

Eli and Boy Samuel

BIBLE PASSAGE: 1 Samuel 1–3

MAIN POINT: God called Samuel to share God’s plan.

KEY PASSAGE: Isaiah 33:22

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: How does God accomplish His plan? God uses people for His glory and our good.

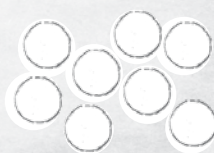
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(25–30 MINUTES)
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Leader BIBLE STUDY

Hannah—an ordinary Israelite during the time of the judges—wanted nothing more than to be a mother, but the Lord had closed her womb. (1 Sam. 1:5) Each year when her husband went to Shiloh to worship and to sacrifice to God, Hannah went up to the house of the Lord. One evening, Hannah returned to present herself to the Lord. She wept and prayed, asking God to give her a son and vowing to dedicate him to God. Hannah’s cries to the Lord were so fervent that Eli the priest rebuked her because he thought she was drunk.

“I haven’t had any wine or beer; I’ve been pouring out my heart before the Lord,” Hannah explained. Eli blessed

Hannah and said, “May God answer your prayers.” God answered Hannah’s prayers. Hannah had a son. She named him Samuel, which means, “requested from God.”

When Samuel was old enough to be weaned, Hannah took him to Shiloh and presented him to Eli. First Samuel 2 records Hannah’s triumphant prayer. Hannah glorified God for His sovereignty, then she went home with her husband, leaving Samuel to serve God under the leadership of Eli the priest. Samuel faithfully served God. Hannah visited Samuel each year and brought him a robe.

Now Eli had two sons of his own who were also priests. Eli had trouble controlling his sons. They were wicked men with no regard for God. Eli rebuked his children, but they did not listen. So God rejected Eli’s family.

Review 1 Samuel 3. Note how Samuel responded to God’s call: “Speak, for Your servant is listening.” Samuel was the prophet Israel needed to give them God’s guidance. He became a prophet of God and was the last judge of Israel. Help kids identify Samuel’s role as God’s messenger. Help them connect Samuel to Jesus, who came to earth not only to tell what God is like, but to show what He is like.



The BIBLE STORY

Eli and Boy Samuel

1 Samuel 1–3

In a hilly country called Ephraim, **a man named Elkanah lived with his wife Hannah. Hannah was very sad because she did not have any children.** Hannah wanted to have a family.

Every year, Elkanah went to the tabernacle to make sacrifices to God and to worship Him. Hannah went with him. Elkanah saw that Hannah was upset. “What’s wrong, Hannah?” he asked. “Don’t I make you happy?”

Hannah prayed to God, “Lord, if You give me a son, I will dedicate him to You. He will serve You all of his life.” A priest named Eli was sitting near the doorpost of the tabernacle. **Eli watched Hannah pray.** He couldn’t hear her, but he saw her lips moving. **Eli thought there was something wrong with Hannah.**

Hannah explained, “I’ve been pouring out my heart before the Lord.”

Eli replied, “Go in peace. May God answer your prayers.”

Hannah and Elkanah returned home, and **God did answer her prayers. After some time, Hannah gave birth to a son. She named him Samuel.**

When Samuel was no longer a baby, Hannah took him to Eli at the tabernacle. “God answered my prayers!” she said. Hannah pledged Samuel to serve God and she worshiped God.

Hannah returned home and left Samuel with Eli to serve God. Every year, Hannah returned with a new robe for Samuel, and God gave Hannah many more children.

Eli was getting old, and his sons served as priests in the

tabernacle. Eli heard that his sons were sinning against God. Eli asked his sons why they were sinning, but they did not listen to him. **Samuel**, on the other hand, **grew older and found favor with God and with men.**

One night, Eli was in his bed and Samuel was lying in the tabernacle when Samuel heard someone speak to him.

“Here I am,” Samuel replied. He ran to Eli. “Here I am; you called me.”

God called Samuel three times, and each time Samuel ran to Eli. “Here I am,” he said. Eli finally understood that God was calling to Samuel. He told Samuel how to respond.

Samuel went back to his place, and God called, “Samuel, Samuel!”

