

Living the Word:

Teaching Youth God's Story

Narrative Lectionary, Year 3

Samuel is Promised to God

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

Lesson #3-6

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Writers

Gloria Allhiser
Brett Carter
Nance Keyes
Kari Osmek
Beth Priest

Editors

Cynthia Fairman Paulson
Rev. Dr. Daphne Burt

Curriculum Design

Rev. Sarah Nye

Layout

Nance Keyes

Publisher

Gregory Rawn

Illustrator

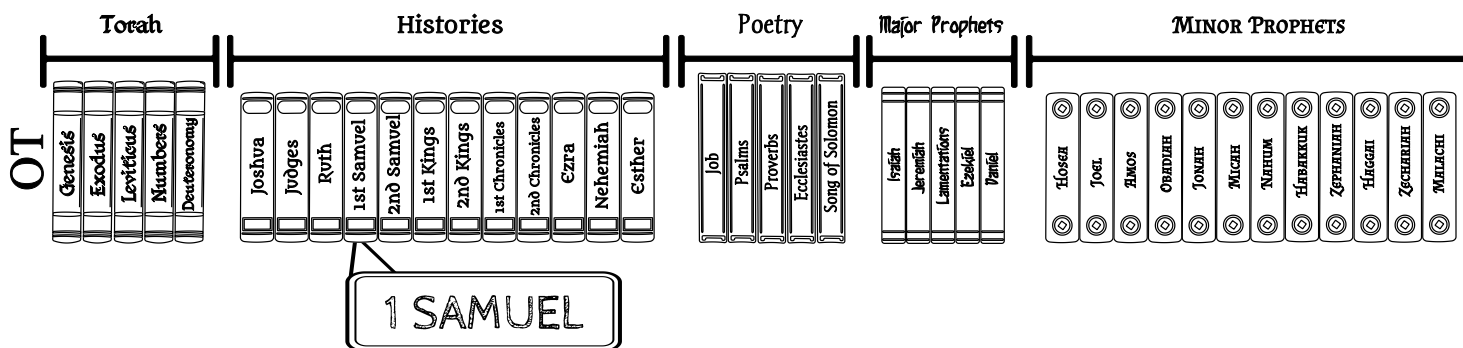
Rev. Tom Pairan

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Samuel is Promised to God

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

Hannah's story shows us that God hears our prayers and is faithful even when we despair—this is good news for us all!

Story Connections

In spite of the Israelites unfaithfulness to God, God remained faithful to them and gave them a covenant to live into, outlining a way of life and instructions for worship that would set them apart from other tribes and nations. They began to settle into this new way of living. A tabernacle was created to house the Ark of the Covenant and would become the center for worship, sacrifice, and offering. Today's story introduces us to Hannah, who came to the tabernacle to plead with God for an answer to her prayers.

Story Summary

Samuel is Promised to God

Here we meet a woman named Hannah. She is loved by her husband but childless, which

brings her great sadness and shame. Hannah pours her heart out to God, weeping because she does not have a child. She promises that if God would give her a son she would dedicate him to God's service as a Nazarite. (A Nazarite took special vows in God's service, somewhat like a priest, which included not cutting their hair and not drinking wine.) God heard Hannah's prayer and answered her request for a son, and she named him Samuel.

Hannah then sings a song of praise in response to God's answer to prayer. She

Lesson @ A Glance

#3-6: Samuel Is Promised To God
1 Samuel 1:9-11, 19-20, 2:1-10

The Point: God hears the prayers of the forgotten and cares for the ones that we think are worthless.

Making Connections: Promises Made, Promises Broken

Spiritual Practice Emphasis: Worship

Bible Nuts and Bolts: Ancient History



praises God for the ways God remembers those who have nothing and for the ways God honors and lifts up the poor and forgotten.

The Point

God hears the prayers of the forgotten and cares for the ones that we think are worthless. We all experience times when we feel despair. Our God hears and responds to the cries of the suffering. When you feel alone and forgotten, remember that you are known and you are loved beyond compare by the one true God, Creator of the universe, Savior of the world.

