

Beginner Level, Block 6, Week 1
Hannah—Cooperating with God by Prayer

Point to Emphasize: We can pray to God because He listens to our prayers.

Reference Reading: 1 Samuel 1:1-20

Memory Verse: You will pray to Him, and He will hear you... (Job 22:27a)

Story Sample

Have you ever been sad before? Have you ever been happy before? Have you ever been scared before? Have you ever been so happy that you wanted to start jumping up and down? Throughout your life, at one point or another, you experience all kinds of emotions. Sometimes you decide that it is better not to get mad or not to be sad, but your face might have already expressed that emotion and it is too late to hide it!

When you feel sad or scared, it is always good to talk to someone. You can talk to some of the people who are around you. You can talk to your dad, your mom or your siblings. You can even ask your mom to call your grandmother who lives far away and talk to her on the phone. Isn't that wonderful? It is SO good that we can talk to others. Sometimes you don't even have to feel sad or scared, you might just want to talk to someone to tell them about your day or maybe share with them about your new pet. You might want to tell them what you had for lunch that day or sometimes you simply just want to talk to them! It is wonderful that we can talk to someone who cares for us, right?

Well, in the Bible, there was a woman named Hannah. Hannah had no children. Other women around her had children, but not Hannah. This made her sad; really, really sad. She was so sad that she cried and cried and wouldn't even eat. But let me tell you what Hannah did. Hannah prayed to God and asked Him for a son. Hannah could not rest until she had a son. But do you want to hear her prayer? She simply said, "O Jehovah...give your female servant a male child." She was very simple and told God just what she needed. This was Hannah's prayer.

So, what is it to pray? To pray is simply to talk to God. We can talk to God! We can simply talk to God and tell Him how we are feeling. We can tell God when we are happy or when we are sad. We can tell God when we are afraid or when we are happy. When we pray to God we don't have to speak good-sounding prayers, we can just simply tell God how we feel. And the most important thing is that God listens to our prayers!

When I was a little girl my dad flew to Taiwan. He was supposed to be there just for a few weeks. But he ended up being there a lot longer. I really missed him and I was very sad. My mom found me crying, and she told me she was sad too. We both started to pray for God to care for my dad while he was away and to make time go fast. After we prayed I felt much better. Since then, I've been praying to God and telling Him how I feel. I know God listens to all of our prayers.
[Storyteller, insert a personal experience of praying to God.]

Hannah prayed to God, and God listened to her prayer. Actually, Hannah wanted a son, and God also needed Hannah to have a son. Hannah was praying for what God also needed. God gave Hannah a son, and she named him Samuel. We will hear more about Samuel in the coming weeks. Samuel was a very special boy.

Beginner Level, Block 6, Week 2 Samuel—Chosen by God

Point to Emphasize: We were chosen by God even before you were born.

Reference Reading: 1 Samuel 1:1-20

Memory Verse: ...God chose you from the beginning... (2 Thessalonians 2:13b)

Story Sample

Who remembers what we talked about last week? That's right, we talked about Hannah and her prayer to God. She could not have any children, so she prayed. And what did she pray for? That's right! She asked God to give her a son. She told God what she needed. She also told God that if He would give her a child, then she would give that child back to Him. This was exactly what *God* needed.

Actually, around this time, the children of Israel were not doing so well. God had called some of the children of Israel to be priests, but the priests were not doing a very good job, and God wanted to have a new start. He wanted someone He could use to help change the situation, so God chose Samuel to do that. Even before Samuel was born, God had chosen him. God arranged everything so that Samuel could be born. He chose the parents Samuel would have, and the way he would be born. When Hannah prayed for a son and vowed to give her son back to God, God must have been so happy. He had chosen this child, and Hannah was cooperating to give this child to Him.

Did you know that you were chosen, too? Even before you were born, God chose you. The Bible tells us that God chose us "before the foundation of the world." That means before you were born, before your parents were born, before your grandparents were born—even before God made the earth—He had you in mind. He was thinking of you, and He loved you, and He chose you. He did a lot of things behind the scenes so that you could be His, too. He gave you the family you have and arranged for you to be born in the exact place you were born.