“Speak, for Your servant is listening,” Samuel replied. God told Samuel that He was going to judge Eli’s family for their sin.

The next day, Samuel was afraid to tell Eli what God had said. Eli asked Samuel to tell him what God said, so Samuel did.

As Samuel grew, God was with him. Everyone in Israel knew that Samuel was God’s messenger. **God used Samuel to share His plan with the nation of Israel.**

Christ Connection: Samuel used God’s words to tell the people what God is like. John 1:1 says that Jesus is the Word. Jesus showed the world what God is like, and He told people to turn away from their sin. Jesus ultimately freed people from the power of sin by dying on the cross and rising again.



**WANT TO
DISCOVER
GOD’S WORD?
GET
ADVENTURE!**

Invite kids to check out this week’s devotionals to discover that God heard Hannah’s prayer and gave her a son, and Hannah praised God. Like the Psalmist says, God is good and His love is eternal. (Ps. 136:1) Order in bulk, subscribe quarterly, or purchase individually. For more information, check out www.lifeway.com/devotionals.

Small Group OPENING

SESSION TITLE: Eli and Boy Samuel

BIBLE PASSAGE: 1 Samuel 1–3

MAIN POINT: God called Samuel to share God’s plan.

KEY PASSAGE: Isaiah 33:22

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: How does God accomplish His plan? God uses people for His glory and our good.

Welcome time

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, and help new kids connect to your group. As kids arrive, ask them to name one thing they cannot wait until they are old enough to do, such as driving a car, going to high school, or getting a job.

SAY • In our Bible story, Samuel was a young boy when God called him to do something amazing. Do you think God has an age limit when it comes to using people for His glory and our good?

Activity page (5 minutes)

- “Which Came First?” activity page, 1 per kid
- pencils or markers

Invite kids to complete the “Which Came First?” on the activity page.

SAY • The way people talk to one another sure has changed quite a bit, hasn’t it? I bet some of you may never have even seen some of those ways to communicate! In today’s Bible story, we are going to meet a boy named Samuel. **God called Samuel to share God’s plan.**

Session starter (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: Who called you?

Choose a volunteer to sit in a chair with her back to the rest of the class and close her eyes. Silently point to another kid to call out the volunteer's name twice. The volunteer must guess who called her name. If she is correct, the person who called her name will be the new volunteer. If she guesses incorrectly, he must call out her name again. Play as time allows, giving each kid a chance to call out a name or guess who said it.

SAY • In our Bible story today, a young boy named Samuel heard someone calling his name. He thought it was Eli the priest, but it was actually someone else. We will find out more in the Bible story.

OPTION 2: Play the telephone game

Invite the kids to sit in a circle. Whisper the main point, big picture question, or another sentence in the ear of the kid on your right. He will whisper it to the kid on his right, and she will continue to pass the message around the circle until it reaches you again.

If the message is correct, congratulate the kids. If the message is incorrect, say, "Listen again," and repeat the sentence into the ear of the first kid. Continue playing as time allows.

SAY • In today's Bible story, someone gave Samuel an important message that he had to tell Eli the priest. We will learn more in our Bible story.

Transition to large group



Large Group LEADER

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Countdown

• countdown video

Show the countdown video as your kids arrive, and set it to end as large group time begins.

Introduce the session (3 minutes)

• leader attire

• notepad

• pen

• employee of the month
ribbon or plaque

[Large Group Leader enters dressed in a polo shirt and slacks with an apron and a name tag. Leader is also carrying a notepad and pen to take orders.]

LEADER • Good morning, everyone! I’m so excited to see you today. Guess what? Our manager came to the diner yesterday and told the servers that one of us is going to be voted employee of the month. According to our manager, the employee of the month is someone who works hard to help customers, doesn’t mix up orders, and has a great team spirit.

Our customers will fill out a comment card, which our manager will use to determine who wins the employee of the month. That means I need to make sure I really give my customers my best effort this week!

You know, the employee of the month contest reminds me of today’s Bible story. In our Bible story today, the priest Eli was a man who loved God. His

sons, on the other hand, did not love or honor God. They cheated the people of Israel, and they made many sinful choices. They would definitely not have received a good report on a customer comment card!

