

CONCERNING THE WAY

August 26, 2008

LESSON 28: ISRAEL: 1 SAMUEL



Introduction

This lesson we'll be starting a series on the books of 1st and 2nd Samuel. In most of these studies I use a variety of resources to put together the lessons. But for this I'm going to primarily use an audio Bible study given some years ago by Charles Clough. Charlie's insights into the scriptures are so rich, and this study is so excellent that I decided to primarily use it. I have edited it for length and changed the wording for clarity. We will all learn much that we can use in this series!
- *Dusty Rhodes*

Let's review the situation when we start the book of Samuel. First you have to understand that Israel was dominated by nations all around her. The Midianites, as well as other tribes such as the Philistines and the Edomites, kept Israel under dominion for many, many years. Now the problem in Samuel's day is that the nation had passed through cycle after cycle after cycle and apostasy has increased with each cycle. So, since the nation is elect by the Abrahamic Covenant, and since this is an unconditional covenant, which means that God can't change it, then He is has a problem. These people are so disobedient they are going to go into the cursing stage of the cycle again and yet at the same time God promises them that He is not going to utterly cast them out. So therefore God is going to try a new approach and this approach is going to be through developing a new office in the nation.

The old way, which was a time of tremendous personal freedoms, was the time of the Judges. The judge had a charisma in the true sense of the word, he was a gifted man, he had a gift by the Holy Spirit of leadership, and these people would just kind of pop up, lead the nation, die and then there'd be somebody else pop up to take their place. There was no family dynasty or anything, you had to trust the Lord to raise up leaders.

Well now the carnality has set in so much they can no longer trust God to provide leaders. And so God is going to say, All right Israel, you can't trust Me, so here's what I'm going to do; I have elected you as a national entity, I have predestined you and therefore you are going to be saved in history, whether you like it or not I will save you, but the means I am going to use to save you is you're going to lose your freedom and we're going to have a centralized bureaucracy centering in a king. And this was the first movement in the nation Israel toward centralized power. Notice the reason for it was because of apostasy; the collection of power at high levels and the development of the monarchy was simply due to the extreme disobedience of the people.

Although it's something bad that introduces the period, it's disobedience of the nation over many centuries, its also cursing turned into blessing as God always does, and that is that out of all of this disaster God is going to create an office which we are going to study, and when we get through studying that you will understand why Jesus is the Christ, or the Messiah. Do you realize that "Christ" is not Jesus' last name? "Christ" is His title.

This is why saying just Jesus over and over just doesn't cut it. That's like walking out here and saying John, John, John or Joe, Joe, Joe. Jesus is simply a common everyday name in the ancient world and has no theological significance by itself. This is why when you use the term "Jesus" it should always be entitled Jesus who is the Mashach (Messiah) or the Christ, or even the Lord Jesus.

We're going to study 1 and 2 Samuel together. These books were originally one and we will study them as one together. And here is the outline that we will follow:

1 Samuel 1-7 - We would summarize the content of these first seven chapters as God prepares to deliver Israel by a great change. Remember they are in the dark ages and God is going to deliver them and He's not going to do it like He used to do it back in the book of Judges, by simply raising up a judge. Things have gotten too bad, more drastic means are necessary. So now He is going to introduce a great change. God prepares to deliver Israel by a great

change, that's 1 Samuel 1-7.

1 Samuel 8-15 - We would summarize the content of chapters 8-15 as God establishes the office of King and its first incumbent, Saul, fails. This, by the way, is to introduce a wonderful principle of God's grace. Saul is going to be a testimony to the fact that the energy of the flesh doesn't make it and that the only kings that are going to survive are those that depend on the Lord all the way, just like the only way we survive in the Christian life is to depend upon Him in every area. So 1 Samuel 8-15, God establishes the office of King and its first incumbent, Saul, fails. Those are very, very important chapters because those chapters are what is going to introduce you to what Christ's title means. So this part of history is very important. When we get through here you'll have a much deeper appreciation for the person of Christ. And when you read that and John's Gospel, it will take on fantastic meaning because now you will look at it the way an Old Testament person would.

This is important to you as a believer for one reason - you can't understand who Jesus is unless you understand who the Christ is, for the issue of the New Testament is that the carpenter from Nazareth called Jesus literally is the Christ. And if He is or is not the Christ, is an issue that you must decide and depends entirely upon what the Christ is like and what is He supposed to do. This being so it behooves us as believers to understand what the historic office of the king or the anointed one was to be, and therefore the books of Samuel and Kings have been written to teach us what this office is, what its incumbent is supposed to do.

1 Samuel 16 - 2 Samuel 1 - This is a very interesting portion and we could summarize the content as Saul decreases but David increases. And out of this you have a tremendous typology of Satan and Christ. As Satan was the first anointed one, he was the anointed cherub, and Christ replaces him. Most of David's Psalms were written during this era of history.

2 Samuel 2-8 - God blesses David and prepares for His worldwide kingdom. This is an astounding section because this deals with the prophecies of the millennium and shows you the tremendous future ministry that the person of Christ had. Again, 2 Samuel 2-8, God blesses David and prepares for His worldwide kingdom.

2 Samuel 9-20 - God curses David and his court. You'll see a portrait of a believer under discipline. This is known as the so-called succession narrative.

2 Samuel 21-24 - a closing divine viewpoint profile of King David.

God causes Samuel to be born

The first section that we are going to deal with will be from 1:1 through 2:11. I want you to see and be able to think your way through the book so this won't just be a set of stories tacked on to each other, sort of like links on a chain. God causes Samuel to be born.

This is a major shift in God's strategy and this brings out a very important principle and it goes back to a philosophical principle behind government. Where does sovereignty come from? For example, in the days when the kings ruled Europe, you could point to the king and say well, he is the sovereign, what the king says goes. In a democratic republic where does sovereignty reside? You may say the constitution; fine, but who made the constitution? It was the people, and they're expressing themselves through government. So you've got to locate sovereignty if you're going to have government. Now the most beautiful thing about Samuel is who comes first? Saul, the king or Samuel the prophet? Samuel the prophet, and this is the divine order of history. **The prophet must always precede the king and this is kept all the way into the New Testament.** Who appears first in the New Testament, Jesus or John? It is John the Baptist and Jesus Christ, even as the ideal King, must be anointed by John.

So, the same thing here, Samuel is going to be the king-maker, and from this point forward the kings are to be under the control of the prophets. Why? Because sovereignty resides in God alone and it must be transmitted to the king; the king is never an unlimited monarch, and this is the difference between Israel and all other forms of monarchies, in that Israel's king was hemmed in by the Law on one hand (Deuteronomy 16, 17 and 18, deals with the boundaries upon the monarch ruling in the nation), and the prophets on the other hand. So the king has two things hanging over his head. He has the Law of Moses, the Torah, to which he must submit, and he has the word of the prophets who

bring it up to date.

This is an important principle, that in God's plan the political office is always underneath the Word of God, never above it. Now this has to be compromised in the Church Age because we believe in the doctrine of the separation of church and state, and so therefore during the time from the collapse of the kingdom, on down until Christ reestablishes it that principle is not effective. And so it is in our day, the governmental offices are not under the authority of the Word of God, so therefore we have problems. However, in God's long range program the Word of God will dictate through the government what it shall be. But in the Church Age it is not.

Before God can establish the king that is going to deliver the nation He must first establish a line of prophets. So see the prophecy of what's happening here, turn to Deuteronomy 18:15.

