

# 133. HANNAH'S PRAYER



## SAMUEL'S FAMILY

Can even little children choose to love, trust, and obey Jesus as long as they live, no matter what happens? Yes, they can. The Bible tells about a little child who did that when he was a very little boy. His name was Samuel.

Samuel's father was named Elkanah. He was rich and important, and he was also a Levite. The Levites did special work for God by caring for the sanctuary. The high priest and all his helpers in the sanctuary were Levites.

Elkanah and his family lived at Ramah. That was about twelve miles from Shiloh, where the sanctuary had been for many years.

Samuel's mother was named Hannah. And Hannah was a lovely lady who loved God with all her heart.

## VISITS TO SHILOH

Every year, Elkanah took his family to Shiloh for a very special meeting that lasted for several days. They always took an animal to sacrifice to God. And after giving their offering, they would have a special meal together. It was meant to be a happy time for everyone.

But instead of being happy, Hannah usually felt very sad. Year after year, Elkanah had

taken his family to the meeting at Shiloh. And year after year, Hannah was always sad. In fact, nearly every time they went to the meeting, she was so sad that often she couldn't even eat.

**1 Samuel 1:7.** ○

One time, after the special meal, she went to the sanctuary by herself; and she was crying as if her heart would break. **Verses 9, 10.** ○

Why? What was wrong? The reason was that she and Elkanah didn't have any children of their own. And they wanted a son.



## AN UNHAPPY HOME

Elkanah loved and worshiped God, and he also loved Hannah dearly. But when they didn't have any children, instead of trusting God to give them a son, he had married another wife. Her name was Peninnah. Then, of course, jealousy started.

When Peninnah had children, she thought God was showing that she was more important than Hannah. But she was also jealous, because she knew Elkanah loved Hannah more. Peninnah became mean, and she did all she

could to hurt Hannah's feelings.

## SADNESS AT THE FEAST

Do you remember where Elkanah took his family each year? What did they do there?

**1 Samuel 1:3.** ○

At the special meal after giving their

offering, Elkanah gave each person in his family a serving of the special sacrifice he had made to God. **Verses 4, 5.** ○

When Elkanah gave a larger serving to Hannah, Peninnah probably felt more jealous than ever. How did she act toward Hannah?

**Verses 6, 7.**

Hannah was always quiet and patient; but this time, it all seemed more than she could bear, even though Elkanah did his very best to comfort her. **Verse 8.** ○

Hannah didn't complain to Elkanah; but when the special meal was finished, what did she do? **Verses 9, 10.** ○

## HANNAH'S SPECIAL PRAYER

Hannah had gone to the sanctuary to talk to God about why she was so sad. As she knelt close to the entrance, sobbing, what did she tell Him? **1 Samuel 1:11.** ○

From where Eli, the high priest, was sitting at the entrance, he could see Hannah. He had never seen anyone praying like she was praying. Most people weren't even reverent anymore. Sometimes, even women were drunk when they came to the sanctuary.

The longer Eli watched Hannah, the more sure he was that she had been drinking too much wine. What did he say to her? **Verses**

**12–14.** ○

Poor Hannah must have felt terrible. Quickly and gently she told Eli that he was mistaken. **Verses 15, 16.** ○

Eli immediately felt very sorry for what he had said to Hannah. He had not meant to hurt an innocent person. Hannah had not told him what she was talking to God

about; but Eli could tell that she was a good woman, and that she truly loved God. What did he say? **Verse 17.** ○

Suddenly the heavy feeling in Hannah's heart was gone. And as she hurried back to their tent, she knew that God had heard her prayer. Now she was even hungry. **Verse 18.** ○

The next morning the family went back home to Ramah. You can be sure that Elkanah was happy, because Hannah was happy. Peninnah and her children must have wondered what had happened to make such a difference in Hannah.