Giant timeline (1 minute)

LEADER • Today's Bible story is called "Eli and Boy Samuel." [*Point to today's story on the timeline.*] Even though today's Bible story is found in the Book of 1 Samuel, it is still part of the judges stories because Samuel can be considered the last of the Old Testament judges.

• Giant Timeline

When Samuel was a judge, the people demanded to have a king like the nations around them. God was supposed to be their king, but the people wanted a human king instead. But we will get to that another day. Today we will see how **God called Samuel to share God's plan.**

Key passage (5 minutes)

Show the key passage poster. Lead the boys and girls to read together Isaiah 33:22. Invite volunteers to say the key passage from memory. Thank kids for their attempt.

• Key Passage Slide or Poster
• "He Will Save Us" song

LEADER • Our key passage reminds us that God is our Judge, lawgiver, and King. Since God never changes, He is still our Judge, lawgiver, and King! God sent His Son, Jesus, to rescue us from sin and be our King forever!

Sing the key passage song, "He Will Save Us."

Big picture question (1 minute)

LEADER • This is our last week to say our big picture question and answer, *How does God accomplish His plan? God uses people for His glory and our good.* In our Bible story today, God used a young boy to share His message to the people.

Tell the Bible story (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to 1 Samuel 1–3. Tell the Bible story in your own words, or show the Bible story video “Eli and Boy Samuel.” For a shorter version of the Bible story, read only the bolded text of the Bible story script.

LEADER • Hannah wanted a son very badly. The amazing thing is that Hannah promised God that if He gave her a son, she would give him right back to God! God answered her prayer, and God gave her a son. Hannah named her son Samuel, and she kept her promise to give Samuel to the Lord. Hannah took Samuel to the tabernacle and left him there under Eli’s care.

Can you imagine how exciting it must have been for Samuel to hear God’s voice? At first, Samuel thought he heard Eli calling his name. At this time in the Bible story, there were not many prophets who received messages from God. [*See 1 Samuel 3:1.*] But even though Samuel was young, **God called Samuel to share God’s plan.**

Ask the following review questions:

1. Who was the priest when Hannah went to the tabernacle to pray for a son? (*Eli, 1 Sam. 1:9*)
2. How long did Hannah say she would give Samuel to the Lord? (*all his life; 1 Sam. 1:11,28*)

- Bibles
- “Eli and Boy Samuel” video
- Big Picture Question Poster
- Bible Story Picture Poster
- Main Point Poster

3. What did Hannah bring to Samuel every year?
(*a new robe, 1 Sam. 2:19*)
4. What was Samuel's message to Eli? (*God was going to judge Eli's family for their sin, 1 Sam. 3:13*)
5. ***How does God accomplish His plan? God uses people for His glory and our good.***

LEADER • Samuel used God's words to tell the people what God is like. John 1:1 says that Jesus is the Word. Jesus showed the world what God is like, and He told people to turn away from their sin. Jesus ultimately freed people from the power of sin by dying on the cross and rising again.

The Gospel: God's Plan for Me (optional)

Use Scripture and the guide provided with this session to explain to boys and girls how to become a Christian. Assign individuals to meet with kids who have more questions.

Encourage boys and girls to ask their parents, small group leaders, or other Christian adults any questions they may have about becoming a Christian.

*Tip: Provide *I'm a Christian Now* for new Christians to take home and complete with their families.*

Discussion starter video (4 minutes)

LEADER • Are you a good listener? Watch this. Show the "Unit 9, Session 6" discussion starter video.

LEADER • Why did Emiliano miss out on a better snack? Was it that he couldn't hear or that he wasn't paying attention? What are some things that can distract us and prevent us from hearing someone at times?
[*Invite responses.*]

• "Unit 9, Session 6" discussion starter video

Guide a discussion of how there are times that we choose not to hear someone else because we would rather pay attention to someone—or something—else. Remind kids

that televisions and music players can be turned down or off, games can be paused, and so forth to allow them to hear others better.

LEADER • Just like it is hard for us to hear our parents or a teacher, or someone else, sometimes it is hard to hear from God because we are distracted or not paying attention. What are some ways that we can learn to hear from God better? [*Invite responses.*]

Be sure to address any ways the kids miss such as reading the Bible, choosing a quiet place and time to pray, keeping a journal, and so forth.

