

1 Samuel 2:1-10 | “My Heart Exults in the Lord!”
Preached on September 26, 2021 by Pastor Matt Brown

Please turn in your Bibles this morning to 1 Samuel 2, and we will be in verses 1 through 10.

We just started a new sermon series in the book of 1 Samuel last week.

And we learned all about what led up to Samuel’s birth and dedication to the Tabernacle. *[pause]*

His mother, Hannah, couldn’t conceive and was ridiculed for it by her husband’s other wife.

Yet in her anguish, she prayed out to the Lord, and the Lord led her to give birth to Samuel.

And then she gave Samuel back to God in lifelong service.

This amazing work by God and answer to prayer led Hannah to rejoice, and it’s that joyous prayer that we will look at closely today.

Let’s READ THE PASSAGE. *[pauseeee]*

Is serving God joyless or joyful?

Pastor Robert Beringer gives an illustration of this question, when he says...

“After an ordination service to the Christian ministry, a sad-faced woman came up to the newly-ordained pastor and said, ‘It’s a grand thing you are doing as a young man - giving up the joys of life to serve the Lord.’

That woman's attitude reflects a commonly held belief that to be serious about our faith means that we expect all joy to be taken out of living.

For many, Christianity appears to be a depressing faith, with unwelcome disciplines, that cramps our lifestyle and crushes our spirits.”¹ *[pause]*

Is that how people think of your Christian faith? As something that makes you give up on the joys of life?

They may admire you for being so committed to God, but they also kind of feel bad that you have to miss out on the real, true joys of life. *[pause]*

What about you? Is that how you think about Christianity and being committed to serving Him?

Do you see it as something restraining you or hindering you from experiencing more joy because your time and focus is taken up on God? *[pause]*

You need to understand that that is a lie straight from the Devil.

¹ Original by Robert A. Beringer. Found at: <https://www.sermonsuite.com/sermonstudio/rejoice-lord>.

If Satan can get people to think that serving God takes away your joy or limits your joy, then he knows that he will lead many, many more people to not want anything to do with God.

But it's a master deception because it's the furthest thing from the truth, since it really gives the complete opposite of the truth. *[pause]*

According to the Bible, it's actually our faith in the Lord that brings us deep and lasting joy.

You see that throughout all of Scripture, but you see it here in this passage with stunning clarity. *[pause]*

Hannah, for most of chapter 1, was miserable.

She was filled with anxiety, she was sorrowful, distressed, and troubled in spirit.

But that all changed when God intervened; that all changed when God delivered and provided.

She was now a joyous woman, who rejoiced in the Lord. *[pause]*

And what we will discover this morning is in Hannah's praise-filled prayer, she isn't just praising God for providing a son, although she is doing that...

...She praises Him because her situation was an example of who God is and how He works in the world throughout all of history for his people.

And she shows us that our deepest joy and our greatest moments of rejoicing are simply because we rejoice *in the Lord*.

That's the main idea for this morning, which our text teaches us...we are to...

Rejoice in the Lord for His salvation! (1)

Before we get into the content of what Hannah says.

I'll give a couple very interesting details.

If you look at this prayer, there are a lot of similarities between it and a song that David gives near the end of 2 Samuel.²

It's almost like these prayer songs bracket the whole story of 1st and 2nd Samuel. *[pause]*

But something else interesting is there are a lot of similarities between Hannah's song and Mary's song of praise in Luke 1, when she's pregnant with Jesus and goes to visit Elizabeth.³

Both accompany the news of a baby being conceived at a vital part of the storyline of the Bible, and both emphasize many of the same things.

² This is found in 2 Samuel 22.

³ This is found in Luke 1:46-56.

It may even be that Mary modeled her song after Hannah's. *[pauseeee]*

I give these details because they once again remind us of the importance of what was going on with Samuel's birth.

And they also remind us of how God works in the world, and show us the breath-taking unity of Scripture. *[pauseeee]*

Alright, let's get into what Hannah said.

Verse 1 of Hannah's prayer gives us the main theme for her whole prayer, "My heart exults in the Lord."

