

1 Samuel 4:20

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And about the time of her death the women that stood by her said unto her, Fear not; for thou hast born a son. But she answered not, neither did she regard it.

Analysis

As she dies, attendants try to comfort her: 'Fear not; for thou hast born a son.' In normal circumstances, bearing a son would bring joy and security. But she does not respond - 'she answered not, neither did she regard it.' A son cannot compensate for what has been lost. The attendants' comfort reflects normal values; her non-response reflects accurate theological assessment. Personal blessing means nothing when God's glory has departed. Her priorities exceed those of her comforters.

Historical Context

The birth of a son ordinarily brought great joy, especially in securing a widow's future. The attendants' words follow conventional comfort formulas. The woman's unresponsiveness signals that something more profound than personal circumstances concerns her.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Study Questions

1. What does her non-response to the birth of a son reveal about her priorities?
2. When do personal blessings fail to comfort because larger realities overshadow them?

Interlinear Text

וְכַעַת ת	מוֹתָהּ ה	וַתֵּדַבֵּר רָנָהּ	הַנִּצָּב וְ	עַל יָדָהּ	
And about the time	of her death	by her said	the women that stood	H5921	
H6256	H4191	H1696	H5324		
אֶל	תִּירָא י	כִּי	יֵלְדָתָּ	וְלֹא א	עֲנָתָהּ ה
H408	unto her Fear	H3588	a son	H3808	But she answered
	H3372	H1121	H3205		H6030
וְלֹא	שֶׁתָּהּ	לְבָהּ:			
H3808	not neither did she regard	H3820			
	H7896				

Additional Cross-References

Psalms 77:2 (Parallel theme): In the day of my trouble I sought the Lord: my sore ran in the night, and ceased not: my soul refused to be comforted.

John 16:21 (Parallel theme): A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world.