

## 57 The Boy Samuel

MEMORY VERSE: "My heart rejoices in the Lord." 1 Samuel 2:1

SCRIPTURES: 1 Samuel 1 and 2

AIM: To teach that God hears all prayers, and answers "yes, no or wait."

Today our story is about a woman named Hannah who prayed for a son.

In the city of Ramah, there lived a man named Elkanah and his wife, Hannah. They loved God and worshiped Him as he had commanded.

Every year they made the long trip to Shiloh to sacrifice to God in the way which He had commanded. There was one great sorrow in Hannah's heart, for she had no children. Sometimes she felt so badly about this that she cried and could not eat her meals. One time when they were at Shiloh, Hannah slipped away after supper and came to the House of God. There she prayed and wept before the Lord. She told God that, if He would give her a baby boy, she would give him back to serve Him all the days of his life. Hannah prayed for a long time. The priest saw her. He saw her lips moving, though she was not talking out loud. He thought she was being silly and told her to stop, but Hannah said, "I am very sad at heart. I have been praying to the Lord." Then Eli said to her, "Go in peace, and may the God of Israel grant you what you have asked of Him." Then Hannah went home. She was not sad any more, for she knew that God had heard her prayer.

Elkanah and Hannah returned to their home, and in due time Hannah had a son. She called him Samuel, saying, "I have asked him of the Lord." Samuel means "asked of God." Hannah loved her baby and raised him carefully, always remembering that Samuel belonged to the Lord. When Samuel was old enough, Elkanah and Hannah made the trip to Shiloh to worship with their sacrifice and to give Samuel to Eli.

Samuel remained at the tabernacle when his mother and father returned to their home. He served the Lord even as a child and he grew "in stature and in favor both with the Lord and with men." (1 Sam. 2:26) Each year Hannah would make a coat and take it to Samuel. She knew how good God had been to her. She was glad to have her son serving God in the tabernacle. Hannah was a woman who worshiped God, and trusted Him in her prayers. God answered all of her prayers. Sometimes He simply answered "No." And other times his answer was "Wait." Hannah had to trust that God knew best. Sometimes, as in the case of the birth of Samuel, God's answer was, "Yes." Hannah knew that Samuel was a gift from God, and she gladly devoted him to the Lord's service.