

# God is Gracious!

**Key Verse:** “The LORD is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.”  
--Psalm 145:8

**Bible Story:** 1 Samuel 1:1-8

Ask if any of the kids in the group know what the word **gracious** means. Then have the group read this week’s memory verse (**Psalm 145:8**) from the poster. Ask if the verse gives any clues about what gracious means. Explain that another way we could say **gracious** is to say that God shows grace to His people and gives us what we don’t deserve, or doesn’t give us what we do deserve. Tell the kids that you want to tell them a story from the Bible that helps to explain **gracious**.

Read **1 Samuel 1:1-8** to the group. Choose children to play the parts of Elkanah, Hannah, Peninnah & Eli while you read. After reading through the text, make sure the kids in the group get the following points.

- There was a man named Elkanah who had two wives- Hannah and Peninnah.
- Peninnah had children, but Hannah didn’t.
- Every year Elkanah’s family would go to Shiloh to worship the Lord and sacrifice to Him.
- One year while they were in Shiloh, Hannah got really upset and wept and cried out to the Lord in prayer. In her prayer she promised God that if He would give her a son that she would give him back to God to serve Him.
- Eli, the priest saw her praying and confronted her and Hannah told him what she was praying and Eli prayed for her as well.
- Elkanah and his family went home and soon Hannah became pregnant. When the baby was born, she named him Samuel because she asked the Lord for him.
- When Samuel was still a very young boy (around 2 maybe), Hannah took Samuel back to Shiloh where she offered a sacrifice to God.
- Then, she took Samuel to Eli, the priest, and told him that she asked God for a baby and He gave her Samuel, so she was keeping her promise to God and was giving Samuel back to Him to serve God.

## GRACIOUS = MERCIFUL, BENEVOLENT, KIND & COMPASSIONATE

**EXPLAIN:** Talk about how we saw the **graciousness** of God in today’s story. In this story, God was **gracious** to Hannah; He heard her prayer and He gave her Samuel. Explain how **gracious** has the root word **grace** in it and that grace can be defined as getting what we don’t deserve and that God is gracious to His people by giving us what we don’t deserve. Since motions & actions help kids remember, choose an action for *GRACIOUS*. *A good motion might be to pretend to hand someone a gift.*

## MEMORY VERSE:

**SAY:** “This morning we’re talking about the truth that God is **gracious**. Another way we could say this is to say that God shows grace to His people and gives us what we don’t deserve, or doesn’t give us what we do deserve.”

Ask, where in the story did we see this definition of grace play out? Explain that God didn’t have to give Hannah a baby, nothing she did meant that she deserved a baby, but that God was gracious to her.

Read the **memory verse** (Psalm 145:8) one more time.

## CROSS CONNECTION:

Take a few minutes to talk about the most amazing way that God has shown grace (or been gracious) to His people. Then, have one of the kids read **Romans 5:8** and ask, what did God do to show His grace to us? Explain how because of our sin we all deserve death, but that God is gracious and gave His only Son, Jesus, so that we might live. Read **Ephesians 2:8-9** and ask what this verse tells us about salvation – it is a free gift of God’s grace. Remind the kids that in the story God didn’t have to give Hannah a baby, but he graciously gave her the gift of a baby, and in the same way, God didn’t have to save anyone and didn’t have to give up His Son, but because of His great love for His people He graciously did just that.

## REVIEW:

Give each child a blank piece of paper provide markers or colored pencils. Encourage them to write the word *gracious* somewhere on the paper and then write or draw something to help them remember this attribute of God. They could write the definition for *gracious* or the memory verse or you could encourage them to draw two cartoons, one of God being gracious to Hannah in the birth of Samuel and one of God’s ultimate act of grace in Jesus dying on the cross in our place. After a few minutes, bring the group back together and give kids time to share what they have drawn or written.

## PRAYER:

Pray that the kids in the group would personally come to know the graciousness of God more and more each day and that they would turn to this gracious God for salvation.