Did you know that my mom was born in another country? She was born there, but one day, an American family adopted her. So my mom moved to America, to Texas. My dad was born in a different part of America, but when he was in high school, he moved to Texas, too! They met in Texas, and then they got married and had me! Who would have thought that a woman from another country and a man from another state would both end up in Texas? God thought that! He made all those arrangements just so that I could be born, grow up, and be here talking to you about God! He chose me! He did the same thing for you, too—if you ask your parents, you will see all the amazing things God did so that He could have YOU! *[Storyteller, insert your own story about God's arrangement in your life.]*

God did all that for Samuel, too. God answered Hannah's prayer, and she had a son. She named him *Samuel*, which means "heard of God" or "asked of God." Hannah knew that God heard her prayer. After Samuel was born, Hannah remembered the vow she had made to give him back to God, and she took Samuel to the priest Eli so that Samuel could live among the priests and serve God.

Samuel would grow up to be someone extraordinary in the Bible. We will learn more about him next week. But this week we want to remember that he was chosen—and that we are too!

Beginner Level, Block 6, Week 3 **Samuel—Trained by Eli**

Point to Emphasize: We can learn lessons to be qualified and become useful to God.

Reference Reading: 1 Samuel 2—3

Memory Verse: Train up a child according to the way he should go; / Even when he is old, he will not depart from it. (Proverbs 22:6)

Story Sample

Last week we learned that Samuel was a very special boy, because he was chosen by God (just like each of us!). When Samuel was little, his mother Hannah brought him to live in the temple with Eli the priest, just as she had promised God. God gave Samuel to Hannah and her husband, and as a little boy, Samuel was given back to God to live in God's house and to serve God and learn to be a priest. God had chosen Samuel, but Samuel still needed to grow up and learn many lessons in order to become qualified to be useful to God. To be qualified means to have the skill or ability needed for a special purpose or event. So for Samuel to be qualified to become a priest and judge, he had to learn many things. For us to be able to do anything, like ride a bike or play the violin, we need to do some learning, don't we? We have to first be qualified!

Under Eli the priest, Samuel learned how to be a proper priest. He had to learn how to do all the practical things in the temple, like cleaning the temple, taking care of the utensils, and handling the offerings. Samuel learned how to serve God from Eli. He was given practical tasks, and he was a good learner. He paid attention and listened. He not only listened to Eli, but as a child, he also learned to listen to God's voice. So from the time he was young until he grew up to be a priest, Samuel listened to God's voice and followed it his whole life.

Samuel had to learn to be a priest since he was young. He couldn't have become a priest when he was a grown man because he had to learn so many practical things, and that took a long time. Do you all go to school? Some children start preschool when they are 2 or 3 years old. But all the children need to start school by the time they are 5 years old. First they go to Kindergarten, then elementary school, middle school, high school, college or university, the FTTA, and maybe even more schooling after that. We all need many, many years to learn how to be useful. Samuel also needed many, many years to learn the things of God.

When I was younger, I wanted to be many things, and one of those things was to be a writer. So I had to figure out what I needed to study in order to become a good one. I had to make sure that I paid attention in all my classes, did well in my English classes, and participated in writing contests. I also joined clubs and took harder English classes to help me get better at writing and to give me an opportunity to learn from the best teachers. *[Storyteller, insert your own story about learning something that would be useful for your future.]*

We all can learn to be good at something in order to become useful. We should work hard at being good learners, paying attention and listening carefully. Because Samuel learned his lessons well, he became a priest and judge who was proper and very useful to God. We can learn from Samuel's story and we can also become qualified to be useful to God.

Beginner Level, Block 6, Week 4
Samuel—Caring for What God Wanted

Point to Emphasize: We can care for God’s cares and want what God wants.

Reference Reading: 1 Samuel 8

Memory Verse: ...And he who takes care of his master will be honored. (Proverbs 27:18b)

Story Sample

We have been hearing a lot about Samuel these last few weeks. He was offered to God by his mother Hannah (who had prayed to God for a son), chosen by God to be a Nazarite, and trained by the priest Eli. Samuel was one who was raised to care for God and to care for what God wanted. His whole life was spent wanting what God wanted.

