



LESSON 3

GOD ANSWERS HANNAH'S PRAYER

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Answers Prayers

SCRIPTURE: 1 Samuel 1

GOD'S BIG STORY: After years of praying, Hannah is still childless. Though sad, she continues to pray in the tabernacle where she encounters Eli the priest. God answers her prayers, and Hannah gives birth to Samuel, whom she returns to the Lord.

WORD OF WONDER: God is able to do far more than we could ever ask for or imagine. He does everything by his power that is working in us. —Ephesians 3:20

CURIOSITY

BELIEF

FAITH

- Welcome Question: What would you ask for if you knew the answer would be “yes”?
- Curiosity Questions
- Small Group ACTIVITY for Younger and Older Kids
- Small Group Prayer Time
- Word of Wonder: Ephesians 3:20
- Word of Wonder Activity
- LARGE GROUP
- Responding in Worship: Prayer Stations
- Optional Review Questions and Cup Decorating



[Unexpected Elementary Spotify playlist](#)

INVITATION

We invite you to pause, listen, and shift your gaze toward the Father ...

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Answers Prayers

SCRIPTURE: 1 Samuel 1

WORD OF WONDER: Ephesians 3:20

Hannah was wrecked, distraught to the point of being confused with someone in a drunken state. She was weeping in the house of God, alone and in despair.

The only person who saw her in her most desperate state was the priest Eli. Hannah had come to the house of the Lord to pray. She had come to God, and God sent a minister. Take a moment and read 1 Samuel 1:9–28.

As ministers, there are times we are privy to the experiences of others that no one else gets to see. And often, in their encounter with God, He sends us as ministers of His presence and grace. That also means we often get to see just how beautifully God answers prayers, just like He did for Hannah.

Consider a time you have seen God work in this way. Has God gifted you with the opportunity to share His grace with others? It's a blessed and sacred thing to be the voice of comfort and mercy, reminding others of God's presence in those moments. God answers prayers, and sometimes we get to be part of that answer.

—Christina Embree

Nonprofit Ministry Director and Minister of Generational Discipleship
Contributor to Wonder Ink

LESSON 3 FOR LEADERS
GOD ANSWERS HANNAH'S PRAYER

DID YOU KNOW?

FOUNDATION BUILDING BLOCKS

WHO?

Elkanah and Hannah—an Israelite family; Hannah is barren. Eli is the priest at the tabernacle where they worship. Samuel is Hannah's miracle son.

WHAT?

Hannah's barrenness was considered a curse of shame in Israelite culture. Her despair brings her to the temple where she weeps before God, begging Him for a child. Eli confirms that God has heard her prayer and will give her a child.

WHERE?

Elkanah's family lived in Ramah (1 Samuel 1:19) and worshiped in Shiloh (1:3). Today, Ramah is located about five miles north of Jerusalem at an archeological site called Al-Ram. Shiloh still exists 19 miles north of Jerusalem.

WHEN?

Hannah's story takes place during the time of the judges before Israel had kings. Her son Samuel would later anoint both Saul and David as the first two kings of Israel.

CONNECTING TO GOD'S BIG STORY:

Hannah kept praying year after year until God answered her prayer. Her perseverance was the type Jesus would tell His disciples to have in prayer too: "always pray and not give up" (Luke 18:1).

Small Group

Spark curiosity, encourage exploration, and get kids thinking about the wonder of God.

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WONDER TRUTH: God Answers Prayers

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Pre-Service (15–20 min)

RESOURCES: [Coloring Page](#)

Small group leaders should be seated in place in their small groups 20 minutes prior to service time. Have play stations with various board games, activities, or use games from the extra Games & Activities Guide to keep children occupied and engaged WITH you. This time is important to build relationships, welcome new kids, and keep structure in the room - you should be an active participant with them!

Learn the kids names, and make sure they all know yours too!

Warmly welcome new friends, and introduce them to your group.

Allow quieter kids who don't engage with the board games to color. Involve them in the curiosity questions.

While kids are playing in their opening activity groups..