Deuteronomy 18:15 *The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you – from your fellow Israelites; you must listen to him.*

Here you have a fulfillment of a prophecy made in Moses' time, and it says the prophet is the man in charge. And this is why you have something go on in the Hebrew courts that you do not have in Assyria or Egypt, that is having a man by the name of Nathan, walking in and chewing out the king. Now how could that ever happen? Can you imagine somebody walking in and chewing out Pharaoh? Or can you imagine somebody walking in and saying hey, king, you just goofed and really reading the riot act to him, like Nathan does to David. No, that is unknown in the ancient world. Only in Israel do you have a prophet walking in and telling off the king. And this is why the tradition has gone on down through history. And the most famous one in recent history is John Knox walked into the Queen of England and told her, you bloody whore, and he said it good and loud right in her court, and probably everybody fainted, and Knox didn't care, he was a believer and wasn't afraid of being executed. So he told her off. And the tradition for telling off the state in the name of the Word of God comes from right here; it all starts with Samuel. Now I want to show you in a series of verses how Samuel is looked at in the rest of God's Word.

2 Chronicles 35:18 *A Passover like this had not been observed in Israel since the days of Samuel the prophet. None of the kings of Israel had observed a Passover like the one celebrated by Josiah, the priests, the Levites, all the people of Judah and Israel who were there, and the residents of Jerusalem.*

Something has happened in Josiah's day that was fantastic. They had a tremendous restoration and a Biblical revival in that generation, but notice how it is dated "since the days of Samuel the prophet." In other words, what we are facing here is a another George Washington. Moses was one of the founding fathers of Israel and Samuel is actually looked upon as another. The nation sees itself as having two beginnings; one was Moses and one was Samuel.

Psalms 99:6 *Moses and Aaron were among his priests; Samuel was one of those who prayed to him. They prayed to the LORD and he answered them.*

Here you see the same thing. Try to follow through as we go through these verses because I want you to see the stature of the man Samuel in God's sight, and then you're going to get shocked by going back to 1 Samuel and seeing the stature in the sight of man and the contrast will be resolved in 1 Samuel 2. But first let's look at Samuel as how God evaluates the man. You see how Samuel is elevated together with Moses and Aaron; Moses and Aaron the founders, Samuel the co-founder, so it's as though the nation has a new lease on life in Samuel's day. God is doing a drastic thing in Samuel's life. Now let's come into the New Testament and see how the people in the New Testament looked back on Samuel.

Acts 3:24 *And all the prophets, from Samuel and those who followed him, have spoken about and announced these days.*

Here you read of the tremendously high office that Samuel held. You see how the line of prophets begins with Samuel.

Acts 13:20 *All this took about four hundred fifty years. After this he gave them judges until the time of Samuel the prophet.*

This reference shows you that Samuel is at the last of a line of judges. So you see, Samuel is at a juncture in history; before him you have the judges. The New Testament recognizes that he stood on the boundary of history. Now let's start with the text of the lesson.

1 Samuel 1:1 *There was a man from Ramathaim Zophim, from the hill country of Ephraim, whose name was Elkanah. He was the son of Jeroham, the son of Elihu, the son of Tohu, the son of Zuph, an Ephraimite.*

This is just a comment but it's useful to notice this. The Hebrew people had one of the most fantastic systems ever devised for naming people. They had the only system that perfectly describes the person. Here's why; the Hebrew system of names starts with your name, say n, and your father's name is n1, n2 and so on, and they would say ben, this is the son of, n1 who was the son of, n2, all the way back to Adam. And that's the full name of the person. Can you imagine it'd get kind of long to sign their signature so they obviously just signed this last name and maybe their father's name. But the point of the Hebrew system of names is better than anything we've got because it pegs the person in history. It shows you the uniqueness of every individual; there can never be a duplication of names on this basis, never, because each name is a perfect line all the way back to Adam.

And even today, scholars used to laugh at the Bible and say oh, look, they made up all these genealogies. And then Nelson Glick did some surface expeditions in the eastern part of Jordan and he hired a bunch of Arabs to help him out and do the digging, etc. and around the camp fires they would sit and start talking about the various Arab tales. The Arabs are Semites, and they named themselves, particularly the Bedouins, much like this. And Glick just about dropped his teeth because he started listening to these Arabs and one night they were around the campfire and one of the Arabs started telling his name, I am the son of so and so and son of so and so and he could remember it back forty generations. And Glick couldn't believe it and so he started around, what's your name, give me your name, and they just rolled it right off. And he discovered something that the liberal scholars just were astounded when they found this out, and that is that the Semitic Bedouin tribes, even today, can go back in their genealogies about forty generations. The son is required to know his name from his father, and his father drilled and drilled his son until his son can memorize it cold, all the way back. So the presence of the genealogies in Scripture are very important from our standpoint.

Now what do we have in front of our names; well, when our ancestors were trotting around Europe they discovered that they had too many first names and so they came up with all sorts of systems and you can analyze your name and see what's happened. Your surname, or your last name, is usually named after a location or an occupation, so you have somebody like Crook, Carpenter or something, and that surname was just designating their occupation and then it came to stick in the family; a characteristic, even somebody by the name of Lange, actually that's a distortion of "long," they're a tall person. So they named him John Lange, he's the long one. And so you have the various reasons for naming.

Now some nationalities have gotten close to the Hebrew. For example the Scotch, when they put "Mac" somebody, that is "son of." Or in another area you have Fitzgerald or something, that is a designator of a son. So some of the Gentiles have sort of mimicked this system. But only the Jew here in the Bible, in God's Word, sees himself inside history. And this is tremendous because you see, we inherit sin from our fathers, and the Jew knew and could snap out his whole life by his line. So when you look at verse 1 don't get discouraged before you hit verse 2, I'm just trying to encourage you so when you see so and so begat so and so, who begat so and so and son of somebody, you'll just remember that the Holy Spirit put that in there for a reason. And it's to reaffirm the tremendous historicity of these people, that they knew where they stood and they measured themselves from all points.

1 Samuel 1:2 *He had two wives; the name of the first was Hannah and the name of the second was Peninnah. Now Peninnah had children, but Hannah was childless.*

That was double trouble, and of course the trouble there was that one was childless and the other had a child and you had jealousy develop.

1 Samuel 1:3 *Year after year this man would go up from his city to worship and to sacrifice to the LORD of hosts at Shiloh. It was there that the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phineas, served as the LORD's priests.*

This shows you the tremendous spirituality of this man, Elkanah, he obviously was the glue that held the family together. "The Lord of hosts" is a title which is first introduced at this point in Scripture. Literally it means, "the Lord, the God of armies." This is the first time this title is used for God.

Now let's look at what this means. What do we learn about the essence of God from looking at His name and His title? We go back to the essence of God. God is sovereign, God is righteous, God is just, God is love, God is omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent, immutable, eternal. That's the character of God. Now from this name, because a name depicts character, two attributes are emphasized, God's sovereignty and His omnipotence. It doesn't say "Elohim Sabaoth," it says "Yahweh Sabaoth." What is the difference? Yahweh Sabaoth has to do with the covenant and it means His relationship to believers or the elect. And so in particular this name shows us God's omnipotence and His sovereignty on behalf of believers. And it is a very precious name of God in the Bible and you will see in the Psalms and in the late prophets that when believers are in a jam, inevitably when they call upon God they call upon Him as "Yahweh Sabaoth," my God, the God of armies. It means that God has the ability, omnipotence, and has the desire, sovereignty, to manipulate the nature and be able through His angelic command and hierarchy to come to your aid. That's what the Lord Sabaoth means.

Where are the armies? The armies in the Bible are many things. It includes angels, it includes astronomical bodies and human armies. So we have three things that can be meant by armies. The Lord is in charge of angels; He is in charge of the physical universe, which includes nature, weather, the astronomical bodies, etc. Then of course the human armies; He can work in and through government and use the armies of the world. Now I'm going to conclude by taking you through a verse chain to show you a flavor for this term and how the saints of the Old Testament employed this in their everyday life.