## THINK ABOUT IT



- 1 Why was Peninnah so unkind to Hannah? Do feelings of jealousy make us want to hurt other people? Do our thoughts and feelings influence the way we act? Why does God ask us to choose good thoughts?
- 2 Do you remember any other homes that were unhappy because there were two wives instead of just one, like God planned? What about Sarah and Hagar in Abraham's home? And Rachel and Leah in Jacob's home? Are we always happiest when we follow God's plan for our homes?
- 3 Did Hannah complain or become angry about how Peninnah was treating her? To whom did she take her problems? We can always go to God with our disappointments, too. Can He understand us even when no one else does?

# 134. HANNAH'S PRECIOUS GIFT

## ANSWERED PRAYER

God had heard Hannah's prayer. And when He gave her the son for which she had asked, what did she name him? **1 Samuel 1:20.** ○

The name Samuel means "Heard by God." Do you think that was a good name for Hannah's little boy?

Do you remember the vow (promise) Hannah had made? What did she promise if God would give her a son? Read it again.

**Verse 11.** ○

Little Samuel would be a Nazirite. That meant he would belong to God in a very special way. Samson had been a Nazirite too, but he had disappointed God many times. Now, what kind of choices would Samuel make?

## CAREFUL TRAINING

Even before Samuel could talk, Hannah started teaching him to love and obey God. In every way that she could think of, Hannah helped him understand God's Ten Commandments. She showed him the beautiful things that God had made, and she taught him how to pray and thank God for taking care of him.

As soon as Samuel could understand, Hannah taught him to be helpful. Perhaps he picked up trash or put away his toys or carried little things for his mother.

She taught him what "No" means, and she gently helped him to choose to obey. He soon learned that people are happier when they obey.

The Holy Spirit was helping Hannah get

Samuel ready to do a great work that needed to be done in Israel. Most of the people had become very careless about obeying the Ten Commandments, and God couldn't bless them like He wanted.



## REMEMBERING HER PROMISE

Not very long after Samuel was born, it was again time for the special meetings at Shiloh. But what did Hannah decide to do?

**1 Samuel 1:21–23.** ○

Neither Elkanah nor Hannah had forgotten the solemn promise Hannah had made. They both knew that God had given Samuel to them. And Hannah was carefully training him, because they knew that they would soon give him back as a special gift to God. They would take him to Shiloh; and he would live with Eli, the high priest.

As soon as Samuel was old enough to feed and help himself, Hannah knew that it was time to keep her promise. She knew that Samuel would live with Eli, and that Eli would teach him how to help at the sanctuary. She had even made for him a special little robe like the priests wore. As she lovingly sewed it, she prayed that God would protect and care for her precious little boy.

Hannah must have thought about Eli's home. Everyone in Israel knew that Eli was a kind man. But he had not trained his sons to obey God's law, and they were very wicked. Would those sons, Hophni and Phinehas, tempt Samuel to disobey, too? Samuel was so small.

Would he remember the things she had taught him? Would he make good choices? Oh, how Hannah must have prayed that he would!

## SAMUEL GOES TO SHILOH

Finally the day came for Elkanah and Hannah to take Samuel to Shiloh. They prepared a special offering for God, and took it with them to the sanctuary. **1 Samuel 1:24, 25.** ○

It had been a few years since Hannah had been to the sanctuary, and she knew that Eli might not remember her. What did she tell him? **Verse 26–28.** ○

Eli could hardly believe that anyone would be so unselfish. He himself had not been a wise father. He had been too selfish to train his sons as he should have done, and they had become very wicked men.

Now, as Eli listened to Hannah's beautiful prayer (1 Samuel 2:1–10), he felt humble and reverent. He would do his very best to avoid making the same mistakes with precious little Samuel that he had made with his own sons.

## A SAD GOOD-BY

Soon it was time to say good-by. Perhaps Samuel cried a little. But no doubt his mother had already helped him to eagerly look forward to being Eli's helper at the sanctuary. And Eli already loved this dear little boy.

There were tears in Hannah's eyes, too. But she had joy at the same time. She was keeping her promise to God. And she was trusting

Him to take care of the precious gift that she was giving to Him. Samuel and his parents gave each other hugs and kisses. Then they waved good-by. **1 Samuel 2:11.** ○

Samuel was probably between three and five years old at this time. That was very young, wasn't it? But God had helped Hannah carefully train Samuel from the time he was born. He had already learned that he was happier when he obeyed willingly.