Pose the following “I’m curious” questions. Say “I’m curious...” before each question and give kids a chance to think about and answer each one. After each question, consider having kids share their ideas with a neighbor before you call on one or two of them to share with the group.

- **Do your parents (or family members) always give you what you ask for or what they think is best? What’s the difference?**
- **What do you do when you have a problem and aren’t sure how to solve it?**

Small Group Begins: Welcome Question 2–3 min

SUPPLIES: whiteboard, poster paper, or butcher paper, writing utensils

As kids arrive, invite them to write/draw the answer to the Welcome Question:

“What would you ask for if you knew the answer would be “yes”?”

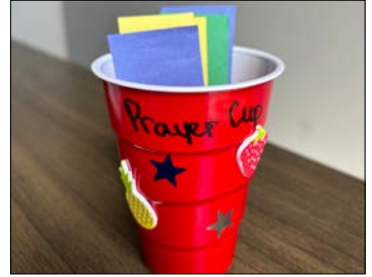
Right at your service time, move into Small Group time by sharing your own answers and allowing kids to talk about their answers.

Small Group ACTIVITY: Younger Kids 5–8 min

SUPPLIES: large disposable cups (1 per kid), markers, colored cardstock or construction paper (several sheets), stickers, tape, scissors or paper cutter (prep only),

Prayer Cup Parent Label (1 label per kid)

Before you begin, cut the cardstock or construction paper into strips at least 2" wide. You'll need at least 10 for each kid. Read the following verses aloud, encouraging kids to write/draw a prayer or prayer request on a strip for each one. Assist kids in writing the scripture reference on the back of each strip. Kids may decorate the cups as they have time at the end of service. Make sure a Parent Cup cup.



ADORATION 2 Samuel 7:22 - "Lord and King, how great you are! There isn't anyone like you. There isn't any God but you. We have heard about it with our own ears.

"write/draw a prayer praising God for He is."

SUPPLICATION Hebrews 4:14-16 "We have a great high priest. He has gone up into heaven. He is Jesus the Son of God. So let us hold firmly to what we say we believe. We have a high priest who can feel it when we are weak and hurting. We have a high priest who has been tempted in every way, just as we are. But he did not sin. So let us boldly approach God's throne of grace. Then we will receive mercy. We will find grace to help us when we need it."

"write/draw a prayer asking God for what is on your heart for yourself."

INTERCESSION James 5:15-16 "The prayer offered by those who have faith will make the sick person well. The Lord will heal them. If they have sinned, they will be forgiven. So confess your sins to one another. Pray for one another so that you might be healed. The prayer of a godly person is powerful. Things happen because of it."

"write/ draw a prayer praying for a friend, someone in your family, or anyone else in your life."

THANKSGIVING Isaiah 12:4-5 "Give praise to the Lord. Make his name known. Tell the nations what he has done. Announce how honored he is. Sing to the Lord. He has done glorious things.

Let it be known all over the world."

"write/ draw a prayer to God, thanking Him for something He has done for you or a prayer He has answered."

"Today in God's big story, we will hear how God answered Hannah's prayer. Hannah waited a long time for God to answer, but she never gave up and continued to trust God to be faithful. **I'm going to give you a few more strip to take home and write prayer requests with your family. When God answers a prayer, you can put it on your fridge or somewhere everyone can see. God answers our prayers! Let's follow Hannah's example and talk with God in prayer.**"

Prayer Time: Younger Kids

Invite kids to share prayer requests. Remind kids God wants us to share everything with Him. Pause and allow time for kids to sit quietly and talk to God. After some time has passed, pray aloud for your group.

Small Group Discussion: Older Kids 8–12 min

SUPPLIES: large disposable cups (1 per kid), markers, colored cardstock or construction paper (several sheets), scissors or paper cutter (prep only)

Prayer Cup Parent Label (1 label per kid) stickers, tape

Before you begin, cut the cardstock or construction paper into strips at least 2" wide. You'll need at least 10 for each kid. Read the following verses aloud, encouraging kids to write/draw a prayer or prayer request on a strip for each one. Instruct kids to write the scripture reference on the back of each strip. Assist as needed. Kids may decorate the cups as they have time at the end of service. Make sure a Parent Cup Label gets in each cup.

