they might be kept by the power of God.

They might be given grace, and gracious discernment in the things of God. God, there are many things that can lead the young people astray.

Yes, perhaps then in a natural way, for this child I prayed. And the prayers of parents over their children, and the prayers of those that are older.

I feel sure of this, there are those of our older friends that pray for the children. there is one thing that I can testify to, I believe, was this.

[ 42 : 09 ] My father died when I was six years old, but I remember visiting him in hospital, that impression as a young child, and seeing him there in the hospital bed, not really understanding all what it meant, but knowing that he was dying.

he gathered his children around him, and I believe that his prayers were for his children, that they might be led in those right paths, and kept.

I believe in a measure, oh, I do not know what his prayer was for this poor man, but I believe in a measure that there has been a performing of those things that he was exercised for his children.

Oh, may we have that exercise for our children then, but also in a spiritual way, in the church of Christ, where there is that burden.

Yes, a praying people found here, for where there is a praying people there is life. Oh, may you know what it is to travel for souls, but one and another.

[ 43 : 26 ] I am thankful of this. See, I go here and there in the Lord's name, amongst many different people, come to know and love different ones for the truth's sake.

And I am thankful of this, that the Lord has burdened me in one or two instances for the souls.

what a burden it is. And sometimes when I have seen that the Lord has touched the hearts of one and another, I have had to pray to the Lord in this way, Lord, leave them not alone, give them no peace.

Oh, may there be that fulfilling of what thou has spoken. Yes, that travel then as we speak of it for souls, for this child I prayed.

And then there will be those times, and I may not know it, oh, I may not know it, but I can leave it in the Lord's hand, that it can be said, for this child I prayed, for this child I prayed.

[ 44 : 46 ] Well, she returns then at that particular time, with rejoicing over what the Lord had done.

Well, I think we can sum up then, when the Lord is pleased to hear and to answer our poor petitions, oh, how we feel to be so unworthy that the Lord would appear in these ways.

But she said, for this child I prayed and the Lord has given me my petition which I asked of him. But that song of thanksgiving that we read of this morning and Hannah prayed and said, my heart rejoiceth in the Lord.

that's where it will be. And what the Lord has done, what the Lord has wrought out, what the Lord has performed, yes, a tracing out in it all.

Those times of trial and times of distress, those times of anxiety and those times of watching, that there's been a purpose in it, it's been for good, it's been needful, and you'd have to say, I would not have been without it.

[ 46 : 09 ] I would not have been without it. Those times when the Lord has shown to us that it is not our work but it is his. Those times when the Lord has said, put not forth thy hand.



Those times when the hand of the Lord has been upon us for good, that we have had to be silent, but still pleading before the Lord.

You see, this was Hannah's pathway. She was silent before man. I wonder if really she opened up her heart to her husband. What did her husband say?

Hannah, why weepest thou? And why eatest thou not? And why is thy heart grieved? He knew a little, no doubt, of what her exercise was.

For he loved her, but he could not fully understand. Now, one final thought here before we close.

[ 47 : 12 ] For this child I prayed. Oh, if you know what it is to be exercised over souls, if you know what it is to have a burden before the Lord for one and another, there will be a watching.

Oh, there will be a watching. And how you will have to watch closer when there are those signs that the Lord is working.

It may be with a dear one, it may be with one of your children, in whatever way it might be. Oh, you will see those signs.

There will be those tokens. There will be the beginning need to read the word of God, to come more to the house of God, that more attention upon the means of grace, listening more attentively.

Oh, there will be those sighs and those cries and those groans unto the Lord. You will see that there are those that are troubled. Oh, they're troubled.

[ 48 : 24 ] They're bowed down, perhaps, for this child, I prayed, and have you known what it is to watch over your own children, to be troubled in your own heart when they're troubled, when they're in grief, when they're in sorrow, when they're in tears, sometimes their own children, when they're in a great trouble, we're troubled for them.

And when you see a soul that is troubled, oh, how you're troubled for them. You've known what it is for the Lord to appear in your own case, the Lord to give you sweet liberty, the Lord to give you, present you with those worthy portions, and how because of that love that you have, that they may also have a worthy portion from the Lord.

Well, may the Lord bless these few remarks. For this child I prayed. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. We'll close this morning by singing hymn number 623 to the tune lovely 477.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Hymn number 623 Whom the Lord Jehovah loves He in various ways reproves Tis his settled wise decree that his son's chastise shall be Hymn number 623 Hymn number 623

[ 50 : 53 ] Hymn number 623 Hymn number 623 Hymn number 623 Hymn number 623 Hymn number 623 Hymn number 623 Hymn number 623 Hymn number 623 Hymn number 623 Hymn number 623

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