



Hillside Monthly Dispatch

Hillside Baptist Church, Pembroke, NH

Volume 23 No. 1

Modeling the Truth of God's Word

January 2024

SEEK HIS WILL FOR YOUR LIFE

From the Pastor's Desk

The Lord Is There

1 Samuel 1

Have you had an opportunity to read from the book of 1 Samuel recently? The book of 1 Samuel is one of the best books in the Old Testament because it is a transition book from the time of the Judges to the time of the Kings in the history of Israel.

One of the most dramatic figures in this book is of course Samuel who was the last Judge, but also a prophet of the Lord. What is interesting was the way Samuel came to be. Now without going into too many details about the birds and the bees let's just say that Samuel came about through divine means.

In the first couple of chapters of 1 Samuel the faithful servant isn't actually Samuel, but instead Samuel's mom Hannah. Now Hannah was one of the two wives of Elkanah, but she was unable to have children. Now I am not advocating for this arrangement, but as they say "It is what it is." So in the story Peninnah, the other wife, had children, but Hannah did not have any.

What is more interesting is it is clearly stated that God himself had chosen to close up the womb, and less you say that such a term denoted an expression for simply being barren you would be wrong. For the circumstances in this story do not allow us to write of such an uninspired theological understanding.

Now Peninnah constantly berated Hannah for not having children. This is just one of the problems that occur for a man who has two wives, but this berating was probably spurned on because the

Upcoming Events and Meetings

Jan. nn, 10:45 a.m. – Lord's Supper

Weekly:

Sundays at 9:30 a.m. – Sunday School

Sundays at 10:45 a.m. – Worship Service

Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m. – Weekly Bible Study

Starting March 6

Bible is clear that Elkanah loved Hannah more even though she had not borne a child to him, namely a son. So every year the whole family would travel to Shiloh together to worship the Lord there where the Ark of the Covenant was.

On one occasion Hannah got up after eating and drinking and went off separately and she began to pray within her heart that God would enable her to have children. Obviously she could no longer take the pain of ridicule from the other wife, or the pain of not being able to produce a child for her husband. Now this prayer was not without condition or a vow to the Lord. She promised that if she was given a son that he would be dedicated to the Lord and to His service. This was quite a vow to the Lord, one that God would test her in.

While she was there Eli, the High Priest, saw her and thought she was drunk with wine because she was there just moving her lips giving the impression of not being of right mind through

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On the web at <http://www.hillside-sbc.org>

Pastor’s Desk (from p. 1)

intoxication. After he found out that she was not drunk, but instead in great distress, Eli blessed her and sent her on her way with the hope that God did hear her prayer and would answer it favorably.

The Bible then tells us that she and her family went home and later Elkanah lay with her and she became pregnant. She eventually carried the baby full term and gave birth to Samuel.

After Samuel had spent a couple of years with Hannah and was fully weaned she brought him up to Shiloh and presented him to Eli as a servant for God. From that time on Eli raised Samuel as his son and Samuel served the Lord faithfully.

Year after year Hannah would visit Samuel to see how he was doing and Eli was grateful to Hannah’s faithfulness so much so that after he blessed her she went and had five more children.

This story is a lesson to us that God is there. When we are alone, He is there for us waiting for us to turn to Him. He is there waiting for us to submit to Him. He is there waiting for us to come to Him with a humble heart seeking His will for our lives.

You see, God was working through Hannah’s life is a mighty way to bring about a divine end. She endured pain and hardship so that she would grow closer to the Lord. She endured ridicule and pain so that she would come to the point of being ready and willing to commit her first, and for all she knew only, child to Him for His service. God was grooming, shaping, and preparing her to be an important component to fulfill His will for the future of Israel.

This is why it is so important to notice that God’s closing of her womb was not simply barrenness, but God’s active work in her life to bring her to the point of readiness to give up that which she desired most. When she got to that spiritual mindset God opened her womb for a divine purpose to bring about His plan and glory.

There are times in all our lives in which God seems silent. God might seem like He is nowhere to be seen or heard from. Maybe at this moment

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Fellowship Events

On December 10th after the Worship Service, we celebrated a Christmas Dinner featuring lasagna casseroles as the main dish.



Dinner also included salad, hot rolls, several desserts, cider, coffee, and fellowship.



Property and Space Patrol

Pastor Al Page donated his pickup truck for plowing the church. Thank you, Pastor Al!

Street numbers for the property were added to the entry light pole for delivery drivers. The last storm blew down some limbs throughout the property. The light at the south end of the street sign was replaced.

✝ Pastor Jim

Welcome New Members

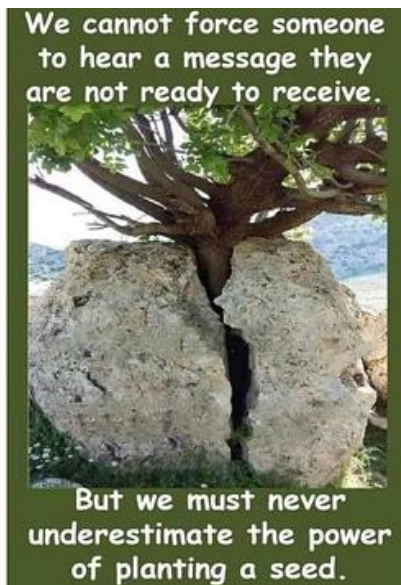


At the end of the Worship Service on December 17th, Pastor Jim announced that Randy and Mary Lisa Baker of Hopkinton expressed their desire to join Hillside. This is a transfer of membership from Harvest Baptist Church in Hooksett. All members agreed with a hearty “Amen.”