Each one of these verses I am about to show you in this chain illustrates how God uses one of His three armies to come to believer's help, to come to your aid as believers. My purpose in taking you through this is that if you will sympathetically go through these verses with me, read them, possibly write them down and look at them later, this will do a lot to shred any naturalistic view of the world when you get in a jam and God seems about 80,000 miles away. If you will just take your mind and submit it to this chain of verses you will see how God is able to move right into your life and come to your aid, no matter how much of a jam you may be in; you may be in a situation where you are surrounded physically, you may be in a business situation, a political situation, war, whatever the situation is and if you have this down you have something precious as far as perception of who and what God is and how He loves you and how He can come to your aid.

1 Samuel 7:10 *As Samuel was offering burnt offerings, the Philistines approached to do battle with Israel. But on that day the LORD thundered loudly against the Philistines. He caused them to panic, and they were defeated by Israel.*

"Thundered loudly" means He scared them. So that's what God did in 1 Samuel 7:10 and there He is using His second army, He is using physical nature to come to their aid.

2 Samuel 22:7-18 *In my distress I called to the LORD; I called to my God. From his heavenly temple he heard my voice; he listened to my cry for help. (8) The earth heaved and shook; the foundations of the sky trembled. They heaved because he was angry. (9) Smoke ascended from his nose; fire*

devoured as it came from his mouth; he hurled down fiery coals. (10) He made the sky sink as he descended; a thick cloud was under his feet. (11) He mounted a winged angel and flew; he glided on the wings of the wind. (12) He shrouded himself in darkness, in thick rain clouds. (13) From the brightness in front of him came coals of fire. (14) The LORD thundered from the sky; the sovereign One shouted loudly. (15) He shot arrows and scattered them, lightning and routed them. (16) The depths of the sea were exposed; the inner regions of the world were uncovered by the LORD's battle cry, by the powerful breath from his nose. (17) He reached down from above and grabbed me; he pulled me from the surging water. He rescued me from my strong enemy, from those who hate me, for they were too strong for me.

Here's David. I want you to see, all these people are using this concept, the Lord Sabaoth. Here is a practical illustration of a believer in a jam and because he knows the Lord as the Lord Sabaoth, he does something, he calls to the Lord of Armies.

Now what is David saying? That God had the ability to work in a catastrophic, fantastic way through what we would call natural forces. Next time you get trapped into thinking this is a fallacy, Satan would love for you to think that way. You get in some sort of a jam and you can't think of a human way out of it and so automatically you think God's stuck too. You're stuck but God isn't. God can do fantastic things in our lives.

1 Kings 22:19-22 *Micaiah said, "That being the case, hear the word of the LORD. I saw the LORD sitting on his throne, with all the heavenly assembly standing on his right and on his left. The LORD said, 'Who will deceive Ahab, so he will attack Ramoth Gilead and die there?' One said this and another that. (21) Then a spirit stepped forward and stood before the LORD. He said, 'I will deceive him.' The LORD asked him, 'How?' (22) He replied, 'I will go out and be a lying spirit in the mouths of all his prophets.' The LORD said, 'Deceive and overpower him. Go out and do as you have proposed.'*

Here God comes to the aid of believers but not with natural elements this time. Micaiah had a tremendous privilege as a believer, very few believers get this privilege, but he attended a session of the heavenly councils. And we don't know where this is held but apparently the entire cosmos, every once in a while, has a meeting, and the Lord calls together all the major chief angels or something that run the lower echelon and He calls them to a general meeting, including the bad ones; both the elect and the fallen angels are gathered together in one of these council meetings. And Micaiah, through a vision, was able to listen in to what was happening.

Notice it's very, very personal, God does not operate the universe like an IBM machine; get that out of your mind. That is not the way the universe runs. If you get that out of your mind you will have a lot easier time in prayer. Just take this verse slow and let it sink in what you're looking at. God is calling a meeting, and He is suggesting a course of action and the angels are discussing the course of action around the council, then there is a decision made. Out of this came forth something that affected history and it all was done in this council, this secret angelic council. But I want you to see the extreme personal interaction that's going on here.

2 Kings 6:15-18 *The prophet's attendant got up early in the morning. When he went outside there was an army surrounding the city, along with horses and chariots. He said to Elisha, "Oh no, my master! What will we do?" (16) He replied, "Don't be afraid, for our side outnumbers them." (17) Then Elisha prayed, "O LORD, open his eyes so he can see." The LORD opened the servant's eyes and he saw that the hill was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha. (18) As they approached him, Elisha prayed to the LORD, "Strike these people with blindness." The LORD struck them with blindness as Elisha requested.*

This is an incident that happened with the prophet Elisha; the king of Syria was after him, and he sent an army after Elisha. Elisha had stopped at a motel here and he looked out the window and he said say, I see a few tanks on the road out there, and then he looked out the other window and he saw some infantry, and he got the impression the

place was surrounded. Now if you just stopped at verse 16 you'd wonder if the guy is off his rocker, here is an army out there and we've got two inside here. What do you mean, more with us than with them? But surrounding the human army was one of the armies of The Lord Sabaoth. So this is another time in history that God used His angelic armies.

The next one is from Zechariah. This should be extremely comforting to you if you are a believer. Zechariah has a group of believers, they have come back to Israel in 516 BC, they face a desolate, very sad situation. The once great nation of Israel was now just a bunch of huts, they tried to build a temple and it just really doesn't look anything like Solomon's temple, and they're really downcast; it's a really sad day for a believer. Not only that but they're victims caught between the great international political machines of the Persians and the Greeks. Very shortly after Zechariah writes, within a century or so, these believers are going to have to face Alexander. And they'll face the other problems in the ancient world, the Medo-Persian Empire and so on, so it's a time of tremendous international intrigue. Now look at how God provides for believers.

Zechariah 1:7-10 *On the twenty-fourth day of the eleventh month, the month Shebat, in Darius's second year, the word of the LORD came to the prophet Zechariah son of Berechiah son of Iddo, as follows: (8) I was attentive that night and saw a man seated on a red horse that stood among some myrtle trees in the ravine. Behind him were red, sorrel, and white horses. (9) Then I asked one nearby, "What are these, sir?" The angelic messenger who replied to me said, "I will show you what these are." (10) Then the man standing among the myrtle trees spoke up and said, "These are the ones whom the LORD has sent to walk about on the earth."*

These are patrols, angelic patrols that are patrolling the land. And Zechariah, just like that boy back in Elisha's day, suddenly he had his eyes opened to what was happening all around him. He was being surrounded by angelic patrols. How comforting. Now he normally couldn't see it; we can't see it, but under certain circumstances in history God takes the scales off the believer's eyes when they are extremely discouraged, see, don't worry about it, we've got it covered. See what God is doing? He is calming and relaxing believers that face tremendous adversity. Two more references to show you this isn't just in the Old Testament.

Matthew 26:51-53 *But one of those with Jesus grabbed his sword, drew it out, and struck the high priest's slave, cutting off his ear. (52) Then Jesus said to him, "Put your sword back in its place! For all who take hold of the sword will die by the sword. (53) Or do you think that I cannot call on my Father, and that he would send me more than twelve legions of angels right now?"*

Jesus Christ had this same concept. This is the scene of His arrest and His disciples are all shook. It was Peter that grabbed the sword, and what he was trying to do was brain the guy and he just cut his ear off, and obviously with a bodyguard like that, the Lord needed something better than that kind of protection.

