



LEADER Bible Study

When was the last time you prayed fervently to God? What did you need? Did He answer in a way you expected?

When Hannah wanted a baby, she cried out to God with great earnestness so much that the priest Eli thought she was drunk. Hannah had confidence that God heard her prayer. She understood that one of the evidences of the understanding and the belief that God hears and answers prayer is persistence in prayer.

Hannah prayed with a passion and bitterness of heart that looked to God at first and fixed her gaze upon the Lord only. She didn't even notice Eli watching her. She believed that God heard and God acted as a result of our small prayers. She prayed with passion because she believed God heard her.

But what if our prayers seem not to be heard? Hannah is a great example for us of what C. H. Spurgeon observed about prayer in his book *Illustrations and Meditations*: "Frequently the richest answers are not the speediest ... A prayer may be all the longer on its voyage because it is bringing us a heavier freight of blessing. Delayed answers are not only trials of faith, but they give us an opportunity of honoring God by our steadfast confidence in Him under apparent repulses."

Finally, Hannah's persistence in prayer showed that she understood she could not fix her situation but the all-powerful God who hears and acts could. The next year, Hannah came with a baby in her arms. A baby she named Samuel, which means "God heard." Samuel's life was a constant reminder to Hannah and all of Israel that God lives, hears, and acts.

As you prepare to serve kids through teaching, remember that even prayers that seem to be delayed are meant to strengthen our resolve to pray and to honor God with a confidence that can't be shaken. We serve a God who hears us, and because He hears us, no prayer is too small or too big that we can't bring Him.

GOD PROVIDED FOR HANNAH

1 Samuel 1-3

BIG PICTURE QUESTION

What are the consequences for sin?

The consequence for sin is separation from God.

CHRIST CONNECTION

Hannah trusted God and sent Samuel away from home to serve God with his whole life. God sent Jesus from heaven to earth to be our Savior. Just as Samuel used God's words to tell people about God, Jesus—the Word who became flesh—perfectly shows us what God is like.

KEY PASSAGE: Roman 6.23

For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.



Busy Hands

WELCOME KIDS // “Prayer Prompts” activity page, pencils

Greet each child as he or she arrives. Use this time to fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

Say: **If you had to describe yourself to someone who didn’t know you, what would you say? Think of words that describe how you look but also words that describe your character.** Pause for responses.

ACTIVITY PAGE: Invite kids to complete “Prayer Prompts” on the activity page. We will use the right part of the page later in the lesson. The kids will make notes then spend time praying to God. Say: **Where do you pray most often? Has God ever answered your prayers? Today, we will hear about a woman who prayed and asked God for something she really wanted. God answered her prayer by giving her a son.**

SESSION STARTER // 20 Index cards with words – one word per card (animals, people), timer on your cell phone

ACT IT OUT: You will have index cards with animals and people written on them. Form two teams of kids. Ask for a volunteer from each team to come to the front and pick a card. Start a one-minute timer and challenge him to read the card and try to act out what is written on the card without using words. His team should be the only team guessing during the first minute. If his team does not guess correctly in the first minute, the other team will have a chance to guess. Whichever team guesses correctly earns a point.

For the next round, choose a volunteer from the second team. Continue as time allows. The team with the most points, wins.

Say: **For this game you used motions and actions to give your team clues about who or what was listed on your card. Today, we will learn that God used people, like Samuel, to tell His people what He is like.**

INTRODUCE THE BIBLE // Countdown video, Big Picture Question Poster, timeline

Show the countdown video as you transition to introduce the Bible story. Set it to end as the session begins. Say: **I am so glad you are here today! Every time we meet together, we hear a true story from what book? [Allow kids to respond.] That’s right! We hear a true story from the Bible. The Bible isn’t just a book; it’s God’s holy Word. There are so many exciting and interesting stories in God’s Word. Today’s story begins with a woman named Hannah who prayed to God. God heard Hannah’s prayer and answered it in an amazing way. I can’t wait to tell you all about it!**



Active Minds

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: Say: **Does anyone remember our big picture question?** [Allow kids to respond.] **Remember, each week we like to think about an important question, and we answer that question by looking in God's Word. Our big picture question is, What are the consequences for sin? Does anyone remember the answer?** [Allow kids to respond.] **The answer is, The consequence for sin is separation from God. God's Word reveals who He is. God's Word says in Romans 6:23 that the payment for sin is death. It doesn't end there, though. The Bible tells us that God, because of His love for us, offers us salvation from sin through Jesus. Today we will see how God used someone named Samuel to tell people what God is like and how, later, God would use His Son to show the world what He is like.**

REVIEW THE TIMELINE: Show the timeline for this unit. Point to individual Bible stories as you review. Say: **Several weeks ago, we heard how God's people were caught in a cycle of sin. Even in their sin, God continued to care for His people. Then, we saw how God used Samson to rescue His people from their enemies. Last week we saw how God provided a kinsman redeemer for Ruth. Today, we will see how God heard the prayers of a woman named Hannah and how He provided for her and continues to provide for His people.**

BIBLE STORY: GOD PROVIDED FOR HANNAH // Bibles, Bible Story Picture Poster, Questions from Kids video: Unit 9, Session 4

Open your Bible to 1 Samuel 1–3. See the passage printed below. Use the Bible Story Picture Poster and the Bible storytelling tips to help you tell the story: As you tell the story, use a dramatic voice to convey some of the emotion Hannah must have felt as she pleaded with God for a son and later, when Samuel heard God's voice. As you tell the story, pause to engage kids by asking questions like, "How would you feel if you heard God calling you in the night?"