Bible Nuts & Bolts: Ancient History

Today's story comes from the historical writings, found between the Pentateuch and Wisdom literature. While we may think of "history" as being only about the facts (names, places, events), the accounts shared here offer us so much more than just knowledge of what happened a long time ago. These books tell the history of Israel (our spiritual ancestors' history!) not just through recounting important places, names, and

Hannah prayed and said, "My heart exults in the Lord; my strength is exalted in my God."
1 Samuel 2:1

For Your Reflection:

1. When is a time in your life when you felt like Hannah?
2. What are some prayers that God has answered?
3. How can you help students relate to Hannah's experience of feeling alone, abandoned, and forgotten?

timelines, but also by showing how God has been present with Israel and with us throughout all of time. By sharing these stories we learn of God's faithfulness time and time again. That is the real purpose of history!

Spiritual Practice: Worship

Songs and poems like Hannah's can help us express the appreciation God is due, individually and collectively. What are you thanking God for when you worship? How do you show God your appreciation?

Overview, Objectives, and Materials You'll Need

Core Elements

Short on time?
Items marked +
can be adjusted to be done with
what you probably already
have in your pocket or
classroom.

Into the Story

5 min.

Tears and Prayers

Eat a salty snack and drink water to be reminded of God's faithfulness even in sorrow.

- › Salty snack
- › Cups
- › Water

+Learning the Story 20 min.

Pouring Out Her Heart

Notice attitudes and identify with elements of today's story.

- › Bibles
- › Activity Sheet #3-6.A
- › Pens or pencils

+Living the Story 15 min.

Psalms of Thanksgiving

Write psalms of thanksgiving.

- › Bibles
- › Activity Sheet #3-6.A and #3-6.B
- › Pens or pencils

+Sending the Story 5 min.

- › None

Extending the Learning:

Hands On <i>There's No Rock Like Our God</i> <i>Paint rocks to keep as a reminder to pray and praise like Hannah.</i>	15 min.	› Small river stones › Paint › Fine-tipped paint brushes › Cups › Water › Paper towels
Mixed Media <i>Hannah's Big Role</i> <i>Watch a video and discuss Hannah's role in the future of God's people.</i>	15 min.	› Video player
+The Competitive Edge <i>Humbled and Exalted</i> <i>Play a Bible-based version of "Chutes and Ladders."</i>	10 min.	› Pennies › Dark permanent marker › Dice
Simply Serving <i>Joyous Mothers</i> <i>Serve mothers of young children in the congregation.</i>	20 min.	› None
+Worship Connection <i>Hear My Cry, O God</i> <i>Memorize verses about God our rock and lead the congregation in singing them.</i>	10 min.	› Bibles › Activity Sheet #3-6.C › Video player

Into the Story: Tears and Prayers (5 minutes)

Eat a salty snack and drink water to be reminded of God's faithfulness even in sorrow.

BEFORE CLASS:

1. Assemble the ingredients and supplies for today's snack.
2. Before serving any food, always check with participants or caregivers for students who have food allergies. Provide an alternative if necessary.

Supplies:

- › Salty snack
- › Cups
- › Water

DURING CLASS:

1. Pass out the snack and cups of water to the students. As students eat and drink, discuss the following: **Does anyone remember the last food items we shared in class together? What were they?** *[Flatbreads, bitter herbs, and salted water from the lesson on Passover.]* **What was the connection between the salted water and Passover?** *[The salted water reminds Passover celebrants of the tears their ancestors, the Israelites, shed while in Egypt. God heard their tearful cries and liberated them from slavery.]* **Why do you think we are sharing another salty snack with water to open our lesson today?** *[Today's story tells of another time when God responded to the cries of God's people.]*

Learning the Story:

Pouring Out Her Heart (20 minutes)

Notice attitudes and identify with elements of today's story.

