

A Heart Filled With Gratitude

Warning: There is a substantial amount of verses to read in this week's lesson. Please account for the extra time it may take. I would suggest that the teacher/adults would possibly read sections of the passages as that would take less time.

**There will also be a posterboard in your classroom with Hannah's prayer (1 Samuel 2:1-10) written out for your teaching time as a visual representation for the students. You are welcome to use however you please when teaching.*

INTRO: What is the best gift you have ever received? What is the best gift you have ever given someone?

Transitioning to the Lesson: What is the longest time that you have had to wait for something? When you have to wait a long time for something, what has kept you from giving up and trying something new? As believers in Christ we have the opportunity to pray and make requests to the Lord. He might respond with a yes, no, or wait. It all depends on His timing. In today's lesson we will take a look at someone that had to endure hardships but still had the patience to continue to call upon the Lord with gratefulness.

Read 1 Samuel 1:2-8

What is Hannah's problem? *She couldn't have children*

Children were of great importance in ancient times for several reasons. They carried the family name on for generations and helped to care for the family's livestock and possessions. Women who couldn't have children were often looked down upon because children were considered a blessing from God. Also due to the lack of medical supplies and knowledge, parents would try to have as many children as possible because they knew that some of their children wouldn't live a long time.

How would you describe Hannah and Peninnah's relationship? *Peninnah was constantly provoking Hannah that she couldn't have children. We see that Elkanah truly loved Hannah as Elkanah constantly was giving Hannah double portions. Scholars believe the main reason Elkanah married Peninnah was because Hannah couldn't have children and wanted to extend his family line. It must have been hard for Peninnah to*

see that Hannah was Elkanah's favorite even though she couldn't bear children. Hannah also would have felt disgraced and inferior that she could not provide children for her family.

Read 1 Samuel 1: 10-11:

What does Hannah vow to do? *If God was to bless her with a son then she would give him to the Lord.*

The Nazirate vow is a set of laws that instructs Jewish men and women to dedicate themselves to God for a specific purpose, by **not** partaking in alcohol, cutting their hair, or being around dead bodies. This is the vow Hannah took. When she took this vow it meant that once Samuel was old enough to live without his mother Hannah would take him to the temple and Samuel would work in the temple the rest of his life. Hannah would only be a motherly figure in his life when he was a baby.

If you were in Hannah's shoes would you have been able to give Samuel up to the temple when you had been pleading the Lord for a child for so long?

Read 1 Samuel 1: 12-18

Why do you think Eli assumed the worst about Hannah? *Throughout Eli's lifetime, Eli saw the worst of the Israelite people as they weren't following the Lord at all. It was extremely rare for someone to be following the Lord. Even Eli's sons who served as priests to the Israelites were caught doing evil things. If you read further into 1st Samuel Eli tells his sons. "Why do you do such things? For I hear of your evil dealings from all these people" (1st Samuel 2:23)*

How does Hannah respond to Eli's criticism and doubt in Verse 15-16. *Eli assumes that Hannah is drunk and has lost her mind but Hannah responds with respect to Eli. Hannah doesn't become angry when Eli doubts her. We even see that Hannah was filled with anxiety and she still gives Eli the respect that he preharps didn't deserve in this situation?*

When you are filled with anxiety and nervousness is your mouth still respecting others or do you tend to become more self centered?

Read 1 Samuel 1:19-28

How does the Lord answer Hannah's prayer? *He opens Hannah's womb and Hannah bears a child.*

What name does Hannah give to her child? Samuel. The name Samuel means name of God or offspring of God. Samuel bore the name of God

God heard Hannah's prayer and answered it and Hannah honored the Lord with giving Samuel up to the Lord.

Read 1 Samuel 2: 1-11.

What do we learn about God's character from Hannah's song?

Isn't it remarkable that even though Hannah ultimately doesn't end up raising Samuel that she continues to bless the Lord.

What characteristics of God does Hannah share in her song to the Lord?

(Examples) He is our Rock, No one is holy like the Lord, the Lord is a God of knowledge, brings death and life, He is humble, He raises the poor from dust, the foundation's of the earth are His, He guards the feet of the faithful, the adversaries of the Lord shall be broken into pieces,

To help the characteristics about our heavenly Father sink into the student's minds in a visual way, use the board that has Hannah's song and identify all of the characteristics of God.

So What?/Application

What have you given up praying for because the Lord hasn't answered that prayer yet or it seems like it's too hard for the Lord to grant that request?

Examples could be your parents marriage, family members health, position/role in an extracurricular activity

Does that mean that if you are constantly praying to the Lord that he will answer that prayer the way you want? *(You can tie this this back into the Intro of how God isn't always going to say yes, he might say yes, no, or wait)*

If so, what practical steps can you take today to start to pray that prayer again?

What are some things in your life you can be grateful for as we get closer to Thanksgiving?

Main Principle/Takeaway: *Even through the fiery seasons of life, Hannah was constantly giving praise and gratefulness to the Lord even when it was hard to see the Lord's faithfulness.*

Close in prayer.