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"write a prayer praising God for He is."

SUPPLICATION Hebrews 4:14-16 "We have a great high priest. He has gone up into heaven. He is Jesus the Son of God. So let us hold firmly to what we say we believe. We have a high priest who can feel it when we are weak and hurting. We have a high priest who has been tempted in every way, just as we are. But he did not sin. So let us boldly approach God's throne of grace. Then we will receive mercy. We will find grace to help us when we need it."

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"write a prayer to God, thanking Him for something He has done for you or a prayer He has answered."

"In today's story, we will hear about Hannah, who had become very sad, but she never stopped praying. It would have been easy for Hannah to think God had forgotten about her and give up. Instead, Hannah continued to visit the tabernacle and pray to God. God heard every prayer Hannah prayed, and He hears you too. **I'm going to give you a few more strip to take home and write prayer requests with your family. When God answers a prayer, you can put it on your fridge or somewhere everyone can see.** God answers our prayers! Let's spend some time talking with God in prayer today."

Prayer Time: Older Kids

Remind kids God wants us to share everything with Him. Let kids know that sometimes it's good to find a place and talk with God alone and share our sadness with Him. It's also good to share and pray with other people. Consider giving kids the option to spread out and pray alone or pray with a partner.

WORD OF WONDER

God is able to do far more than we could ever ask for or imagine. He does everything by his power that is working in us.

—Ephesians 3:20 (NIRV)

Word of Wonder

SUPPLIES: Bibles (1 per kid)

"The Word of Wonder for the Unexpected series is Ephesians 3:20. Today, we saw God answer Hannah's prayers. This verse tells us God is able to answer our prayers in ways we never could imagine!"

Have kids open their Bibles to Ephesians 3:20. Read the verse several times together.

Remind kids the Holy Spirit works within them to help answer prayers. God also gives friends to help us pray. Encourage kids to partner up with a friend to work together to learn today's Word of Wonder.

Gather kids to talk about these questions:

- What does it mean to *imagine*? Why is imagination important when we pray?
- God is able to do more than we could ask for or imagine. What does this show us about Him? What does it teach us about prayer?

Leader Tip: Imagination is the ability to create images, ideas, and concepts that aren't real yet. Imagination, like prayer, knows no limitation.

Word of Wonder Activity

SUPPLIES: disposable spoons (1 per kid)

Repeat the verse several times, trying not to look. Once kids are confident saying the verse, pass out disposable spoons to each kid. Encourage kids to stand and balance their spoons on the ends of their noses. Ask for volunteers to say the Word of Wonder while keeping the spoons on their noses.

Leader Tip: Once kids have mastered the art of spoon balancing, challenge them to stand up and sit down while saying the Word of Wonder with spoons balancing on their noses.

Make It Inclusive!

Balancing spoons on their noses will be easier for some kids than others. Those with delayed motor-skill development or physical disabilities are more likely to struggle. Invite kids to let the spoon's handle rest on their chins and to help steady it with their fingers. Some kids might choose to simply balance the spoon in their hands as they say the verse.

Large Group!

Responding in Worship: Prayer Stations

SUPPLIES: butcher paper (3 large sheets), markers, pencils, watercolor paint sets (1 per 3–4 kids), paintbrushes (1 per kid), disposable cups filled with water, art supplies (paints, glitter, stickers, stampers; optional), disposable tablecloth (optional), masking or painter’s tape (prep only, optional)

In this activity, kids will respond to God in worship by moving among three stations where they will reflect on different aspects of God’s answers to our prayers. Each station will use a different art medium to help symbolize God’s responses to us. If the listed art supplies are not conducive to your ministry environment, simplify this activity by only using one medium, such as markers, for all three stations.

