

## Lesson 1

# God Loves Babies

**Bible Basis:** 1 Samuel 1:1-23

**Lesson Focus:** God loves babies.

### Where Learning Happens



Set up areas for play before children arrive.

### Bible Step

#### Talk Time

■ *Toddler/2 Creative Teaching Aids*—Photo Poster 1

#### Bible Story Time

1 Samuel 1:1-23

### Bible Review Step

#### Bible Story Review Time

■ *Toddler/2 Creative Teaching Aids*—Story Figures 1, 2, Story Card 1, Story Mat

#### Music Time

“THE FAMILY SONG”

■ *Toddler/2 Creative Teaching Aids*—CD, CD player

### Craft Step



#### Baby Blankets

■ Construction paper, paper scraps, glue in bottles; *optional*: damp paper towels

■ *Starting Steps* for Lesson 1 for Goodbye Time

**Tip:** At the beginning of each quarter, separate the pages for *Starting Steps* and store them by lesson.



This symbol appears whenever preparation takes more than five minutes. A list of classroom supplies for the quarter is included on page 5.

### Teacher Devotional

Read 1 Samuel 1:1-23. Hannah gives us an example of persistence in prayer. For years she prayed that God would give her a son. In His own timing, God answered her prayer.

God’s timing and our desire for an answer to prayer do not always agree with each other. We want a result now, but God may choose to wait or even say no. If we do not receive a clear answer to a particular prayer, then we should continue to pray as Hannah did.

This week write down the names and needs of children in your class who have prayer concerns. Pray persistently for them.

### Understanding the Bible

Hannah was the wife of Elkanah, a Levite. They lived in Ramah, a city five miles north of Jerusalem. Elkanah had a second wife, Peninnah. While polygamy was tolerated under the law of Moses at that time, it was contrary to God’s ideal (Gen. 2:24; Deut. 21:15-17).

For many years, Hannah was childless. In Old Testament times, infertility was regarded as a divine curse. Life in that culture was difficult for a childless woman (1 Sam. 1:5-6). God had promised Israel there would be no infertility if His laws were obeyed (Deut. 7:14).

As Hannah prayed at the festival, she vowed to dedicate her child to lifetime service to God.

God answered Hannah’s prayer. She named her child Samuel. While the exact meaning of the name is unclear, it served as a reminder that God is merciful to those who call on Him (1 Sam. 1:20).



**Y**our children spend all of their time in this lesson moving, exploring, choosing, and playing in the learning environment. The learning environment is simply the books, toys, blocks, music, stories, and activities your children interact with from the moment they arrive until they go home. While children are busy exploring and playing, you can gather together a small group to hear the Bible story from 1 Samuel 1:1-23. You can also walk around the room, visit the children at different activities, and use the story mat to present the Bible Story Review.

This lesson is designed to allow toddlers and two year olds to play independently, freeing you to present the Bible Step, Bible Review Step, and Craft Step either to individuals or to small groups throughout the class time.

# Where Learning Happens

## Table—

The table can be used for a free-play activity or the craft. For directions on setting up today's craft activity, see *"Baby Blankets" in the Craft Step, page 10.*

## Rug—

This is the place to gather children together for small group activities, depending on the size of your group. Invite them to the rug for the Bible Step, *page 8. Today's story is "God Loves Babies" from 1 Samuel 1:1-23.*

This is also a good place for sharing stories or movement and the Music Time, *page 9. Sing "THE FAMILY SONG."*

## Care Area—

Take time for each child's physical needs, including rest room breaks and diaper changes. Provide water and a snack when appropriate.

## Books—

A choice of books to explore pictures and words. *Let children explore picture books about babies to help them become involved with the Bible story "God Loves Babies."*

## Blocks—

Blocks of different sizes and shapes for building and creative play.

## Toys—

A variety of toys appropriate for two year olds to encourage play. *If possible, set out baby toys such as rattles, busy boxes, and squeaker toys. As children explore toys they enjoyed as babies, they will become involved with today's Bible story about Hannah and Samuel.*

## Home Living—

Several baby dolls, blankets, play food, dishes, and utensils for children to imitate what they see in real life. *Encourage children to take care of the baby dolls to relate to baby Samuel in today's Bible story from 1 Samuel 1:1-23.*

## When Teaching the Bible to Toddler/2s...

In today's Bible story, from 1 Samuel 1:1-23, the children hear that God loves babies. Dramatic play about babies is often enjoyable for toddlers and two year olds. As you play with children in the Home Living area, show them how to dress the dolls and wrap them in blankets. While the children are playing, remind them that God loves babies.



## Lesson 1 Focus: God loves babies.

# Bible Step

## Talk Time

■ Materials: Creative Teaching Aids—Photo Poster 1

Toddlers love to look at photographs that show children. Sharing what they know about babies helps them connect to the Bible story “God Loves Babies” from 1 Samuel 1:1-23. Invite small groups (of four children or less) to the rug for Talk Time. Use this rhyme to help capture their attention.

