



THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURES

1 Samuel 1:1-20, Luke 1:1-25,
1 Samuel 2:1-10, Luke 1:46-56

DAY 1

Read [1 Samuel 1:1-20](#); [Luke 1:1-25](#)

- **What similarities do you note between Hannah's story and that of Elizabeth in Luke 1:1-25?**
- **How did God answer the prayers of these two women? Why is this so significant?**
- **Both these women gave birth to sons who played a major role in the Biblical narrative. Describe the roles their sons played.**

DAY 2

Read [1 Samuel 2:1-10](#); [Luke 1:46-56](#)

Both of the passages today are known as a "song." Hannah and Mary's songs share the state of their hearts and the role they are to assume through God's gift.

- **What are the similarities you note in these two women?**
- **What stands out about them and their songs?**
- **How do Mary and Hannah thank God for what has happened?**

- **What emotions do they convey?**

DAY 3

Revisit [Luke 1:46-56](#)

Think about what your response would be had the angel spoken to you.

- **What would be going through your mind? How would you begin to get your head around this?**
- **Why do you think God chose to come into the world as a baby instead of immediately as an adult?**
- **In what ways are you making yourself available for God this Christmas season? How can you become more like Mary?**

DAY 4

"He (God) has performed mighty deeds with his arm; he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts. He has brought down rulers from their thrones but has lifted up the humble. He has filled the hungry with good things but has sent the rich away empty. He has helped his servant Israel, remembering to be merciful to Abraham and his descendants forever, even as he said to our fathers."

- **The poor have a special place in God's heart. Why is that?**
- **Mary talks about God scattering the proud. What is your definition of pride? Why is God against a prideful heart?**
- **In what ways does Mary proclaim God's promises in this passage? What is the hope she outlines?**

- **Think about what it means to you that God is merciful to his descendants forever. Reflect on that thought.**
- **God's promise is eternal and God made it possible through the birth of the baby Jesus. How are you seeing his promise fulfilled today?**

DAY 5

Today, reread Luke 1:46-55 with a different translation from the ones you have used on previous days. You choose the translation. How does reading the words in a different translation help you to understand the scripture more deeply?

Mary's reflections focus on status. In our world today, it seems as though we value the rich and powerful. In Biblical times, that was not the case.

- **How do Mary's words reflect a theology of status?**

We tend to view the rich and famous as blessed and powerful; as somehow favored by the divine. Yet, Mary's words make it quite clear whom God honors.

- **How can you make it a point to see those who are poor this Christmas season and instead of feeling sorry for them, show compassion and mercy?**

This Christmas season is a time to stand up for issues of justice. Even in our Largo and Clearwater communities we see so many who are without.

- **In what ways will you make a commitment to support St. Paul ministries as we strive to deal with issues of injustice?**

DAY 6

Today is a day of reflection and prayer. Give thanks to God for your blessings and ask him to help you see those that are without. Take time as you pray to listen and allow God to guide you.

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