

1 Samuel 1:6

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And her adversary also provoked her sore, for to make her fret, because the LORD had shut up her womb.

Analysis

Peninnah's role as Hannah's 'adversary' (Hebrew: tsarah, also meaning 'rival wife') introduces a pattern of provocation. The verb 'provoked' (ka'as) indicates deliberate, repeated irritation designed to cause grief. Her cruelty exploited Hannah's deepest wound and turned joyful worship occasions into times of torment. This domestic persecution mirrors the spiritual opposition believers face from the enemy who attacks at points of vulnerability. Yet God uses such trials to drive His people toward desperate dependence on Him.

Historical Context

The term tsarah specifically describes a rival wife in a polygamous marriage, highlighting the inherent tension in such arrangements. Ancient Near Eastern texts also document conflicts between co-wives competing for status through fertility.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How do you respond when others exploit your vulnerabilities or areas of perceived failure?
2. What spiritual lessons might God be teaching through the provocations you face?

Interlinear Text

וְכִעַסְתָּהּ also provoked H3707	וְצָרָתָהּ And her adversary H6869	גַּם H1571	כִּי עָסָה her sore H3708	וְעָבְרָה H5668	הַיָּעָמָה for to make her fret H7481
כִּי H3588	סָגַר had shut H5462	יְהוָה because the LORD H3068	בָּעָד up H1157	בְּחֶמְהָ her womb H7358	

Additional Cross-References

Job 6:14 (Parallel theme): To him that is afflicted pity should be shewed from his friend; but he forsaketh the fear of the Almighty.

Job 24:21 (Parallel theme): He evil entreateth the barren that beareth not: and doeth not good to the widow.

Leviticus 18:18 (Parallel theme): Neither shalt thou take a wife to her sister, to vex her, to uncover her nakedness, beside the other in her life time.