Sing (4 minutes)

• “All for Your Glory” song

LEADER • Although there are times when we have trouble hearing from God, the great thing is that He never fails to hear us! Whenever we talk with God and worship Him, He hears! Let’s worship God now knowing that He hears us.

Sing together “All for Your Glory.”

Pray (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before dismissing to small groups.

LEADER • Dear God, thank You for calling Samuel to tell Your people what You are like. Thank You for sending Jesus to show us what You are like. Thank You for revealing who You are to us. Help us to boldly tell others about Your plan to rescue them from sin by sending Your Son, Jesus, to die on the cross and come back to life again. Amen.

Dismiss to small groups

The Gospel: God's Plan for Me

Ask kids if they have ever heard the word *gospel*. Clarify that the word *gospel* means “good news.” It is the message about Christ, the kingdom of God, and salvation. Use the following guide to share the gospel with kids.



God rules. Explain to kids that the Bible tells us God created everything, and He is in charge of everything. Invite a volunteer to read Genesis 1:1 from the Bible. Read Revelation 4:11 or Colossians 1:16-17 aloud and explain what these verses mean.



We sinned. Tell kids that since the time of Adam and Eve, everyone has chosen to disobey God. (Romans 3:23) The Bible calls this sin. Because God is holy, God cannot be around sin. Sin separates us from God and deserves God's punishment of death. (Romans 6:23)



God provided. Choose a child to read John 3:16 aloud. Say that God sent His Son, Jesus, the perfect solution to our sin problem, to rescue us from the punishment we deserve. It's something we, as sinners, could never earn on our own. Jesus alone saves us. Read and explain Ephesians 2:8-9.



Jesus gives. Share with kids that Jesus lived a perfect life, died on the cross for our sins, and rose again. Because Jesus gave up His life for us, we can be welcomed into God's family for eternity. This is the best gift ever! Read Romans 5:8; 2 Corinthians 5:21; or 1 Peter 3:19.



We respond. Tell kids that they can respond to Jesus. Read Romans 10:9-10,13. Review these aspects of our response: Believe in your heart that Jesus alone saves you through what He's already done on the cross. Repent, turning from self and sin to Jesus. Tell God and others that your faith is in Jesus.

Offer to talk with any child who is interested in responding to Jesus.

Small Group LEADER

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BIG PICTURE QUESTION: How does God accomplish His plan? God uses people for His glory and our good.

Key passage activity (5 minutes)

- Key Passage Poster
- kid-size bathrobe with pockets
- index cards
- markers
- stopwatch (optional)

Before the session, borrow a clean kid-size bathrobe that has pockets. Write each word from the key passage on separate index cards. Mix them up and place them in the pockets of the bathrobe.

Invite the kids to line up single file. Across from the kids, hang the bathrobe on the back of a chair. When you say go, the first kid in line will run to the bathrobe, put it on, tie it, pull a card out of the pocket, remove the bathrobe, and run back to tag the next kid in line.

Once kids retrieve the key passage cards, instruct them to put the key passage in order. Play again and time the kids to see how quickly they can compete the challenge.

SAY • Each year, Hannah made a robe to bring to her son when she and her husband traveled to the tabernacle to make their yearly sacrifices. **God called Samuel to share God’s plan** with the people. The Bible says that everything Samuel told the people about God came true. God is our Judge, our Lawgiver, and our King. His words are true!

- Bibles, 1 per kid
- Main Point Poster
- Small Group Timeline or unit 9 Bible Story Pictures

Bible story review & Bible skills (10 minutes)

Open your Bibles to 1 Samuel 1–3. Invite kids to read

aloud Hannah's song praising God from 1 Samuel 2:1-10. Talk about how Hannah's praise of God is similar to what the judges told the people about God. Explain that kids will use the small group timeline or Bible story pictures to review the Bible stories you've learned this unit.

Option: Retell or review the Bible story using the bolded text of the Bible story script.

