

## THE WICKED SHALL BE SILENT IN DARKNESS

### 1 SAMUEL 2:1 – 3:1

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~ The Lord heard a woman's desperate cry in our previous report from our Spiritual Safari expedition through the entire Word of God. If you have not read that introductory report, I suggest you go back and do so now. We saw the nation Israel crying out for a king, while Hannah was crying out for a child. God built a throne for Hannah based on her sincere prayer in faith. That is the exalted place the Lord has given to any woman who will trust and obey Him. That's the first spiritual message the prophet Samuel brings us today.

We also examined how many people are attempting to use "rights" – such as the case of abortion is – as a contraceptive to kill the fruits of their sins today. I understand there are certain times and cases where abortion is essential and legitimate; that would be for the sake of the mother's life and sometimes for the sake of the life of the child – but that would require an expert scientific determination and conclusion. I don't think most, if any, women could make that diagnosis on her own behalf. I know the overwhelming majority of abortions are not for that purpose.

In this report, we will consider the prayer Hannah made for her child, Samuel. This is certainly one of the great prayers in Scripture. Hannah is rejoicing in thanksgiving that God gave her this child; and it represents a present deliverance. We have already seen before on safari how salvation comes to us in three tenses: past, present and future, making it such a wonderful thing: we can say I have been saved, I am saved, and I will be saved. Anyone that believeth, saith the Lord, hath everlasting life – as in, right now – and shall not come into judgment. The moment we are saved, we pass from death unto life! We are delivered by Christ from the guilt of sin and baptized into the body of believers. That's a past deliverance called justification in the Word of God.

God has also delivered us from what the old theologian called the pollution of sin. That is a present deliverance which brings a fruit of self-control – or

temperance. This is when we are delivered from the weaknesses of the flesh and fleshy sins, such as the thoughts of the mind and the actions of our self-will. That's what we call sanctification in the Bible, and that's what Hannah is talking about here in her prayer.

We also have deliverance from death – and that is, of course, a future deliverance. It does not yet appear what we shall be, but we know when Christ shall appear we shall be made like Him for we shall see Him as He is! So, we have been saved – we are being saved – and we shall be saved! That is genuine salvation, and Hannah is rejoicing in it! Jonah and the Psalmists said repeatedly, “.... salvation is of the Lord!” That means we have been justified freely by His grace. “Freely” means “without a cause” – there is nothing in us that God sees as worthy of salvation. The only explanation is found in His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. That makes this a most remarkable prayer....

## II

***1 And Hannah prayed, and said, My heart rejoiceth in the LORD, mine strength is exalted in the LORD: my mouth is enlarged over mine enemies; because I rejoice in thy salvation.***

***2 There is none holy as the LORD: for there is none beside thee: neither is there any rock like our God.***

***3 Talk no more so exceeding proudly; let not arrogancy come out of your mouth: for the LORD is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed.***

~ The rock Hannah rested on is the same rock we rest on: Christ. Jesus said He was the chief cornerstone; and He also said He would build His church on that rock. Him. He is that Rock. There is no rock like our God! When we come to the Lord in prayer, we need to be very aware and careful that we don't allow our pride to cause us to stumble, friends. Recognizing our weaknesses, inabilities and our insufficiencies should make us realize that we really have no claim on God in and of ourselves. Many people ask why God doesn't hear their prayers; well, to be perfectly blunt – why should He

hear your prayer? Only when we come to Him in the Name of Christ do we have any part with God. It's also critical to remember that all prayer and requests must be according to His will....

