

1 Samuel

The Coming King

Study 1 | 1 Samuel 1:1-28

News and Needs

Upcoming Events:

- Adoption/Orphan Care meeting, after church on April 11th.

So once again we launch into a new sermon series. We expect that this one will take us most of the way through the Summer. But before we get ahead of ourselves...let me encourage you to exercise self-control and actually work through the first set of questions below this week. More on that under the questions.

1. As we begin this Easter season, please brainstorm and pray about specific ways our common life together might be marked by celebration. Are there concrete practices you can agree to engage in this season? Ways we can encourage one another to demonstrate the joy, feasting, and victory of Jesus' kingdom?

If you've been paying attention you've heard someone on the pastoral staff reference Jamie Smith's *Desiring the Kingdom: Worship, Worldview, and Cultural Formation* in Ministry Leaders' Meetings, or Sunday School, or in a sermon over the last few months. It's been a very impacting book on us and, we hope, will continue to shape the life of our church. One of the most obvious take-aways from the book is that our common life together in the church and with our neighbors will be shaped as much by *practices* we engage in as by *beliefs* that we hold. If we want to know whether or not we are being changed by the gospel, and whether our communities are being affected, then we ought not only ask if we are proclaiming the news of the gospel, but also need to ask: What habits do we have together? What regular practices do we engage in as a church? A few sermons ago Pastor Matt challenged us to think creatively about how we might become--and become known as--a people who are really and truly celebrating the resurrection. Easter is more than just one Sunday; it is a season. And arguably the most important and most joyful season for Christians. So rather than just run on to our 1 Samuel story and leave Easter Sunday behind, we'd like you to spend some time asking if there are things you can do as individuals and groups to mark this entire season with celebration that responds to lives out of Jesus' victory over sin, satan, and death on our behalf. Feel free to discuss all sorts of things! Maybe individuals can keep a brief daily journal of every small way they see God giving them success each day. Perhaps they can share some of those during weekly meetings. Maybe your group can host a monthly potluck instead of your normal meeting and invite all of your neighbors. If you come up with any really great ideas, feel free to share them with the pastors and other group leaders. But please do devote at least a little serious time to these questions.

2. As we begin a new sermon series, what do you already know about the book of 1 Samuel and the story of David? What do you hope to learn in this series? How do you hope for this series to shape you? What are some ways the story of David might teach us more about King Jesus this Easter season and beyond?

Any time we begin the study of a new series it is important to clear the ground a bit. It can be very illuminating and helpful to know what sort of experience, knowledge, and perceptions each person has about a book. There's a good chance people in your group may never have read 1 Samuel in its entirety. All the more reason to talk about what everyone's thoughts are of studying through this book together.

An obvious point is that 1 Samuel was originally written for an audience. That means that it was written to provoke a response by certain Israelites in the Ancient Near East. Samuel wanted them to be shaped by this account of David becoming King. So how would a book like this shape people? How were they supposed to respond? And how might it apply to us, living after King Jesus? Remember, we just studied Luke 24 which said that every single thing in the Old Testament foretold the coming of the Messiah-King and that he would need to suffer, die, and then rise again victorious. This account traces the beginning of the monarchy in Israel, through the ascension of a King that starts out good but falls away (Saul), on to the calling and slow ascension of a King after God's own heart, chosen by Him, who will become victorious and lead the people righteously. Consider how God must have meant for us to learn more about Jesus himself as we look at the contours of God's work in and through the Life of King David.

3. How does Hannah 'process' her grief? Who all does she involve and how do they assist her? What might we learn from Hannah about how we might deal with disappointment and lack in our lives? What do we learn from this passage about how we as a church community might help those who are suffering?

Hannah was really getting beat up by her rival. She is barren and it is destroying her soul. Notice that she takes her grief directly to the Lord. And I don't just mean in the quiet of her own heart. She 'goes to church' and makes her prayer there, within earshot of the priest. She involves Eli and solicits his help, and believes that God will speak to her through him. She also involves her husband. There's a lot in here, but in light of the Easter and 1 Samuel introduction questions, we've chosen to focus on the one theme of grief. What would it be like for you to process your disappointments in the same, exemplary way that Hannah did? How could you involved the church? And how can we as a church be a place that helps one another to do that, and encourages one another to have hope in God in difficult circumstances?