

15.01 Hannah Prays for a Son (1 Samuel 1:1–19)

✓ “*Check*” it out; opinion, inference, supposed conversation, or fact one can verify follows
[. . .] indicates a remark to the teacher that usually should not be read. It also indicates answers to questions.

Visuals and Tools:

- Pictures and other visuals found at the end of this lesson. Please give credit to the sources of pictures.
- Check “Activities” and “Handwork” found below for additional materials.
- Many books for children have been written about this story. Use some of them.

Bible Time Tips and Terms to Teach: Vocabulary words are enlarged for flashcards at the end of this lesson. Print, cut out, and glue to card stock, or just print on colorful cardstock.

- *barren*: unable to conceive a child

Scripture: (ESV)

1 Samuel 1:1 There was a certain man of Ramathaim-zophim of the hill country of Ephraim whose name was Elkanah the son of Jeroham, son of Elihu, son of Tohu, son of Zuph, an Ephrathite. 2 He had two wives. The name of the one was Hannah, and the name of the other, Peninnah. And Peninnah had children, but Hannah had no children.

3 Now this man used to go up year by year from his city to worship and to sacrifice to the Lord of hosts at Shiloh, where the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were priests of the Lord. 4 On the day when Elkanah sacrificed, he would give portions to Peninnah his wife and to all her sons and daughters. 5 But to Hannah he gave a double portion, because he loved her, though the Lord had closed her womb. 6 And her rival used to provoke her grievously to irritate her, because the Lord had closed her womb. 7 So it went on year by year. As often as she went up to the house of the Lord, she used to provoke her. Therefore Hannah wept and would not eat. 8 And Elkanah, her husband, said to her, “Hannah, why do you weep? And why do you not eat? And why is your heart sad? Am I not more to you than ten sons?”

9 After they had eaten and drunk in Shiloh, Hannah rose. Now Eli the priest was sitting on the seat beside the doorpost of the temple of the Lord. 10 She was deeply distressed and prayed to the Lord and wept bitterly. 11 And she vowed a vow and said, “O Lord of hosts, if you will indeed look on the affliction of your servant and remember me and not forget your servant, but will give to your servant a son, then I will give him to the Lord all the days of his life, and no razor shall touch his head.”

12 As she continued praying before the Lord, Eli observed her mouth. 13 Hannah was speaking in her heart; only her lips moved, and her voice was not heard. Therefore Eli took her to be a drunken woman. 14 And Eli said to her, “How long will you go on being drunk? Put your wine away from you.” 15 But Hannah answered, “No, my lord, I am a woman troubled in spirit. I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but I have been pouring out my soul before the Lord. 16 Do not regard your servant as a worthless woman, for all along I have been speaking out of my great anxiety and vexation.” 17 Then Eli answered, “Go in peace, and the God of Israel grant your petition that you have made to him.” 18 And she said, “Let your servant find favor in your eyes.” Then the woman went her way and ate, and her face was no longer sad.

19 They rose early in the morning and worshiped before the Lord; then they went back to their house at Ramah. And Elkanah knew Hannah his wife, and the Lord remembered her.

Introduction/Review:

Can you remember stories from the Bible of men who had two wives? Who were they? [Abraham: Sarah and Hagar; Jacob: Leah and Rachel.] Do you think these two wives got along well? [No.] Why not? [Usually one was favored and the other was not.] In both cases of Abraham and Jacob, what was true regarding children of the favored wife? [They were barren.]

Story:

Two wives

Today's story from 1 Samuel is another story of a man with two wives. The man was Elkanah. He lived in Mount Ephraim. His two wives were Hannah and Peninnah [pronounce the *i* as a short vowel]. Hannah was the favored wife; she was well loved. Guess what! She was barren: "The Lord had shut up her womb." This made her very sad. This is a theme we have heard before,

Her husband asked, "Why are you so sad?"

You know Hannah's answer: "Because I have no children."

"Aren't I better to you than ten sons?" replied Elkanah.

What do you suppose was true of Peninnah regarding children? Yes, she did have children, and she continually provoked Hannah by reminding her that she had these sons and daughters.

Yearly journey to Shiloh

Every single year the whole family would leave Mount Ephraim and go to Shiloh to worship the Lord and to sacrifice to Him. Shiloh was the location of the tabernacle in those days. [Locate.] Elkanah gave everybody in the family a "portion" of ✓(perhaps) food. Peninnah got one, each child got one, but Hannah got two because Elkanah loved her more and ✓maybe he wanted to try to cheer her up. But Hannah was even more sad than usual when they went to Shiloh because it seemed as if Peninnah was far meaner to her then.