***4 The bows of the mighty men are broken, and they that stumbled are girded with strength.***

***5 They that were full have hired out themselves for bread; and they that were hungry ceased: so that the barren hath born seven; and she that hath many children is waxed feeble.***

***6 The LORD killeth, and maketh alive: he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up.***

***7 The LORD maketh poor, and maketh rich: he bringeth low, and lifteth up.***

***8 He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory: for the pillars of the earth are the LORD'S, and he hath set the world upon them.***

***9 He will keep the feet of his saints, and the wicked shall be silent in darkness; for by strength shall no man prevail.***

~ See, the Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away. He is the One Who has the right to do it, too, by the way. Until we have the power to create life, we have no right to take life away. God accepts the blame – if you want to call it that – for the deaths of Ananias and Sapphira, for example. God won't be making any apologies for them, either – and I believe they were saved. Likewise, God makes no apologies that He intends to judge the wicked and send them down into the second death! This is God's universe and we're His creatures. God runs His show His way and He works out salvation His Own way; and, if we don't like it, we can go start our own universe with its own laws and we can run it our way – for a while – until God destroys it. However, the most wonderful privilege we have is that we can come to God and bow before Him and receive salvation! That's when

we come under the blessing of God, too – if we're willing to do things His way!

I must admit I do not understand why God has permitted certain men to become filthy rich while other dear saints become utterly impoverished. I honestly feel I could distribute wealth a little better than God does it. Unfortunately, God didn't ask for my program, nor did He leave that decision to me. God says He will explain it someday and give us His reasons - and I accept that. I'm satisfied to wait for the poverty explanation because I know it is nothing that I have ever thought about before. Just like the pillars in verse eight: God doesn't tell us what those pillars rest on - yet! Later, we are instructed the pillars of the earth are the Gospel, and so we know they rest on Christ!

In your own power and in your own strength you will never accomplish anything for God, friends. Christians really need to make those realizations today because this is one area in which the current teaching of the church is WAY off base! Only those things we do in the power of the Holy Spirit will ever amount to anything or count for something. We need to learn to be dependant upon Him for everything and rest in Him at all times! ~

***10 The adversaries of the LORD shall be broken to pieces; out of heaven shall he thunder upon them: the LORD shall judge the ends of the earth; and he shall give strength unto his king, and exalt the horn of his anointed.***

~ Verse ten is one great verse in Scripture as it brings the first mention of the coming Messiah. The word "anointed" is the Hebrew word for "Messiah!" I don't think very many Christians realize that because I hear people talking about how they are the anointed – well, no, they're not – but you usually can't tell someone who is totally and completely ignorant of the Bible anything about the Word of God. In the New Testament it is translated "Christos" and it comes to us in English as "Christ" – which is the title of the Lord Jesus. "Jesus" was His earthly Name and His title of deity is "Christ!" What this means is that God is preparing the kingdom to be established; they have rejected the theocracy God set up and God is going

to give them the king they want! This is an absolutely critical piece of Biblical information to understand, friends! ~

***11 And Elkanah went to Ramah to his house. And the child did minister unto the LORD before Eli the priest.***

***12 Now the sons of Eli were sons of Belial; they knew not the LORD.***

~ So, Hannah brought Samuel to the tabernacle and most people would, naturally, assume that he was in a wonderful place of protection and shelter at this time. Well, Samuel was not in a good place as we saw in the last report and Hannah is going to continue to pray for him. The sons of the high priest, Eli, were sons of the devil; and they were the ones ministering there! I have heard many people say they want to send their children to a Christian school. They usually feel very comfortable about doing so and they assume any Christian school is a decent place. The problem is: most people either quit praying for their children or they never pray for their leading from the Lord to begin with! A Christian school can be just like this tabernacle – very dangerous! Most people think their church is a wonderful place, too; but the devil only goes to wonderful places. Some churches put on a beautiful service – but that’s the only kind of service the devil attends! Remember, Satan was in the upper room with the disciples at the Passover; making that the most dangerous place to be in Jerusalem that night! Even people who go to church regularly still need prayer because they may be in just such a place! ~

***13 And the priests' custom with the people was, that, when any man offered sacrifice, the priest's servant came, while the flesh was in seething, with a fleshhook of three teeth in his hand;***