Do you think Jesus is just playing games mystically or do you think He really means it? Do you know how much a legion is? It varies from about three thousand to six thousand. Multiply it by twelve and that's how many angels God the Father could have dispatched, just like that, to His Son. Jesus isn't shook in that sense; Jesus is shook about facing our sins, that's why He shook in the Garden of Gethsemane but He's not shook about the political force; He knows that He has that many angels at His disposal.

Acts 12:7-10 *Suddenly an angel of the Lord appeared, and a light shone in the prison cell. He struck Peter on the side and woke him up, saying, "Get up quickly!" And the chains fell off Peter's wrists. (8) The angel said to him, "Fasten your belt and put on your sandals." Peter did so. Then the angel said to him, "Put on your cloak and follow me." (9) Peter went out and followed him; he did not realize that what was happening through the angel was real, but thought he was seeing a vision. (10) After they had passed the first and second guards, they came to the iron gate leading into the city. It opened for them by itself, and they went outside and walked down one narrow street, when at once the angel left him.*

This is when the angel delivers Peter and I want to conclude with this and a passage from David, to show you that this applied after Pentecost to born again believers in Christ. In verse 7 we have Peter in prison, he is physically bound, he needs physical deliverance. By the way, that's another thing, the angels usually give physical deliverance, the Holy Spirit's involved in the spiritual problems, but generally speaking the angels give the physical deliverance. Here the angel did for Peter what Peter couldn't do for himself, solved the problem.

So we have then a steady stream of verses and this is what is meant by the Lord Sabaoth. There's one final great promise in God's Word and it's 1 Samuel 17:47, I want to finish with that one. This technically isn't part of the chain but it's an application of the truth of all these verses, a promise that you can claim as a believer. This is David facing Goliath.

1 Samuel 17:45-47 *But David replied to the Philistine, "You are coming against me with sword and spear and javelin. But I am coming against you in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel's armies, whom you have defied! (46) This very day the LORD will deliver you into my hand! I will strike you down and cut off your head. This day I will give the corpses of the Philistine army to the birds of the sky and the wild animals of the land. Then all the land will realize that Israel has a God (47) and all this assembly will know that it is not by sword or spear that the LORD saves! For the battle is the LORD's, and he will deliver you into our hand."*

"I come against you in the name of the LORD of Hosts," now what does that mean? David walked up to Goliath and he had confidence that all around him he was protected. That's why verse 47 can be a promise. I want you to see that. The concept of the Lord Sabaoth enables the believer to believe the promise in a crisis. **The battle is the Lord's!**

So, in 1 Samuel 1, in this era of history we have a very poignant illustration of how God works into a bad, negative situation and turns cursing into blessing, dealing with a woman in the middle of one of the greatest adversities a woman could have been exposed to in the ancient world. So this chapter traces the life of this woman Hannah, her mental attitudes, how she is responding to life, etc. and out of all of this will come God's great work of deliverance.

Watch how Hannah is responding to her problem and what a fantastic thing God is going to do and it's all going to be by grace, and that's what her name means. Hannah is taken from the Hebrew noun which means grace. But first in chapter 1 we meet Hannah when she's out of it. She doesn't have anything on her mind except vengeance on this other woman in the house. So apart from that she just can't think of anything else. She is a woman who is hysterical, she's almost psychotic with depression.

1 Samuel 1:4-7 *Whenever the day came for Elkanah to sacrifice, he used to give meat portions to his wife Peninnah and to all her sons and daughters. (5) But he would give a double portion to Hannah, because he especially loved her. Now the LORD had not enabled her to have children. (6) Her rival wife used to upset her and make her worry, for the LORD had not enabled her to have children. (7) Peninnah would behave this way year after year. Whenever Hannah went up to the LORD's house, Peninnah would upset her so that she would weep and refuse to eat.*

She had what modern people would call a nervous breakdown, she fell apart. We don't know what festival this was, but during the time of the feast, the man, being the head of the house, would dispense the food to his family. This is the event that knocked this woman for a loop every single year. She was doing fine until she came to this thing and then she'd fall to pieces and this went on over and over again. And it's going to show you something about Hannah, something she wasn't doing that she should have been. But this is the incident that would flip her out every year. It would come right down to the religious ceremony, she would go there, and she would have to sit at the table while her husband gave these portions to her rival wife and to her sons and her daughters. Hannah's problem is the fact that she can't bear any children. Now if we just forget about that specific problem we

can generalize what is happening here and make it apply to any one of us by simply saying that Hannah's problem was a crippling weakness; any kind of a crippling weakness that you have from birth is what Hannah had; that is her problem. Now watch how she is going to deal with it, the wrong way and the right way. Now I want to first show you two passages in the New Testament that deal with congenital defects or crippling weaknesses to show you what is not taught in the Bible. Some people would say Hannah must have sinned more than all the other women and so God is cursing Hannah, God is picking Hannah out to suffer because of something Hannah did. That is a wrong inference; let me prove it to you from two New Testament passages, one in John 9. We'll take one passage because of our time, there's another passage in Luke 13:1-5 which we won't turn to but that has to do with accidents that happen in your life.

John 9:1-3 *Now as Jesus was passing by, he saw a man who had been blind from birth. (2) His disciples asked him, "Rabbi, who committed the sin that caused him to be born blind, this man or his parents?" (3) Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but he was born blind so that the acts of God may be revealed through what happens to him.*

This is the authoritative New Testament answer to this question. Is the person who suffers from congenital defect somehow sinning more than someone else? What Jesus is saying here must be interpreted in the framework of the fall. At a point in time the creation left the fingertips of God perfect; there were no congenital defects in Adam and Eve. All congenital defects come, basically, from what happened after that, the fall. You have man rebelling against God, as a result of this you have chaos introduced into the created order, chaos on a genetic level, which leads to these kinds of congenital defects.

So chaos at the genetic level is introduced at the point of the fall. This is the "why" of the suffering. But it still doesn't explain why some suffer more than others. In other words, if we were to take a chart and we were to say look, here are five people, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, all of these people deserve that much suffering because all are in Adam and we have all fallen in Adam; yet here's the problem, you look at those same five people in their lifetime and you'll have some that will suffer this much, some suffer more, some suffer a little bit, some suffer more, and some don't suffer as much. In other words, there's unevenness; some people suffer more than others. Why is this? After we solve why is there suffering in general (the fall), we still have an additional problem, the distribution of suffering. Why is suffering distributed like it is? And the Bible answers that ultimately by saying that God did not introduce suffering but once suffering was introduced it is under His sovereign control and He has as His ultimate purpose what Jesus says in verse 3, that His acts will be revealed in these areas.

So let's take person number 4, they suffer a lot, (by the way, no member of the human race suffers as much as we deserve) and let's say that person is Hannah. A woman in the ancient culture, her great honor hung on bringing forth a male child. Now you notice this because when this woman goes to pray, she doesn't pray for a child. She prays for a male because in the ancient world, as in the Arab world today, a man says I have four children and two sons; the girls are not looked upon in the same status as the males. And so therefore in the ancient world... now actually that has resulted in iniquity to the woman, but historically, girls, don't let it bother you because the reason why this started was the fact that the ancient Semitic woman valued the male only because she thought she might be the mother of Messiah. And so it isn't because the man is inherently superior to the woman in Scripture. This is distortion of the Messianic hope.

