

Bible Stories for Adults

The Birth and Call of Samuel

1 Samuel 1 - 7

Opening

Gathering: Share a time when you recognized God's voice and direction.

Today's Focus: God wants to communicate with us. He wants to hear us and He wants us to hear Him.

Key Verses: *We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express.* Romans 8:26

Before they call I will answer; while they are still speaking I will hear. Isaiah 65:24

Opening Prayer

Lesson

Faithfulness During the Judges (*Judges 21:25*)

How effective was Israel's leadership during the time of the judges?

Judges 21:25 = Israel had no king, everyone did as he saw fit

How faithful were God's people during the time of the judges?

Judges 2:10-13, 18-19 = Worshiped other gods before & after each judge

How actively did God reveal Himself to this unfaithful people? = Only 5 revelations in Book of Judges

Judges 4:4, 6:7-8a = Only 2 prophets mentioned during time of Judges (Deborah & unnamed)

1 Samuel 3:1 = The word of the Lord was rare, not many visions

Spiritual Leaders (*1 Samuel 2:12-36*)

Where was Israel's central place of worship during the time of the judges?

Joshua 18:1a = Shiloh - Between Bethel and Shechem

How faithful were the priests of God's tabernacle at Shiloh? = Treated offerings with contempt

1 Samuel 1:3; 2:12, 17 (12-17) = Hophni & Phinehas had no regard for God, Eli was High Priest

Did Eli support his sons' actions?

1 Samuel 2:22-25 = No, He rebuked them; They didn't listen

How did God feel about what they did? = Family would have limited lives, H & P would die on same day

1 Samuel 2:27a, 29-31, 34-35 (27-36) = He would replace Eli's family line with a faithful priest

A Valentine's Love (*1 Samuel 1:1-8*)

Who is one man who tried to live faithfully?

1 Samuel 1:1-3 = Elkanah visited Shiloh annually to worship & sacrifice

Though he had two wives, which was his true valentine? = Hannah was barren

1 Samuel 1:4-5 = He gave Hannah a double portion because he loved her

Where have we seen similar polygamy with a preferential love toward one wife?

Genesis 29:30-31 = Jacob loved Rachel over Leah, Rachel was barren, wives competed

How did Peninnah treat Hannah because of Elkanah's preferential love?

1 Samuel 1:6-7 = She teased Hannah of her barrenness to the point of tears

How did Elkanah respond to his valentine's sadness?

1 Samuel 1:8 = *Don't I mean more to you than ten sons?*

Bible Stories for Adults

The Birth and Call of Samuel

Page 2

Take it to the Lord in Prayer (1 Samuel 1:9-10)

How did Hannah respond to her barrenness?

1 Samuel 1:9-10 = She prayed to the Lord

How are we to respond to our troubles?

James 5:13-16 = If you are in trouble, you should pray

Psalm 50:15 = *Call upon me in the day of trouble, I'll deliver you*

When should we pray?

Ephesians 6:18 = Pray in all occasions with all kinds of requests

Why should we pray?

Matthew 7:7 (7-11) = Ask & it will be given, seek & find, knock & door will be opened

Hannah's Drunken Prayer (1 Samuel 1:11-20)

For what did Hannah pray and what was her promise?

1 Samuel 1:11 = For a son. She'd give him to God for life

What was the meaning behind the promise that no razor would be used on his head?

Numbers 6:1-2, 5 (1-21) = Vow of dedication as a Nazirite

How did Eli interpret Hannah's emotional prayer?

1 Samuel 1:12-14 = He thought she was drunk and reprimanded her

What did Hannah say she was pouring out instead of wine or beer?

1 Samuel 1:15-18 = Pouring out her soul in prayer

Did God hear and answer Hannah's "drunken" prayer?

1 Samuel 1:19-20 = He heard her & she had a son, Samuel (*heard of God*)

Samuel, the Baby Nazirite (1 Samuel 1:21-2:10)

Why didn't Hannah go to Shiloh to worship after Samuel was born?

1 Samuel 1:21-23 = She stayed to nurse Samuel until he was old enough

Did Hannah remember her promise to give Samuel to God as he got older?

1 Samuel 1:24-28 = Hannah brought sacrifice & gave Samuel to Eli

How did Hannah's prayer change after giving Samuel to God? = Magnificat of OT – Like Mary's (Luke 1)

1 Samuel 2:1 (1-10) = She praised God for His greatness, God is in control

What other parents of *Nazirites* praised God in response for their children?

Judges 13:19 (2-25) = Manoah for Samson

Luke 1:67 (67-79) = Zechariah for John the Baptist

Luke 1:46 (46-55) = Mary for Jesus

Mama's Child Grows (1 Samuel 2:18-21)

Did Hannah forget about Samuel after she gave him to God? = He served God in contrast to Eli's sons

1 Samuel 2:18-19 = She made & brought him a new robe every year

Did Hannah remain barren after Samuel?

1 Samuel 2:20-21 = God blessed her with 3 more sons & 2 daughters

How did Samuel fit as a young Nazirite boy in the High Priest's home?

1 Samuel 2:26 = He grew *in stature and in favor with the Lord and with men*

Whose childhood is described in a similar manner?

Luke 2:52 = *Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men*

Bible Stories for Adults

The Birth and Call of Samuel

Page 3

The Lord Calls Samuel (1 Samuel 3)

Where did Samuel sleep? = *Lamp of God* was lit at night & extinguished at sunrise

1 Samuel 3:1-3 = Stayed in the tent of tabernacle (*temple*)

What did Samuel do when he heard his name called in the night?