***14 And he struck it into the pan, or kettle, or caldron, or pot; all that the fleshhook brought up the priest took for himself. So they did in Shiloh unto all the Israelites that came thither.***

***15 Also before they burnt the fat, the priest's servant came, and said to the man that sacrificed, Give flesh to roast for the priest; for he will not have sodden flesh of thee, but raw.***

**16 And if any man said unto him, Let them not fail to burn the fat presently, and then take as much as thy soul desireth; then he would answer him, Nay; but thou shalt give it me now: and if not, I will take it by force.**

~ The sons of Eli were taking the sacrifices and, instead of offering it to God as instructed by Moses, they were just keeping almost the whole thing. What we see here is the running of one of the first religious rackets. These two sons were totally dishonest in the Lord's work. This caused many, many people to turn away from God, too. Today, we need to be super careful about our Christian lives and about what is happening in our church. This idea we have about shutting our eyes to sin and covering it up is the reason for most of the protests young people are making today against the Word of God. Most people are simply completely against the organized church. The main point they make is about the hypocrisy that exists and runs rampant. I can't say I blame them, because it's true - and it's exactly what was happening in the day in which we are studying. Honestly, all I can tell them is the church always has room for one more lying hypocrite....

**17 Wherefore the sin of the young men was very great before the LORD: for men abhorred the offering of the LORD.**

**18 But Samuel ministered before the LORD, being a child, girded with a linen ephod.**

**19 Moreover his mother made him a little coat, and brought it to him from year to year, when she came up with her husband to offer the yearly sacrifice.**

~ What a wonderful mother Hannah was, and this is one of the tenderest passages we have as she makes him a new coat each year. To me, that is the highest-level display of the quintessential motherhood of sweetness, possibly in the entire Bible. She loved that little boy, but she had promised to give him to the Lord – and that's exactly what she did. I think she spent a lot of time each year making a new coat for Samuel....

**20 And Eli blessed Elkanah and his wife, and said, The LORD give thee seed of this woman for the loan which is lent to the LORD. And they went unto their own home.**

**21 And the LORD visited Hannah, so that she conceived, and bare three sons and two daughters. And the child Samuel grew before the LORD.**

**22 Now Eli was very old, and heard all that his sons did unto all Israel; and how they lay with the women that assembled at the door of the tabernacle of the congregation.**

~ What we have in Eli is an indulgent old man of a father shutting his eyes to the sins of his sons. The gentle rebuke these two boys received wasn't even a slap on the wrist. Theirs was an egregious sin. An open scandal in the tabernacle of Israel wasn't being dealt with seriously by the high priest. This is a picture of gross immorality. These two boys would make the attendees at a Hollywood backstage party blush – and the old man was looking the other way. Well, as priests; so, as people - and that was happening now....

**23 And he said unto them, Why do ye such things? for I hear of your evil dealings by all this people.**

**24 Nay, my sons; for it is no good report that I hear: ye make the LORD'S people to transgress.**

**25 If one man sin against another, the judge shall judge him: but if a man sin against the LORD, who shall intreat for him? Notwithstanding they hearkened not unto the voice of their father, because the LORD would slay them.**

**26 And the child Samuel grew on, and was in favour both with the LORD, and also with men.**

**27 And there came a man of God unto Eli, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Did I plainly appear unto the house of thy father, when they were in Egypt in Pharaoh's house?**

***28 And did I choose him out of all the tribes of Israel to be my priest, to offer upon mine altar, to burn incense, to wear an ephod before me? and did I give unto the house of thy father all the offerings made by fire of the children of Israel?***

***29 Wherefore kick ye at my sacrifice and at mine offering, which I have commanded in my habitation; and honourest thy sons above me, to make yourselves fat with the chiefest of all the offerings of Israel my people?***

***30 Wherefore the LORD God of Israel saith, I said indeed that thy house, and the house of thy father, should walk before me for ever: but now the LORD saith, Be it far from me; for them that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed.***