But let's suppose this fourth person who suffers a lot is Hannah. Let's just suppose she suffers a lot; now she says what purpose does God have in this suffering that I receive? I am humiliated day by day, month by month, year by year, I have to live with this humiliation, with this congenital weakness that I have. Why me? **And God's answer throughout Scripture always is because He is going to work a special work in that kind of a person.** That kind of a person has the opportunity to show the grace of God like no other person. This is why Hannah's very name means grace; she is going to have a tremendous opportunity of turning that crippling weakness around into something that will not only deliver her but deliver the entire nation. So why? The same thing as this blind man in John 9; he was prepared from eternity; God knew that men would sin and God said I'm going to distribute the evil this way so that when My Son walks by that road that congenitally blind man will be sitting there and My Son can heal him and through that act I can glorify Myself to man and men can come to know Me better.

Now it's the same thing with Hannah. Hannah has been prepared from all eternity. God knew what Hannah's

problem was going to be; God knew that man would fall and He said all right, I'll distribute the evil this way and here's a woman I am going to pick out and this woman will be born physically such that she cannot bear children. And I am deliberately going to do this because if this woman will take this crippling weakness and turn it around and give it to Me, then I can show a mighty work through her life.

I also want to point out that verse 6 in 1 Samuel 1 describes the other wife, Peninnah, as "her rival wife". This shows you the Old Testament attitude toward polygamy; it was allowed but never enjoyed. And the women were always called the rivals, the adversaries. Even the men didn't enjoy it so guys, don't get tempted.

Anyway, "her rival wife used to upset her and make her worry". At the risk of offending you ladies, you have an interesting way of being real catty toward each other and it's fascinating from the man's point of view to sit and watch what goes on. Women have the most fantastic ways of "dissing" one another and doing it politely with a nice sweet smile wrapped all over their pretty little face and yet they can really get on one another. They do it all the time, and here you see it and it doesn't mean that her adversary had to make some outward insult.

So Elkanah had gone around, he had given the meals, and Hannah starts crying, and like most men, he doesn't really know what to do when she starts crying and so he kind of stands there and says what do I do now. So he comes up with three brilliant questions.

1 Samuel 1:8 *Finally her husband Elkanah said to her, "Hannah, why do you weep and not eat? Why are you so sad? Am I not better to you than ten sons?"*

Now he knows exactly why she's not eating. But he has to do something, there she is crying and so he doesn't know what else to do. And then he comes up with something that is at least halfway a winner, and that is, "Why are you so sad? Am I not better to you than ten sons?" And actually this is a smart move on this part because it is this one phrase that apparently shakes her. We don't know and can't reconstruct everything that went on in her mind at this point but something he said in that last remark was something that got her moving. We can only surmise what it must have been like. It might have been the fact that she suddenly realized that if her husband loved her in spite of the fact that she could not bear her husband a son, might it possibly be that somewhere in the heart of God that God might love her too?

1 Samuel 1:9-10 *On one occasion in Shiloh, after they had finished eating and drinking, Hannah got up. (Now at the time Eli the priest was sitting in his chair by the doorpost of the LORD's temple.) (10) She was very upset as she prayed to the LORD, and she was weeping uncontrollably.*

This described how she prayed, she is still falling apart, but at least she's doing something right. Every other year this would happen, every year she'd get mad, provoked, and so on, break down, hysterics and all the rest of it. But finally this year she does something about it. She prays and it's a selfish request she's going to make but still, she does pray.

1 Samuel 1:11 *She made a vow saying, "O LORD of hosts, if you will look with compassion on the suffering of your female servant, remembering me and not forgetting your servant, and give a male child to your servant, then I will dedicate him to the LORD all the days of his life. His hair will never be cut."*

Hannah was a woman who at this point decided that she wanted to take that crippling weakness and turn it around. She doesn't realize what she just did, she just started in motion something that even she doesn't know. And she's not going to learn about for at least three years, but after three years, by the time she gets to chapter 2 and she sings her song of praise she's going to realize what she just did. She has set off a chain reaction in the throne room of God that is going to deliver the entire nation as well as solve her problem.

But the funny thing about it all is, is that she only has in view at this point her own selfish need. She still is not giving

thanks for God; look at verse 11, "if you will look," that "if" is a conditional clause, and what she's really saying is, now Lord I know it's not too possible, but if you would just look at me once...." So this is still not the prayer of somebody that's giving thanks. I don't think she really realized what she said, that she's going to dedicate him to the Lord, I think rather she's really saying O Lord, all I care is that I have a man child, I don't care whether I get to raise him, I don't care whether he's around the house, I don't care whether he grows up to be my son, just give me a man child. You see again the obsession with that crippling weakness, just get me one. But watch what happens.

1 Samuel 1:12-17 *As she continued praying to the LORD, Eli was watching her mouth. (13) Now Hannah was speaking from her heart. Although her lips were moving, her voice was inaudible. Eli therefore thought she was drunk. (14) So he said to her, "How often do you intend to get drunk? Put away your wine!" (15) But Hannah replied, "That's not the way it is, my lord! I am under a great deal of stress. I have drunk neither wine nor beer. Rather, I have poured out my soul to the LORD. Don't consider your servant a wicked woman, for until now I have spoken from my deep pain and anguish." (17) Eli replied, "Go in peace, and may the God of Israel grant the request that you have asked of him."*

In 1 Samuel 8 the nation Israel is going to ask for a king. Now they don't realize what they're asking for, they just want a king like the other nations. But what they have really asked for under the sovereign work of God is for Christ. And later in 1 Samuel 8 the nation does exactly what Hannah does; both Hannah and Israel come to the Lord angry and bitter over their experiences in life, they pour out their heart to God, they make a request, and then it turns out after they've made the request that God was working even through their bitterness and their request turns into not just what they immediately asked for but the plan of God is actually going to start up again in history as a result of this one frustrated hysterical woman's prayer.

1 Samuel 1:18-20 *She said, "May I, your servant, find favor in your sight." So the woman went her way and got something to eat. Her face no longer looked sad. (19) They got up early the next morning and after worshiping the LORD, they returned to their home at Ramah. Elkanah had marital relations with his wife Hannah, and the LORD remembered her. (20) After some time Hannah became pregnant and gave birth to a son. She named him Samuel, thinking, "I asked the LORD for him."*

So Hannah's prayer is answered, and from this heartfelt prayer of a woman, God built a kingdom.

1 Samuel 1:21-22 *This man Elkanah went up with all his family to make the yearly sacrifice to the LORD and to keep his vow, (22) but Hannah did not go up with them. Instead she told her husband, "Once the boy is weaned, I will bring him and appear before the LORD, and he will remain there from then on."*

In the Hebrew culture at this time this generally was approximately three or four years, this explains why without any contraceptives they weren't over populated; they had a long nursing period. So Hannah is going to have a long time interval in here to think, and in chapter 2 you'll see what she's done in this three year time to think.

1 Samuel 1:23-28 *So her husband Elkanah said to her, "Do what you think best. Stay until you have weaned him. May the LORD fulfill his promise." So the woman stayed and nursed her son until she had weaned him. (24) Once she had weaned him, she took him up with her, along with three bulls, an ephah of flour, and a container of wine. She brought him to the LORD's house at Shiloh, even though he was young. (25) Once the bull had been slaughtered, they brought the boy to Eli. (26) She said, "Just as surely as you are alive, my lord, I am the woman who previously stood here with you in order to pray to the LORD. (27) I prayed for this boy, and the LORD has given me the request that I asked of him. (28) Now I dedicate him to the LORD. From this time on he is dedicated*

to the LORD." Then they worshiped the LORD there.

Verse 23 is sort of humorous, now Elkanah doesn't quite know about his wife yet, he's watched all these years her crack up, go into hysterics, handle her adversities by falling apart instead of trusting the Lord for them, and so he says, "Do what you think best..." In other words, what he's saying is, well Hon, I've seen you before and I'm just a little concerned that now that you've got your boy you're going to break your vow, so this is kind of a gentle nudge. Elkanah is a very diplomatic husband.