Obedying made others happy, too. Most of all, it made God happy. Are you learning that, too?



## THINK ABOUT IT



- 1** Have you ever seen a dog that has learned to obey? Did you know that by the time a baby is able to sit up, it can understand more than a very smart dog can? Wise parents like Hannah start teaching their children when they are tiny babies.
- 2** Did it take a lot of trust for Hannah to keep her promise? Do you think that little Samuel already understood that he was a special gift to God? Do you know that is what your parents want you to be, too?
- 3** Have you ever noticed that even babies can show tempers and scream to have their own way? We are all selfish when we are born. Why is it important for parents to train their babies and young children very carefully?
- 4** Do you think it was easy for Hannah to keep her promise? If we make a promise to God, what should we do? Ecclesiastes 5:4, 5.



# 135. CRANBERRIES

*“The righteous cry out, and the Lord hears, and delivers them out of all their troubles. The Lord is near to those who have a broken heart, and saves such as have a contrite spirit.” Psalm 34:17, 18*

**Prayer makes  
life’s trials much  
easier to bear.**



**C**ranberries like to grow in bogs—places that are very wet. In the wild, they grow in the northern parts of North America, Europe, and Asia. But almost all the cranberries that are grown by farmers are grown in the United States and Canada.

Most cranberries are picked in a special way. The farmer floods his cranberry fields with water, and then uses a special machine to knock the berries off the

plants. Since cranberries float, it is easy to move all the berries to one side of the field and take them out!

Do you like to eat cranberries? Most people do. In the United States, they are a real favorite during the holidays of Thanksgiving and Christmas. Maybe your mother or grandmother makes a cranberry sauce or jello that you especially like. Many people also like cranberry-flavored juice. There is cran-apple juice, cran-grape juice, and other delicious combinations. Dried cranberries (craisins) are also very good.

Have you ever tried to eat plain cranberries? If you ever have, you know that they are very sour and bitter. Most people don’t like that kind of flavor at all. Sugar is the key to making those sour, bitter

cranberries good to eat. All delicious foods made out of cranberries have sugar in them—sometimes quite a lot of sugar.

Do you ever have trials and troubles and problems in your life? Those things aren’t fun at all. They are like the sour, bitter flavor in unsweetened cranberries. But God has given us something that can make these things easier to bear. It’s called prayer.

The story of Hannah is a good example of this. She was so sad about wanting a son, she couldn’t even eat. But after praying at the sanctuary, she felt much better about it.

When we take time to talk to God about our troubles and listen to what He wants to tell us, it’s like mixing sugar with those sour, bitter cranberries—it makes life much better.



## 133. HANNAH'S PRAYER



**Do you know the answer?**

1. Name Elkanah's two wives.

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2. Who was the high priest in the sanctuary in the time of Elkanah?

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3. Why was Hannah so very sad?

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4. What did Hannah promise to do if God would give her a son?

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5. When Hannah prayed earnestly in the sanctuary, what did Eli think of her?

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- [illegible]

## 134. HANNAH'S PRECIOUS GIFT



**Do you know the answer?**

1. What does the name Samuel mean?

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2. In what city was the sanctuary set up?

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3. Did Hannah train Samuel very carefully? Why?

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4. What were Eli's sons like?

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5. Did Hannah keep her promise to give her boy to God?

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## Digging Deeper

1. A growing baby goes from crying to talking, from crawling to walking, and from being fed to feeding itself. We call this development. All over the world, babies about the same age are able to do the same things. Doctors like to call these things “developmental milestones.” Find a website or a book from the library that lists the developmental milestones of children ages 12 months to 5 years old. Write one developmental milestone and one helpful task that a child could do at these different ages:

Age	Developmental Milestone	Helpful Task
12 months		
18 months		
2 years		
3 years		
4 years		
5 years		

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## Hannah's Prayer / Hannah's Precious Gift

### Teaching Aids

- Bible
- My Bible Pictures\*
- A few small toys in a basket
- Ruler/pencil
- Supplied Pictures:\*
- #L2.6.1: Monkey with baby
- #L2.6.2: Boy praying

### Lesson Emphasis

Through prayer, we can bring all our problems to God. Having a close connection with Him will lead us to work for Him cheerfully in our homes. "God is pleased when even little children give themselves to His service" (PP 573).

