

Lesson #3-6

Hannah Promises Samuel to God

1 Samuel 1:9-11, 19-20; 2:1-10



Key Verse:

"There is no Holy One like the Lord, no one besides you; there is no Rock like our God."

1 Samuel 2:2

The Point:

God hears the prayers of everyone.



Introduction

This story directly contrasts the Israelites' disregard of God's commands with Hannah, an obedient servant of God. In the tumultuous time of the judges, a woman with no child had no one to safeguard her future and was at the bottom of the social hierarchy. Hannah prayed to God for a son and promised that she would dedicate him to the work of God. The Lord looks upon her with favor and grants her the son she desired. Her response is a song of joy that praises the God who favors the oppressed and who lifts up the lowly.

The Point

God hears the prayers of everyone. Our culture and our own sinful biases lead us to think we know who matters and who does not, but God always turns that upside down. God listened to the prayers of a faithful woman, one who was most disdained by society, and answered those prayers with more than she could ever expect. Similarly, we can see evidence of God's care for the weak and favor for those who give what little they may have to do God's will.

Activities a la Carte

Activities

Supplies

Introduction

Promises to God

Think about promises we make to God.

10 min.

† None

Learning the Story

Samuel Is Promised to God

Hear the story as Lectio Divina.

15 min.

† Bibles

Activities

The Forgotten

Remember the forgotten.

10 min.

† Paper
† Pens or pencils
† Internet-connected devices
† Envelopes

Baby Pictures

Consider origins.

10 min.

† Internet-connected devices

Prayer

God's Story @ Home



Introduction (10 minutes)

Promises to God?

Think about promises we make to God.

Supplies:

† None

Instructions:

1. Discuss the following questions:
 - Have you ever made a promise to God? What was the situation? What did you promise? What did you ask for in return?
 - Do you think that God honors the promises that we make?
 - What promises does God make to us?
2. In our story today, we will meet a woman who makes a very important promise to God, and God hears and honors her promise. We will learn how that promise is very important to how we understand who God is, and who God cares for.

Learning the Story (15 minutes)

Samuel Is Promised to God

Hear the story as Lectio Divina.

Supplies:

† Bibles

Instructions:

1. **God's people have been reading and reflecting upon God's Word since ancient times.** These words are not just the history of God's work in the world. They speak to us today as a church, as families, and as individuals. Early Christian communities came up with a reflective form of reading Scripture called Lectio Divina, which was designed to help people hear how the Bible speaks God's word to each of us intimately.
2. **We will first calm our minds and get ourselves in a position to hear God's word.** Then I will read our story twice. The first time you will just listen to understand what the passage is saying. The second time you will listen for what it is saying to you.
3. **Find a comfortable listening position.** You may sit in your chair, or on the floor, or lay down—as long as you do not fall asleep. Place your hands comfortably on your lap and take a few slow deep breaths. Close your eyes and breathe deeply.
4. **Hear the Word of God.** Read 1 Samuel 1:9-11, 19-20; 2:1-10 slowly and clearly. Allow a few moments of silence after your reading.
5. **Hear the Word a second time.** This time listen for a word or phrase or image that stands out to you.
6. Read 1 Samuel 1:9-11, 19-20; 2:1-10 a second time. Allow a few moments of silence.
7. **Discuss what word, phrase, or image stood out to you.**
 - Were there any themes that you noticed? What were they?
 - It is not uncommon that God speaks to us with the same message. Review common themes.
 - What images in Hannah's song stand out to you?
 - Do you know other songs in the Bible that have similar themes? [*Mary's song, the "Magnificat"*]
 - What examples of authentic worship do you hear in this text? [*Hannah's trust in and promise to God; her song of praise.*]

Activity (10 minutes)

The Forgotten

Remember the forgotten.

Supplies:

- † Paper
- † Pens or pencils
- † Internet-connected devices
- † Envelopes

Preparation:

1. Read the information at <http://www.bread.org/write-congress>. This page has information and writing prompts on a number of different specific hunger issues. Feel free to search online for “hunger issues” or “Bread for the World” or make your own prompts. Decide if you will invite letters on one given area or if you would like to present each topic.
2. Research your Congressional representatives’ names and addresses at <http://www.house.gov/representatives/find/>.
3. These website hyperlinks are provided for your convenience and are correct and relevant at the time of publication but may not be at the time of use.

Instructions:

1. **Hannah’s Song speaks of the reversals that God performs, including the uplifting of those who have been forgotten and do not have much power.**
2. **Who are some of the people who are forgotten and may feel powerless in our culture and community?** *[People who are poor, hungry, sick, imprisoned.]*
3. **Bread for the World is a non-profit organization that provides education and resources for individuals and churches to advocate for people who struggle to find enough food to eat. One of the resources they provide is information and writing prompts concerning very specific hunger issues. They prepare you to write to your congressional representative about how they can make a difference in addressing these issues.**
4. Invite family members to look up the Bread for the World website and writing



prompts.

5. Hand out pens or pencils, paper, and envelopes.
6. **You are invited to write a letter to your congressional representative, urging them to take action on behalf of those who are forgotten and may feel powerless. Each person is encouraged to write a separate letter, since the more letters Congress receives, the bigger the impact made, but consider inviting a small child to partner with you if they are unable to complete the task themselves.**
7. Provide addresses of congressional representatives.

Activity (10 minutes)

Baby Pictures

Consider origins.

Supplies:

- † Internet-connected devices

Instructions:

1. **God used Samuel from a very young age. His mother dedicated him to God's work, and God lost no time in speaking to him and using him as an important prophet.**
2. Ask each family member to search online for a baby picture of a famous person. Take turns showing the pictures and trying to guess the person's identity.
3. Discuss:
 - **What do you think they were like as children?**
 - **How are these famous people similar to and different from Samuel?**
 - Ask the younger family members present: **How are you similar to and different from Samuel?**

Prayer

Make a point to come together to pray. Use the following or say your own prayer.

God, it took a lowly, forgotten woman to remind us what it means to worship authentically. In our time of worship, we pray for all of the people our society has forgotten. We pray for people who are sick, poor, oppressed, or imprisoned. We pray specifically for those we name now. Pause.

We also pray for our children. As we reach out to lay a gentle hand on our children, we ask you to bless their ministry. We ask you to remind us that they have as much or more to teach as they do to learn. Give them strength for their journey, and wisdom to guide their path. In your name we pray. Amen.

If you have the “Living the Word: Sharing God’s Story @ Home” sheet, remember to use it throughout the week as a part of your family devotions!