

One of the beautiful literary themes woven throughout 1 Samuel is the Hebrew word *kabod*, often translated "glory" or "honor," but carrying the idea of "weight" or "importance." To give God glory is to recognize that He is the weightiest reality in our lives, that He is the One whose authority, wisdom, and presence outweigh every other voice or desire. Hannah understood this. After years of heartache and humiliation, she did not allow bitterness to define her. Instead, she entrusted her pain to the Lord and, when He answered her prayer, she responded with a song of praise. In that song she declared that God humbles the proud but lifts up the humble (2:8). Those who acknowledge God's greatness discover that He graciously raises them up in His perfect time.

Eli, however, provides the tragic contrast. God confronted him because he honored his sons more than he honored the Lord (2:29). Their greed and irreverence revealed hearts that treated God's holiness as something light, while giving greater "weight" to their own appetites. Ironically, the family that sought the choicest portions for themselves became known for literally being overweight, and Eli's death came as he fell backward because of his heaviness (4:18). The message is unmistakable: whenever we give greater importance to ourselves, our comforts, our families, or our ambitions than we give to God, pride eventually brings us low. God's glory cannot be treated as secondary without spiritual consequences.

Yet this theme is not merely a warning, it is an invitation filled with grace. God delights in lifting those who willingly humble themselves before Him. Hannah's life demonstrates that surrender is never wasted. The Lord sees the unnoticed, strengthens the weary, and exalts those who trust Him rather than themselves. This pattern reaches its perfect fulfillment in Jesus Christ. Throughout His earthly life, Jesus gave the Father His full honor in every word, every decision, and every act of obedience. He humbled Himself completely, even to death on a cross. Because Jesus gave the Father all the glory, the Father highly exalted Him. Jesus shows us that true greatness is never found in exalting ourselves, but in joyfully submitting to the One whose glory outweighs everything else.

The question that echoes through these opening chapters of Samuel is one each of us must answer: Who carries the greatest weight in my life? Every decision, priority, and relationship reveals what we truly honor. When we recognize God's unmatched glory and gladly take our place as His servants, we discover that humility is not humiliation, it is the pathway to blessing. The God who calls us to humble ourselves before Him is the very God who delights in lifting His children up according to His perfect wisdom and timing.

Prayerfully consider the following this week: What priorities or desires in my life may be receiving more weight than my devotion to God? In what area is God calling me to humble myself more fully and trust Him instead of relying on my own strength or importance? How can I follow the example of Jesus this week by giving the Father glory through humble obedience and joyful service?

Weekly Memory Verse:

"He lifts the needy from the garbage heap, To seat them with nobles, And He gives them a seat of honor as an inheritance;"

1 Samuel 2:8

Weekly Affirmation:

WHO CARRIES THE GREATEST WEIGHT IN MY LIFE?

JULY 2026 GROWTH GOALS

- ☐ Read the Book of 1 Samuel
- ☐ Watch the Bible Project video on 1 Samuel (*available on the website*).
- ☐ Memorize one of the weekly memory verses.
- ☐ Consider each week a new way of intentionally using your resources (*money, mind, skills, etc.*) to another's benefit.