### Memory Verse—Proverbs 20:11

"Even a child is known by his deeds, whether what he does is pure and right."

### Introduction


**Visual (several toys/small basket):** Grandma was watching Johnny. He was a little boy who was learning to love and obey Jesus. They had been playing at a pond and Johnny had his toys scattered along the path by the water. When it was almost time to go home, Johnny began to pick up his toys without being asked. He took them one at a time, singing as he went, and put them in the basket. The song he sang as he skipped happily back and forth was one his parents had taught him during family worship—"Angels Watching Over Me." Johnny was known in the neighborhood for his happy obedience. Our lesson today is about a little boy like that. But first let's pray.

### Opening Prayer

Dear God, as we study the Bible today, we ask for Your Holy Spirit to teach us how to pray and how to work cheerfully for You in our homes. Thank You for hearing and answering our prayer. In Jesus' name, amen.


### Teaching the Lesson

#### **1** Tell why Hannah was sad.


- Hannah was a gentle, humble lady who loved God. Her husband Elkanah also loved God; and he loved Hannah very much, too. But there was sadness in their home.
- Children are a special gift from God; and in those days, ladies wanted to have children more than anything else. Hannah wanted children; but she had none, and so she felt very sad.
- Elkanah wanted children, too. But instead of trusting God, he made a wrong choice and married a second wife, Peninnah. In time, Peninnah had children; but Elkanah still loved Hannah more, so Peninnah became jealous and treated Hannah badly. Hannah bore it all quietly and patiently.
- Every year Hannah went with Elkanah, Peninnah, and her children to the sanctuary at Shiloh to worship God. After the sacrifice, they ate a special meal. Elkanah gave extra food to Hannah. He wanted her to know he loved her even though she didn't have any children.
- Peninnah made fun of Hannah at these yearly meetings. Hannah bore it patiently. But one time she couldn't hide her sadness anymore, and she cried so much that she couldn't even eat.
- Her husband was kind and tried to understand; but Hannah knew that only God could really understand her problem. **Ask**, "What did Hannah do?"  **1 Samuel 1:10**
- When we have problems, God always understands how we feel, even if no one else does. Always remember to talk to Him. God can always help us in our troubles.
- Hannah clung tightly to Jesus in her trouble.

**Object lesson (#L2.6.1):** Remember how baby monkeys hang on tightly to their mothers? When we are in trouble, we should cling tightly to God and never stop trusting Him to help us.


#### **2** Review Hannah's prayer at the sanctuary.

- Let's read Hannah's prayer in  **1 Samuel 1:11** Hannah moved her lips as she prayed silently in her mind. Eli, the high priest, thought she was drunk like many other worshipers had been. But


Hannah explained that she was deeply troubled and was praying.

- b. **Ask**, “What did Eli say to Hannah?”  **1 Samuel 1:17**
- c. After that, Hannah felt much better. Her face wasn’t sad anymore, and she could eat. She didn’t have a son yet, but God had given her peace. She trusted Him to help her.
- d. God will help us when we pray, too. After we talk to God about our problem, we don’t need to worry anymore. We can trust Him to answer our prayer at the right time and in the best way.

### **3 Tell how God answered Hannah’s prayer and gave her a baby boy.**

- a. **Ask**, “What did Hannah name her son?”  **1 Samuel 1:20, last part**
- b. Samuel was a special gift from God. And you are, too! He has a special plan for your life.
- c. Hannah didn’t forget her promise to give Samuel back to God. She trained him very carefully to love and obey God and to do his work cheerfully and well.
- d. When he was still young, she brought him to the sanctuary and gave him to God for his whole life.
- e. Again Hannah prayed to God a beautiful prayer of thankfulness.
- f. Hannah was a woman of prayer. She prayed when she was in trouble, and she prayed when she was happy. God is pleased when we do the same. He wants us to talk to Him when we are in trouble, but He also loves to hear us thank Him for how He has helped us. God loves to hear us pray.