Unfortunately, the children of Israel were not the same. They became unhappy with the way things were and decided they wanted a king, just like all the other nations. They told Samuel that he was getting old and it was time for a king. They wanted to be like all the other nations; they wanted a king who would judge them and lead them to fight their battles.

At this time, Samuel was God’s representative on earth. Do you think he didn’t want a king because it would mean that he would no longer be the “boss?” NO! Samuel knew that no king could ever replace God. God should be the highest authority! So he told the people how he felt. He even told them what would happen if someone became king. But they refused to listen. They still wanted a king.

Growing up, there were many times I wanted to do what my friends were doing. They would say, “Let’s go bowling on Sunday. It’s OK if you miss children’s meeting!” But way deep down I knew I cared for the meetings more than being with these other friends that did not care for what God cares or want what God wants. *[Storyteller, use your own example to illustrate that choosing what God cares for is more important than what others want.]*

Samuel was not pleased with the request for a king. He knew that what God wanted was not that a man would be king. He agreed with God, so he prayed to God about this, wanting to know what God’s heart was. God spoke to Samuel and told him that it was not Samuel they were rejecting but God. He told Samuel to allow them to have a king. God had a plan to have a kingdom and He would use the king for His purpose. God always knows what is best!

We can also be like Samuel, caring for what God cares. The Bible tells of all the things that God cares for. As you learn to read, you should start asking your mom and dad to help you find some simple verses in the Bible. Read them, then one day you will find that you can care for God and you can want the things God wants!

Beginner Level, Block 6, Week 5

David—A Humble Shepherd

Point to Emphasize: We can be humble, appreciating those who are better than us.

Reference Reading: 1 Samuel 16:1-11

Memory Verse: For everyone who exalts himself shall be humbled, but he who humbles himself shall be exalted. (Luke 18:14b)

Story Sample

If right now we went outside and ran a race, who of you would want to be the winner? I'm sure that we all would want to run the fastest and win. If you ran so fast and easily beat everyone else you'd feel so proud. You would think that we are really the best one around. In playing sports most winners think that they are the best and look down on those who lost. And that is not a nice way to look at others. Winning does not make us the best person.

This brings us to a very important word: humility. We all need to learn to be humble. To be humble is to admit that there may be others better than you. To be humble is to admit that there may be other students smarter than you. If you are humble, when others are good at something, you want to go to them quickly and congratulate them. You can go to them and tell them, "You are really good!"

There was a boy in the Bible whose name was David. David was humble. David was born last in his family. He was the youngest child. David was the eighth son. As the last child he learned many experiences that taught him to be humble. One of the things he had to do was the lowly task of taking care of the sheep in the field. None of his seven brothers would do that; they all wanted a better job. But David was humble and accepted his task. Caring for sheep is a task through which you learn humility.

Growing up, I liked writing speeches, memorizing them, and presenting them in front of my school. There were competitions within my class. The winner would go and compete with winners of other classes, and sometimes other schools. Year after year, I was the winner. I was really good at it. I never gave it too much thought, until one day a girl came to me and congratulated me for winning. She told me, "You are really good! Year after year I write my speech, and I hope to win. But when I hear your speech, I see that your speech is better than mine." She was so humble. After she told me that I decided to help her. So we set a time and I sat with her and helped her to write better speeches. She was humble and I was humble! *[Storyteller, share a personal story of being humble.]*

David was about 15 years old. This eighth son was so young that he did the lowest family chores. While his older brothers did all the big important things, he was always sent to look after the sheep. He was so humble. Do you think this 15-year-old boy who just looked after the sheep could be put in an important position? David was chosen to be a king for the children of Israel! He was a humble person and God made him a king!

We should do our best in everything, but we can also be humble. We can want to win, but when we lose, we should still appreciate others. We want to appreciate others who are better than us. We can go and tell them, "You are really good at this!" We can be humble!

Beginner Level, Block 6, Week 6 **David—Taking Care of His Responsibilities**

Point to Emphasize: We should be responsible.

