

Lower Elementary

Hannah

Checklist

small ball (or any object to pass around)

Introduction:

We're going to play the "I'm Fine!" game. We'll pass the ball around in a circle. I'll tell the person holding the ball something that happens, and then everyone else will ask, "Are you okay?" Always answer, "I'm fine!"

- You got caught doing something wrong.
- Your best friend is too busy to come for play dates now that they go to a different school.
- You didn't know any of the answers during a math lesson.
- You forgot your homework.
- Your team lost the game.
- You had a fight with your mom.
- Your little brother broke your favorite toy.
- Your older sister acts like she doesn't even know you when you go out in public.
- You broke something that belongs to your parents.
- You lost your favorite shirt.
- You got new shoes that you love, but they stopped fitting after only a couple times wearing them.
- You dropped your ice cream cone on the sidewalk.
- You lost your dog.
- You broke a leg.

Do you ever say, "I'm fine!" when you're really upset? Lots of people do (even grown-ups). God wants to hear about our problems. We can cry to God when we are sad or mad. He loves us and wants to help us feel better. He already knows how we feel, so we don't need to hide anything from Him. Talking to God first can make it easier to talk to other people, and to tell them how we really feel (instead of saying, "I'm fine!").

There was a woman from the hill country of Ephraim named Hannah. She was married, but she had not been able to have any children. Each year, she and her husband Elkanah and other people in their family would travel from their hometown, Ramah, to Shiloh, where Elkanah would offer sacrifices to God. Back then, most people lived on farms that were spread out. They would worship God together as a family each week, but travel was so difficult they would gather in larger groups much less often.



Other family members who traveled with them had so many children. It made Hannah long for children even more. One year, her stomach felt tied up in knots with so much sadness, she could not even eat the meal after their time of worship. “Please eat something,” Elkanah begged, his heart breaking for his wife’s sorrow. “Don’t I mean more to you than ten children?”



But Hannah was still gloomy, so after everyone else had eaten, Hannah got up and went to pray. Eli was the Lord's priest at this time. He sat in his chair near the door to the house of worship. Brokenhearted Hanna cried as she prayed to God. "Lord, I know that you have all the power in the world and can do anything and I want to serve you. I want a baby so badly. Please let me have a son. I will have him become a Nazarite."

Hannah promised to have her son belong to a special group of people who served God and showed their commitment by never cutting their hair or tasting any kind of grapes. These were both symbols that showed others who they were.



As Hannah prayed, she cried and didn't even realize that as she spoke her thoughts to God in her head, her lips moved and her face showed the intense sorrow she was feeling.

Eli, meanwhile, watched her from his place by the door. Not used to seeing people lay their hearts out to God so openly, he wondered what was going on.



“What did you drink at lunch?” he asked her. “This is a house of worship. It’s no place for you to goof off!”

Hannah was jolted out of her alone time with God and suddenly noticed him. “Please don’t think I’m being disrespectful, sir!” Hannah answered. “I’m just so miserable and have been pouring out my heart to God.” Eli realized how genuine her prayer had been. “Go home and rest,” Eli told her. “I’m sure God will answer your prayer.” So, Hannah thanked him, feeling well enough to eat again.



Early the next morning, Hannah's family got up to worship God again. Then they traveled back to Ramah. Soon after, Hannah had a son. "God answered my prayer for you," she said to her new baby boy. "I will call you Samuel."



"Hannah loved Samuel so much, but she remembered her promise to God. When he was older, but still a boy, she brought him to the temple to serve God. Back then, instead of going to school, children would apprentice with a person whose job they would one day have. Samuel became Eli's apprentice, learning how to help with the sacrifices and worship.



Each year when Elkanah and Hannah came to Shiloh to worship God. Hannah sewed special clothes for Samuel. “God has answered your prayer through Samuel,” Eli told her. “I pray He will bless you with many more children.”

Hannah and Elkanah had three more sons and two daughters. They stayed at home, learning how to farm like their family and neighbors, but Samuel studied how to serve God at the Lord’s house in Shiloh.



Closing Discussion:

What did Hannah want? (a baby) Did God answer her prayer for a baby right away, or did she have to wait a long time?

How did it make Hannah feel to not have what she wanted? Do you ever feel very sad and cry about something that you want but don't have?

