

# God Answers Hannah's Prayer

Scripture Reference: [1 Samuel 1:1-20](#)



**Suggested Emphasis:** [Pray](#) because the Lord hears your prayers.

**Memory Verse:** "Pray continually." [1 Thessalonians 5:17](#)



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## Story Overview:

Elkanah had two wives, Peninnah and Hannah. Peninnah taunted Hannah because Hannah had no children. When Hannah accompanied Elkanah to the tabernacle, she prayed and wept near the entrance. In her prayer she promised the Lord that if He would give her a son then she would give that son to Him all the days of her life. Hannah's prayer was so intense that the High Priest, Eli, saw her and thought she was drunk. Hannah's prayer was answered and she gave birth to a son. His name was Samuel.

## Background Study:

[Refer to information about the time of the judges.](#) Samuel came on the scene at the end of this time period. He was the last judge.

Samuel's story begins in the hill country of Ephraim (EE-fray-m) at a place called Ranathaim (RAY-mah-THAY-m), near Shiloh. A man named Elkanah had two wives, which was a common practice in early Bible times. In those days polygamy was tolerated under the Law of Moses ([Deuteronomy 21:15-17](#)). However, it was not God's original intention, for as Jesus taught, it could cause great misery ([Matthew 19:3-8](#)).

In the case of Elkanah's two wives, things were indeed miserable. Their names were Hannah and Peninnah. Only Peninnah had children." Penning provoked Hannah because of her childlessness. Perhaps Peninnah was jealous of the special attention that Elkanah lavished on Hannah.

This was the cause of much trouble and rivalry between the two women. Because children are a blessing from God, the absence of children was sometimes considered a punishment for sin. Peninnah may have suggested this possibility and used it to hurt Hannah since she was jealous of Hannah.

Three times a year every Israelite male was required to appear before the Lord at the central sanctuary ([Deuteronomy 16:16-17](#)). They were supposed to offer sacrifices to the Lord. Once each year, it seems as if the whole family attended. At those times Elkanah always gave a portion of meat to Penning and her children to offer in sacrifice. Because of his love for Hannah, Elkanah gave her a double portion.

While attending a feast in Shiloh, the religious centre of the nation at that time, Hannah left the feasting to pray at the tabernacle. Her prayers were honest, and she told God of her anguish over her childlessness. The desire of her heart was stated simply, but her distress was evident.




Hannah vowed that, if the Lord would give her a son, she would dedicate him to the Lord's service ([1 Samuel 1:11](#)). Then she prayed, "May your servant find favour in your eyes" ([verse 18](#)). Hannah was so intense in prayer and so focused on the Lord,

that she was oblivious to those around her.

The priest, Eli, observed Hannah moving her lips without sound and jumped to the incorrect conclusion that she was drunk. He immediately reprimanded her for being drunk at the tabernacle. Hannah explained that she was not drunk but was praying in this manner because of her sorrow. When Hannah told him of the longing in her heart, she received his blessing.

After she and her husband returned home, Hannah conceived and a son was born. Hannah named her son Samuel, to mean “asked of God” ([verse 20](#)).

For more about Samuel see [Samuel Becomes a Helper in the Tabernacle](#) and [The Lord Speaks to Samuel](#).

-  [What happened before this story?](#)
-  [What happens after this story?](#)
-  [List of all Bible stories and themes on this website.](#)

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## Way to Introduce the Story:

Discuss any aspect of prayer. The times that you have prayed. Specific requests you or someone you know has made. If you have a church bulletin, see if there are any prayer requests in it. Discuss prayer posture (you can pray lying down, standing up, kneeling, etc. Ask the children what they pray for. “In today’s story we are going to learn about a woman that prayed for something she wanted very much!”

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## The Story:

Each year Elkanah and his family travelled to the city of Shiloh to offer sacrifices to the Lord. Elkanah always offered sacrifices and then gave his family meat to offer as sacrifices too. Elkanah had two wives. He would always give his first wife, Peninnah,

enough portions of the sacrifice meat for her and her children. Then Elkanah would give twice as much sacrifice meat to his other wife, Hannah. That was because he loved Hannah very much and he knew that she was sad because she did not have any children.

Hannah really was sad. She had wanted to have a baby for a long time. Peninnah sometimes teased her and made her feel even sadder. Once, when she was in Shiloh with Elkanah, Hannah wanted to be alone to pray to the Lord. She went to the entrance of the tabernacle tent. She didn't see anyone around, so she began to pray. She just talked to God and told Him how she was feeling. Hannah told Him all about how sad she was. She told him how bad she felt when Peninnah picked on her. Then she told the Lord how much she wanted a baby.

"Lord, if you will give me a son then I will promise to give him back to you so he can be a helper to you."

Hannah was praying so hard that she was crying. Her lips were moving but no one could hear her because she was not praying out loud.