**Clap, clap, clap.**

**Pat your knee.**

**Clap, clap, clap.**

**Look at me.**



Photo Poster 1

*Show Photo Poster 1 to the children. Point to the child. **Here is a child. There is also a baby in the picture. Can you find the baby in the picture?** Have each child point to the baby. **What does a baby eat?** Be sure to give each child an opportunity to share. You may need to give examples. **What does a baby wear?** Again have the children share ideas. They may talk about diapers. **What else can you tell me about babies?** Encourage those children with undeveloped verbal skills to point or act out what they know about babies. **Today we are going to learn that God loves babies.***

## Bible Story Time

■ 1 Samuel 1:1-23

Toddlers can relate well to the nurturing and love babies require. By teaching about babies the children will begin to understand that God loves all family members. Have your Bible open to 1 Samuel. **Our story today is from God’s special book, the Bible. Hannah’s story is in the Bible. Hannah might tell her story like this:**

**My name is Hannah. I was very sad because I didn’t have a baby.**

*(Pretend to cry.)*

**I loved babies.**

*(Hug yourself.)*

**I asked God for a baby.**

*(Fold your hands.)*

**God gave me a baby boy.**

*(Pretend to rock a baby.)*

**The baby’s name was Samuel. God loved Samuel.**

**God loves babies.**

*(Point to heaven, then pretend to rock a baby.)*

## Story Questions

Ask the following questions to review the Bible story:

**1. What did God give to Hannah?** (A baby)

**2. Who loves babies?** (God)



Whether you are telling the story to one child or a small group, repeat the Bible story. Repeating the actions with you will help the children learn and remember.



# Bible Review Step

## Bible Story Review Time

- Materials: Creative Teaching Aids—Story Figures 1, 2, Story Card 1, Story Mat

Touching and moving things are good ways for toddlers to learn. The children in your class are not concerned if the same figure is used as different characters throughout the quarter. It is more important that they are able to move the figures around as you tell the Bible Review story. This week the woman (Figure 1) will be Hannah and the baby (Figure 2) will be Samuel. Have the children handle the figures of Hannah and Samuel as they help you retell the Bible story. Anytime after you have done the Bible Step, you can do the Bible Review Step. Keep the small group you have at the rug or visit children at different activities and tell the Bible Review story.



Before class, find a story mat to use to review the stories. A small towel or blanket will work well as a story mat. Put the figures in the order you will use them. Lay Story Card 1 next to the story mat. Present the story to each small group.

*Put Hannah (Figure 1) on the mat before telling the story.*

**The Bible tells us about Hannah. Hannah was sad. She didn't have a baby. Hannah prayed to God. She asked God for a baby.**

**God gave Hannah a baby boy. Have a child put Samuel (Figure 2) on the mat. Hannah named the baby Samuel. God loved Samuel. God loves babies.**

Even if you tell the story to just one child at a time, repeat it to each child or small group. Young children need to hear and do things more than once.



Story Mat with Story Figures 1, 2, and Story Card 1

## Music Time

- Materials: Creative Teaching Aids—CD, CD player



Music filled with energy and action is perfect for toddlers. They learn the way they like best—using their whole bodies and lots of energy! This song reinforces the Bible story, from 1 Samuel 1:1-23, that God loves babies.

### "THE FAMILY SONG"

The complete song is track 1 on the CD in the Creative Teaching Aids packet. The words and movements can be found on page 71 of this teacher's guide.

Children like to sing a song many times. Repeat "THE FAMILY SONG" to help your class learn the music.



**Lesson 1 Focus: God loves babies.**

## Craft Step

### Baby Blankets

The process of doing a craft is one of the ways toddlers and two year olds learn. They discover how glue works by drizzling and pressing paper. Encourage each child to create more than one Baby Blanket as time allows. All the things your children create are treasures. You can send them all home.

**Materials:** Construction paper

Paper scraps

Glue in bottles

*Optional:* damp paper towels to clean messy hands



**Before Class:** Cut the construction paper into half sheets. Tear or cut the paper scraps into pieces about three inches square. Put a pile of paper scraps at each place at the table.

### Craft Time:

**Our Bible story told us that God loves babies. Babies need blankets to stay warm. We can use the paper to make blankets for a baby.** Give each child a piece of construction paper. Let the children drizzle glue on the construction paper. You may need to show some children how to drizzle the glue without making large “blobs.” Large “blobs” of glue make the paper heavy and take a long time to dry. Then have each child press paper scraps on the glue.

While the children work, talk about the Bible story from 1 Samuel 1:1-23. **The Bible tells us about Hannah. Hannah asked God for a baby. God gave her a baby named Samuel. God loves babies.**

Let each child make as many baby blankets as he or she wants.



### Goodbye Time

As they leave, tell all the children, individually, you are glad they came. As you say goodbye, ask, **“Who loves babies?”** Send home the cover of *Starting Steps* this week. Families can enjoy the calendar activities. Send each child home with his or her very own *Starting Steps*. One side connects each child’s family to today’s lesson; the other side includes a devotional, parenting tips, and an amusing anecdote.