Ask the following questions:

1. Who were the judges? (*The judges were people whom God called to rescue the Israelites from their enemies and lead them to worship God.*)
2. Why did the Israelites need the judges? (*They kept forgetting God and turning to worship idols.*)
3. Name the judges we have learned about over the last few weeks. (*Ehud, Othniel, Shamgar, Deborah, Gideon, Samson, Samuel*)
4. To whom did God give a message through Deborah? (*Barak*)
5. Who gave Samson his power? (**God gave Samson power.**)
6. How did Boaz help Ruth and Naomi? (*He was a family redeemer.*)
7. What did God call Samuel to do? (**God called Samuel to share God's plan.**)
8. *How does God accomplish His plan? God uses people for His glory and our good.*

SAY • God sent the judges to lead the Israelites and to rescue them from the consequences of their sin, but the judges could not save people from the cause of sin. God had a plan to rescue people from the cause of their sin. God sent Jesus to die on the cross and rise again to rescue us from sin and give us eternal life when we trust in Him.

Activity choice (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: Impossible tasks

Invite each kid to attempt to do one or both of the following tasks. The tasks seem pretty easy, but they are actually impossible to do!

1. Stand against one wall with your ankle, knee, hip, and shoulder of one side of your body touching the wall. Your head must also touch the wall. Try to lift your opposite foot off the ground without moving away from the wall. (*Why it is impossible: You would need to move your head and shoulder off the wall to redistribute your weight.*)
2. Sit in a chair with your feet in front of you flat on the ground and your back touching the back of the chair. Without using your hands or leaning forward, stand up. (*Why it is impossible: With your back straight, your center of gravity is off. You can only put your weight over your knees so you can stand in this position by leaning forward.*)

SAY • That was a challenge, wasn't it? Those tasks were impossible because we are limited by what our bodies can do. Hannah could not have children, and she prayed to God for a son. God answered her prayer and gave Hannah a son, Samuel. **God called Samuel to share God's plan.**

OPTION 2: Thank-you robes

Before the session, cut robes out of sheets of construction paper. Explain that Hannah kept her promise to give Samuel to God. She took him to serve in the tabernacle, and she brought him a new robe each year.

Invite kids to decorate paper robes to give to the people

- heavyweight paper
- crayons and markers
- stickers
- construction paper
- glue
- various art supplies

who brought them to church as a thank you.

SAY • Hannah brought Samuel to the tabernacle where **God called Samuel to share God’s plan.** The people who brought you to church today are part of God’s plan to share His message of His love for you. God sent His Son, Jesus, to die on the cross and rise again. Give them this robe and tell them how a robe was part of today’s Bible story. Thank them for bringing you to church.

Journal and prayer (5 minutes)

Distribute each child’s journal and instruct the kids to draw how they, like Samuel, can share God’s message with people they meet at home, at school, or in other activities.

SAY • **God called Samuel to share God’s plan.** Even though Samuel was young, people realized that God was with Samuel. You don’t have to wait until you are older for God to use you in His plan. ***How does God accomplish His plan? God uses people for His glory and our good***—even you!

Make sure each child secures this week’s sheet in the journal, and then collect them. Keep the journals in the classroom so they will be available every week or as often as you wish to use them.

If time remains, take prayer requests or allow kids to complete the coloring page provided with this session. Pray, thanking God that nothing can stop His plan to rescue people from sin. Pray that God will help us share with others His plan of salvation through Jesus Christ alone.

- pencils
- Journal Page
- Bible Story Coloring Page, 1 per kid
- crayons or markers

Tip: Give parents this week’s *Big Picture Cards for Families* to allow families to interact with the biblical content at home.

Journal Page

God Judges His People

Key Passage: Isaiah 33:22

Big Picture Question: How does God accomplish His plan? God uses people for His glory and our good.

Session 1: The First Judges

Judges 3:7-31

God's people turned from Him to worship idols.

Session 2: Deborah and Barak

Judges 4-5

God's people needed someone to rescue them from their enemies.

Session 3: Gideon

Judges 6-8

God used Gideon's weakness for His glory.

Session 4: Samson

Judges 13-16

God gave Samson power.

Session 5: Ruth and Boaz

Ruth 1-4

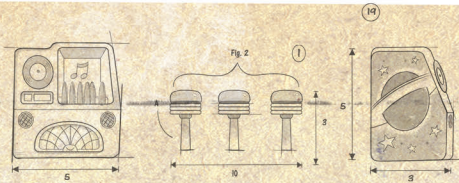
God provided a redeemer for Ruth.