1 Samuel 3:4-5 = Assumed Eli needed something and went to him

What did Eli realize after this happened twice more?

1 Samuel 3:6-9 = That God was calling Samuel; told Samuel to go back

What message did God have for Samuel?

1 Samuel 3:10-14 = He was going to punish Eli's family as promised

Was Eli upset when he learned what Samuel had been told?

1 Samuel 3:15-18 = *He is the Lord; let Him do what is good in His eyes*

Did God come to Samuel to tell him about Eli or for some other purpose?

1 Samuel 3:19-21 = To personally call Samuel as His prophet & judge (7:15)

The Philistine Menace (1 Samuel 4:1-4)

Who was Israel's enemy during Samson's time as judge?

Judges 13:1 = The Philistines

Had the Philistines been subdued by Samuel's time?

1 Samuel 4:1-2 = No. Israel fought at Ebenezer & lost 4000

What did Israel believe was the cause of their defeat? What did they do?

1 Samuel 4:3-4 = Didn't have God's backing. Went & brought the ark

Why had Israel lost in the first place?

Judges 3:10 (Joshua 9:14) = God hadn't sent them; They hadn't called on God first

You Can't Force God (1 Samuel 4:5-11)

Would bringing the ark to the battlefield ensure success from God's presence?

Judges 4:6-9 = No, Barak lost honor of victory by trying to force God's presence through Deborah

What effect did the presence of the ark have on the Israelites?

1 Samuel 4:5 = They shouted with joy, God was now present

What effect did the presence of the ark have on the Philistines?

1 Samuel 4:6-9 = They were afraid that they were now fighting a god

Did the ark have the intended effect as both sides expected? = Man can't force God to do man's will

1 Samuel 4:10-11 = No, Israel lost 30,000, plus Hophni & Phinehas, plus the ark

How did this event fulfill the message God gave to Samuel?

1 Samuel 4:17-18 (12-18) = Eli also died when he heard the ark was lost

Was God referring to the demise of Eli's family when He said that ears would tingle (3:11)?

1 Samuel 4:22 (19-22) = No. He was referring to the capture of the ark

The Tour of the Ark (1 Samuel 5)

How did God display His power to the Philistines even through the capture of the ark?

1 Samuel 5:1-4 = Philistine god Dagon fell on his face before the ark, broke apart second time

How did God inform all in Ashdod that He was in control? = God's hand heavy vs Dagon's hand broken

1 Samuel 5:6-8 = Tumors on people of Ashdod (& *rats* in some versions), sent to Gath

How did God make sure that all Philistines knew that He was in control?

1 Samuel 5:9-12 = Tumors on people in Gath & Ekron, People feared its presence

Bible Stories for Adults

The Birth and Call of Samuel

Page 4

Send It Back (1 Samuel 6)

What did the Philistines decide to do to stop the problem?

1 Samuel 6:1-2 = Return the ark to its place

Who were the Philistines trying to appease by returning the ark? The Israelites?

1 Samuel 6:3, 5 (3-6) = Israel's God

How would the Philistines send it back? = Was the disaster by Israel's God or by chance?

1 Samuel 6:7-9 (7-12) = Put on cart and watched to see where heifers took it

How did Israel respond when the ark was returned? = Beth Shemesh was town of priests (Josh 21:13-16)

1 Samuel 6:13-14 (13-18) = *Rejoiced at the sight*, sacrificed cows to God

What happened when Israelites curiously looked into the ark?

1 Samuel 6:19 (6:19-7:1) = 70 died from irreverently looking into the ark

Lessons From the Loss of the Ark (1 Samuel 7)

How did the Israelites respond to God's lack of protection in the loss of battles and the ark?

1 Samuel 7:2 = *All the people mourned and sought after the Lord*

What was significant at this time for the Israelites about Samuel's name?

1 Samuel 1:20 = Samuel means *ask of God*

What was the central lesson for the Israelites?

1 Samuel 7:3 = Return to God, Get rid of foreign gods

How did the Israelites respond to Samuel's message?

1 Samuel 7:4-6 = They threw out idols, met at Mizpah, fasted & confessed sins

How did God bless Israel after they returned to Him?

1 Samuel 7:13-14 (7-14) = Philistine's no longer invaded Israel, captured towns returned, peace

This sounds like the classic cycle of a judge. Did Samuel qualify as a judge?

1 Samuel 7:15-17 = *Samuel continued as judge over Israel all his life*

Closing Prayer

Response - Consider and meditate on one each day this week

1. Do I recognize God's presence even though He doesn't reveal Himself to me directly?
(1 Samuel 3:1, 17-18; 1 Kings 19:9-18; Psalm 139:7-9; Luke 10:21-24; Galatians 1:15-16)
2. Do I take seriously and reverently the call God has given me to lead others spiritually?
(1 Samuel 2:12-17, 22-36; Luke 12:48; Ephesians 4:1-13; 1 Timothy 4:13-16; James 3:1)
3. Are my prayers focused on myself or on God?
Are my prayers filled with ACTS - Adore, Confess, Thanks, Supplication?
(1 Samuel 2:1-10; Psalm 95:6-7; 1 John 1:8-9; 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18; Philippians 4:6)
4. How have I dedicated my life to the Lord? How can I be more of a 21st Century Nazirite?
(1 Samuel 1:11, 28; Numbers 6; Joshua 24:14-24; 1 Chronicles 22:19a; Matthew 22:36-40)
5. Do I hear and recognize God's voice and guidance in my life?
(1 Samuel 3; 1 Kings 22:1-28; Job 33:14; Psalm 29; John 10:1-5, 25-30)