



GOD'S CARE FOR HIS PEOPLE

Judges 21:25: *"In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes.*

- * **The era of the Judges.** Brutal, spiritually dark, and chaotic.
- * Samuel (1 & 2) is the story of **Israel's transition from judges to a monarchy.**
- * 1 Samuel begins **approximately 1100 BC**
- * God's people are in desperate need of **good leadership**, as the judges to this point have failed.
- * The story of 1 Samuel begins with **Hannah, a barren woman from the hills.**
- * **She will show us God's care and providence in four ways:**

EXHIBIT A: HANNAH'S BACKGROUND

1 Samuel 1:1-3: *"There was a certain man of Ramathaim-zophim of the hill country of Ephraim whose name was Elkanah the son of Jeroham, son of Elihu, son of Tohu, son of Zuph, an Ephrathite. He had two wives. The name of the one was Hannah, and the name of the other, Peninnah. And Peninnah had children, but Hannah had no children. Now this man used to go up year by year from his city to worship and to sacrifice to the LORD of hosts at Shiloh, where the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were priests of the LORD."*

- * **Ramathaim-zophim is Ramah.** Elkanah and Hannah are from the hills.
- * **Elkanah** (means "God has created") a Levite by blood (1 Chronicles 6:22-28, 33-35).
- * **Hannah** (means "grace") is barren. Both Elkanah and Hannah are obscure but not random.
- * **It makes you pause:** Has God placed me where I am for a purpose?

EXHIBIT B: HANNAH'S FAMILY

1 Samuel 1:3, 5-6: *"Now this man used to go up year by year from his city to worship and to sacrifice to the LORD of hosts at Shiloh, where the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were priests of the LORD... To Hannah he gave a double portion, because he loved her, though the Lord had closed her womb. And her rival used to provoke her grievously to irritate her, because the Lord had closed her womb."*

- * **Lord of Hosts.** Points to God's control of heavenly beings, armies, and yet, in this particular story, also His care for the orphan and widow (1 Sam 1:3, 1:11).
- * **Eli, Hophni, and Phinehas** were technically leaders, but not good ones. God was raising up a new leader!
- * **A double portion vs. a choice portion:** Either way, it demonstrates Elkanah's care for Hannah.
- * **It makes you pause:** Could God use my broken situations too?

EXHIBIT C: HANNAH'S PRAYER

1 Samuel 1:11: *“And she vowed a vow and said, “O Lord of hosts, if you will indeed look on the affliction of your servant and remember me and not forget your servant, but will give to your servant a son, then I will give him to the Lord all the days of his life, and no razor shall touch his head.”*

✱ **Hannah's prayer wasn't polished, it was authentic:**

- ✱ She spoke from a place of bitterness (1 Sam 1:10)
- ✱ She spoke in her heart (1 Sam 1:13).
- ✱ She spoke from a place of Biblical truth (1 Sam 1:11).
- ✱ **Genesis 8:1-2:** *“But God remembered Noah and all the beasts and all the livestock that were with him in the ark. And God made a wind blow over the earth, and the waters subsided.”*
- ✱ **Genesis 30:22:** *“Then God remembered Rachel, and God listened to her and opened her womb.”*
- ✱ She “poured out her soul” (1 Sam 1:15).
- ✱ She spoke out of “anxiety and vexation” (1 Sam 1:16).
- ✱ **Psalm 55:1-3:** *“Give ear to my prayer, O God, and hide not yourself from my plea for mercy! Attend to me, and answer me; I am restless in my complaint and I moan, because of the noise of the enemy, because of the oppression of the wicked.”*
- ✱ **Hannah's vow** is similar to a “Nazarite vow” (similar to Samson). It marks a “setting apart.”
- ✱ **Hannah's prayer was misunderstood.** Why did Eli react in such a way?
- ✱ **It makes you pause:** Do you offer a ‘real’ prayer, or a ‘polished’ prayer?

EXHIBIT D: HANNAH'S DEDICATION

1 Samuel 1:20: *“And in due time Hannah conceived and bore a son, and she called his name Samuel, for she said, “I have asked for him from the Lord.”*

- ✱ **Samuel means literally “name of God.”** But in Hebrew it sounds like “heard by God.”
- ✱ **1 Samuel 1:26-27,** *“Oh, my lord! As you live, my lord, I am the woman who was standing here in your presence, praying to the Lord. For this child I prayed, and the Lord has granted me my petition that I made to him. Therefore I have lent him to the Lord. As long as he lives, he is lent to the Lord.” And he worshiped the Lord there.”*
- ✱ Hannah didn't forget God's answer. She lived according to His answer.
- ✱ **Psalm 66:19,** *“But truly God has listened; he has attended to the voice of my prayer.”*
- ✱ **Hannah's story is about God.**
 - ✱ “Samuel 1 is not primarily about Hannah, any more than it is primarily about Elkanah. It is mainly about God. First Samuel begins by showing us that God cared for Hannah. We will see, as this story unfolds, that his care for Hannah was his care for Israel... Hannah's son will be surpassed by Mary's son. God's care for us all finds its fullest expression in Jesus Christ.” John Woodhouse
 - ✱ **John 3:16,** *“For God so loved the world. That he gave his only son. That whomsoever should believe in Him will not perish but have everlasting life.”*
 - ✱ **1 John 4:9,** *“This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him.”*
 - ✱ The story of Samuel and Hannah show us that **God loves the world.** He intervenes in the world (even in dark times).
 - ✱ God is at work in the world today. God loves you. God cares for you.
- ✱ **It makes you pause:** Is your story more about you or God's perfect grace and love?