What did Eli think when he saw Hannah so worked up while she prayed? (she was goofing off) What did Hannah tell him? (she was sharing her feelings with God)

What did Hannah promise God? (to dedicate her baby to Him) Did God answer Hannah's prayer? (yes) Did Hannah keep her promise? (yes)

Does God think you're silly for feeling sad? Will He make fun of you for crying? (No!) Can you tell God anything? Can you share your deepest secret feelings with Him? (Yes!)

When God answers your prayers, what can you do? (thank God, share about it with others)

Craft:

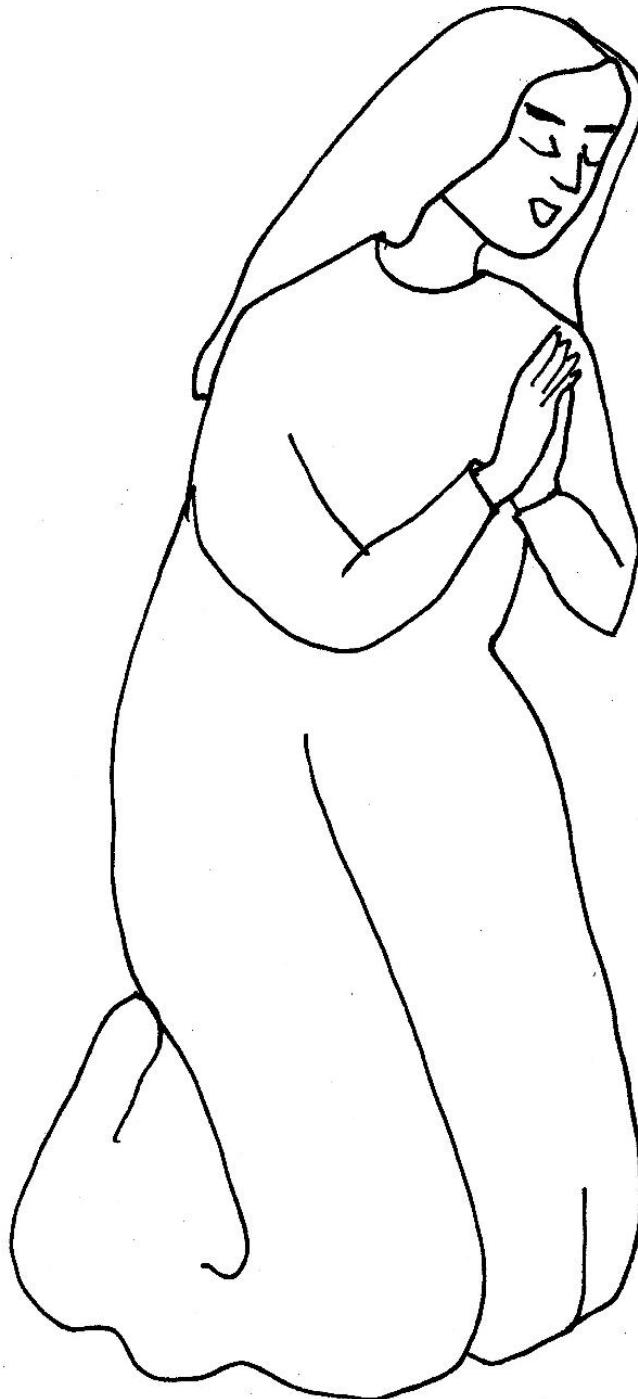
Fold-out Hugging Hannah

Closing Activity:

Give each child a number. Throw a ball into the air and call out a number. That child must run into the middle of the circle and catch the ball. They then call out another number and that child will have a turn catching the ball.

Everything we have belongs to God. Hannah knew that. That's why she wanted to dedicate the baby God had given her back to Him. God answered Hannah's prayer because He knew she meant what she promised. There is nothing we can hide from God. He knows how we feel about everything and wants to talk to us about our feelings. If you feel sad about something, tell Him. If you are grateful for something He has given you, say thank you. And tell others about what God has done for you. This is how people know how good God is.

Name: _____



“The LORD gave me just what I asked for. Now I am giving him to the LORD, and he will be the LORD’s servant for as long as he lives.”

~ 1 Samuel 1:27-28

- ❖ Children color and cut out Hannah and extra arms
- ❖ Children glue arms behind Hannah and fold over to cover Samuel