Reference Reading: 1 Samuel 17:12-40

Memory Verse: ...To obey is better than sacrifice... (1 Samuel 15:22b)

Story Sample

While David was young, for many years there was a war between the children of Israel and a people called the Philistines. When the time came to go off and battle the Philistines, do you think David got to go? Noooo! His oldest three brothers got to go off to fight the enemy. And what did David get to do? Stay home and take care of the sheep. This wasn't quite as exciting, was it? But David did what he was told. He took the best care of those sheep at Bethlehem, where the sheep were. He was an obedient, responsible son. *[Storyteller, give an example of someone who was the youngest in the family and felt like they never got to do what the older siblings did, BUT accepted it and did not complain.]*

But the day came when Jesse, David's father, asked him to do something special. He asked him to take some food to his brothers on the battle line. I'm sure he was excited to go off on such an adventure! But did he just take off without taking care of things? No. He first made sure that the sheep were taken care of by another keeper.

When David reached the battlefield, there were so many things around to distract him. But, did he get distracted by all things happening around him? No, he stayed on task. Remember, his dad, Jesse, had sent him with the specific task of providing food for his brothers. So David took care of his assignment first. He gave the food he had brought to the keeper of the equipment who would distribute the food properly; only then could he go off to find his brothers.

Now, when I was young, one day my dad woke me up and told me we were going to Red Rock Canyon that day. I was soooo excited, thinking about all those big giant red rocks to climb on and caves to explore—it would be so much fun! So, I jumped out of bed and into my dad's truck and off we went! When we got home late that afternoon though, my mom was there with the most disappointed look on her face. I had gone off without making my bed. I didn't act very responsibly, did I? *[Storyteller, give an example of carrying through with chores instead of being swept away by the excitement of something.]*

David's example is of someone who was very responsible and very obedient. He was not easily distracted from the task that his father gave him to complete. Now what are some things that you did last week that showed you were responsible? Who turned in their homework on time? Who may have forgotten to turn in their homework or do one of their chores one time this week? *[Storyteller, use these everyday examples to talk with the children.]* This coming week, let's all remember David's example and choose to be more responsible.

Beginner Level, Block 6, Week 7 David—His Conduct

Point to Emphasize: We can be those who behave wisely.

Reference Reading: 1 Samuel 18

Memory Verse: And David acted prudently in all his campaigns, and Jehovah was with him.
(1 Samuel 18:14)

Story Sample

From last week's story, do you remember that David was at the battlefield bringing food to his brothers? Well while David was at the camp, a very BIG Philistine named Goliath challenged anyone from the children of Israel to fight him. All of the Israelite soldiers were afraid to fight him, but not David. As a young boy, David was a shepherd who had to fight off wild animals to protect his father's flocks. Even as a young person, all of his responsibilities as a shepherd were training, preparing, and equipping him for many other things. When Goliath made his challenge to the Israelites, David stood tall and struck Goliath down. Wow! The Israelites were all so encouraged by what they saw. Not only the people but also King Saul were so impressed with what David did! Because David had the right training and character, he was able to defeat such a big, strong Philistine warrior.

Saul saw David's wisdom and character and set him over the men of battle, and all the people and the servants of Saul approved of David. Without trying to, David became a leader among the people. David was successful in every mission that King Saul sent him on. He carried out Saul's missions using sound judgment and managing matters carefully. David was not rash or hurried; rather he was so wise in how he carried things out.

Now anyone in this position is bound to become well-known. Once you have a high position it is easy for everyone to see what you do and hear what you say. This is how things were for David. Once Saul sent him on missions and set him over the men of battle, it was easy for all to observe how he behaved himself. How do you think David conducted himself? The verse says that David acted prudently. *Prudently* is not a word that we hear very often. It means to act in a way that uses good judgment and common sense. The opposite of being prudent is being rash, reckless, hasty, and careless.