***31 Behold, the days come, that I will cut off thine arm, and the arm of thy father's house, that there shall not be an old man in thine house.***

***32 And thou shalt see an enemy in my habitation, in all the wealth which God shall give Israel: and there shall not be an old man in thine house for ever.***

***33 And the man of thine, whom I shall not cut off from mine altar, shall be to consume thine eyes, and to grieve thine heart: and all the increase of thine house shall die in the flower of their age.***

~ As Samuel grows and thrives in spite of his environment, God promises Eli his tenure as priest would end. We'll see that ending very soon in this book. After this, God will no longer move through the priests. God is raising up a priest-prophet in Samuel. From here on, Samuel will make intercession for Israel to the Lord as a priest would, but he will technically become a prophet, speaking to them of the Lord's will. We need to be very careful to honor God with every aspect of our lives, irrespective which office we believe we hold. That means obedience to God at all times and on all levels in our lives. How's that working out in your life, friends? The Lord is good, and the redeemed of the Lord should say so....

***34 And this shall be a sign unto thee, that shall come upon thy two sons, on Hophni and Phinehas; in one day they shall die both of them.***

***35 And I will raise me up a faithful priest, that shall do according to that which is in mine heart and in my mind: and I will build him a sure house; and he shall walk before mine anointed for ever.***

~ God's anointed is the Lord Jesus Christ. When we began this chapter, He was designated as the Messiah King that was to come. Christ is mentioned as a priest here, and He was mentioned by Moses as a prophet. The Lord Jesus is Prophet, Priest and King - and He is the ONLY One Who ever fulfilled all three offices simultaneously. I would definitely have you make a note of that fact....

***36 And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left in thine house shall come and crouch to him for a piece of silver and a morsel of bread, and shall say, Put me, I pray thee, into one of the priests' offices, that I may eat a piece of bread.***

### III

***1 And the child Samuel ministered unto the LORD before Eli. And the word of the LORD was precious in those days; there was no open vision.***

~ Our safari ends this report on the threshold of a chapter usually reserved for children, as Samuel is called to his office as prophet/priest. Well, we're taking our study out of the nursery, my beloved, and we'll feed some mature saints as the Lord leads our teaching from here. This is for the sincere beginner, but only those who sit in the sanctuary. The form of government is changed in this chapter altogether; and is an indictment of this generation of the nation Israel. God adopts a new program as He moves from a theocracy to a monarchy, from priest to king. Samuel will be the one to anoint both King Saul and King David.

Now, God called Samuel four times, as we shall see. That nullifies the epigram that opportunity only knocks once, too, by the way! It also makes void the notion that man can turn to God at his leisure. I believe there is an

appointed time; and there can come a time in a person's life when turning to Him is no longer possible. I know that's not popular, but it just happens to be Biblical. God says TODAY if you will hear His voice and turn to Him you shall be saved. God said that because there will come a day when you won't hear His voice, friends. You won't hear His voice because He won't be calling you any longer. That's frightful. Candidly, this truth ought to send alarm bells off in your ears and shivers down your spine.

Josephus tells us that Samuel was twelve years old when he was called these four times. I think Samuel may have been slightly older than that, personally. What I know for sure is that his age isn't important. Remember, Solomon said he was but a little child; but he made that statement when he was the king – a grown man! Jeremiah told God he couldn't speak because he was but a child – when he was also a grown man at that time.

Alright, in the next leg of our safari, we'll see Samuel was no child during this period; he was a teenager and possibly even older than that! Many of the things we have all learned in Sunday school weren't exactly accurate. Our Spiritual Safari should help dispel many Biblical misunderstandings. Some people have been in church their entire lives and they have no clue what the Bible is really all about! See, all sixty-six books of the Word of God present one central message; and that message is the Lord Jesus Christ – Period. Full stop. There are some timeless truths and valuable principles in these historical double-books we are beginning to consider now. I hope these reports are as helpful to you as the man who taught all of this to me was ~