

# Hannah's Prayer

*The Tabernacle should be set up, with the curtains covering only the back wall, and the roof section folded back so you can reach down into it to move the dolls, and the Veil, Ark and Waybread, altar and candlabra set up inside it. Secure the furnishings with little lumps of glue-tac, and put four lumps of glue-tac around the altar where Eli, Elkanah, Peninnah and Hannah will stand to sacrifice, and one inside the tabernacle where Hannah will go to pray.*

## 1 Samuel 1:1-20

Elkanah lived in Ramah, a town in the hill country of Ephraim. His great-great-grandfather was Zuph, so Elkanah was a member of the Zuph clan of the Ephraim tribe. Elkanah's father was Jeroham, his grandfather was Elihu, and his great-grandfather was Tohu.

Elkanah had two wives, Hannah and Peninnah. Although Peninnah had children, Hannah did not have any.

Once a year Elkanah traveled from his hometown to Shiloh, where he worshiped the Lord All-Powerful and offered sacrifices. Eli was the Lord's priest there, and his two sons Hophni and Phinehas served with him as priests.

Whenever Elkanah offered a sacrifice, he gave some of the meat to Peninnah and some to each of her sons and daughters. But he gave Hannah even more, because he loved Hannah very much, even though the Lord had kept her from having children of her own.

Peninnah liked to make Hannah feel miserable about not having any children, especially when the family went to the house of the Lord each year.

One day, Elkanah was there offering a sacrifice, when Hannah began crying and refused to eat. So Elkanah asked, "Hannah, why are you crying? Why won't you eat? Why do you feel so bad? Don't I mean more to you than ten sons?"

When the sacrifice had been offered, and they had eaten the meal, Hannah got

**Storyteller:** After the Children of Israel crossed the river Jordan they entered the land that God promised them, and lived and farmed in that land. One of God's people was Elkanah, who lived in the hill country of Ephraim. *Hold out the figure of Elkanah for the children to see.*

Elkanah had two wives, Hannah and Peninnah. *Put the figure of Elkanah down, and pick up the Hannah and Peninnah figures, one in each hand.* Peninna had children, *hold out the Peninna figure* but Hannah did not have any children *hold out the Hannah figure.*

*Put the figures down, and pick up the tabernacle. Place it carefully down in front of you, with the open side facing the children.* Once a year Elkanah travelled to worship God in the Tabernacle. Eli was the priest there. *Hold out the figure of Eli, and then place him outside the Tabernacle in front of the altar (on the glue-tac, so that he doesn't fall over).*

Elkanah worshipped God by offering a sacrifice. He brought a cow or goat, and Eli killed it on the altar and burned some of it. *Place Elkanah next to the altar opposite Eli.* Then Eli and Elkanah and Hannah and Peninnah all shared the meat from the sacrifice. *Place Peninnah to one side of the altar, between Eli and Elkanah.* Peninnah got enough meat to feed all her children

## Story Materials

Tabernacle & furnishings

Dolls:

Eli

Elkanah

Hannah

Peninna

Baby Samuel

Tray, basket or shallow open box to hold the story

up and went to pray. Eli was sitting in his chair near the door to the place of worship. Hannah was brokenhearted and was crying as she prayed, "Lord All-Powerful, I am your servant, but I am so miserable! Please let me have a son. I will give him to you for as long as he lives, and his hair will never be cut."

Hannah prayed silently to the Lord for a long time. But her lips were moving, and Eli thought she was drunk. 14 "How long are you going to stay drunk?" he asked. "Sober up!"

"Sir, please don't think I'm no good!" Hannah answered. "I'm not drunk, and I haven't been drinking. But I do feel miserable and terribly upset. I've been praying all this time, telling the Lord about my problems."

Eli replied, "You may go home now and stop worrying. I'm sure the God of Israel will answer your prayer."

"Sir, thank you for being so kind to me," Hannah said. Then she left, and after eating something, she felt much better.

Elkanah and his family got up early the next morning and worshiped the Lord. Then they went back home to Ramah. Later the Lord blessed Elkanah and Hannah with a son. She named him Samuel because she had asked the Lord for him.

too ... *Place Hannah on the other side of the altar, opposite Peninnah* ... but Elkanah gave even more to Hannah because he loved her so much. But Hannah felt sad, because she had no children of her own to share it with.

One day when Elkanah was at the Tabernacle offering a sacrifice, Hannah began to cry. She wouldn't eat. When the meal ended, Hannah went to pray. *Move Hannah into the Tabernacle, in front of the Veil.* She prayed "Lord All-powerful, please let me have a son." She prayed silently for a long time, just moving her lips.

*Move Eli into the Tabernacle behind Hannah.* Eli thought she was drunk, and scolded her: "Sober up!" But Hannah told him "I haven't been drinking! I am miserable, and I have been telling my troubles to the Lord."

Eli answered. "I am sure the God of Israel will answer your prayer."

The next day, Elkanah and his family went home to Ramah ... *Move Elkanah, Peninnah and Hannah forward a few inches toward the children, so that they are outside the Tabernacle ... and after a time, ... place baby Samuel in Hannah's arms ....* Hannah had a son. She called the baby Samuel, which means "he came from God."