BEFORE CLASS:

1. Make copies of the Activity Sheet #3-6.A for each youth.

Supplies:

- › Bibles
- › Activity Sheet #3-6.A
- › Pens or pencils

DURING CLASS:

1. **Will someone recap for us what was happening with the Israelites the last time we met?**
[The Israelites in the wilderness had grown impatient and were tired of waiting on God; they crafted a false idol out of gold to worship. Despite their unfaithfulness, God kept God's promise to bring them to the Promised Land and to make out of them a great nation.] **Today's story takes place after the Israelites have been in the Promised Land for quite some time. Open your Bibles to the beginning of the book of Joshua and mark your place with one finger. Then find the beginning of the book of 1 Samuel.** This is to help students visualize that a lot has happened in between last week's story and this week. **After the Israelites' incident with the golden calf, God gave them instructions on how to live and worship. These instructions take up much of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. Despite this new covenant, Israel continued to doubt God and disobey. Because of this, God decreed that the current generation of adults—including Moses—would not be allowed to enter the Promised Land. Rather, a new leader—Joshua—and the children of Israel would enter and begin Israel's new life in the land. When the Israelites finally did settle in the land of Canaan, Joshua divided the land between twelve tribes. Each tribe settled in its own area, though they still shared the same history and customs according to the covenant made with God. The tribes appointed judges to help them govern and to lead military efforts to protect them from other tribes and nations. The people constructed a tent in the city of Shiloh to house the Ark of the Covenant and to offer sacrifices and worship to God. Priests were tasked with the care of this tent and the offering of sacrifices.**
2. **That brings us to today's story. Open your Bibles to 1 Samuel 1:9-11. Our story picks up in the middle of a larger passage. We are introduced to Hannah, a married woman who has not been able to bear children as of yet. Every year Hannah's husband, Elkanah, and their family would travel to Shiloh to offer sacrifices to the Lord. Our story today begins during one particular trip to Shiloh. Let's read!** Invite a volunteer to read the passage out loud for the group. After reading, ask: **Does anything stand out for you from this story? What is the general mood or feel of the passage? Of Hannah?** Allow time to students reflect and share.
3. **Now look at verses 12-20. Invite a new volunteer to read. What happened here? How has the mood changed, if at all, from verses 9-11?**

4. Hand out copies of Activity Page #3-6.A. Read the passage together, girls reading the parts marked “girls” and boys reading the parts marked “boys.” If you have all girls or all boys in your group, simply divide the group in half.
5. **How would you describe Hannah’s mood here?** *[Answers will vary.]* **Hannah’s song of praise is similar to the song of Mary, the mother of Jesus, which we call *The Magnificat*. Here, Hannah praises God for being faithful to her people in many ways. What are some of the specific things Hannah praises God for in this song?** *[Giving strength to the weak, food to the hungry, children to the barren, hope to the hopeless, dignity to the poor, etc.]*
6. **We are all in need of God’s faithfulness. Circle a part of this passage to which you can relate—is there a time when you have felt weak, hungry, or poor, either in spirit or literally? When has God been faithful to you?**

Living the Story:

Psalms of Thanksgiving (15 min.)

Write psalms of thanksgiving.

BEFORE CLASS:

1. Make copies of Activity Sheets #3-6.A and B for each youth.

DURING CLASS:

Supplies:

- › Bibles
- › Activity Sheets #3-6.A and #3-6.B
- › Pens or pencils

1. **Like Hannah, we can praise God through songs of thanksgiving. Our worship services are filled with songs of praise like the songs of Hannah, Mary, and Miriam, Moses' sister, who sang a song of praise after the Israelites safely crossed the Red Sea. Can anyone think of another place in the Bible where we can find a collection of songs of praise and thanksgiving? [The book of Psalms.]**
2. Hand out Activity Sheets to youth and invite them to find Psalm 113 in their Bibles. **Psalms of thanksgiving often have a certain structure and flow. They begin with praise, move on to acknowledge the characteristics of God and the things God has done, offer thanksgiving to God for the ways God has delivered and redeemed us, and calls for the world to praise God as well. Look at Hannah's song from Activity Sheet #3-6.A. Can you identify these sections?**
3. **Using Hannah's song as an example, write your own psalm of praise! Consider the four elements and think about who God is—what role has God played in your life? How has God provided for you like God provided for Hannah? How has God delivered you from trials?**
4. Write psalms! If students are comfortable, consider sharing these psalms (with or without the writers' names) with the congregation.