Session 6: Eli and Boy Samuel

1 Samuel 1-3

God called Samuel to share God's plan.

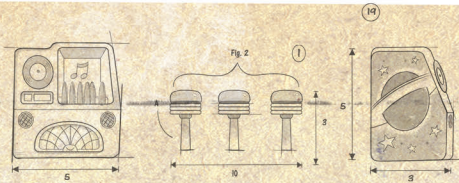




The LORD is our
Judge, the LORD is
our lawgiver, the
LORD is our King.
He will save us.

Isaiah 33:22

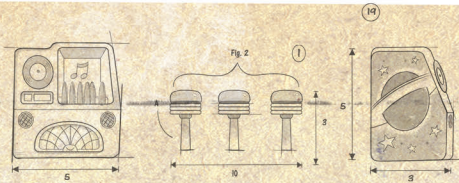




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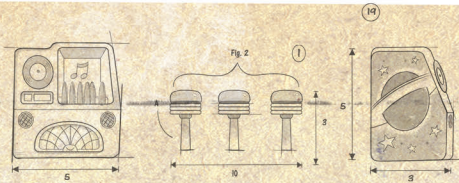




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Isaiah 33:22





The LORD is our
judge, the LORD is
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LORD is our king; it is
he who will save us.

Isaiah 33:22



God called
Samuel to share
God's plan.





Which Came First?

DOWNLOAD THE
TGP FAMILY APP

INSTRUCTIONS: Place the ways we can communicate with others in the order they were invented.

KEY PASSAGE: Isaiah 33:22

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

- How does God accomplish His plan? God uses people for His glory and our good.

BIBLE STORY:

ELI AND BOY SAMUEL

- Hannah did not have any children and prayed to God for a son.
- God gave Hannah a son named Samuel, and she took him to live with Eli at the tabernacle.
- God called to Samuel at night and gave him a message.
- God used Samuel to share His plan with the people of Israel.

FAMILY DISCUSSION STARTERS:

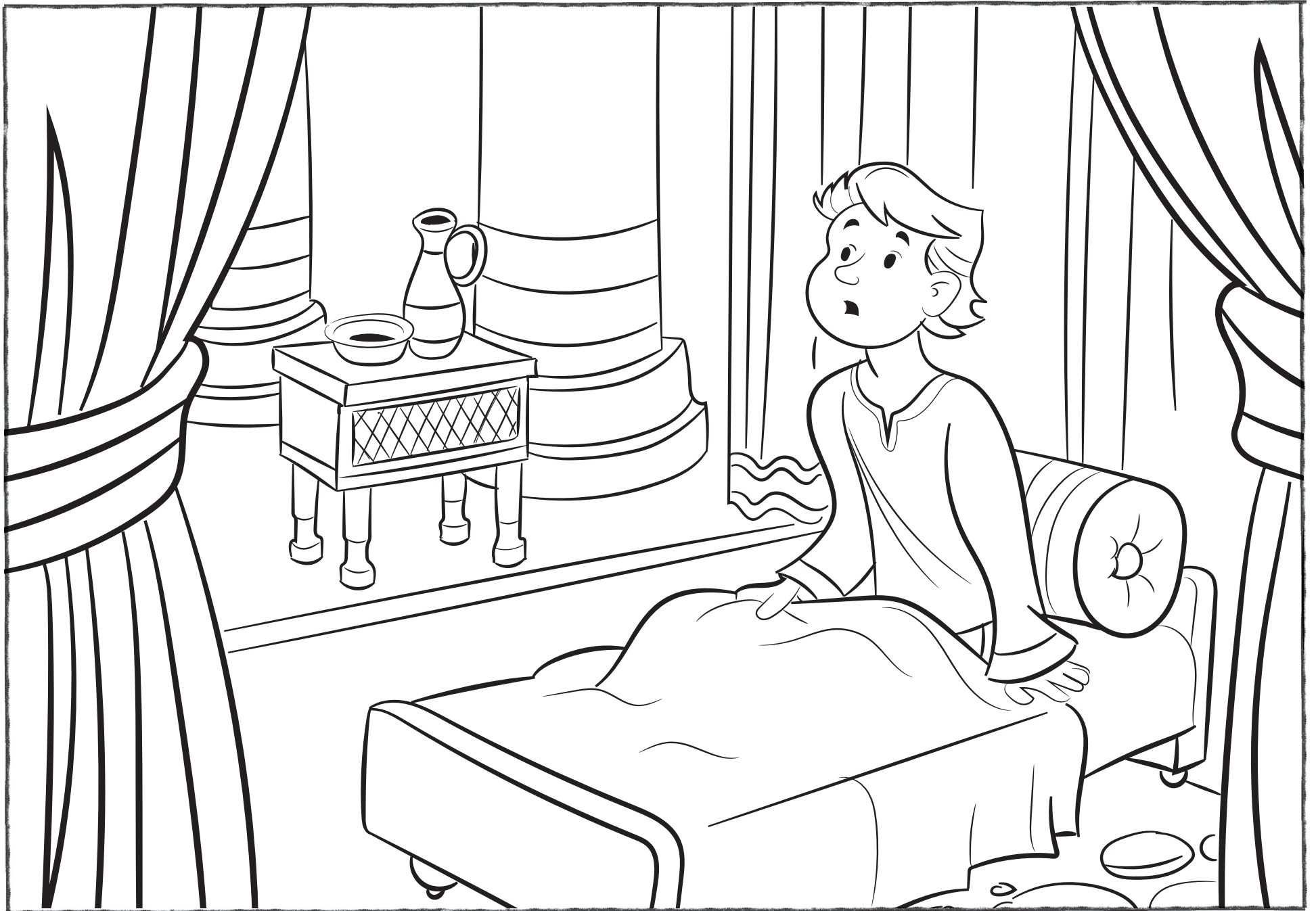
- Read Luke 2. How can kids be used by God?
- How has each family member blessed you?