GOD PROVIDED FOR HANNAH

In a land called Ephraim (EE fra ihm), a man named Elkanah (el KAY nuh) lived with his wife Hannah. Hannah was sad because she really wanted children, but she didn't have any.

Every year, Elkanah went to the tabernacle to make sacrifices to God and to worship Him. Hannah went with him. She prayed: "Lord, if You give me a son, I will dedicate him to You. He will serve You all of his life."

A priest named Eli sat nearby and watched Hannah pray. He couldn't hear her, but he saw her lips moving. Eli thought something was wrong with Hannah. "I've been pouring out my heart before the Lord," she explained. So Eli replied, "Go in peace. May God answer your prayers."

Hannah and Elkanah returned home, and God answered her prayers. After some time, Hannah gave birth to a son. She named the baby Samuel. Continued on the next page.



Active Minds

When Samuel was a little older, Hannah took him to Eli at the tabernacle. “God answered my prayers!” she said. Hannah pledged Samuel to serve God, and she worshiped God. Then Hannah went back home and left Samuel with Eli to serve God. Every year, Hannah returned with a new robe for Samuel. God gave Hannah many more children too.

One night, Eli was in his bed and Samuel was lying in the tabernacle when Samuel heard someone call his name. “Here I am,” Samuel replied. He ran to Eli. “Here I am; you called me.” But it wasn’t Eli. He told Samuel to go back to bed. God called Samuel three times, and each time Samuel ran to Eli. “Here I am,” he said. Eli finally understood that God was calling to Samuel. He told Samuel how to respond. So Samuel went back to his place, and God called, “Samuel, Samuel!”

This time, Samuel spoke up, “Speak, for Your servant is listening.” God told Samuel that He was going to judge Eli’s family for their sin. Eli’s sons served as priests in the tabernacle, but they were sinning against God.

The next day, Samuel was afraid to tell Eli what God had said, but he shared God’s message with Eli. As Samuel grew, God was with him. Everyone in Israel knew that Samuel was God’s messenger. God used Samuel to share His plan with the nation of Israel.

Christ Connection: Hannah trusted God and sent Samuel away from home to serve God with his whole life. God sent Jesus from heaven to earth to be our Savior. Just as Samuel used God’s words to tell people about God, Jesus—the Word who became flesh—perfectly shows us what God is like. Feel free to use *The Gospel: God’s Plan for Me* on the last page to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.

REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY: Say: **What an amazing story! The story of Hannah and Samuel shows us how God loves, cares, and provides for His children. Open your Bible to 1 Samuel 1. Look at verses 10 and 11.** [Ask for a volunteer to read 1 Samuel 1:10-11 aloud.] **Hannah was very upset. In her sadness, she chose to cry out to the Lord through prayer. God heard Hannah’s prayer and gave her a son, Samuel. Now find chapter 2 in 1 Samuel and look at verse 2.** [Choose a volunteer to read 1 Samuel 2:2.] **Hannah knew that it was the Lord who heard her prayer and answered her. Have you ever prayed and wondered if God really heard your prayers? Did you think He would ever answer them? One of the ways we can get to know God more is through His Word, the Bible. The Bible tells us that He hears us when we pray and that He will answer in just the right way, at just the right time. God wants to have a relationship with us and one of the best ways to develop that relationship is by talking to Him and trusting Him through prayer.**

QUESTIONS FROM KIDS: Show the “Unit 9, Session 4” questions from kids video. Prompt kids to discuss:

1. Does God always answer our prayers? How can we be sure He hears us?
2. How might God answer our prayers in unexpected ways?



Active Minds

KEY PASSAGE // Key Passage Poster, Key Passage Song: "Eternal Life (Romans 6:23), sticky note for each child

Show the key passage poster. Lead kids in reading aloud Romans 6:23 together. Say: **Just like Hannah trusted God, we can trust God's Word. God's Word is clear that the payment for sin is death. God's Word also offers life through Jesus Christ. We can trust God's Word and Jesus.**

Provide each child with a sticky note. Read Romans 6:23 aloud. Each time you read the key passage, invite one child or several children to put their sticky notes on the poster to cover one word. Read aloud Romans 6:23, filling in the missing word. Continue until all words are covered and the kids can fill in all of the missing words in the key passage. This will help them to memorize the passage.

Lead kids to sing "Eternal Life (Romans 6:23)."

PRAY: Say: **God, thank You for always hearing our prayers and for providing everything we need for eternal life. You provided us with the free gift of salvation through Your Son, Jesus. Help us live in a way that brings glory and honor to You. Amen.**

GROUP DISCUSSION // Bibles

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

Say: **Does God really hear us when we pray?**

Guide kids to recognize that through Jesus, we have direct access to God through prayer. Prayer is another way we can know Him more and grow in our relationship with Him. The Bible tells us that we can have confidence that when we seek the Lord through prayer, He will hear us.