Hands On:

There's No Rock Like Our God (15 minutes)

Paint rocks to keep as a reminder to pray and praise like Hannah.

BEFORE CLASS:

1. Set out paintbrushes, paint, cups of water, paper towels, and stones.
2. Stones should be large enough to paint on, but small enough to be easily held in your hand. Craft stores often have bags of river stones for sale in a décor section.

Supplies:

- › Small river stones
- › Paint
- › Fine-tipped paint brushes
- › Cups
- › Water
- › Paper towels

DURING CLASS:

1. **Hannah knew that God was her rock, and rocks can be a great visual reminder to us to pray. We are going to decorate rocks—one to keep and one to give away—that will act as reminders to us to pray and praise God like Hannah did.** Distribute stones and painting supplies.
2. **For inspiration, think about a time in your life when God acted like a rock for you. What is a symbol that reminds you of this time when God was faithful?**
3. Invite students to paint one stone for themselves and one stone for another person they think could use a reminder of God's unconditional love.

Mixed Media: Hannah's Big Role (15 minutes)

Watch a video and discuss Hannah's role in the future of God's people.

BEFORE CLASS:

1. Cue up the video "1 Samuel" found here:
<https://www.jointhebibleproject.com/?video=1-10>.

Supplies

› Video player

DURING CLASS:

1. **Today our story is about Hannah's steadfast faith, prayer, and praise. Her faithfulness led to the birth of her son, Samuel. Today's story does not tell us much about Samuel, as we have focused on Hannah. But just how important were Samuel, and Hannah, to the future of God's people—and us? This video may give us an idea. As you watch, pay special attention to Samuel. Try to remember what he does, what he says, and to whom and with whom he speaks.**
2. Show the Bible Project video "1 Samuel." Afterwards, ask students for their initial reactions. If anything was unclear or confusing, help to clarify.
3. **Where was Samuel?** *[As a prophet, Samuel communicated with God. Samuel was also respected by the Israelites. Samuel acted as a messenger from God and therefore played a key role in the shaping of the future of Israel.]* **This video outlining the book of 1 Samuel tells us about the first king of Israel, King Saul, and gives us a glimpse at the man who would become the second king, David. What do we know about David—who he was, what he did, who he became?** *[David became king of Israel; David composed many of the Psalms; David was a great leader who also made mistakes—big mistakes; the Messiah was to come from the line of David.]* **Jesus was a descendant of King David, who was called by God to lead the people of Israel as king and was influenced by God's messenger, Samuel. Samuel played a major role in God's plan to bring a Messiah to God's people. Knowing this, how does your opinion of Hannah from today's story change, if at all?** Hannah's humble faith despite being mocked and ridiculed is a key moment in the story of the Messiah. Help students understand that Hannah's story reminds us that God hears the cries of the outcast and raises up the oppressed, just as God sent the son, Jesus, to do.

The Competitive Edge:

Humbled and Exalted (10 minutes)

Play a Bible-based version of “Chutes and Ladders.”

Supplies:

- › Pennies
- › Dark permanent marker
- › Dice

BEFORE CLASS:

1. Print out a game board
(found here: <https://s-media-cache-ak0.pinimg.com/736x/33/73/85/3373858b3a676ac25498704722121b8d.jpg>) on 11x17 paper. You may need to print more than one, depending upon the size of your group.

DURING CLASS:

1. **Much of Hannah’s song centers on how God humbles the prideful and exalts the lowly. The Scriptures are full of these kinds of reversals, as we see God lift up the needy and forgotten, but humble those who think they are “high and mighty.” For this activity we are going to play a game of “Chutes and Ladders,” but instead we will call it “Humbled and Exalted.” The ladders represent the times when God lifts up the humble, and the chutes represent the times when God humbles the exalted.**
2. Place the game board in the center of the group and distribute pennies. Pennies will act as game pieces. Instruct students to use the permanent marker to write their initial(s) on the “heads” side of their penny to identify their game piece as their own.
3. Review game play with the students:
 - The object of the game is to move your game piece to the “finish” by rolling the dice and advancing in squares the number you roll. Each player gets one role per turn.
 - If you land on the bottom of a ladder, you advance your game piece to the top of the ladder. If you land on the top of a chute, your game piece moves down to the bottom of the chute.
 - First player to reach the “finish” wins!