### **4 Share some simple, helpful pointers on how to pray.**

- a. Have a **time** to pray—first thing in the morning, in the middle of the day, and at night.  
 **Psalms 55:17** And we should pray throughout the day in our minds.
- b. Have a quiet **place** to pray. By your bed is a good place.
- c. Remember, prayer connects you to God Himself. **Show #L2.6.2** Kneel, fold hands, close eyes to shut out distractions. Think how big and good God is. Begin by saying, “Dear God,” or “Dear Father in heaven.” Then quietly whisper your prayer out loud. Think about what you are saying. Talk to Him like you talk to your best friend. Tell Him everything—what is good and bad in your life. If you have sinned, tell Him you are sorry and ask Him to forgive you and help you do right. Ask Him to talk to you. End with the words, “In Jesus’ name, amen.”

### **5 Tell how Samuel served in the sanctuary.**

- a. Every day Hannah prayed for Samuel, and every year she made new clothes for him.  
**Visual (ruler/pencil):** Discuss how parents mark the wall to show their child growing; and how clothing doesn’t fit anymore. Example: jeans get short on boys who are growing quickly.
- b. Eli, the high priest, loved Samuel, trained him, and gave him work to do in the sanctuary.
- c. “These [jobs] were at first very humble, and *not always pleasant*; but they were performed to the best of his ability, and with a willing heart” (PP 573).



### **Memory Verse Review**

Repeat the memory verse together.

### **🔗 Conclusion**

Hannah set a good example in prayer. She talked to God as a friend. She prayed when in trouble and sadness, she prayed when she was happy, praising and thanking God, and she prayed for her little son. Because of prayer Samuel learned to be faithful in his small duties in the sanctuary and was known as an obedient little boy.

### **♥ Appeal to the Heart**

Prayer can change our lives, too. It brings us close to God and makes us more like Him. Shall we pray to God more every day, telling Him everything about our lives? (Raise hand.)



### **Prayer**

Dear God, thank You for teaching us about prayer. We want to pray more to You when we are sad and when we are glad. Please help us remember to pray to You all through each day. Thank You. In Jesus’ name, amen.

**1. Ask someone to help you answer these questions:**

- \* To whom should I pray?**
- \* When should I pray?**
- \* Does God hear me when I pray?**
- \* For what things should I pray?**

**2. Color the picture below.**



# What the Bible Says About...

## Prayer

Fill in the puzzle below with the missing words.

### Psalm 34:15

"The eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and His ears are **1** to their cry."

### Psalm 34:17

"The **5** cry out, and the Lord hears, and **2** them out of all their troubles."

### Proverbs 28:9

"One who turns away his ear from hearing the **3**, even his prayer is an abomination."

### Psalm 66:18

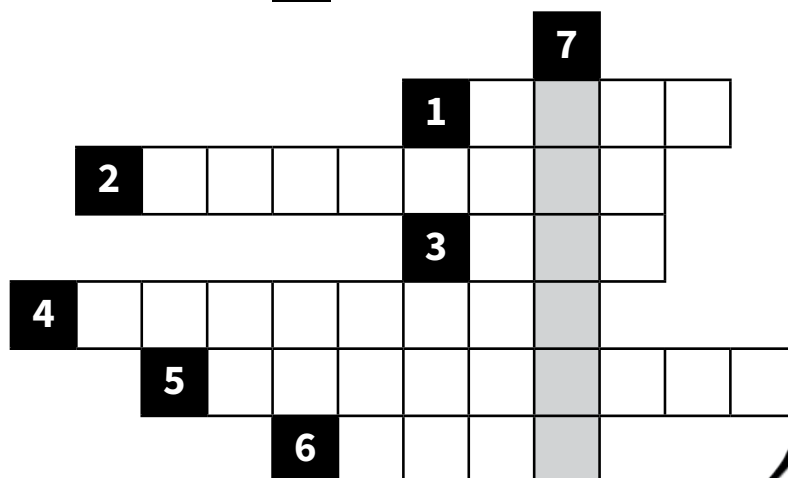
"If I regard **4** in my heart, the Lord will not hear."

