

The Provoking of Satan

⇒ **Text:** 1 Chronicles 21:1-8

⇒ **Intro:**

⇒ There are many actions that Satan tries to take against the Christian.

○ We are told that he –

- He accuses the brethren – **Rev. 12:10**
- He seeks to devour the Christian - **1 Pe. 5:8**
- He tempts the Christian – **1 Cor. 7:5**
- He tries to take the Christian captive at his will – **2 Tim. 2:26**
- He tries to hinder the Christian in his work for the Lord –
1 Thess. 2:18
- He buffets the Christian – **2 Cor. 12:7**
- He desires to sift the Christian as wheat – **Lk. 22:31**
- He tries to get the Christian to blaspheme God – **1 Tim. 1:20**
- He tries to get an advantage of the Christian – **2 Cor. 2:11**
- He tries to beguile the Christian – **2 Cor. 11:3**
- He blinds the minds of the nonbeliever from the light of the glorious gospel of Christ – **2 Cor. 4:4**

⇒ In our passage we see one action that Satan tries to take against the Christian that is often overlooked.

- Notice **1 Chronicles 21:1**, “**Satan...provoked David to number Israel.**”
- The word provoked means = To call into action; to arouse; to excite; as to provoke anger or wrath by offensive words or by injury; to provoke war.

- To incite; to rouse; as provoke one to anger.

⇒ We want to look at two examples in the Word of God where Satan tried provoked the believer.

- In one case we will see that Satan was successful and in another case he was not.

⇒ **I. The First Case is with King David**

⇒ Often Satan will provoke the believer to take action that goes against the will of God.

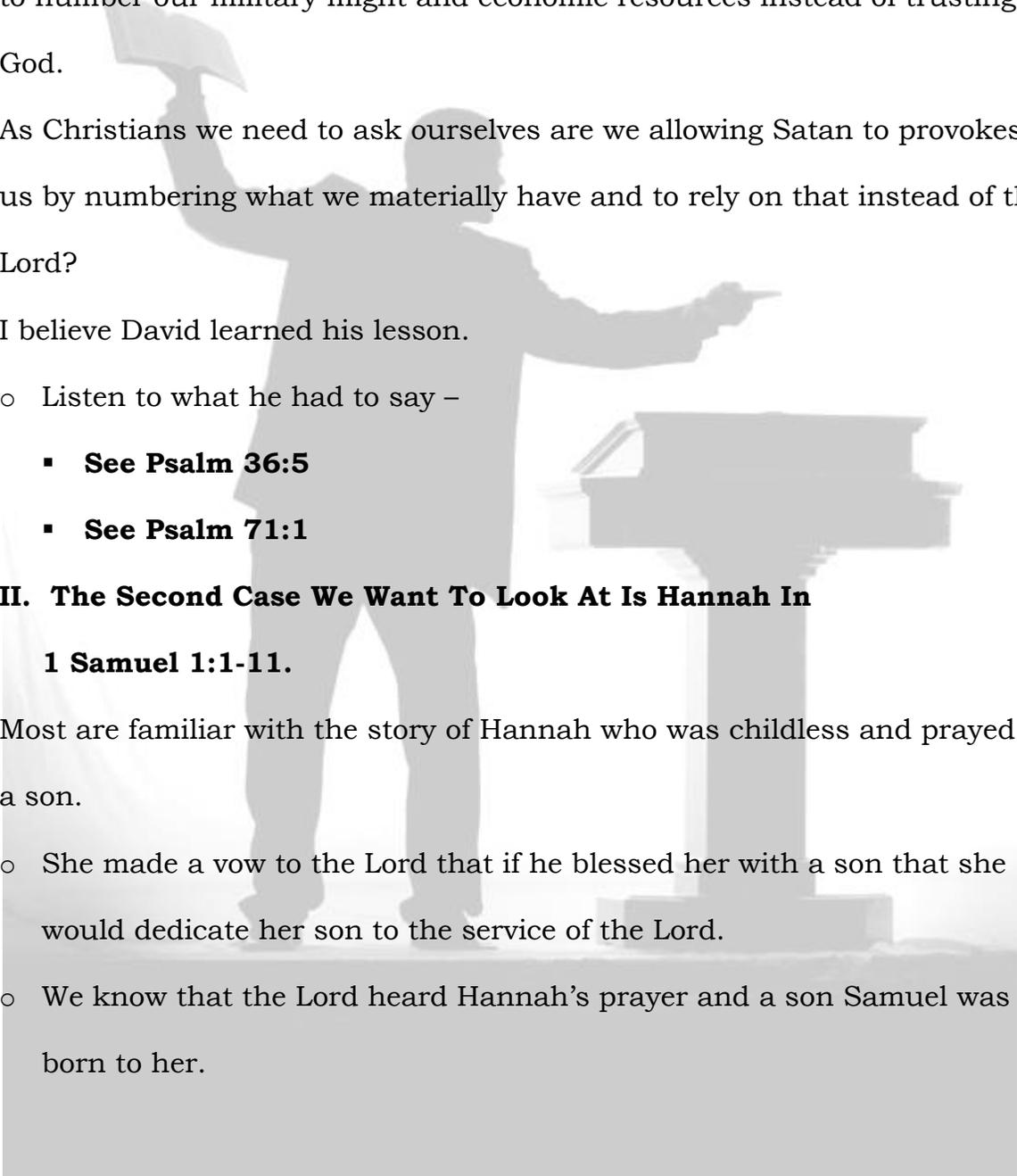
- In David's case we see that Satan was successful because he provoked David to number Israel.
- He got David to take a census to see how many men that Israel had.
- God was obviously against this as evidenced in **verse 7 of 1 Chronicles 21 – Read.**

