

LESSON 52

God Calls Little Samuel

1 SAMUEL 2–3



BIBLE TRUTH

IN THE MIDST OF ISRAEL'S GREAT SIN, GOD RAISES UP A PROPHET

LESSON SNAPSHOT

- 1. OPENING REVIEW 5 MIN**
Use last week’s lesson outline to review with the children what they learned.

- 2. BIBLE STORY 10 MIN**
Read 1 Samuel 3:1–20 from the Scriptures or read story 52, “God Calls Little Samuel,” from *The Gospel Story Bible*.

- 3. OBJECT LESSON 1 15 MIN**
What Would You Do If You Were Eli?

- 4. TEACHING/DISCUSSION 10 MIN**

- 5. OBJECT LESSON 2 10 MIN**
Only God Makes Christians
SUPPLIES:
 - ✓ professional baseball team cap
 - ✓ stethoscope
 - ✓ hammer and nails
 - ✓ pair of scissors
 - ✓ a laptop computer

- 6. SWORD BIBLE MEMORY 5 MIN**

- 7. ACTIVITY TIME 15 MIN**
God Calls Samuel
SUPPLIES:
 - ✓ colored pencils, crayons, and paper

- 8. CLOSING PRAYER 5 MIN**

- 9. BONUS OBJECT LESSON 10 MIN**
Samuel and Jesus

TOTAL 85 MIN

PREPARING TO TEACH

TEACHING POINTS

The word of the Lord is ignored by Eli's house—During Samuel's childhood, most of Israel is disobedient to God. God's priests Hophni and Phinehas, sons of Eli, are corrupt. When the people bring sacrifices to God, Hophni and Phinehas keep some of the best meat for themselves. They do other terribly sinful things as well.

Because of this, the Lord sends a prophet to warn Eli that his sons will be destroyed because they are corrupt. He also says that the priesthood will be taken away from Eli's family because Eli has not honored God. Even in the face of this prophecy, Eli does not remove his sons from serving at the temple.

The word of the Lord comes to Samuel—In this passage we see young Samuel meet the Lord personally for the first time. At first, Samuel does not recognize the voice of God. But Eli discerns that it is God and instructs Samuel to answer. God gives Samuel a prophetic message of judgment over Eli's house. In a time when the word of the Lord and visions are rare among the Israelites because of sin, God speaks clearly to Samuel about the future. Still Eli allows his sons to remain as priests and does not repent.

Samuel delivers the word of the Lord to Eli—Samuel is reluctant but upon the urging of Eli, shares God's judgment over Eli's house and confirms the word of the earlier prophet that the house of Eli will be judged. In their corrupt service as priests of God, Eli's sons were basically rejecting God and his ways. They were using the priesthood for their own advantage, and not honoring God. People who refuse to believe in God and live only for themselves can never be forgiven because they will never repent. This is why God said that no sacrifice or offering could ever atone for the sins of Eli's household.

As Samuel grew, the Lord was with him, and all of Israel recognized him as a prophet of God.

A LITTLE BIT MORE

Shiloh

Shiloh was the place where Joshua brought the ark of God and set up the Tent of Meeting. All through the period of the judges, the ark remained there. An annual feast was held to worship Yahweh. Elkanah, Samuel's father, traveled to the temple in Shiloh for this feast in order to worship God. The ark of God (except for a time when it was at Bethel [Judges 20:26]) remained at Shiloh until it was captured by the Philistines.

WHERE IS JESUS? _____

How does today's Bible story fit into God's greater plan of redemption?

Read 1 Samuel 2:26; Luke 2:52.

In the midst of corruption within Eli's household, God sent a man to prophesy the coming of a faithful priest who would be obedient to the heart and mind of God. The final fulfillment of this promise came in the life of Christ. Jesus did only what his Father commanded him to do (John 14:31). Jesus is a faithful high priest forever (Hebrews 7:21–24).

Samuel was also a foreshadowing of Christ. Very similar language is used to describe both Samuel and Jesus (compare 1 Samuel 2:26 and Luke 2:52).