Depending on the number of kids in your space, you may choose to allow kids to pick their stations and move freely about the room, or you may wish to move as a group from station to station. Make sure a leader is present at each station to help kids respond. Consider printing copies of the Responding in Worship activity for each leader.

Ahead of time or while kids are engaged in their small groups, set up the following stations:

“Yes” Station: On butcher paper, use a marker to write “Yes.” Tape it to the wall or lay it on the floor or a table. Set out pencils.

“Not Now” Station: On butcher paper, use a marker to write “Not Now.” Tape it to the wall or lay it on the floor or a table. Set out watercolors, paintbrushes, and disposable cups filled with water. Consider placing a disposable tablecloth under the butcher paper to help protect the surface from messes.

“Better” Station: On butcher paper, use a marker to write “Better.” Tape it to the wall or lay it on the floor or a table. Set out an assortment of art supplies, such as pencils, markers, paints, glitter, stickers, and stampers.

Gather kids together. **"God answers prayers! We can pray to God and trust Him to be faithful. God’s answers to our prayers might not be as fast as we want, but He always hears us and answers in the best possible way. In Scripture and in our lives, we see God answering prayers in different ways.**

Lead kids to the “Yes” Station. **Sometimes when we pray, God’s answer is “yes.” It’s wonderful when this happens. It can feel easy, just like drawing or writing with a pencil. At this station, we will thank God and celebrate all the times we have prayed and received “yes” for an answer.** Help kids brainstorm examples from their lives or stories from the Bible. To get kids started, consider quickly writing or drawing in pencil an example of a time God answered “yes” to your prayers.

Next, lead kids to the “Not Now” Station. **Sometimes God responds to our prayers with a “not now.” When the timing is right, we see God answer, but until He does, God asks us to wait patiently. In today’s story, Hannah had prayed the same prayer for a very long time. Hannah became so sad that she could only move her lips and pray in her heart. Perhaps Hannah thought God didn’t hear her or answer fast enough, but God was simply telling Hannah, “Not now.”**

Leader Tip: For Younger Kids. Simplify this activity for younger kids by having just one station. Write “God Answers Prayer” on a sheet of butcher paper, and invite kids to draw how God answered their prayer, the prayer of someone they know, or the prayer of someone in the Bible.

Help kids remember times when they had to wait like Hannah for God to answer. Be ready with your own example to share and help kids brainstorm. Explain that watercolors make beautiful pictures, but seeing the results requires waiting. This is similar to waiting on God to answer prayers. Encourage kids to use the watercolor paint and brushes to write or paint a time when God answered prayer with a “not now” that eventually turned into a “yes.”

Finally, take kids to the “Better” Station. **Sometimes when God answers prayers, He answers them in a different and better way than we could have asked for or imagined. When God answers our prayers, He does so in the best possible way. It’s important to remember that our solution is not always God’s solution. But God’s answer is always the best answer!** Show kids the assortment of art supplies and ask them to think of a time when God’s answer to prayer would not have been their answer, but it turned out to be a better answer. Kids can give their own example or one from the Bible. Be prepared with your own example to help kids get started. When kids are ready, encourage them to write, draw, and create illustrations to reflect God’s “better” answers to prayers.

Leader Tip: To get kids started, remind them that Jesus was a “better” plan for everyone. God had promised the Israelites a savior. They were expecting a mighty warrior who would destroy their enemies. Instead, Jesus came riding on a donkey as the Prince of Peace who would offer His love to everyone who would receive it. Jesus was not the answer the Israelites expected, but Jesus was undoubtedly a “better” plan!

Optional Review Questions (if time allows)

- Why was Hannah so sad in God’s big story today?
- Has there ever been something you wanted but didn’t receive, and that made you sad? If you would like, tell us about it.
- Are you more likely to pray when you are happy or sad? Why do you think that is?
- God answers prayers in the best possible way. How was this true for Hannah? How is it true for you?
- When is a time God answered your prayer or the prayer of someone you know? What is a prayer you are still waiting on God to answer?
- Does God always answer your prayers in the way and the timing you think He should? Explain.