

# RockPointe Small Groups

Judges and Kings • Hannah and Samuel: God Calls a Prophet •

1 Samuel 1:1-28; 2:1-11; 3:1-21 • 09/22/2019

## Main Point

Hannah persistently prayed for a son and God answered her prayer with Samuel who would be a prophet to His people.

## Introduction

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

**What is the longest and hardest you've ever prayed for something? Why did you find that person or thing worth praying for over a long period of time?**

**When you pray long and hard for something, what is your gut reaction: to wonder whether God actually heard you, that His timing is perfect, that He must have another plan, that you're doing something wrong, or something else? Explain.**

Today we will look at Hannah's story. Hannah longed for a child, but was unable to conceive. Hannah did the only thing she knew to do: she poured her heart out to the Lord in prayer, and by His grace, He answered her plea for a child. This child would become a prophet to God's people.

## Understanding

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

| Have a volunteer read 1 samuel 1:1-2:11.

**What responses did Hannah's childlessness evoke in her? In Elkanah? In Peninnah?**

**How do you tend to respond to God when He seems to say no to your prayers?**

**What stands out to you about the details of Hannah's prayer?**

As she prayed, Hannah captured some of God's attributes, including His greatness and

sovereignty. Then she asked God to look upon her sorrow. Finally, she told God that she wasn't asking for a child to benefit her, but for ministry in the temple as a Nazirite (lay priest). She offered her not-yet-conceived child to God for His purposes in the world. God chose to answer her prayer, and she became the mother of Samuel, the last judge and first prophet in Israel. Samuel bore the responsibility of anointing David as king, and he is listed among the greats of the faith in Hebrews 11:32.

**How did Hannah view the things God gave her? Is this the same view you have? Why or why not?**

**What does lifelong service to God (v. 28) look like in your life? If you are a parent, is this an honest desire you have for your children?**

**What stands out to you about Hannah's prayer in 1 Samuel 2:1-11? Why is it important to offer thanks before God when we recognize that He has answered our prayers?**

| Have a volunteer read 1 Samuel 3:1-21.

**How did Samuel's surroundings help him hear from God?**

**If you desired to hear from God on a daily basis, what distractions would you need to limit or eliminate?**

The main reason we don't hear the voice of God is not because He's not speaking; it's because we're not listening. But putting ourselves in the right surroundings to listen isn't only about time and place; it's also about our relationships. One of the reasons we do life together, investing in each other, is so that we can help each hear and recognize the voice of God. Once we hear the voice of God, that voice requires a response of surrender.

**How did Samuel's response to the voice of God indicate his surrender to the will of God?**

**What, in your own words, did God tell Samuel? Would this have been an easy or hard message to deliver?**

**Why is it important that we measure success according to obedience before God and not according to the response of other people?**

Samuel delivered a tough message to his mentor. It probably didn't feel good at the time, but Samuel was successful because he listened to God and did what He said. When we put ourselves in the right surroundings, choose to surrender to what God says, then there's no doubt we will find success in the eyes of the Lord.

# Application

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

**What do you find most difficult about letting go and relying on God through prayer?**

**Why do difficult times make us aware of our need for God? Share about a time when you've seen this awareness in your life.**

**Where is God currently calling you to obedience? How do you need to respond?**

# Pray

Close in prayer asking that you as a group would continually depend on the Lord in prayer and also exhibit obedience to His voice when He speaks.

# Commentary

| 1 Samuel 1-3

Samuel's Dedication (1:1-2:10). Samuel's unusual birth was an early indication of the special dedication Samuel would have to the Lord throughout his life. Barren Hannah, Samuel's mother, prayed for a son. She vowed to rear the child as a Nazirite (see Num. 6:1-21 and Judg. 13). Because the Lord answered her prayer, she dedicated Samuel to serve at the tabernacle under Eli's care.

Hannah's prayer in song celebrated the righteousness and sovereignty of God. He defeats the proud and exalts the humble. He will protect His saints and strengthen His anointed king.

Eli's Corruption (2:11-36). The corruption of the tabernacle at Shiloh by Eli's sons is contrasted with the faithful ministry of young Samuel. Whereas Hannah's son "ministered before the Lord," the sons of Eli "had no regard for the Lord." Eli's servants had contempt for the Lord's offerings, and his sons engaged in temple prostitution. Yet young Samuel, as it would be said of Jesus (Luke 2:52), grew in "favor with the Lord and with men."

A man of God prophesied the death of Hophni and Phinehas and the appointment of a "faithful priest." The immediate context suggests that Samuel is meant (1 Sam. 3), though Samuel did not exhaust this powerful image. This priest has also been identified as the high priest Zadok (1 Kgs. 2:35), or Jesus Christ the priestly Messiah (Heb. 5:1-10; 7:1-28).

Samuel's Ministry (3:1-4:1a). Because of the sin at Shiloh's shrine, the "word of the Lord was rare" and "visions" were not seen. However, the word came to Samuel, and the Lord appeared to him at Shiloh. Samuel's ministry reached throughout the land, and the people recognized that he was a prophet of the Lord.