THE LESSON

OPENING REVIEW 5 MIN

Use last week's lesson outline to review with the children what they learned.

BIBLE STORY 10 MIN

Read 1 Samuel 3:1–20 from the Scriptures or read story 52, "God Calls Little Samuel," from *The Gospel Story Bible*.

OBJECT LESSON 1 15 MIN

What Would You Do If You Were Eli?

After the prophecies against him in both 1 Samuel 2:31–33 and 3:12–14, Eli did not repent. He seemed indifferent to God's message, see 1 Samuel 3:18.

Ask for four volunteers. Tell them that they are all transported back in time and are now the high priest Eli. Tell them you are going to read to them two prophecies that were spoken to Eli. Read the prophecies and then have the children consider how they would like to respond. Tell them you want them to act out their response before the class.

Then ask the class the following questions:

- When God pronounces judgment, does he ever change based on the repentance or appeal of the person he is judging?
(Yes, for example, after Israel made the golden calf. Read Exodus 32:8–14 to the class.)
- How can God not punish someone when they have sinned against him?
(There is only one way for a person to be released from the punishment they deserve for their sin. That can only happen if Jesus takes the penalty for their sin. That is why we must place our hope in Jesus.)

TEACHING/DISCUSSION 10 MIN

Using the teaching points, teach through the lesson for today.

OBJECT LESSON 2 10 MIN

Only God Makes Christians

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ professional baseball team cap
- ✓ stethoscope
- ✓ hammer and nails
- ✓ pair of scissors
- ✓ a laptop computer

The point of this activity is to emphasize that, like Samuel, we do not just become Christians because we grow up in the church, have Christian parents, or do good works. We become Christians when the Lord reveals himself to us and causes us to be born again. Likewise, Samuel worshiped with his parents but did not know the Lord until God revealed himself to him (1 Samuel 3:7).

Ask for five volunteers and give one prop to each. Announce to the class that these volunteers have just been commissioned as a professional baseball player, doctor, carpenter, barber, and computer technician.

Then ask the class the following questions:

- If you were sick would you trust our new doctor to take care of you? If not, why not?
(They will likely say that the student is not a doctor. You should argue by presenting the evidence that they have a stethoscope. Make similar announcements about each of the other volunteers.)

- What does it take to become a professional baseball player, doctor, carpenter, barber, or computer technician?
(Call on individuals for each specific answer.)

- What does it take to become a Christian?
(God needs to change your heart and make the gospel message alive to so that you believe.)

- What if a person has a Bible: does that make him a Christian?
(Help the children to see that it is not the outward appearance that makes an individual a Christian but the heart. Point out to them that even though Samuel performed the duties of a priest, God did not reveal himself because of Samuel's good behavior. God chose to reveal himself.)

WORD BIBLE MEMORY 5 MIN

Take time during the class to review the WORD Bible Memory verses with the class. Provide the opportunity for each child to recite the verses to an adult worker.

ACTIVITY TIME 15 MIN

God Calls Samuel

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ colored pencils, crayons, and paper

Have the children draw a picture of Samuel rising out of bed after hearing God's call. Have them write "Samuel!" in a cloud in the corner of the picture.

CLOSING PRAYER 5 MIN

Pick several children to pray prayers based on the day's scripture passages.

BONUS OBJECT LESSON 10 MIN

Samuel and Jesus

Ask the class to think of how Samuel's early childhood resembles that of Jesus.

- Both were born miraculously. Hannah was barren; and Mary, a virgin, conceived when the Holy Spirit came upon her.
- Both were called to be prophets.
- Both were born to godly parents.
- Both were born in a time when a foreign nation oppressed Israel (the Philistines and Romans).
- Both were born in a time when the word of the Lord was infrequent (prior to John the Baptist, there had been no prophets for over two hundred years).
- Both grew up with the favor of God upon them. (Compare 1 Samuel 2:26 with Luke 2:52. See also 1 Samuel 3:19 and Luke 1:80.)