1 Samuel 2

In Chapter 2, Hannah gives us a song, a song of praise, and this praise song comes out of three years of her own prayer life, of her own meditation, as she thought and she thought about what had happened in her life. And this woman sees that her experience in many ways is analogous to my nation's experience. This will come out in the song that she's about to sing. Now it's the custom of liberal commentators of the Bible to say such songs as we are about to study are simply literary insertions put into the mouths of these peasant women, that these poor women weren't creative enough to think this up themselves, that this was the work of some sort of a set of editors that later on wanted to write a history of Israel and they thought this would be a good spot to put this song in there. That is a little far-fetched if you just simply look at the facts. First she had three years to think about it; secondly, if she was a woman of Israel she was already being schooled from her childhood in singing songs. David didn't write the first psalms.

Are all the psalms in the Bible in the book of Psalms? No, they're spread out through the whole Bible; the book of Psalms has the most in it because the book of Psalms is a collection of them, but there are lots of other psalms in the Bible. It's hard to see sometimes if you're reading a King James version, but if you have a modern translation you'll notice there are certain sections that are whole psalms by themselves. And we're going to study some of these psalms very briefly to give you a setting for this one.

The song of praise was drilled into the Israelite children. The women of Israel probably made up many psalms and we just happen to have only a few. I think that these women were raised through childhood up to express themselves to God in terms of the psalm structure. So when there came a great event in their life they would bear testimony to what God had done in their life by giving a psalm.

As we study these let's go back to Deuteronomy 32 for the first one. Though this isn't absolutely the first one in the Bible, Deuteronomy 32 is actually the true song of Moses. Deuteronomy 32 apparently was a psalm that was to be memorized by all the citizens of the kingdom. It is what is called a *reev* psalm, which is the Hebrew word for lawsuit. Its structure is very special because it will be used by practically every classic prophet. Micah, Hosea, and Isaiah will use this psalm and they'll write their books this way and give their messages this way. Jehovah has a lawsuit with the nation, and we know this from the study of ancient Near Eastern text, that this is a literary form that was used in the ancient court system.

But at the end of Deuteronomy 32, at verse 27 we have a complete break with the *reev* format. Up until this time it follows pretty much the ancient Near Eastern lawsuit format... up until verse 27. And then suddenly in verse 27 we have a whole new thing. God has been suing Israel, accusing Israel, threatening Israel with punishment, and now beginning at verse 27 He says but Israel, beyond all My threats, beyond all My punishments, there's My hand of grace; I have elected you, Israel, to an eternal destiny with Me and though I will be hard on you, and though I will train you I will never give you up. And so here we have God's eternal security. At the end of this God would not abandon Israel.

I'll just merely point out some things in this and you remember some of these details and watch for them when we come to 1 Samuel 2. Verse 26 is what leads into it,

Deuteronomy 32:26-27 *"I said, 'I want to cut them in pieces. I want to make people forget they ever existed. (27) But I fear the reaction of their enemies, for their adversaries would*

misunderstand and say, "Our power is great, and the LORD has not done all this!"'

In other words what God is saying, the reason I am not going to let Israel disappear from history is because then I have no evidence that My promises work and the enemies will say, ha, what kind of a God do you have, look, He couldn't finish what He started.

Now this should mean a lot to you as believers because that this is why He holds onto you and me? It isn't because of who and what we are or what we've done; it's because God has invested His honor with each one of us who is a believer in Jesus Christ. His honor is on the line, can He or will He continue what He has started? He has begun a work of salvation and will He finish it? The honor of God is at stake, and people who reject the doctrine of eternal security are people who smear the character of God. That's one of the fundamental sins of history and the theology that would promote uncertainty in one's salvation is a theology that cannot honor God because it does not honor His promises. So He says I'm not going to let you go, Israel is eternally secure.

Deuteronomy 32:28-29 *They are a nation devoid of wisdom, and there is no understanding among them. (29) I wish that they were wise and could understand this, and that they could comprehend what will happen to them."*

This is God bereaving over the fact that they are going to suffer but not eternally so. And then He says in verse 39:

Deuteronomy 32:39 *"See now that I, indeed I, am he!" says the LORD, "and there is no other god besides me. I kill and give life, I smash and I heal, and none can resist my power.*

This is said to all the nations, for we'll see what God is looking forward to in this psalm of Moses, as He is addressing the nations of Assyria, the nation of Egypt, the nation of Persia, of Greece, of Rome, of the Gentiles in general. He is saying, "All you nations, I have called you to come and to discipline My people but don't you ever forget you are but a paddle in My hand; you are nothing more than that. And I have called you forward to discipline Israel and you have become proud, you think that you've been able to clobber Israel because you're more superior than Israel's God.

Deuteronomy 32:40 *For I raise up my hand to heaven, and say, 'As surely as I live forever,*

This is an oath in the ancient Near Eastern terminology. Verse 40 is a strong oath that confirms His promises, in other words, what God is saying, He's holding His hand up, and apparently this was done in the culture like we would swear over the Bible when we hold our hand up, God is picturing Himself as holding His hand up and says as I live this will be done for you. In other words, let Me pass out of existence if I don't bring forth what I have promised for you.

Deuteronomy 32:41-43 *I will sharpen my lightning-like sword, and my hand will grasp hold of the weapon of judgment; I will execute vengeance on my foes, and repay those who hate me! (42) I will make my arrows drunk with blood, and my sword will devour flesh —the blood of the slaughtered and captured, the chief of the enemy's leaders!" (43) Cry out, O nations, with his people, for he will avenge his servants' blood; he will take vengeance against his enemies, and make atonement for his land and people.*

Verse 43, the last part of this song of Moses, is the advice given to the nations because of what has gone before, all the nations that God has called to discipline Israel. So this is the warning that had been given back in Moses day. This song would have been sung, probably over and over, probably set to some sort of a musical accompaniment, and played again and again in the Jewish homes. And so we find this song reappearing at other points in Scripture.

Okay, here's another song where this motif comes in; it is known in history as Mary's magnificat, Luke 1. This explains the fierceness of Mary's song, if you don't understand the mentality of the Old Testament you'll never understand what Mary is saying here as she learns that she is to be the woman that is to be blessed above all women

because from her womb will come God incarnate. Mary is going to respond in Luke 1:46 and she is going to identify herself with this stream of thinking that started way back with Moses, goes through Hannah, goes through David, and now comes down to Mary.

Luke 1:46-48 *And Mary said, "My soul exalts the Lord, (47) and my spirit has begun to rejoice in God my Savior, (48) because he has looked upon the humble state of his servant. For from now on all generations will call me blessed,*

Now why does this Jewish peasant girl have the audacity to say that all generations will "call me blessed?" It is not that this woman is bragging on herself, it was rather she said because God has chosen me and I stand here, I will be called blessed forever. I have a place in history, and as Protestants we must always remember this. We knock the Catholics with their worshiping of Mary and that is wrong, but if we are going to be true to the thrust of the New Testament, we must say that she is to be honored with the prophets because as the woman of all women, she answers to Eve; Eve and Mary are two ends of one chain and Mary does play a hugely important part and we should not be afraid of calling her a blessed woman who has a particular place in God's plan.

Luke 1:49-55 *because he who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name; (50) from generation to generation he is merciful to those who fear him. (51) He has demonstrated power with his arm; he has scattered those whose pride wells up from the sheer arrogance of their hearts. (52) He has brought down the mighty from their thrones, and has lifted up those of lowly position; (53) he has filled the hungry with good things, and has sent the rich away empty. (54) He has helped his servant Israel, remembering his mercy, (55) as he promised to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever."*

There is no doubt in Mary's mind that this is not just a chance happening with her, but this is linked to the stream of history, going all the way back to the Abrahamic Covenant. And notice the language, the way she expresses herself in verse 51-53, you look at those words she is using there. Again, this was on their mind and when one of these events would happen it would burst forth into a psalm of praise.