Here are some real situations that I have seen. You tell me if you see good judgment and common sense being used; or if you see careless, hasty and reckless behavior. *[Storyteller, discuss how each one's conduct could be changed to become the opposite. The examples you use should depend on age group.]*

- 1) A 3rd grade girl lets her little brother walk across the street without holding on to his hand.
- 2) A 1st grade girl's dog runs into the street; she stops at the curb to make sure no cars are coming before she chases the dog.
- 3) A girl in kindergarten puts a marble into her mouth while playing.
- 4) A 2nd grade boy races into a group of children without slowing down.
- 5) A 1st grade boy works on his math assignment; even though he thinks he can whiz through it in 3 minutes, he decides to carefully check his answers after he is done.

[Storyteller, insert your own story about being prudent or rash and the consequences of being this way.]

Because of the long war with the Philistines, David had many opportunities to act wisely. Just like David, the shepherd boy who became so important to King Saul and to all the Israelites, we can act wisely and prudently in all the things we do.

Beginner Level, Block 6, Week 8

David—Respecting Authority

Point to Emphasize: We can respect those God has put in charge of us.

Reference Reading: 1 Samuel 24

Memory Verse: ...There is no authority except from God... (Romans 13:1b)

Story Sample

David's life was a life of fighting, wasn't it? When he was a young shepherd, he fought a lion and a bear to protect the sheep. Later, he became a warrior who fought Goliath and the Philistines and the other enemies of Israel. During all that fighting, David trusted God to protect him and make him victorious. So, he became a very brave and victorious warrior. But did you know there was one person David would not fight? It was King Saul.

King Saul was the king that God had chosen, and because David respected God, he also respected the king. Actually King Saul was not even very nice to David. If anyone should have been allowed to fight against King Saul, we might think it would be David. You see, King Saul was very jealous of David. He didn't like the way people admired David for being such a great warrior. King Saul was so jealous that he even sent his men to capture David—but David escaped. King Saul kept sending men to capture David, and David kept escaping.

Even though King Saul was always chasing after David, David would not hurt him. David respected God and God's authority on earth, which at that time was King Saul. David would never do anything to hurt the king who God had raised up.

God has put certain ones in charge of all of us. We may not have a king, but we do have parents, teachers, and serving ones. All of these people were chosen by God, and we were put under their care for our protection and benefit! When we respect them, we really respect God.

We can be just like David when we respect those in authority. Sometimes it's as easy as saying "Ok, mom!" when our mom asks us to do something. I remember one time my mom asked me to help clean up something. At that moment I was playing with some toys, and I didn't want to stop. But I also knew that cooperating with my mom and obeying her were the right things to do. So I said, "Ok, mom," and stopped playing for a few minutes to help out. Oh, it felt so good to do that! I was not only obeying, but I was respecting my mom's authority. God gave me my mom to take care of me and help me grow. When I respected her like that it made me, my mom, and God all so happy! *[Storyteller, insert your own example of regarding or not regarding those over you.]*

Eventually David had the chance to really hurt Saul, but he chose not to. He honored the king and respected the authority God had chosen. We can be like that, too! God has placed many above us for our protection and benefit. We can be like David who respected the king God placed above him. Even when King Saul was not a good king and was trying to hurt David, David respected Saul because he knew he was the authority set by God. Let's be those who respect all authority given to us by God!

Beginner Level, Block 6, Week 9 David—A Psalmist

Point to Emphasize: We can be those who write a song of thanks or praise and enjoy singing.

Reference Reading: 1 Samuel 16:16-23; Psalm 3—9; 11—32; 34—41; 51—65; 68—70; 86; 101; 103; 108—110; 122; 124; 131; 133; 138—145

Memory Verse: ...And with my song do I give thanks to Him. (Psalm 28:7d)

Story Sample

In children's meetings we always have a singing time. Oh, singing is so enjoyable! How many of the songs that we sing do you already know? Five, ten, or fifteen? Do you know that we have over one hundred songs that we sing together? All these songs were composed by some dear adults and young people among us. It is so wonderful that there are some who love God, who spend time gathering their thoughts and feelings and write poems that can be sung and enjoyed by others!