### Psalm 55:17

"Evening and morning and at noon I will pray, and cry aloud, and He shall **6** my voice."

### Proverbs 15:29

"The Lord is far from the wicked, but He hears the **7** of the righteous."











## 128. Samson, the Judge

### Do you know the answer?

1. He picked up the city gate and carried it to the top of a hill.
2. Samson's muscles were strong. In fact, he was strongest man who had ever lived. But there was another way in which he was very weak. He quickly yielded to Satan's temptations.
3. Delilah
4. Dagon
5. He pushed on the pillars supporting Dagon's temple; and when the building crashed down, he died with the Philistines.

### Digging Deeper

1. —

## 130. Faithful Ruth

### Do you know the answer?

1. Because there was a famine in Bethlehem.
2. Naomi, Mahlon, and Chilion  
The two sons died.
3. At least 10 years
4. She asked them to return to their people and their gods. Ruth chose to go with Naomi to Bethlehem, but Orpah returned home to her people and her gods.
5. When people harvested fields of grain, they were to let poor people gather up stalks that were on the edges of the fields, or that the reapers had dropped.

### Digging Deeper

1. —
2. Answers will vary, but can include both physical and spiritual blessings.
3. God repays us with far more than we gave.

## 131. Ruth and Boaz

### Do you know the answer?

1. Boaz
2. Boaz invited Ruth to eat with his workers.
3. Her plan was for Boaz to marry Ruth.
4. He took off his shoe and gave it to Boaz.
5. Obed

### Digging Deeper

1. Matthew 1:5 lists Ruth and Boaz in the genealogy of Jesus Christ.

## 133. Hannah's Prayer

### Do you know the answer?

1. Hannah and Peninnah
2. Eli
3. 1) She had no children and  
2) Peninnah was so mean to her
4. She would dedicate her son to God all the days of her life
5. He thought she was drunk

### Digging Deeper

1. God chose Shiloh as the first place for the sanctuary because of its central location. It would be easy for the entire Israelite nation to access it.

## 134. Hannah's Precious Gift

### Do you know the answer?

1. Heard by God
2. Shiloh
3. Yes, she did. She wanted him to be ready to do a great work that needed to be done in Israel.
4. They were very disobedient.
5. Yes