Simply Serving: Joyous Mothers (20 minutes)

Serve mothers of young children in the congregation.

BEFORE CLASS:

1. Speak with church staff about hosting a “Mom’s Day Out” event. Consider issues of publication and space. It might be a good idea to bring a copy of the church’s calendar with you so you can be aware of possible conflicts when scheduling this event with your students.

Supplies

› Nothing

DURING CLASS:

1. **Hannah rejoiced to become a mother. Women still today rejoice to become mothers. That said, the joy of motherhood does not necessarily mean motherhood is easy. Being a parent is a hard job! Sometimes parents can use a break. Let’s offer an opportunity for a break to moms in our congregation by hosting a “Mom’s Morning/Afternoon/Night Out.”** Have your group decide between morning, afternoon, or evening.
2. Get to planning! Some things to consider:
 - When will this event be? What day? Will it be in the morning, afternoon, or evening? Make sure to decide upon a specific day and time.
 - What ages will you accept? Depending on age ranges you may need to adjust your space and volunteer plans—babies and toddlers require different levels of attention and activities than preschool/early elementary children.
 - Where will you host activities? The church nursery? In classrooms?
 - Who will provide childcare? You will need at least one adult present, or more, depending on your church’s regulations on child safety.
 - What activities will you provide? What about snacks? (Always check for allergies before serving snacks to participants!)
 - How will you publicize and who will promote this event? How will mothers sign up?

Worship Connection:

Hear My Cry, O God (10 minutes)

Memorize verses about God our Rock and lead the congregation in singing them.

BEFORE CLASS:

1. Preview and bookmark the video clip, found here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3CRTY1xb0NE> (“Psalm 61:1-4 Hear My Cry, O God” by Esther Mui)
2. Print copies of Activity page #3-6.C for each youth.
3. Arrange with pastor(s)/music staff for a time where the youth can lead the congregation in this sung psalm. Musical accompaniment and vocal lead sheets can be found at www.scriptsongsforworship.com.

Supplies

- › Bibles
- › Activity page #3-6.C
- › Video player

DURING CLASS:

1. **Open your Bibles to Psalm 61:1-4.** Ask students to follow along in their Bibles as you play the video.
2. **This psalm is a powerful testament to how God acts like a rock and refuge for us, especially in times of trouble and despair. Distribute copies of the activity page. We are going to lead the congregation in singing this song on** (insert date/service time here). **Today we will practice! Notice on the activity page where it says “cantor(s);” that is where we will sing.** Practice singing this psalm with the video recording several times.
3. Make sure students are aware of the date/service where this will be sung! Send reminders via email or text/phone calls to students and/or parents the week before. Plan to meet before the service to practice the psalm with your music staff.

Sending the Story (5 minutes)

Remember to send “The Story @ Home” take home sheet with students before dismissing them.

God hears the prayers of the forgotten and cares for the ones that we think are worthless. God redeems and delivers us. Hannah felt forgotten and was mocked by her family, but God had not forgotten her. God listened to her and answered her prayer for a son. What’s more, Hannah gave her son to God’s service. Think about Hannah and her faith. What is one thing you can learn from Hannah’s story to help you be a more faithful disciple of Jesus in the coming weeks?

After students think and share their ideas, close in prayer. Try leading a “popcorn” style prayer, inviting students to spontaneously share things they are thankful to God for, perhaps taking ideas from their personal psalms of praise. Close with the following prayer:

God of the forgotten, the lonely, the despairing, thank you for hearing us when we cry. Thank you for taking up the cause of those the world judges to be worthless. To you, no creature is worthless. Thank you for teaching us about the sanctity of life. Thank you for giving us words and song to help us express our thanks and praise to you for all that you do for us. In your holy name we pray, amen.

Pouring Out Her Heart

Notice attitudes and identify with elements of today's story.

