

SAMUEL'S BIRTH**1 Samuel 1:1 – 2:21**

Lesson Memory Verse: Psalm 34:15 – “The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and His ears are open to their cry.”

Lesson Aim: God will answer the unselfish prayers of Christians, so we must be careful to ask God to help us do good things for Him and for others.

Lesson Plan: Use the KEY – HE – SEE – WE – BE plan (explained in the Introductory Notes).

KEY (for Attention): Do you know what a selfish prayer is like? It may go like this: “Lord, give me lots of fun today at our picnic.” “Lord, help us win the game.” “Lord, make my parents remember to bring home some special treat for me.” Have you ever heard anyone pray these kinds of prayers? Why are these called selfish prayers? (Repeat one by one the selfish prayers that you just mentioned and see if they can answer the question.) God wants us to pray unselfish prayers. What do you think an unselfish prayer is like? (It is when we ask God to help us do good things for Him and for others. Today's Bible story will tell us about a lady who prayed an unselfish prayer and what God did for her.)

HE (for Authority): Our memory verse tells us that God is very interested in the righteous. Who are the righteous? (They are the people who have asked Jesus to save them from their sins.) This verse tells us that God is always watching the righteous. That means He watches them to help them keep out of trouble. What does this verse tell us about God's ears? (They are open to the cry of the righteous, that is, God hears the prayers of saved people.)

SEE (for Apperception) and WE (for Application): PLEASE do not read these comments until you have read the Scriptures for this lesson. First let the Holy Spirit teach you directly from His Word. (How to prepare a lesson is given in the Introductory Notes.) In this lesson we will learn how Hannah prayed an unselfish prayer and how God answered her. God will answer your prayers, too, if they are unselfish prayers.

I. Persecution (1:1-10)

Elkanah had two wives and as a result he had family problems. Peninnah, who had children, persecuted Hannah because she had no children. Elkanah loved Hannah most, but Hannah was deeply hurt by Peninnah.

WE: If someone is trying to hurt us and make us feel badly, we have some idea how Hannah must have felt.

II. Prayer (1:11-19)

Hannah decided to go to the temple and pray to the Lord. It was a wise decision. She asked for a son and she promised to give him back to the Lord. At first, Eli, the priest, thought she was drunk, because she moved her lips, but made no sound. Later he learned she was having serious prayer with God for a son. Eli promised Hannah that God would answer her prayer. She believed him and was no longer sad. She worshipped the Lord.

WE: When we have troubles, we must pray to the Lord until we know that He will answer us? We should pray for specific things that we can name. We should believe so strongly that God will answer, that we can be happy and worship Him and give Him thanks, even before we have the answer.

III. Pledge (1:20-28)

Hannah did receive a son and she called his name Samuel (it means "asked of God"). She pledged to her husband that she would give Samuel to the Lord when he was weaned from her milk. After he was weaned, she kept her promise and gave him to Eli, who took care of him.

WE: We must keep our pledges! When we promise to do something, God says we must do it, or it is sin. However, when we keep our promises, even if it is hard to do, God will make us very happy and will bless us in other ways.

IV. Praise (2:1-11)

Hannah praised the Lord with great joy for answering her prayer. No longer could Peninnah make her sad because God had made her glad when she gave her son to Him. She was also happy because she had kept her pledge.

WE: We should rejoice and praise the Lord when God answers our prayers.

V. Problem (2:12-17)

Eli had not raised his sons well. They were wicked and did not know the Lord. Eli honored his sons more than the Lord (2:29), and he did not punish them for their sin or hold them back from sin (3:13). As a result, his sons made the people hate to sacrifice to the Lord.

WE: We must rebuke sin and those who practice sin. This will please the Lord.

VI. Profit (2:18-21)

Samuel was profitable to Eli as he helped him with his duties. Eli blessed Elkanah and Hannah for giving their son to the Lord. As a result, God gave Hannah three more sons and two daughters. It was very profitable for her to give Samuel to the Lord. We can never give more to God than He gives back to us.

WE: We must believe God will bless us if we bless Him with our best gifts.

BE (for Action): What was Hannah's unselfish prayer? (She asked for a son.) Why was this an unselfish prayer? (She was going to give her son back to the Lord.) What did the Lord give to Hannah for keeping her promise? (Three sons and two daughters) Can you think of some unselfish prayers that you might pray, starting this week? (Many are given in this week's handwork game, but are given below for your convenience.)

1. Pray for missionaries that they will be able to win people to Jesus and to organize churches.
2. Pray for sinners to be saved.
3. Pray for our pastor and for your teachers.
4. Pray for your family to serve God.
5. Pray for your enemies to be saved.
6. Confess your sins to God.
7. Tell God how much you love Him.
8. Thank God for everything.

Challenge them to begin to pray one or more of these prayers this week.