### Digging Deeper

1. Answers will vary. See chart on page 28.

## 136. Eli's Little Helper

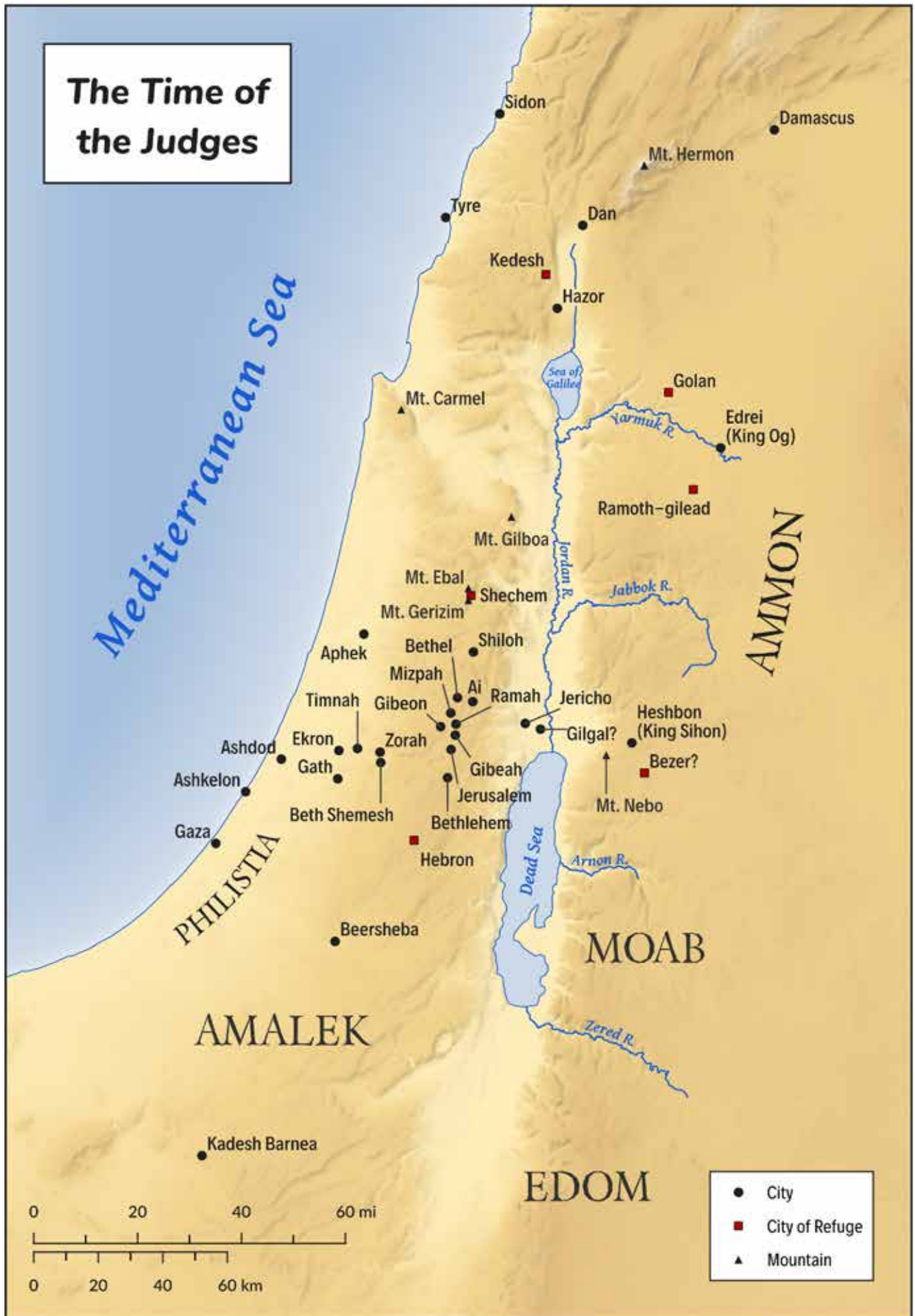
### Do you know the answer?

1. Hophni and Phinehas
2. Corrupt
3. He did not teach his sons to obey.
4. Because Hophni and Phinehas were so wicked.
5. A little robe (1 Samuel 2:19)

### Digging Deeper

1. Answers will vary.  
Example: Corrupt: Acting dishonestly for the sake of personal gain (Oxford English Dictionary).
2. Answers will vary.  
Example: Psalm 53:1 "The fool has said in his heart, 'There is no God.' They are corrupt, and have done abominable iniquity; there is none who does good."
3. Answers will vary.  
Example: The word "corrupt" in this verse

# The Time of the Judges





# *The Life of* **SAMUEL**



Was prayed for by his mother Hannah.

Was carefully trained at home in Ramah by Hannah.

Went to live at the sanctuary with Eli.

Helped Eli in the sanctuary.

Heard God's voice at night when still a boy.

Replaced Eli as judge of Israel after Eli's death.

Led the Israelites in reform and repentance at Mizpah.

Began the schools of the prophets.

Appointed his sons Joel and Abijah as judges.

Was rejected as leader when people asked for a king.

Anointed Saul king at God's command.

Rebuked Saul for his disobedience.

Anointed David king at God's command.

Gave temporary refuge to David who was persecuted by Saul.

Died and was buried in Ramah.