To 'exult' is to greatly rejoice.

She is just overflowing with joy, and the reason she exults in the Lord is because she's rejoicing in His salvation. *[pause]*

The Lord had delivered her out of being provoked by the rival wife, and she was delivered out of shame.

You see, what Hannah is doing is that she's using her specific situation and the deliverance she experienced, to then broaden out to God's salvation on a grander scale.

Her mini-deliverance was an example of God's big delivering, saving work.

It was a small foretaste of what God would do in Christ, and what He *will* do in the end.

And so we can rejoice just like Hannah.

We can take extreme delight and joy in the Lord for His salvation. *[pauseeeee]*

Notice how just like Hannah, we can *personally* rejoice in the Lord.

She says, "My heart exults...my horn is exalted...my mouth derides...I rejoice."

This isn't something that only other people do, it was what Hannah personally was doing - she was rejoicing.

So God's salvation should be rejoiced in personally. *[pause]*

Do you ever personally rejoice in the Lord for his salvation?

Do you praise Him for what He has done for you in Christ Jesus? *[pause]*

Each individual has to personally place their faith in Jesus Christ's work on the Cross.

It's not enough to say, "Well, my parents had faith, but I don't."

It's not enough to say, "That's good for you, but not for me."

You must place your faith in what Jesus Christ did on your behalf, and then you, too, can rejoice in His salvation. *[pauseeee]*

Look, also, at the object of her rejoicing - she rejoiced *in* the Lord.

Her joy wasn't in herself, or anything other than God Himself.

That's where you will find true, deep, and lasting joy - in the Lord. *[pause]*

You may search and search for lasting joy in the things of this world, and come up empty.

You may spend your whole life trying to find joy in everything other than God, but you will not find it.

Because true joy is found in the Lord! *[pause]*

Hannah knew this.

Hannah's ultimate joy wasn't in herself or even in Samuel, it was ultimately in the Lord.

He's the One who changed everything for her.

Samuel was the gift, she was the recipient, and God was the Giver. *[pauseeeee]*

Do you ever just rejoice *in the Lord*?

Is that how you respond to Him? *[pauseeee]*

Think about what just happened right before this prayer.

Hannah was giving Samuel over to the Lord in lifelong service in the Tabernacle after waiting so long for him.

You would think that that would be the hardest time to have joy, but even in this situation, she exulted.

Because she understood that it was worth it, that God was good, and that God was on the throne.

God was her joy, she knew that Samuel actually belonged to God, and she couldn't help but exult in Him. *[pauseeee]*

No matter how much people may try to sway you into thinking that that new boyfriend, new car, new job, or that new reputation will bring you lasting joy, don't believe it.

No matter how much people may try to sway you into thinking that serving the Lord hinders your joy, don't take the bait.

There is joy in serving Jesus. *[pauseeee]*

There's a story of a man walking along a busy street one day, and he says, "I heard someone singing.

His sweet voice was distinguishable even above the noise of the traffic.

When I located him, I noticed that he had no legs and was pushing himself through the crowd in a wheelchair.

Catching up with him, I said, 'I want you to know, friend, that to hear singing from a person in your condition gives everyone else a lift.'

He answered with a grateful smile, 'When I thought about what I had lost and began concentrating on all I had left, I found much for which I could rejoice.'"⁴ *[pauseeeee]*

When everything else is taken away, there's still much to rejoice in because you still have God, and joy is found in the Lord. *[pause]*

What do you rejoice in?

In your things, in your job, in your situations, or in the Lord? *[pauseeee]*

This rejoicing doesn't stop after verse 1, for as Hannah continues, this rejoicing is expanded.

And we see this in verses 2 through 8, as it shows us that we should...

I. Rejoice! For there is none like the Lord! (2-8)

She says, "There is none holy like the Lord: for there is none besides you; there is no rock like our God."

What a statement!

She rejoices in who God is.

He is holy.

He is completely without sin, and totally other.

He is unique and perfectly pure. *[pause]*

None can compare with him, that's why Hannah can say, "there is none besides you."

