

## Day 48

- Good morning! This has been quite a ride, going into all the places the LORD is leading us. I have been impacted in my own life as we have dove into scripture and gone around twists and turns to see all He wants to show us. It is exciting and a privilege to be on this journey with all of you! Let's see what Holy Spirit has for us today.
- "Then all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah, and said to him, "Look, you are old, and your sons do not walk in your ways. Now make us a king to judge us like all the nations." 1 Samuel 8:4-5.
  - I find this verse fascinating. First, I feel for Samuel. He has taken care of this whole nation of people his entire life, for he was born to serve God over the house of Israel, given as a first fruits offering by his mother, Hannah. She had beseeched the LORD at the Tabernacle of the LORD to give her a son because she was barren. And as she prayed, she told the LORD she would give the child back to Him as an offering if He gave her a son. The LORD heard her heart's cry and opened her womb and blessed her, filling her whole life with healing and joy, for she knew the great honor and privilege it is to be given a child to nurture and raise up in the ways of the LORD. And after she had weaned Samuel, she honored her vow to the LORD, and she brought him to Eli the priest at the Tabernacle of the LORD and gave the child to him. And LORD blessed her again, and she became pregnant. This is all found in 1 Samuel 1 and 2.
  - Can you see the foreshadowing of Jesus in there? Her only son offered up to serve Israel. Hannah is a type and shadow of Mary, who also gave her first born, Jesus to be the Last Lamb sacrifice to take away the sins of the world. Again, I love God's beautiful, intricate tapestry He weaves through scripture for us to see how much He loves us.
  - By the way, there is so much in this that I could jump off into. Holy Spirit just showed me some things I have never noticed before in that first part of 1 Samuel. I will do a deep dive and maybe He will have me share it with all of you. It's beautiful. Or even better, maybe you will take this teaser, grab Holy Spirit's ready hand, and jump into it yourself, asking Him to show you what He just showed me. The Bible is an amazing multifaceted land, full of truths and woven passions of God Most High, filled with love and courage, prosperity, justice, and mercy and grace. It is like the best theme park ever!
  - Back to Samuel — In my fleshly nature or human thinking, I can see that Samuel would feel slapped in the face by the request of the people. After serving them faithfully, they come and say, "your old, we don't like your sons, and we want to be just like everyone else." No, "thank you for putting up with us, instructing us, leading us" — nothing.
  - But the most profound part comes from the LORD to Samuel, "So Samuel prayed to the LORD. And the LORD said to Samuel, "Heed the voice of the people in all that they say to you; for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me, that I should not reign over them." 1 Samuel 8:6-7.
  - Do you know that the word qol (Kole), which is translated here as "voice" from the Hebrew also translates out as bleating, lowing, and noise? The sound of sheep — "You are My flock, the flock of My pasture..." (Ezekiel 34:31). That in itself is another deep, deep, dive.
  - So, if we examine our own lives, where have we said to the LORD, "I don't want You to reign over me. I want to be like everybody else." "I don't want to be special, set apart as holy; I don't want to be chosen; I want to be ruled by the same thing that rules everybody else?"

- I think, in this world, whether through religious church teaching or just the corruption we experience daily around us in the breakdown of society, we forget that we have been made in God's image and according to His likeness. In forgetting that, we assume (wrongly, I might add) that God has no feelings, no real tangible emotions. Yet, if we have feelings and emotions, He must have them. How do I know? Because Genesis 1:26 tells me He does. "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness." So not only does Father God and Jesus God have feelings and emotions, Holy Spirit God has feelings and emotions, for we were created like them. I also find that verse in Genesis extremely fascinating. God chose very carefully to put the words "Us" and "Our" in it. I think it is the only time He refers to Himself in that way, as "Us" and "Our" and not "My," "Me," "I." Why did He do that? Because He wants us to see that like Him, we are triune in design - spirit, soul, and body — but He also wants us to know that Father, Jesus, and Holy Spirit are real, tangible, and we are in Their image and fashioned according to Their likeness. Each has aspects of a body like we have, hands, feet, arms, legs. Each is Spirit, and each have a soul — mind, will, and emotions. This understanding isn't to bring God to our level, but to bring us up to His level. Just as we look at our children and see our image and likeness, or to our parents and see that we are like them; we are God's children, designed in His image and according to His likeness. When we look at ourselves in the mirror, we are looking at God's image and likeness. Wow! That is powerful!!
  - When we look at ourselves in the mirror are we seeing the daughter of the Most High God or the son of the Most High God? Are we choosing our words carefully when we speak over that daughter or son? If we were face to face with God, would we say the same things over ourselves that we often do when we THINK we aren't right in front of Him?
  - Do you know what else I see in those verses in Samuel? The people of God are literally telling God, we don't want to be special; we don't want to be the beat of your heart. We want to be just like the rest of the world. Yet, if we look at almost every tv show, especially reality tv, and at least half of the movies, all of the award shows, the music industry, the sports industry, and the way people mark their bodies or the way they dress or do their hair, we see that nearly every person is crying out to be noticed, be special, be the "favorite," be set apart as different. Isn't that fascinating — could it be that in our DNA, God designed us to want to be set apart, to want to be noticed for who we are. Although many of the lives of people that I mentioned above are not reflecting a life dedicated to God, the very DNA make up of each of them is crying out, craving to be special, accepted, desired, noticed — truly loved. Yet, as we look at how many of these people have chosen to go about becoming what the people of God literally gave up in 1 Samuel 8, we can see that most are still hollow, empty, unable to obtain the desire of their hearts because the only way the ache will be satisfied is if they turn to the DNA designer Himself, the One we are created in the image of and according to the likeness of — God, Father, Son, Holy Spirit — the Maker of heaven and earth.
- Can we see that God is always talking to us, always wanting us to see His love and passion for us in everything He created, in the beautiful love story He wrote for us in scripture? Can we see that each verse is a veritable story in itself, speaking to us, calling us to see Him in the way He truly is?
  - "Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends." John 15:13. So, not only are we His children, He calls us friend. How do I know? Because Jesus God willingly sacrificed His life for all mankind, from Adam to the last created human yet to be

born. There is no greater love than that, and He did it because we are His friends. And what does that word mean to Jesus? For He is the, “friend who sticks closer than a brother.” Proverbs 18:24.

- God imagined us inside Himself; He dreamed of us; He planned for us long before He designed us and created the earth as the most amazing home. And after carefully designing every tiny facet (things we often don't notice at all), after knowing all that would happen, from Lucifer to Adam, He designed Himself into our recompense, writing Himself in as the Kinsman Redeemer, weaving in every window, door, event, or person that would point us back to perfect, intimate, closer than a brother relationship with Him, and sealing the assurance of it all with Himself, Jesus — Who would live, die, and rise from the dead to remove the power of all sin and death and connect us back to Himself, that when we choose Him, nothing can ever separate us from Him again. Amazing!! What a perfect love story!!
- Tomorrow, we will pick back up in 1 Samuel and see where Holy Spirit takes us. I love His detours, His pauses, and His careful look into each intricate detail of His love story. There is no better way to read than with the Author Himself.
- I bless you with God's courage to overcome the plans of the enemy. I bless you with a passion to know God so intimately that people won't know where you end and He begins.
- Be greatly encouraged, for you are loved and designed by the Greatest Love of all time, past, present, and future, the One Who gave His own life for yours. Now, that is the most beautiful love story.