Hannah thought she was all alone but she was not. The High Priest, Eli, was sitting beside one of the poles of the tabernacle tent. When Eli saw her crying and moving her lips, he did not know she was praying. He thought she was drunk!

"How long will you keep getting drunk? You need to stop drinking wine!" Eli said to Hannah.

"Oh, no. I am not drunk! I was just praying to the Lord. Maybe I looked drunk because I am so upset," replied Hannah.

Eli saw what she said was true. "I am sorry, I did not know you were praying," Eli apologized. "I am the High Priest. I know that the Lord will listen to your prayers. I will pray too. May the Lord give you whatever you are asking for."

After this Hannah felt better. She and Elkanah travelled back home. Later that year, Hannah had a beautiful little baby boy. Hannah knew that the Lord had heard her prayer. Hannah and Elkanah named their little baby Samuel, which means "asked of the Lord." Hannah also remembered the promise she had made to the Lord. She

knew that when Samuel was old enough, she would have to make sure that he became a helper to the Lord.

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## Ways to Tell the Story:

This story can be told using a variety of methods. Always remain true to the facts found in the Bible but help children connect to its meaning by using drama, visual aids, voice inflection, student interaction and/or emotion.

[Click here for visual aids and story-telling methods.](#)

[Click here to download these illustrations and slideshow.](#) Be selective. Each teacher is unique so only use the illustrations that best relate to the way YOU are telling the story in THIS lesson. Too many illustrations can be confusing so eliminate any that cover other stories or details you do not wish to emphasise in this lesson.

## Review Questions:

1. What were the names of Elkanah's two wives? Peninnah and Hannah
2. Why was Hannah sad? Hannah had no children but Peninnah did. Peninnah teased Hannah.
3. When Hannah was crying and praying quietly, what did Eli think? He thought she was drunk
4. What did Hannah promise the Lord? If she had a son, she would give him back to the Lord as a helper.

## Song Suggestions:

- God is Listening When We Pray
- Read Your Bible, Pray Every Day
- Refer to the [Song Page](#) on this website for more options.

# Learning Activities and Crafts:

[\(How to choose the best learning activities for my teaching situation\)](#)

## *Activities:*

- See [Prayer in Bible Class](#) for Ideas
- Write the word "Prayer" on the chalk/white board. Then write "who? what? when? where? why?" As you call out a word (who? what? when? ...) gently throw a bean bag (or any soft object) to a child. When the child catches the bag then they need to give an example of the word you called out. Example: say "where?" and throw the bag. Child catches and answers: "at home." That child says "when?" and throws the bag. The next child catches it and the game continues. Encourage the children to throw to children who haven't had a turn.
- Have a chain prayer.
- Use a puppet to tell the story from Hannah's point of view.
- You could use a cloth to make a head covering and tell the story as if you were Hannah. You could do the same thing as any of the characters in the story.
- Sing: [Read Your Bible-Pray Every Day](#)

## *Crafts:*

- [Make a shoebox diorama.](#) Samuel Box- (Covering 3 Samuel lessons) Picture of mum and baby, baby items, sewing items, little coat, tabernacle pictures or model, picture of sleeping boy, pillow and blanket . . .

Check the [Teaching Ideas](#) page on this website for ideas that are adaptable to any lesson.



[Click here for "God Answers Hannah's Prayer" printables to print \(A4 paper\)](#)

[Click here for "God Answers Hannah's Prayer" to print \(Letter size-USA\)](#)

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## Other Online Resources:

- [Colouring page and puzzle worksheets-Hannah \(Calvary Curriculum\)](#)
- [Colouring page and puzzle worksheets-Samuel's Birth \(Calvary Curriculum\)](#)
- [Craft: Printable puppets and furniture to use to tell the story at <http://www.sermons4kids.com/>](#)
- [Craft: Prayer reminder pocket made from a paper plate at <http://www.create-kids-crafts.com/>](#)
- [Craft: Praying hand silhouettes at <http://www.dltk-bible.com/>](#)
- [Crossword puzzle at <http://www.sermons4kids.com/>](#)
- [Activity: "Five finger prayer" to teach children to pray at <http://ministry-to-children.com/>](#)
- [Lesson on prayer for children at <http://ministry-to-children.com/>](#)
- [Explaining how to teach children to pray at <http://ministry-to-children.com/>](#)
- [A good selection of both online and printable puzzles, activities and story words covering the stories of Samuel's birth and being a helper in the temple\) at <http://gardenofpraise.com/>](#)
- [Craft: Prayer pail with popsicle/craft sticks at <http://www.lubirdbaby.com/>](#)
- [Five finger prayer activity at <http://www.sermons4kids.com/>](#)
- [Recipe for praying pretzels at <http://www.dltk-bible.com/>](#)

<https://www.pinterest.com/marynnz/samuel/>

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