No one even comes close, in fact, no one is in the same category. *[pause]*

⁴ Encyclopedia of Illustrations #13176. Found at: <https://www.family-times.net/illustration/Rejoicing/200720/>.

God is so high, so holy, and so unique - He is the one and only and He has no competitors.

[pause]

You will not find anyone holy like God.

You will not find any Rock like our God.

He is steadfast, immovable, protective, a great and solid refuge for His people.

No one is as strong, and all so-called imitators are as tiny pebbles meant to be kicked around and trampled underfoot compared to Him. *[pause]*

Christian, rejoice!

We have a God, who is like none other.

There is none besides Him! So no one can talk arrogantly. *[pause]*

How can pride exist when God is God?

Any prideful thought should dissipate at the thought of the holy, unique Lord.

In fact, pride should flee not just because He is holy and unique, but also as Hannah says, “for the Lord is a God of knowledge.” *[pauseeee]*

God is the all-knowing One.

All actions are weighed by Him, for he knows everything and judges what people do.

No act goes unknown, but he knows all, so much so that he makes the biggest encyclopedia look like a book for babies. *[pause]*

THE ALL-KNOWING JUDGE SITS ON THE THRONE, AND NO ONE CAN PULL THE WOOL OVER HIS EYES, OR ESCAPE HIS NOTICE. *[pause]*

People pridefully think that God does not know or care what they do, but our God is not only holy and unique, but he’s all-knowing!

He knows what you are going through, he perceives everything perfectly in accordance to what is *really* going on.

There is no fake news source providing Him false or biased information, but he already knows everything inside and out - completely, deeply, and accurately. *[pause]*

Pride has no place with the knowledge of the knowing God.

He is not just a God *with* some knowledge, he is a God *of* knowledge. *[pauseeee]*

What a joy it is to know this God!

He is holy, unique, and our Rock - none is like Him, there is none besides Him.

What a refuge He is!

He is all-knowing, and he assesses every action.

We can rest in the fact that God knows all things, even the things that you are going through, and he sees the hidden motives of the heart.⁵ *[pauseeeee]*

This is who God is, and we rejoice in Him.

But Hannah also goes on to talk about what God does, that is, how God works in the world.

And we see this in verses 4 through 8.

He sovereignly works His might and justice in the world.

He is the supreme and ultimate power of the Universe.

Just look at these verses and stand in awe. *[pause]*

According to verse 4, he's in control of war.

"The bows of the mighty are broken, but the feeble bind on strength."

Human strength actually doesn't matter in this world because God easily breaks the bow of the mighty.

In fact, it is the ones who think they are mighty that are thwarted, while the feeble put on the strength that God provides.

What encouragement! *[pause]*

Those who seem mighty and strong in the world are actually not, so we don't fear them.

They may boast of their power, but they will be humbled by the all-powerful One.

And those who seem feeble, who stumble, are the strong for God strengthens them with His might. *[pause]*

This is seen in Israel's history time and time again.

Israel is outnumbered, the enemy looks so powerful, yet when Israel trusts in God, the enemy is quickly routed. *[pause]*

⁵ See Proverbs 16:2.

We have a God who is sovereign over strength and victory, so we don't fear any enemy, for we trust that God is for us, and "if God is for us, who can be against us?"⁶ *[pauseeee]*

At the beginning of verse 5, we are also shown that God is in control of food.

It states, "Those who were full have hired themselves out for bread, but those who were hungry have ceased to hunger."

It is the Lord that provides food for all.

We are to be people who always remember this, and who pray like Jesus said to pray, "Give us this day our daily bread."⁷

We open our hands in humble trust, and he provides in his time.

So we are not to be worrisome people, worrying about what we will eat or drink, for our Father in heaven knows what we need.⁸ *[pauseeee]*

This sovereignty over food is seen in Israel's history, especially in the wilderness wanderings.

They need food, and what does God do? He provides manna and quail.⁹

This is our great God! Not only in control of strength, but food to live. *[pause]*

Speaking of living, he's in control of life and death.

