

Preparation Study
May 13, 2012

MONDAY STUDY

Read 1 Samuel 12:23-24 and answer the following questions:

- *In what ways did Samuel influence the people of Israel? What would have been some of the struggles he would have faced as its leader?*
- *How hard is it to pray for people who have rejected you?*
- *Why did Samuel vow to pray for the Israelites? Wasn't he done being their leader?*
- *In verse 23, Samuel vowed that he would not "sin against the Lord by ceasing to pray" for the Israelites. What is the implication? (That it would be a sin to stop praying for them.)*
- *What if the people God has entrusted to you don't want you or your leadership?*
- *According to verse 24, what was Samuel praying for the Israelites?*
- *What did Samuel say to the Israelites that is a reflection of what Moses told them in the passage we studied last week? (Deut. 6:13. Encourage class members to flip back to page 86 of their learner guides—the "Fully Furnished" feature.)*
- *In what ways will your child choose to follow someone else rather than you in the years to come? How will you continue to pray for them and teach them as your relationship changes?*

TUESDAY STUDY

Read 1 Samuel 1:10-20 and answer the following questions:

- *What vow did Hannah make to God? In what ways have you tried to make a deal with God in exchange for answering a prayer in a certain manner? How is this vow different?*
- *In what ways have you committed something to God before that thing even came to pass? How did your pre-commitment affect how you viewed God's answer?*
- *What conclusion did Eli jump to in verse 14? Why did he go there?*
- *What does that reveal about Hannah's relationship with God?*
- *How did Eli comfort Hannah? How has God used people to comfort you in times of heartbreak?*
- *Does the word "remembered" in verse 19 imply that God had forgotten Hannah? What does it mean? (Make sure class members understand that when God "remembered" someone in Scripture, He accomplished a mighty act on his or her behalf. See Gen. 8:1; 19:29; 30:22.)*
- *What do you assume about Hannah's prayer life outside of this passage? How is her confidence in God observable in Samuel's life?*
- *How did Hannah see herself, according to verses 11 and 18?*

WEDNESDAY STUDY

Read 1 Samuel 1:27-2:1 and answer the following questions:

- *What advice would you give to someone voicing a "bargaining" prayer to God—one that follows the pattern of "If You do this, then I will do this." Hasn't God already done everything for us?*
- *What makes Hannah's prayer different? (Her attitude. Hannah trusted God as the Lord of Hosts even before her prayer was answered.)*
- *What steps do you take to make sure your children are always in good hands?*

- *How much more difficult would this have been for Hannah, knowing that Samuel would not even be living under her roof?*
- *Look at the phrase “For as long as he lives.” How secure was Hannah in her willingness to fulfill her promise? Did she have a “Plan B,” or was she certain of God’s plan for her son?*
- *Consider the fact that Hannah had been barren and despondent, but after giving up her son, she praised God. How can we explain this similar situation (childlessness) with a completely different attitude and posture?*
- *In what ways have you been unwilling to turn something or someone over to God in faith? What fears do you have? What can you learn from Hannah’s example?*

Summary: Hannah’s story is not the only one in the Bible that demonstrates hope in God when all seems hopeless. But Hannah’s story reveals that her hope was passed on; we see the obedience and devotion to God many years later in the son who knew of her faith and observed her dedication to Him. Our children are watching us as well. They will observe the way we turn—or don’t turn—to God in hopeless situations. Let’s commit today to trusting God’s power and plan for our lives and that of our children.

THURSDAY THROUGH SATURDAY STUDY

Read the following articles contained in your study packet:

1. Barrenness in the Ancient Near East;
2. Life Situation of Samuel;
3. Samuel – A Biography;