⇒ I believe that although pride did enter into it, pride is not the total explanation for the sin.

⇒ **Notice what the Word of God says in Jeremiah 9:23-24 – Read.**

⇒ God was not pleased when David took the census because David was not delighting in the Lord.

- He was delighting in his own might.
- So the thing that motivated him to number the people was the awful sin of unbelief.
- David was trusting numbers instead of trusting God.
- My friend you don't feel the need for God when you have a million men.

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- When you have a slingshot and five stones, you know that you need Him.
 - ⇒ The same can be said of this country.
 - 911 – should have made this country realize we need God.
 - Instead, we are trusting in our economic and military might.
 - ⇒ Remember, Satan is behind the scenes provoking our leader as he did David to number our military might and economic resources instead of trusting in God.
 - ⇒ As Christians we need to ask ourselves are we allowing Satan to provoke us by numbering what we materially have and to rely on that instead of the Lord?
 - ⇒ I believe David learned his lesson.
 - Listen to what he had to say –
 - **See Psalm 36:5**
 - **See Psalm 71:1**
 - ⇒ **II. The Second Case We Want To Look At Is Hannah In 1 Samuel 1:1-11.**
 - ⇒ Most are familiar with the story of Hannah who was childless and prayed for a son.
 - She made a vow to the Lord that if he blessed her with a son that she would dedicate her son to the service of the Lord.
 - We know that the Lord heard Hannah's prayer and a son Samuel was born to her.

- Further, Hannah kept her vow to the Lord and turned her son over to Eli the priest to be trained in the things of the Lord.
- Many will use the story of Hannah to illustrate how there no prayer to hard for God to answer.
- However, I want us to focus on a different aspect of this story.

⇒ Notice with me **v. 6 of 1 Samuel 1.**

- **“And her adversary also provoked her sore”**
- **“Adversary”** – This tells us that Satan is very much involved in this situation.
- **1 Pe. 5:8 – Read.**

⇒ In Hannah’s case, Satan was able to use someone to provoke Hannah.

⇒ The someone that Satan used to provoke Hannah was her husband’s other wife, Peninnah.

⇒ The Word of God says that Peninnah, **“provoked her (Hannah) sore”**

- In other words Peninnah got Hannah all stirred or worked up over the fact that she was childless and Peninnah was not.
- The provoking was so great that it caused Hannah to fret over not having any children.
- In other words, Hannah became so agitated that being childless was the total focus of her life.

⇒ The fretting got to the point where she literally started to wear away.

- Notice **v. 7, “so she provoked her; therefore she wept, and did not eat.”**

- She was totally consumed by being childless.
- The provoking was continuous, no let up. – **“so she provoked her”**

⇒ Instead of focusing on how blessed that she was.

- **See v. 5 – “But unto Hannah he gave a worthy portion; for he loved Hannah:”**

- He husband loved her very much.

⇒ Satan is very good at provoking the Christian to dwell on what they don't have instead of how God has blessed them.

- The sad fact is that Satan will use other Christians to provoke us.
- Sometimes, Christian can say the stupidest things like, “God is really blessing me, look at such and such that He given me.”
 - In other words trying to provoke you like Peninnah did Hannah.
 - Trying to provoke you and make you think that God doesn't love you.

⇒ You see Satan's game plan is if he can get us to be totally consumed on what we don't have instead of what we have.

- Then we will fret and won't serve a God that appears to withhold His blessings.
- We will look at God as our adversary instead of the devil.
- We will become bitter Christians instead of better ones.

⇒ Praise the Lord, unlike David, Hannah wins the battle.

- She stops her fretting and goes to the Lord in prayer.
 - **See v. 11**

- The result the Lord heard her prayer.
 - **See vs. 19-20.**

⇒ **Conclusion:**

- We have seen that another thing that Satan will attempt to do to you and I is provoke us.
 - Provoke us go against the Will of God and God's Word like He did David and trust in man instead of God.
 - Provoke us to fret, be consumed, and totally focus on what we don't have and instead of what we have like He did Hannah.
- Important thing is what will your response be?
 - One of unbelief and totally disregard for the Word of God as David did.
 - Or
 - One of Prayer and seeking the Lord's will for your life as Hannah did.