For several months now, Randy has been volunteering as our audio/visual technician, operating the praise song projector and recording sermons. Last Sunday, Mary Lisa surprised us with several platters of homemade M&M cookies. We are blessed to have Randy and Mary Lisa in our fellowship.

Plant That Spiritual Seed

Submitted by Tom Cairns



Pastor’s Desk, from p. 2

right now in your life God seems that way and you’re crying out asking Him where He is.

You might be under some ridicule at work for your faith. You may be going through hardship financially. Possibly you are experiencing pain in your marriage. You might wonder where He is in regards to your children and the decisions they are making in their lives. It might be that you are going through a difficult time with your aging parents and you are frustrated from having to live in reversed roles. Maybe right now there is physical hardship with you or your spouse. The list could be very long and, at some point, you feel as if you are about to break, wondering why God seems so silent in such dark times.

Know this, GOD IS THERE! He might seem like He is not, but He is. For our God is omnipresent. That is just a big word to say that He is everywhere at all times. If you believe this to be true, then even when you may feel He is not there you can know that He is. For often when our feelings fade or wane our faith is supported by our knowledge of what His word says in regard to His divine being.

You never know, maybe the silence you are experiencing might be similar to that of our protagonist in today’s passage. Maybe God is molding you and shaping you. Possibly He is preparing you for a greater task or ministry. Perhaps He is ratcheting you down a notch or two to keep you humble in His presence. Or maybe, just maybe like Hannah, He is preparing you to sacrifice something so big and so important that you would not have been willing to sacrifice it before going through the trial that brings you to the point of submitting to His divine will.

Hannah gave up her son to do His will, what are you willing to give up? I hope you are ready to give up everything and anything He desires of you for His glory and His kingdom.

I hope and pray that if you are going through a hard and difficult time in your life right now that these words bring you hope and joy. Hope in knowing that God is there and that what you are

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going through is not arbitrary, nor is it useless. Joy in knowing that God is so interested in you as His child that He has carved out a special spot in His divine plan for you to fulfill and He is just waiting for you to catch up to it.

May you seek His will and His ways in your prayers and may you be ready to serve Him when He reveals to you that He has been right there all the time waiting there for you to hear Him and to submit to His will in your life.

God bless,
✠ Pastor Jim

The Day after Christmas

This devotional from December 26 deals with post-Christmas “blahs.” Read Luke 2:15-20 and this essay by Sheridan Voysey.

After all the joy of Christmas Day, the following day felt like a letdown. We'd stayed overnight with friends but hadn't slept well. Then our car broke down as we were driving home. Then it started to snow. We had abandoned the car and taxied home in the snow and sleet feeling *blah*.

We're not the only ones who've felt low after Christmas Day. Whether it's from excessive eating, the way carols suddenly disappear from the radio, or the fact that the gifts we bought last week are now on sale half price, the magic of Christmas Day can quickly dissipate!

The Bible never tells us about the day after Jesus' birth. But we can imagine that after walking to Bethlehem, scrambling for accommodation, Mary's pain in giving birth, and having shepherds drop by unannounced ([Luke 2:4-18](#)), Mary and Joseph were exhausted. Yet as Mary cradled her newborn, I can imagine her reflecting on her angelic visitation (1:30-33), Elizabeth's blessing (vv. 42-45), and her own realization of her baby's destiny (vv. 46-55). Mary “pondered” such things in her heart (2:19), which must've lightened the tiredness and physical pain of that day.

We'll all have “blah” days, perhaps even the day after Christmas. Like Mary, let's face them by pondering the One who came into our world, forever brightening it with His presence.

Birthdays and Anniversaries



Hillside wishes a happy, happy, happy birthday to the following people who are celebrating another orbit around the Sun:

1/10 Peter Jenkins

1/11 Pastor Jim Robertson



Hillside also wishes God's blessing on anyone who celebrates a wedding anniversary this month.

Let us know if that is you.

Prayer Requests

If you need us to pray for a physical, spiritual, financial, marital, or other need, contact Pastor Jim, Pastor Al, or Michael Frascinella and they will get the word out to the membership. It is our duty and privilege to lift you up in prayer to Jesus Christ our Lord.

Hillside on the Web

Go to the Hillside web site <http://www.hillside-sbc.org/> for more information about our fellowship, including this newsletter in PDF format.

Submissions for Next Issue

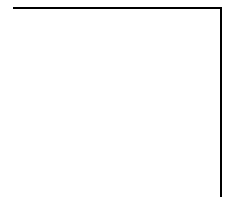
Deadline is Jan. 25. Send news items to News Wrangler and Editor, Michael Frascinella, mfrascinella at comcast dot net.



Hillside Baptist Church is a member of the Baptist Churches of New England, part of the Southern Baptist Convention.



Hillside Baptist Church
547 Pembroke St.
Pembroke, NH 03275



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