

Westwood Baptist Church



Grounded. Growing. Going.

Worship Guide for March 19, 2023

Sermon Notes

The Heavy Hand of God: Idols Broken in Pieces

1 Samuel 5

Hannah's prayer in chapter 2 is a thematic roadmap for the entire narrative that follows in 1 and 2 Samuel. A central theme that will be repeated throughout Samuel is that of reversal. The strong are broken and the weak are strengthened. Those who were hungry are filled and those who are full become destitute. The proud and self-exalting are humbled, and the humble faithful are exalted. *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.* 1 Samuel 2:7-8

In chapter 5, we see another example of 'reversal'. In her prayer, Hannah proclaimed / prophesied *"The adversaries of the LORD shall be broken to pieces; against them he will thunder in heaven"* (1 Sam 2:10). When the Philistines defeated the Israelites and captured the ark (Ch. 4), they believed Dagon, their primary god, had given them the victory. So, they placed the ark of God in the temple of Dagon as a war trophy, and as an addition to their collection of gods. But the apparent victor Dagon ends up toppled and broken! God is not a man-made idol, and he will not be captured, domesticated, or deprived of his glory. The Psalmist reminds us, *He who sits in the heavens laughs; the Lord holds them in derision..... he will speak to them in his wrath, and terrify them in his fury* (Ps 2:4-5). In an encounter that is humorous, yet deadly serious, the ark's capture and God's judgment on the Philistines is a profound example of the Lord of Host's infinite superiority and power over the foolishness of idols and idolatry.

The warnings in the New Testament church are as relevant for us as they were for our ancient brethren, *Therefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry. Little children, keep yourselves from idols* (1 Cor 10:14 & 1 Jn 5:19-21). Presently it might not seem so, but ultimately every adversary of the Lord will be broken in pieces, and God's humble people will rise up from the dust to inherit a seat of honor.

Despair & Delight: the glory departed and a 'trophy' displayed (4:21-5:2)

Captured & Toppled: the ark captured and carried, Dagon toppled and propped back up (5:3-5)

No Hands & the Heavy Hand: the "defeated" God devastates with his powerful hand (5:6-10)

Feared & Glorified: the judgment (heavy hand) of heaven and crying out to heaven (5:11-12)

Life Group Preparation Guide

"Let the *Word* of Christ *dwell* in you(all) *richly*
teaching and *admonishing* one another in all *wisdom*..."
- *Colossians 3:16a*

Focus #1: GOD

1. What does this passage reveal about the character or nature of God?
2. What does this passage reveal about God's eternal plans and purposes?
3. What does this passage reveal about how God interacts with his creation?

Focus #2: ME

4. How does this passage reveal sin in my own mind, heart, or life?
5. In what ways does this passage help us to see how we need to be aligned with God's will?
6. What is one tangible and measurable way that the Spirit is leading me to respond to his Word?

Focus #3: OTHERS

7. What is one truth that I can share meaningfully with someone, and with whom?
8. How can I specifically encourage someone or everyone in my Life Group from this passage?

Three contributions (reflections, questions, observations, etc.) I plan to include in our next Life Group discussion:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Westwood Staff

Gerald Hodges: Lead Pastor

Jonathan Taylor: Associate Pastor

Jason Engle: Pastor of Students
& Discipleship

Deborah Rudd: Children's Ministry
Coordinator

Yvonne Hager: Executive Assistant

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MARCH

19 Taco & Tamale Fundraiser @ 12:00 p.m.
22 Evangelism Class-Session 4 @ 6:30 p.m.
23 Blood Drive (FLC) 10:30a.m.-3:00p.m.
25 Women's Ministry Event @ 10:00 a.m.
31 Mom 2 Mom Spring Consignment Sale

APRIL

1 Mom 2 Mom Spring Consignment Sale
6 Maundy Thursday Service @ 7:00 p.m.
9 Easter Sunrise Service @ Hyco @ 6:30 a.m.
9 Easter Fellowship Breakfast @ 9:00 a.m.
9 Easter Worship Service @ 10:00 a.m.