The second part of verse 5 and into 6, "The barren has borne seven, but she who has many children is forlorn. The Lord kills and brings to life; he brings down to Sheol and raises up." *[pause]*

God controls the womb, but more than that, he controls life and death itself.

The only reason that each of us are living and breathing this very moment is the Lord. *[pauseeee]*

People think that they can prolong their life as long as they do certain things, but they neglect to see that it's God who is in charge of life and death.

Of course, we do take care of our bodies, and make wise choices, but ultimately, God is in charge of life and death. *[pause]*

This truth is so essential, especially right now in our world.

People are absolutely frightened of dying, and it shows in how people are acting. *[pause]*

⁶ Romans 8:31.

⁷ Matthew 6:11.

⁸ See Matthew 6:25-34.

⁹ See especially Exodus 16.

As I just mentioned, we make wise choices, and we are not to be intentionally reckless, but we are also to be people who know that God is sovereign over life and death. *[pause]*

Someone could try their hardest to avoid people to not get sick, but still die of something else.

So we do not fear death, for we know that the Lord is in control of life and death.

We rest in the fact that we have eternal life because of faith in Jesus Christ, and we trust God with our lives. *[pause]*

As Christians, we need to get back to the truth that physical death is not the worst thing to happen to us, for it is actually gain because it means we will be with the Lord, as Paul says.¹⁰

So don't fear death, but trust the One who has control over it. *[pauseeee]*

That's a lot of things to be in control of, isn't it?

Strength, food, life and death - wow, that's most of life itself, isn't it?

But that's not it, for there's another big part of life that God is in control of: money. *[pause]*

The truth is, money is a part of life, for we need it for the basic things of life, like food and shelter.

Well God's sovereign over that, too. *[pause]*

Hannah says, "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." *[pause]*

The pridefully rich and self-dependent will be brought low.

But the spiritually poor, needy, and God-dependent will be exalted.

Truly, as Jesus said, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."¹¹
[pause]

Those who recognize their poor state are the ones lifted up out of the dust, up out of the ash heap, and seated in places of honor.

What a marvelous truth!

Those who recognize they are sinners in need of grace, and who trust in Christ, are seated with him in the heavenly places.¹² *[pause]*

¹⁰ See Philippians 1:21-24.

¹¹ Matthew 5:3.

¹² An allusion to Ephesians 2:6.

He has made us rich in Christ, according to His glorious riches, and we have an inheritance awaiting.

But the sad truth is that those who consider themselves rich in this world and see no need to repent will be brought low someday. *[pauseeee]*

Why is God in control of money? For He is the Creator and Owner of the Universe!

“The pillars of the earth are the Lord’s, and on them he has set the world.” *[pause]*

The one who created and owns the universe certainly is in charge of money, for he owns all things.

He never lacks anything, but he gives freely at his discretion. *[pauseeee]*

The truth is, we often think we are in control of each of these things, but we are not.

So when we think we are in control, we are deceiving ourselves. *[pause]*

Imagine a baby trying to climb up the stairs, but the baby can’t, so the father uses his hands and pushes and guides the baby up the stairs.

The baby may be moving his or her arms to climb, but ultimately, who is in control of that baby climbing up the stairs? The father.

So we may think we are in control, but we are wrong and we are deeply mistaken, for actually God is.

God is in control - He is the Sovereign One over all things.

So we would do well to act like it. *[pauseeee]*

And God is the Great Reverser.

Because the pridefully strong become weak, while the humbly weak become strong.

The self-sufficient full become hungry, but the God-dependent hungry are filled with the bread of life.¹³

The ones who think they have life will be brought down to Sheol, while the ones who cling to God for life will experience life anew and be raised up.

And the rich in spirit are brought low, but the poor in spirit are lifted up. *[pause]*

God is the great reverser of human strength and values.

Human strength melts away at the glimpse of the strength of God.

¹³ An allusion to Jesus’ statement about himself in John 6:35.

And human values disintegrate at the sight of God's transcendent values. *[pauseeee]*

We have a God who is the Sovereign Lord over every aspect of life.