1 Samuel 2:1-10

ALL: ¹Hannah prayed:

GIRLS: I'm bursting with GOD-news! I'm walking on air.
I'm laughing at my rivals. I'm dancing my salvation.
²Nothing and no one is holy like GOD,
no rock mountain like our GOD.
³Don't dare talk pretentiously—not a word of boasting, ever!
For GOD knows what's going on.
He takes the measure of everything that happens.

BOYS: ⁴The weapons of the strong are smashed to pieces,
while the weak are infused with fresh strength.
⁵The well-fed are out begging in the streets for crusts,
while the hungry are getting second helpings.
The barren woman has a houseful of children,
while the mother of many is bereft.

GIRLS: ⁶GOD brings death and GOD brings life,
brings down to the grave and raises up.
GOD brings poverty and GOD brings wealth;
he lowers, he also lifts up.
⁸He puts poor people on their feet again;
he rekindles burned-out lives with fresh hope,
Restoring dignity and respect to their lives—a place in the sun!
For the very structures of earth are GOD's;
he has laid out his operations on a firm foundation.

BOYS: ⁹He protectively cares for his faithful friends, step by step,
but leaves the wicked to stumble in the dark.
No one makes it in this life by sheer muscle!

ALL: ¹⁰GOD's enemies will be blasted out of the sky,
crashed in a heap and burned.
GOD will set things right all over the earth,
he'll give strength to his king,
he'll set his anointed on top of the world!

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Psalms of Thanksgiving

Write psalms of thanksgiving.

Structure of a psalm of thanksgiving:

PRAISE: The author offers praise to God first, acknowledging God's majesty and faithfulness. (*Some examples are Psalm 113:1-4, Psalm 145:1-3, or Psalm 148:1-4.*)

ACKNOWLEDGING WHAT GOD HAS DONE: The psalmist writes about the things God has done to meet the needs of God's people. In this case, YOU! How has God met your needs? When is a time when you were in especially in need? How did God respond?

THANKSGIVING: the psalmist expresses thanks and praise to God for the things God has done.

PRAISE: the psalmist ends with a call for everyone to praise God, similar to the first section.

Here My Cry, O God

Learn a psalm about relying on God and lead the congregation in a sung version.

Psalm 61:1-4, “Hear My Cry, O God, Lead Me To the Rock That Is Higher Than I”

Cantor(s): Hear my cry, O God, attend to my prayer
 From the ends of the earth I will cry to you
 When my heart is overwhelmed
 Lead me to the rock that is higher than I

Congregation: Hear my cry, O God, attend to my prayer
 From the ends of the earth I will cry to you
 When my heart is overwhelmed
 Lead me to the rock that is higher than I

Cantor(s): For you have been a shelter for me
 A strong tower from the enemy
 I will abide in your tabernacle forever
 I will trust in the shelter of your wings

Congregation: Hear my cry, O God, attend to my prayer
 From the end of the earth I will cry to you
 When my heart is overwhelmed
 Lead me to the rock that is higher than I

Cantor(s): For you have been a shelter for me
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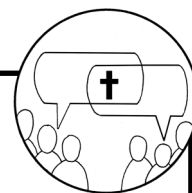
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Samuel is Promised to God

The Story @ Home + Youth #3-6

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



The Point

God hears the prayers of the forgotten and cares for the ones that we think are worthless.

We have all felt, or will feel, like Hannah at some point in our lives—alone, abandoned, forgotten.

These feelings are universal. But our God hears and responds to the cries of the suffering. When you feel alone and forgotten, remember that you are known and you are loved beyond compare by the one true God, Creator of the universe, Savior of the world.

Story Connections

In spite of the Israelites unfaithfulness to God, God remained faithful to them and gave them a covenant to live into, outlining a way of life and instructions for worship that would set them apart from other tribes and nations. They began to settle into this new way of living. A tabernacle (large tent) was created to house the Ark of the Covenant and would become the center for worship, sacrifice, and offering.

Today's story introduces us to Hannah, who came to the tabernacle in Shiloh to plead with God for an answer to her prayers.

