

Bible Story 16: SAMUEL HEARING GOD CALLING

SCRIPTURE: 1 SAMUEL 1:1-28; 2:11,18-21; 3:1-10,19-20

MEMORY VERSE: 1 SAMUEL 3:10

BIBLE STORY:

NARRATOR: During the time of the last judge in Israel, there was a woman called Hannah who did not have any children. Every year she and her husband Elkanah left their town and went to worship and offer sacrifices to God at the Tabernacle in Shiloh. This year Hannah was very sad over not having any children. In the Tabernacle she cried out and prayed to God, saying:

HANNAH: *“O Lord, if you will give me a son, I promise I will give him back to you to serve you all his life.”*

NARRATOR: Now sitting just inside the temple was the priest Eli, the religious leader. He watched Hannah, and, after talking with her and seeing her sadness, he said,

ELI: *“Return home in peace. May God give you what you have asked.”*

NARRATOR: God responded to Hannah’s prayer. Later she gave birth to a son and called him Samuel. Hannah and Elkanah dedicated him to God. When he was old enough, they took him to the Tabernacle in Shiloh, where he was to stay and serve God. Every day Samuel helped the priest Eli and he was like a son to him. Each year Samuel’s mother came, bringing him a new robe to wear.

Time passed. Eli was old and almost blind. One evening, Eli was lying down in his normal place. Samuel was lying inside the Tabernacle, probably helping the priest Eli by making sure the oil lamp remained lit. *(The lamp was required to stay lit from sundown in the evening to sunrise in the morning.)* Suddenly the Lord called out:

VOICE (GOD): *“Samuel, Samuel!”*

NARRATOR: Samuel ran to Eli and said,

SAMUEL: *“Sir, did you call me? Here I am.”*

ELI: *“No, I didn’t call you. Go back to bed.”*

NARRATOR: Samuel returned to his bed. For a second time the Lord called out:

VOICE (GOD): *“Samuel, Samuel!”*

NARRATOR: Once again Samuel got up and went to Eli, saying:

SAMUEL: *“Sir, did you call me? Here I am again.”*

ELI: *“Son, I didn’t call you. Go back to bed.”*

NARRATOR: Now for the third time the Lord called out:

VOICE (GOD): *“Samuel, Samuel!”*

NARRATOR: Once again Samuel got up and went to Eli, saying:

SAMUEL: *“Sir, did you call me? Here I am.”*

NARRATOR: Finally Eli understood that it was God calling Samuel. Eli said,

ELI: *“Samuel, it is the voice of God calling you. Return to your bed and, when the voice calls again, say, ‘Speak, my Lord, for your servant listens.’”*

NARRATOR: Samuel returned to his bed. For the fourth time, God called out:

VOICE (GOD): *“Samuel, Samuel!”*

NARRATOR: This time Samuel stayed in his bed and said,

SAMUEL: *“Speak, my Lord, for your servant listens.”*

NARRATOR: God spoke to Samuel. God had special plans for Samuel’s life. He became a priest and prophet of God, respected by all the people in Israel.

LIFE LESSONS:

1. When Samuel was small, he began to serve God. No matter what your age is, seek ways to serve God.
2. Samuel liked the church and helped Eli in the Tabernacle. Follow Samuel’s example. Go to church and participate in the services, singing, reading the Bible and praying. Help take care of your church. How? (Examples: bringing flowers, picking up paper other people have thrown on the floor, straightening the hymnals in the racks...)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. Why was Hannah sad? What was a Tabernacle? What did Hannah do when she went to the Tabernacle? What did Eli say? Who was born?
2. When was Samuel taken to live in the Tabernacle? What did he do in the Tabernacle?
3. What are some ways you can worship and help in your church?
4. About how old was Samuel when God called him (an adult, youth, preteen, child or preschooler)?
5. Does it matter how old a person is when God calls him/her? Why?
6. How many times did God call Samuel during the night? Was Samuel listening? What did Samuel do the first three times? What happened on the fourth call?
7. How does God talk to people today? Should we listen? Why?
8. Do you think God has a special plan for each person's life? How can you discover God's plan for your life?

ACTIVITIES FOR THIS BIBLE STORY:

Choose activities that may be used in your specific situation. Consider the age and maturity of each person, locality where the story will be told (customs and traditions), and available resources, time and space.

PRESENTATION:

- Ask: *"Tell me about your church. Where is it located? What color is it? Describe the windows. Who works in your church? When do you go to church? How do you get to church? How do you worship in your church?"*
- Explain: *"During the time of the Bible story we're going to hear today, the Tabernacle was the church where Israelite people went to worship God. The Tabernacle was like a tent; it was portable. Why? Whenever God led the people to move, the Israelites were able to dismantle the Tabernacle and take it with them. Inside the Tabernacle was the Ark of the Covenant, where the Ten Commandments were kept. Also inside the Tabernacle was a Lampstand. The priests were to make sure there was enough oil so the lamp remained lit all night."*
- Using appropriate expressions, tell the Bible story about Samuel in your own words.
- Immediately after telling the story, share the Life Lessons and/or ask questions for discussion.

for a child and what happened.

...**Priest Eli:** Tell the story as if you are Eli, sharing what happened during the night when Samuel came during the night and kept waking you up.

...**Samuel:** Tell the story as if you are Samuel, sharing what happened one night when you heard someone keep calling your name.

VISIT A CHURCH:

- **Option 1:** Visit your church. Talk with different people who help in your church and let them tell your group what they do. (Examples: pastor, music director, secretary, janitor, person who takes care of the grounds outside, etc.)
- **Option 2:** Invite different people to come to your group and share what they do in the church.
- **Option 3:** Send or give cards, cookies or a small gift in appreciation to those who help in the church.

MISSION ACTIVITY: "HELP A CHURCH"

- **OPTION 1:** Volunteer your time to help a church:
 - ...Paint and/or redecorate a classroom, etc.
 - ...Replace damaged doors, windows, etc.
 - ...Visit ones who are visiting your church.
 - ...Care for children as their parents go visiting for ones in your church, attend a church function, etc.
 - ...Help in the kitchen during a church meal.
 - ...Send refreshments to the church office for the staff.
- **OPTION 2:** Donate money for helping the church with its budget expenses, loan expenses, mission projects or special needs within the church.
- **OPTION 3:** Pray for your church regularly.

RETELL THE STORY USING DRAMA

- **OPTION 1:** Make copies of the story and let the group dramatize the Bible story.
- **OPTION 2:** Let the group dramatize different characters in the Bible story. Assign different characters in the Bible story to ones in the group. Using their creative abilities, they tell the story in the point of view of their character that is in the story:

Examples:

...**Hannah:** Tell the story as if you are Hannah, sharing how you went to the Tabernacle to pray

DAILY BIBLE READING - 1 Samuel 1:1-28; 2:11,18-21; 3:1-10,19-20

1 ST	2 ND	3 RD	4 TH	5 TH	6 TH	7 TH
1 Samuel 1:1-8	1 Samuel 1:9-18	1 Samuel 1:19-28; 2:11	1 Samuel 2:18-21	1 Samuel 3:1-6	1 Samuel 3:7-10	1 Samuel 3:19-20