

# HER ADVERSARY PROVOKED HER SORE

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Daily devotions written by Pastor Thomas Smith

“And her adversary also provoked her sore, for to make her fret, because the LORD had shut up her womb. And as he did so year by year, when she went up to the house of the LORD, so she provoked her; therefore she wept, and did not eat.”

I Samuel 1:6, 7

Elkanah had two wives, Peninnah and Hannah. Peninnah had children, but Hannah was not able to have children. Because of this, Peninnah was constantly being verbally abusive to Hannah. Our text refers to Peninnah as Hannah’s “adversary” who “provoked her sore.” This was not just a momentary or occasional provocation. The Bible says that it kept going on “year by year.” It was something that Hannah was grief stricken over. In time, this bitterness of soul turned into prevailing prayer, which eventually resulted in the birth of Samuel.

We too have an adversary. I Peter 5:8 calls him the devil. Just as Hannah’s adversary provoked her and made her fret, our adversary is constantly provoking us. We can only imagine what Peninnah must have said to Hannah. She probably made her feel worthless and like a failure because she was barren. Perhaps she tried to get Hannah to blame God for her inability to conceive. It is just like our enemy to do the same with us. He knows how to provoke us and to make us fret. He accuses us in our minds The devil wants to make us worry and grieve over things we have no control over. He accuses God to us. He wants to use disappointments to cause us to think that God has been unjust in the things He allows in our lives. If people do not know where these thoughts come from and what to do with them, like Hannah, they will be sorely vexed. We must learn to recognize the source of these condemning and accusing thoughts

that crowd our minds.

We can learn a lesson from Hannah. Like this godly woman, we should also allow our provocations to motivate us to seek the Lord and His help. Her adversary grieved her, but she did not simply become frustrated or depressed. She kept bringing her needs and burdens to the Lord. When we are assaulted with accusations, let's use them to drive us closer to our Deliverer. Satan wants to use our problems to drive us away from God, but the Lord wants to use them to do just the opposite. When you are tempted to fret and give up hope, remember Hannah and the answer that she received.