Spiritual Practice: Worship

Hannah worshipped God with the offering of her heartfelt song of praise when her prayers for a son were answered. What are you thanking God for when you worship? How do you show God your appreciation and your praise? Songs and poems like Hannah's can help us, individually and collectively, express the appreciation God is due. The psalms contain many songs of praise and thanksgiving. This week, try reading psalms of praise together as a family before a meal. Some recommendations are Psalms 8, 23, 145, and 150.

Story Summary

Samuel is Promised to God

Today we meet a woman named Hannah, who is childless, something that brings her great sadness and shame. Hannah pours her heart out to God, weeping because she does not have a child. God heard Hannah's prayer and answered her request for a son, and she named the boy Samuel. Hannah then sings a song of praise in response to God's answer to prayer. Drawing on her experiences as a once-barren woman who has been given a son, she praises God for the ways God remembers those who have nothing and for the ways God honors and lifts up the poor and forgotten.

Last Week/Next Week

Last week, we saw God remain faithful to the Israelites despite their unfaithfulness to God. This week we heard how God was faithful and answered Hannah's prayers. Next week we hear about more ways in which God was faithful, this time to King David.

Bible Nuts and Bolts: *Ancient History*

Today's story comes from the historical writings, found between the Pentateuch and Wisdom literature. While we may think of "history" as being only about the facts, the accounts shared here offer us so much more than just knowledge of what happened a long time ago. These books tell the history of Israel (our spiritual ancestors!) not only through recounting important places, names, and timelines, but also by showing how God has been present with Israel and with us throughout all of time. By sharing these stories we learn of God's faithfulness time and time again. That is the real purpose of history!

Samuel is Promised to God

The Story @ Home + Youth #3-6

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

Going Deeper

As you hear and study these stories each week, consider what God has to say to you and your family. What is God's message to us? Consider the following basic pattern as a way of forming family devotions:

- ✦ Light a candle to help you focus this time as "God time." Pray a simple prayer together.
- ✦ Take a moment to check in with each other; what are each person's "highs" and "lows" today?
- ✦ Read aloud from the Daily Bible Readings from below. Discuss the questions following each.
- ✦ End with a blessing, by simply tracing a cross on each other's forehead. The Lord's Prayer is a good way to end your devotion time. If you used a candle, extinguish it as a sign of the end of the devotions.

Note: This is only a suggested pattern. It will vary with your household's context and patterns. What works best for you? First thing in the morning? Over breakfast? Bed time? Be creative and flexible with how you practice and keep your devotions!

Daily Bible Readings

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

Hannah's prayers were answered when God gave her a son.

- When is a time when you have felt like Hannah—alone or abandoned?
- When is a time when God answered a prayer request for you? What happened?

Monday - Read 1 Samuel 3:1-18

God gives an important message to Samuel, who has trouble at first discerning God's voice.

- Have you ever heard God speak? What did God say?
- How do you think Samuel felt, knowing he would have to tell Eli about God's plan to punish him?

Tuesday - Read 1 Samuel 8:1-22

Samuel warns Israel about the realities of being ruled by a king.

- Why do you think Israel wanted a king so badly? What was the appeal of being a kingdom?
- When is a time when you tried to warn someone but they did not listen?

Wednesday - Read 1 Samuel 9:27; 10:1-9

Samuel anoints Saul and declares him the first king of Israel.

- How do you think Saul felt, hearing all of those instructions from Samuel?
- Have you ever received a sign from God or a reminder of God's presence? When?

Thursday - Read 1 Samuel 13:2-14

Threatened by the Philistines' army, Saul goes against the Lord's commands.

- Can you relate to Saul's impatience?
- Why do you think Saul acted against Samuel's instructions?

Friday - Read 1 Samuel 16:1-13

God sends Samuel to Bethlehem to anoint the next king of Israel.

- What qualities and characteristics do you think makes someone a good leader?
- How does a shepherd boy match or conflict with your idea of a mighty king?

Saturday - Read 1 Samuel 24:4-12, 16-20

David honors God by showing Saul mercy.

- How is David's behavior like what you expect from leaders in our world today?
- What would it look like to show mercy to people who "have it out for you"?