Do you submit to Him? Or do you try to live life on your own? *[pause]*

There is none like our God.

He is completely unique, without equal, and the Sovereign One over all human affairs.

So rejoice! This is our God! *[pauseeee]*

As Hannah concludes her prayer in verses 9 and 10, she shows us that we should...

II. Rejoice! For the Lord will deliver His people and destroy His enemies through His King! (9-10)

In verse 1, Hannah personally rejoiced in the Lord.

In verses 2 through 8, Hannah described God's character and how He works in all of time and history.

But observe the change in verses 9 and 10, for she moves on to talk about the *future* work of God.

“God will guard his faithful ones...the wicked shall be cut off..adversaries shall be broken...he will thunder in heaven...The Lord will judge...he will give strength and exalt.”

This is all about confidence in what God *will* do. *[pauseeee]*

God will guard the feet of his faithful ones.

Yes! What a God we have!

He gives us life, but he also guards and preserves us forever.

Even when we die physically, we are guarded right into Heaven.

We don't have to fear, for we are held in the hands of the Father, and no one can snatch us out.¹⁴
[pauseeee]

God's people are guarded, but the wicked are cut off in darkness.

The wicked are all those who don't trust in God, but trust in self.

I say this because look at how it says right after this...“*For* not by might shall a man prevail.”
[pause]

¹⁴ An allusion to John 10:29.

The wicked trust in themselves for life, but the faithful ones trust in God for life.

That's the difference-maker.

Either you trust in Christ's work on the Cross for you, or you trust in yourself - there is no inbetween. *[pause]*

It is not by strength that we prevail, but by trust in Jesus Christ.

We can't trust our own works to save us even a little bit, that's trusting in your strength.

We need to trust in Christ's work alone. *[pauseeeee]*

So we see that God delivers his people, but in saving his people, he destroys his enemies.

We are told that He will thunder from heaven, and break his enemies to pieces. *[pause]*

You do not want to go against the Lord.

You do not want to be his adversary, for He is the all-powerful Judge, who judges the ends of the earth.

And it's implied that it's through his king, his anointed that this will happen. *[pause]*

God gives strength to his king, exalts the horn of his anointed, so that the king is the means by which he delivers his people and destroys his enemies. *[pause]*

This was done in the short-term, temporarily by King David as he brought peace to Israel and defeated the Philistines.

But ultimately this is pointing to King Jesus. *[pause]*

In Jesus, he delivers his people from sin by defeating sin and death on the Cross.

And someday he will once and for all deliver us from this evil age, and destroy all the enemies of God. *[pauseeeee]*

As Revelation 19 says about Christ in the end times...

"From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron.

He will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty.

On his robe and on his thigh he has a name written, 'King of kings and Lord of lords.'"¹⁵ *[pause]*

King Jesus will judge the ends of the earth.

¹⁵ Revelation 19:15-16.

For we are told that there is a day fixed on which God will judge the world in righteousness by Christ, whom he has appointed.¹⁶ *[pauseeee]*

God delivers his people and destroys his enemies by His King, and his name is Jesus. *[pause]*

What a God we serve!

There's nothing better than being one of God's people!

We rejoice in the Lord for his salvation!

Who is like our God? There is none besides Him!

We trust Him and find our strength in Him.

He gives us all that we need: strength, food, spiritual riches, life and breath and everything.

Judgment and justice are in His hands.

Really, all of life is in His hands.

So what else can we do but “rejoice in the Lord”? *[pauseeee]*

Go back in your mind to what I said at the beginning, is the Christian life joyless or joyful?

I think we found our answer here in Hannah's praise-filled prayer.

It's joyful, for we have a great, one-of-a-kind God who has no rival.

This God sovereignly works in the world, has saved his people through the cross and resurrection of Christ, and will one day make all things right.

And so I end with what Paul tells us to do, “Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice.”¹⁷

¹⁶ See Acts 17:31 and Acts 10:42.

¹⁷ Philippians 4:4.