✓Peninnah might have said something like this: [Teacher, read the following with dripping sarcasm.] "Look at my *fourth son* over there. Isn't he a fine *son* that Elkanah and I had. Too bad about you—you don't have even *one son*. Must be something wrong with you. You must be a terrible sinner. If you weren't, surely you would have had at least *three sons* by now." On and on she would harass, making Hannah weep.

"Oh, I wish I could have just one son!" Hannah wailed. She was so miserable that she wouldn't eat even though others were feasting around her. Rather than hang around those who had eaten, she went over to the tabernacle to pray.

Fervent prayer

Eli the high priest (as Aaron had been years before) sat on a seat by a post of the tabernacle, watching the activities. (He was overweight and could not stand for long.) Hannah ✓fell to her knees before the tabernacle and poured out her heart to God, weeping much and making a vow (a promise) to God: "O Lord of Hosts, if You will look kindly on me and give me a son, then that son shall be Yours all the days of his life. He will be a Nazirite—wholly given to You." That's what Hannah prayed, but this is how she did it: [demonstrate crying, moving lips without sound, and perhaps some moving of the head].

Eli looked at Hannah as she cried and did not speak [demonstrate again] and judged her incorrectly. He thought she was drunk! Can you imagine a "man of God" not recognizing earnest prayer? He said, "How long are you going to be drunk? Put your wine away!"

Hannah protested, "Oh, no! I am not drunk, but I am a very sad woman who has poured out her soul to the Lord. Please don't think of me as a daughter of the devil because I have prayed out of a great deal of grief."

Priestly promise

Eli, ✓not knowing what Hannah meant specifically, comforted her with these words: "Go in peace. The God of Israel grant your request, answering your prayer."

"May your servant find grace in your sight," answered Hannah. Then, convinced that God had answered her prayer, Hannah ate and smiled.

Early in the morning the family worshiped God again and afterward departed for home.

Will Eli's promise come true? Will Hannah have a baby?

Lessons from this lesson:

- We see Jesus:

Elkanah was a godly man who kept the law as well as he could, being but a man. Jesus Christ kept the whole law perfectly, being the God-Man. Having kept the law perfectly, He was able to die on the cross, take on Himself the sins of His people, and become their Saviour.

- We must be careful not to be quick to judge by appearances as Eli did.

Activities:

- Play dough: praying hands; different foods
- Snack: Traveling food such as trail mix or granola bars
- Have students play act the conflict between Hannah and Peninnah. Don't let the insults get too strong.
- Game: (probably copied from an unknown source) Have students identify Peninnah or Hannah in the following supposed conversations by indicating Peninnah with pointed finger (like a "pin") and Hannah with folded hands ("han") as if in prayer.

"Come here, son." (Peninnah)

"If Elkanah doesn't love me so much, God does." (Peninnah)

"I wish I had a son." (Hannah)

"I am so sad that I don't want to eat." (Hannah)

"You gave me only one portion!" (Peninnah)

"Thank you for two portions." (Hannah)

- Have students arrange flannelgraph figures as they retell the story.
- Review questions: (Game: From blue, purple, and red felt, cut three 1x5-inch strips of each color. Cut one more strip from one of these colors. For correct answers, students will place strips vertically next to each other on a flannel board to represent the entrance screen to the court of the tabernacle.)
 1. Elkanah had two wives. What were their names? [Penninah and Hannah.]
 2. Fill in the blanks. Peninnah had _____, but Hannah had no _____. [Children; children.]
 3. Why did Elkanah go to Shiloh every year? [To worship and to sacrifice to the Lord of hosts.]
 4. How many portions did Elkanah give to Hannah compared to Penninah and her children? [Twice as much.]
 5. Penninah provoked Hannah to sadness so much that Hannah wept and didn't do something. What did she not do? [Eat.]
 6. While Hannah prayed for a son at the tabernacle, where was Eli the priest? [Seated near the doorpost.]
 7. What vow did Hannah make in her prayer for a son? [She would give him to the Lord all the days of his life.]
 8. Why did Eli think Hannah was drunk? [Because she did not speak but moved her lips.]
 9. What did Hannah say in response to Eli's accusation? ["I am a woman troubled in spirit. I have been pouring out my soul before the Lord. I have been speaking out of my great anxiety and vexation."]
 10. What did Eli say about Hannah's prayer? [It would be answered.]

Memory Verse[s]:

- Psalm 55:17: "Evening, morning, and at noon will I pray, and cry aloud: and he shall hear my voice."

Handwork:

- Students will connect the dots on the picture found below; they will then color the picture.

barren



https://holylandphotos.files.wordpress.com/2014/10/540_shiloh.jpg?w=500









Eli, the priest, heard Hannah praying. He said to her,
"God will give you what you have asked for."
Connect the dots to finish the picture.