Having done all this, now come back to 1 Samuel 2; now we can understand what was going through Hannah's mind for three years as she prepared to come and give her son to the tabernacle. Maybe she did compose this song before she got there, she might well have done so, but my point is there's nothing unusual if you consider the stream of history and the fact that many, many people in the nation had this mentality built into them so they would respond to this situation of linking their personal experience with the whole cosmic plan of God. This is not audacity in the bad sense, this is godly audacity, to say that my experience is so tremendously significant that I stand in the flow of God's cosmic plan and what He does in my life has repercussions for eternity.

See, this is why it makes the Christian life exciting, is that every pressure and every trial that we meet successfully by appropriating grace we make points, so to speak, in the angelic conflict, that have eternal repercussions. Right now God does not see fit to share with us all of the results of our little daily victories of claiming the Word but we're going to see those results and we're going to watch how they have tremendous implications for all eternity. And then if we have not been too faithful in following the Word I think there will come a tinge in the heart of why didn't I do more when I see the tremendous implications of what I did do, why didn't I do more when I had the chance.

All right, back to 1 Samuel 2. These psalms have a structure, and I'll get into that more in a future lesson, but the structure is visible here in chapter 2. The structure of a descriptive praise Psalm generally is first a call to praise, the person calls people to come, come and hear what God is like. The second part of a descriptive praise Psalm is the causes of praise, in other words, why should we bother. As always in the Bible you are never asked to believe in nothing.

By the way, that's exactly the way today's mentality operates. We don't believe on facts, we just boom, believe. This is beyond the comprehension of educators, that we fundamentalists still have the ancient form of faith that rests in historic fact, so that we can be disturbed by these questions simply because if the creation narrative is disproved

then our faith goes into the ashcan, just as if Jesus Christ's body was found in the grave, I would stop being a Christian immediately because my faith is built on facts, not feelings, and it's not built on thin air; it is built on something that is testable and verifiable and falsifiable. If it isn't, I do not have true Biblical faith. This is why the gospel says "these are written that you might believe that Jesus Christ is the Christ." John offers evidences. This is why Acts 1:3 says Jesus gave many infallible proofs after He rose from the dead. Do you suppose Jesus believed that you just believe in nothing? No, no, not at all, it's just today's screwed up postmodern mentality that has gone over to this faith in faith. Too many just have faith in their faith.

All right, here in these descriptive praise Psalms you have a cause of praise and reasons are given, evidences, if you will, are given why you should believe in God and praise Him. And then finally there is a conclusion to these praise Psalms in which people are called to anticipate what is going to happen. This three-fold structure is visible here, verses 1-3 is Hannah's call to praise. Hannah announces her praise and she warns the self-confident in these first three verses. There's two things she does, she announces the fact that she is going to praise God or is praising God and she also warns against the self-confident, the works crowd, the rejecters of grace.

1Samuel 2:1-3 Hannah prayed, "My heart rejoices in the LORD; my horn is exalted high because of the LORD. I loudly denounce my enemies, for I am happy that you delivered me. (2) No one is holy like the LORD! There is no one other than you! There is no rock like our God! (3) Don't keep speaking so arrogantly, letting proud talk come out of your mouth! For the LORD is a God who knows; he evaluates what people do.

You can find almost all that language in Deuteronomy 32; there's no need whatever to follow the critics who would say that this has been put into Hannah's mouth, because this poor dumb peasant woman couldn't get the vocabulary or something.

What a change in Hannah to be able to say "my heart rejoices in the LORD." She had to have a baby to get straightened out but she got straightened out. And when she finally did get straightened out she did something, she gave thanks. That's the fundamental praise form for you and for me as believers. 1 Thessalonians 5:18, "in everything give thanks," if you find you can't give thanks for the Lord in the middle of your situation you'd better do some spiritual checking because you're about to get in trouble if you're not already. The horn exalted refers to the last part of verse 2 of chapter 1 where she was childless, and her position in the family was secondary; she is rejoicing that her horn, her power or position or influence in the family, has been raised. Notice, by the way, she gives credit, "because of the LORD," all the way. And then in verses 4-8 we have the causes of praise; Hannah tells why men should praise and why the self-confident should look out.

1Samuel 2:4-8 The bows of warriors are shattered, but those who stumble find their strength reinforced. (5) Those who are well-fed hire themselves out to earn food, but the hungry no longer lack. Even the barren woman gives birth to seven, but the one with many children withers away. (6) The LORD both kills and gives life; he brings down to the grave and raises up. (7) The LORD impoverishes and makes wealthy; he humbles and he exalts. (8) He lifts the weak from the dust; he raises the poor from the ash heap to seat them with princes and to bestow on them an honored position. The foundations of the earth belong to the LORD, and he has placed the world on them.

She stresses two attributes of God, God is omniscient and God is absolutely righteous. And now beginning in verse 4 she's going to cite evidences of why we should praise God for these two things, His omniscience and His absolute righteousness. Probably verses 4-5 relate to her own private experience but we would also have to say that it relates to the nation's experience. Remember she has lived at the end of a 400 year dark age, and she can recall, as she has been taught, what happened during the Judges, during the book of Joshua and during those periods. And she says every time that God works this is what happens.

Now verses 6-8, she turns now and she begins to talk about God's character. "The LORD both kills and gives life," converted into her personal experience simply means the Lord killed her womb, remember it said the Lord shut up her womb; and the Hebrew word "life" is so general that it can be used for those kind of things, a dead womb would

be spoken of as death. So she sees there was a concrete physical thing that happened to her body and out of this she deduces that God is continually in this business of killing and making alive. And “He brings down to the grave and raises up.” Again, on a small scale this refers to depression and happiness, there were terms and idioms tied to that. But they literally are true in life, the future resurrection, God brings down to the grave, He makes alive again, so it has a prophetic far view.

The “ash heap” was where they burned the garbage, one of the gates in Jerusalem was called a dung gate, where they used to cart all the garbage out and burn it. In fact, Jesus used the incinerator in the garbage dump there where they were burning this as the picture of hell. Notice what he says, “to seat them with princes,” now this didn’t happen to Hannah, exactly; she was raised up to a position of great authority in her life, but prophetically this happens to believers. And where has this happened in its total position? In the Church Age, hasn’t it? Who were we before we accept Christ, aren’t we the beggars in the ash heap, isn’t that the picture of the non-Christian before he receives salvation through Christ? This is a picture of being conformed to Christ. Then she adds something at the end here, she goes back to who God is, that He is the Creator.

And then finally the conclusion in verses 9-10, Hannah concludes with encouraging us to trust in Jehovah because of what He is going to do. The lesson for us is to trust in Jehovah because of what He is going to do, not just because of what He’s already done. Incidentally, this last section is where the revolutionary edition is made, Hannah’s great contribution to the understanding of Jesus Christ.

1Sa 2:9-10 He watches over his holy ones, but the wicked are made speechless in the darkness, for it is not by one's own strength that one prevails. (10) The LORD shatters his adversaries; he thunders against them from the heavens. The LORD executes judgment to the ends of the earth. He will strengthen his king and exalt the power of his anointed one."

Verses 9-10 are the most important part of this particular psalm. It’s verses 9-10 that contribute to the flow of prophecy. Verses 9-10 are the verses that add to the content of God’s revelation. In those three years as Hannah meditated upon what that baby was she was nursing, the more she thought about that, the more she realized that God was going to do something fantastic. And here we have prophecy. Now it’s quite obvious why the critics want to put this in the mouth of Hannah because you can’t have prophecy, we can’t have God in the public schools, we can’t have real prophecy in the Bible so therefore this has to be excised and re-worked according to the critics.