Writing songs and singing go way back in history. Actually, the Bible talks about one man that started to play the lyre for the sheep and later on for the King. He ended up writing poems that others would sing. Most of his poems were praising and thanking God for all God had done for him. He would write praises, prayers, and would sing with joy! Who was he? Yes, David!

We can say that David's heart was SO full of feelings that he wanted to write them down. He wrote poems. Do you know what a poem is? There are many kinds of poems, but the purpose of a poem is to stir a reader's imagination or emotions. Some poems try to express some truth about life, tell a story, honor a person or honor God. Some of David's poems were recorded in an Old Testament book of the Bible called Psalms. We can say that David was a psalmist. The psalms he wrote were songs or poems that were meant to be sung. David's poetry is awesome! Do you know why? In his poetry, David praised God! David's heart was so full of good things and full of thanks that he wrote many praises to God in poems to be sung by him others.

Ever since I was a little girl, I've liked music. I am not a musician, but I can carry a tune and I enjoy singing in every meeting. When I was about 15 years old, I was at home and I was helping my mom prepare for children's meeting. She was reading to me what we were going to share with the children. Later I went to my room and decided to compose a song! It was a very simple song but it brought a lot of joy to me and to all the ones who sang it! Now that I think of it, I was just like David! *[Storyteller, share an experience of writing a song or knowing someone who wrote a song or a hymn. Or give examples of children's songs that David wrote from the book of Psalms and we sing today.]*

At home, your parents might have hymnals. I'm sure you have seen them. The young people also have hymnals. Oh, the young people really love to sing to the Lord! You might also have seen some of the songbooks prepared for the Family Summer Camps. If you take some time to read some of the songs, you will see that they are just like poems with a tune. One day you might write a poem or a song for us to sing! Maybe you can try this week!

Beginner Level, Block 6, Week 10

Jonathan—A Friend for David

Points to Emphasize: We can be a good friend to others; we can also choose friends we can trust.

Reference Reading: 1 Samuel 18

Memory Verse: ...But there is a true friend that sticks closer than a brother. (Proverbs 18:24b)

Story Sample:

What makes a good friend? *[Storyteller, write a list on the board as the children answer; encourage words like "trust, respect, loyalty, love, etc...]* We should be a friend like this and we should have friends like this.

In the Bible there is a good story about two friends, David and Jonathan. These two young people became very good friends. You already know quite a bit about David. You know that he was **responsible** (caring for the sheep), **obedient** (doing as his father instructed him, taking supplies to his brothers), **brave** (standing against Goliath), and **respectful** of authority (honoring King Saul). David sounds like the kind of friend I would like to have! *[Storyteller, you could also add these to the list.]*

David's words and actions showed his wisdom and his dependence upon God. Jonathan could not help but admire, respect, and highly esteem him for that. Jonathan even befriended David, taking him as a very close friend. What Jonathan had seen in David caused him to pledge himself to support David in every way. So, Jonathan gave him his robe, his sword, his bow, and his belt as a pledge of their friendship. Now, these are things a warrior like Jonathan needed very much, nevertheless he gave them away to David. This shows his heart was very pure. Jonathan took care of David as he would take care of himself. Maybe even better!

Now, let me ask you, have you ever seen a friend about to be in danger and you tried to warn them? When I was young, one of my friends had a trampoline. One day we were playing on the trampoline and she started jumping too high. I knew if she kept jumping like that, she could get hurt. So I warned her and said to her, "You'd better stop before you get hurt!" Now, she had a choice to make—she could either listen to the warning of a good friend or she could keep going. Well, she made the wrong choice, and she ended up falling and getting 20 stitches in her head. She really should have listened to me, because I was her friend trying to care for her. *[Storyteller, insert your own story of being warned by a friend or of warning a friend. Focus your example on a friend's help to do what is best. It may be that the friend told you to go home on time, to do what your mom told you to do—also invite examples from the children.]*

The same thing happened to David and Jonathan! Before David became king, he went through many difficult moments. It would have been impossible for David to go through all these situations alone. David was able to go through all these difficult times mainly because of the help that Jonathan gave him. I hope that you all choose to be a good friend and choose friends you can trust. Remember that a good and close friend can help you through your most difficult times!