FAMILY ACTIVITY:

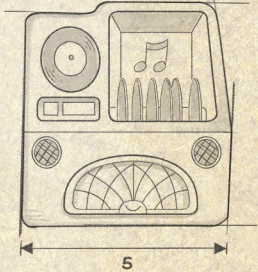
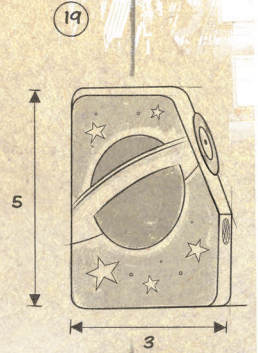
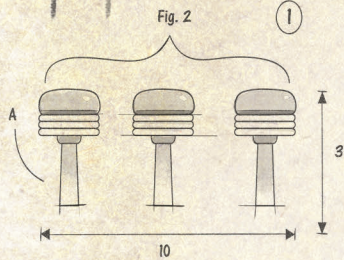
- If you do not have a regular Bible reading plan as a family, develop one.
- Go further: Pray for couples you know who have not been able to have children. Pray for the kids who need to be adopted.

Younger Kids Activity Pages
Unit 9, Session 6

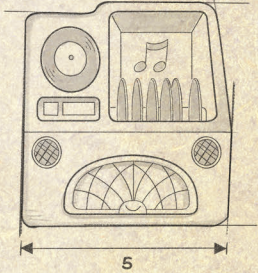
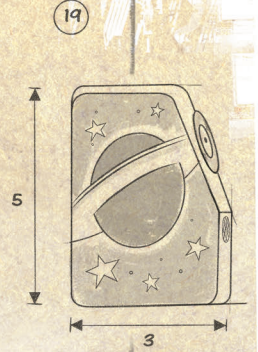
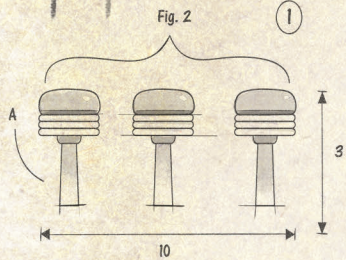




How does God accomplish His plan?



How does God accomplish His plan?



God uses people for His glory and our good.