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read 1 John 5:14.)

Say: **How can we know what God is like?**

Prompt kids to discuss how God allows us to know Him through His Word, the Bible. When we spend time studying the Bible, we will grow in our relationship with Him. As we saw in today's story, God used people, like Samuel, to tell other people what God is like. We can also know God more through His Son, Jesus, who came to tell the world about God's plan.

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read 1 John 5:20.)

Say: **How does knowing what God is like affect your life?**

Explain that the more we know God, the more we will trust Him and the more we will want others to know Him. God is good and holy, and His plan is always the best. When we know this about God, trusting Him becomes easier. Once we have experienced the love of God and salvation from sin through Jesus, we will want to share God's plan with others.

(Option: Choose a volunteer to read Rom. 5:8.)



Open Hearts

ATTRIBUTE MATCH- UP // 5 pool noodles cut into thirds (One of each word printed on each piece: eternal, merciful, holy, wise, good / 3 sets of words), Bibles

Form three groups of kids. Direct each group to form a single-file line. Position a set of noodles across from each group.

Give kids Bibles and call out a reference for them to find and read: Psalm 107:1. One member of each group should race across the room and retrieve the noodle with the matching attribute.

Award three points to the team who matches the attribute first, two point to the team who finishes second, and one point to the team who finishes third.

Repeat with the remaining references: 1 Samuel 2:2; Romans 11:33; Luke 6:36; Isaiah 40:28.

Say: **God reveals who He is through His Word. Samuel used God's words to tell people about God. Jesus—the Word who became flesh—perfectly shows us what God is like.**

JOURNAL AND PRAYER // Journal Page, pencils, True or False? section of the activity page

Distribute journal pages and pencils. Guide kids to think about and answer the questions listed on the page. As kids journal, invite them to share their ideas.

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?**
- What does the story teach me about myself?**
- Are there any commands in this story to obey? How are they for God's glory and my good?**
- Are there promises in this story to remember? How do they help me trust and love God?**
- How does this story help me to live on mission better?**

Review the gospel and encourage kids to speak with you or another teacher if they have questions. Then pray, thanking God for allowing us to know Him and asking Him to help kids be faithful to tell others who He is.

As time allows, lead kids to complete "True or False?" on the activity page.



Extra Ideas

REVIEW AND BIBLE SKILLS // Bibles, Old Testament Kingdom Map, modern day map (optional)

Distribute Bibles and display the Old Testament Kingdoms Map. Guide kids to open their Bibles to 1 Samuel 3. Explain that Elkanah and Hannah were from Ephraim, a region to the northeast of Jerusalem (H5). Consider comparing the map to a modern-day map to help kids understand where these stories took place. (Tip: Locate the areas in and around modern-day Jerusalem.)

Choose a volunteer to read aloud 1 Samuel 3:19-20.

Say: **Samuel's mother, Hannah, dedicated Samuel to the Lord even before he was born. Hannah was faithful to keep her promise to God. She took Samuel to the temple to be trained in service to the Lord. God used Samuel in a powerful way among His people. The Israelites recognized that God had appointed Samuel as a prophet, and they listened to him. God wants us to know Him! God used prophets like Samuel to reveal Himself to His people. God reveals Himself to us through His Son, Jesus, and His Word.**



Extra Ideas

The Gospel: God's Plan for Me

Ask kids if they have ever heard the word gospel. Clarify that the word gospel means "good news." It is the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use the following guide to share the gospel with kids.

God rules. Explain to kids that the Bible tells us God created everything, and He is in charge of everything. Invite a volunteer to read Genesis 1:1 from the Bible. Read Revelation 4:11 or Colossians 1:16-17 aloud and explain what these verses mean.

We sinned. Tell kids that since the time of Adam and Eve, everyone has chosen to disobey God. (Romans 3:23) The Bible calls this sin. Because God is holy, God cannot be around sin. Sin separates us from God and deserves God's punishment of death. (Romans 6:23)

God provided. Choose a child to read John 3:16 aloud. Say that God sent His Son, Jesus, the perfect solution to our sin problem, to rescue us from the punishment we deserve. It's something we, as sinners, could never earn on our own. Jesus alone saves us. Read and explain Ephesians 2:8-9.

Jesus gives. Share with kids that Jesus lived a perfect life, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again. Because Jesus gave up His life for us, we can be welcomed into God's family for eternity. This is the best gift ever! Read Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; or 1 Peter 3:18.

We respond. Tell kids that they can respond to Jesus. Read Romans 10:9-10,13. Review these aspects of our response: Believe in your heart that Jesus alone saves you through what He's already done on the cross. Repent, turning from self and sin to Jesus. Tell God and others that your faith is in Jesus.

Offer to talk with any child who is interested in responding to Jesus.

Note: Feel free to use this clear and concise list to help children understand God's plan for them today or any time children have questions about salvation.