“He watches over his holy ones,” this is a picture of eternal security. Holy ones is translated “saints” in some versions, and I want to make it clear what “saints” or “holy ones” mean. When we believe in Jesus Christ we are put in union with Christ; that means that we are “holy,” and therefore equal to the word “saints”. It doesn’t mean certain special believers; every believer in Jesus Christ in the Bible is called a saint. If you want to start a conversation and raise eyebrows, someday when they’re talking about Saint Benedict or Saint somebody else, say I’m a saint too, why don’t you recognize me and just see what kind of a reaction you get.

“It is not by one’s own strength that one prevails”. That’s the warning for people who are trying to do it in their own energy of the flesh. And in the end, way down at the end of time, at the Great White Throne Judgment, isn’t it interesting that God condemns men not on the basis of their sins; God condemns men in the book of Revelation on the basis of their works. Isn’t that interesting? All the way down through history Christ has already paid for your sins, so why does a person go to the eternal lake of fire? Because they have tried to substitute their good works for God’s provision. And it’s a form of rebellion against God’s grace. And so she is saying the wicked ones will be made speechless in darkness, because by strength no man is ever going to prevail. And this is also a warning to the leaders in her day. Then in verse 10, we have one of the key forms of this prophecy. This theme occurs again in another Psalm. Turn to Psalm 2:

Psalms 2:1-9 Why do the nations rebel? Why are the countries devising plots that will fail? (2) The kings of the earth form a united front; the rulers collaborate against the LORD and his anointed king. (3) They say, "Let's tear off the shackles they've put on us! Let's free ourselves from their ropes!" (4) The one enthroned in heaven laughs in disgust; the Lord taunts them. (5) Then he

angrily speaks to them and terrifies them in his rage, saying, (6) "I myself have installed my king on Zion, my holy hill." (7) The king says, "I will announce the LORD's decree. He said to me: 'You are my son! This very day I have become your father!' (8) Ask me, and I will give you the nations as your inheritance, the ends of the earth as your personal property. (9) You will break them with an iron scepter; you will smash them like a potter's jar!"

Notice how this language gets hooked on to the office of the king. And if we had time I'd show you that this language is hooked on to the person of Christ in Revelation. Then, in verse 9, that is the role of the King. Do you see what a powerful surging picture we have in the Old Testament of the office of the Christ. Don't you see this beefs up the picture of Jesus Christ that you normally get in Christian circles, some fairy floating around with a Kleenex box or something. You go to the Old Testament you find the correct view of the Christ, and we've no apologies about it, Christ is not a pacifist, He loves men but He is a strong man and these are the jobs that He will perform in His office.

Let's finish this Song of Hannah. Can you imagine this woman, singing this song... wow, what's wrong with her; if she sang this song in the average church today the minister would flip, we can't have her in here singing those songs! Now let me show you something, why this is a prophecy. Turn to 1 Samuel 7:10:

1Samuel 7:10 *As Samuel was offering burnt offerings, the Philistines approached to do battle with Israel. But on that day the LORD thundered loudly against the Philistines. He caused them to panic, and they were defeated by Israel.*

A similar event happened in 2 Samuel 22:14 with David. Hannah is looking forward and contained within this simple peasant woman's song is a fantastic line of prophecy that comes literally true within her generation.

All right, the next point that she makes in verse 10, and this is the astounding one; it is this that marks this song as one of the great advances in Old Testament revelation. *"The LORD shatters his adversaries; he thunders against them from the heavens. The LORD executes judgment to the ends of the earth. He will strengthen his king and exalt the power of his anointed one."* This is why this is so important. This is the first time in the Old Testament that you have the word for Messiah; it doesn't occur in the Old Testament until here. Depending on your translation, it may say Messiah, anointed one, or Christ, it's all the same meaning. This woman makes the great breakthrough nationally; it is in a woman's mind where the office of a king suddenly gels, and she becomes the first believer in Israel to actually see in her mind the office of the king. Psalm 2 fills in this whole line of thinking. Was this pure prophecy or do you suppose that Hannah had an inkling about this?

Deuteronomy 17:14-15 *When you come to the land the LORD your God is giving you and take it over and live in it and then say, "I will select a king like all the nations surrounding me," (15) you must select without fail a king whom the LORD your God chooses. From among your fellow citizens you must appoint a king — you may not designate a foreigner who is not one of your fellow Israelites.*

Back in Moses time there had been made in the Law provision for a future king, but that was all it was, there was no king, there was just provision if and when such time he would come. So within the old Mosaic Law there had been a provision for this, and this woman, meditating on her fierce trial and astounding deliverance put the two together and said say, this is what's going to happen to the nation, and so the Holy Spirit worked in this one woman's heart.

Deuteronomy 17:16-20 *Moreover, he must not accumulate horses for himself or allow the people to return to Egypt to do so, for the LORD has said you must never again return that way. (17) Furthermore, he must not marry many wives lest his affections turn aside, and he must not accumulate much silver and gold. (18) When he sits on his royal throne he must make a copy of this law on a scroll given to him by the Levitical priests. (19) It must be with him constantly and he must read it as long as he lives, so that he may learn to revere the LORD his God and observe all the words of this law and these statutes and carry them out. (20) Then he will not exalt himself above his fellow citizens or turn from the commandments to the right or left, and he and his descendants will*

enjoy many years ruling over his kingdom in Israel.

Those of you who know Israel's history, these verses must remind you that even the good kings didn't obey these commands. Now Verse 19 is a very powerful verse that gives you the Bible doctrine of politics, and here we are faced with a Biblical admonition that all civil officers in the nation Israel must be on a continual study program in the Word of God. And obviously that is not happening today, even with so-called Christians that give their glowing testimonies in all the Christian magazines, how I accepted Christ and now I'm a Christian politician, so now I steal from you religiously. So don't be snowed by the fact that Senator so and so or somebody else is a Christian. It doesn't mean a thing unless you apply this verse; are they on a continual Bible study program, are they continuing to take in the Word of God. Very few men in public office are doing that.

So that is the basis for the king, notice that the king is under the law, the king doesn't make the law. But then in chapter 18 the king is to be provided, verse 15, with a source of guidance. *“The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you – from your fellow Israelites; you must listen to him.* In other words, the state will be given guidance and the guidance will be supplied by a prophet. So the prophet is needed.

Now what does this tell us immediately about Christ? Remember, Christ is a title, not a person. When we are using the title Christ in 1 Samuel we are talking about an office of the king; that's what that is, the king. What does this mean? It means that Jesus Christ must be under the Law; the Law dictates to the humanity of Christ. And therefore Jesus Christ could be measured by His obedience or disobedience to the Word of God and therefore Christ was declared to be sinless in John 8:34. So if this is the case and Christ is subject to the Law, Christ would also be subject to the prophets. Of course, however, Christ Himself fulfills the role of a prophet too, but that prophet was John the Baptist. So John the Baptist was the one who was responsible for getting Christ into the position of being anointed. So this defines the humanity of Christ and this is why these passages are so important.

One final notice about what we have seen so far in 1 Samuel 1:1-2:10, is the fact that this first mention of Christ in the Bible comes through the lips of a woman. And this will be true forever in the stream of prophecy, it will always be the woman who first sees it because it was through the woman that the light is given into the world. The reason for this answers back to Eve; Eve introduced sin to the world and as the woman was the first one to sin, so the woman is the first one to announce redemption, and you will see this again and again and again. And Hannah is one illustration.