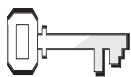


I'm Listening



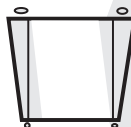
References

1 Samuel 3;
Patriarchs and Prophets,
pp. 581, 582



Memory Verse

"Speak, LORD, for your
servant is listening"
(1 Samuel 3:9, NIV).

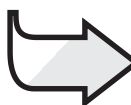


Objectives

The children will:
Know that children
are not too young for
God to talk to them.

Feel privileged to
listen for God's call.

Respond by listening to
God and answering His call.



The Message

I will listen and
answer when God
speaks to me.

Monthly Theme

We learn what is important in life.

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

As a young boy, Samuel is taken to live and work with Eli in the tabernacle at Shiloh. One night as he is sleeping, he hears a voice calling him. After Samuel goes to Eli three times, Eli suggests that God might be calling Samuel. He tells Samuel how to answer. God has a special message for Samuel to share with Eli. As Samuel grows up, God continues to give him messages for Israel. Samuel is a prophet, chosen by God, to lead Israel.

This is a lesson about community.

God chose to give Samuel a special message for Eli and his family, and to give messages to Israel in later years. Children who listen for God's voice and obey it can be an important part of the community of believers. "God is pleased when even little children give themselves to His service" (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 573).

Teacher Enrichment

"The message of condemnation to the house of Eli was Samuel's commission as a prophet of the Most High" (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 581).

"Before receiving this message from God, 'Samuel did not yet know the Lord, neither was the word of the Lord yet revealed unto him;' that is, he was not acquainted with such direct manifestations of God's presence as were granted to the prophets" (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 582).

"It was not customary for the Levites to enter upon their peculiar services until they were twenty-five years of age, but Samuel had been an exemption to this rule. Every year saw more important trusts committed to him; and while he was yet a child, a linen ephod was placed upon him as a token of his consecration to the work of the sanctuary. Young as he was when brought to minister in the tabernacle, Samuel had even then duties to perform in the service of God, according to his capacity" (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 573).

Room Decorations

See Lesson 1.

Program Overview

Lesson Section	Minutes	Activities	Materials Needed
Welcome	ongoing	Greet students at door; hear pleased/troubled	none
1 Readiness Activities	up to 10	A. <i>Who Am I?</i> B. <i>I Love You</i> C. <i>Are You Listening?</i>	audio recording device or screen none building things, puzzle, art supplies
Any Time Prayer and Praise*	up to 10	Fellowship Songbook Mission Offering Prayer	none <i>Sing for Joy</i> <i>Children's Mission</i> offering container none
2 Bible Lesson	up to 20	Experiencing the Story Memory Verse Bible Study	towels, candles, recording of male voice, flash cards Bibles, paper, pencils, scissors Bibles
3 Applying the Lesson	up to 15	<i>God Speaks</i>	Bible, grocery bag/trash bag, letter, Sabbath School lesson, CD, leaf, flower, pine cone, picture of church, white/chalkboard, markers/chalk
4 Sharing the Lesson	up to 15	<i>Reminder Poster</i>	paper, crayons/markers

*Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.

TEACHING THE LESSON

Welcome

Welcome students at the door. Ask how their week has been—what they are pleased/troubled about. Encourage them to share any experiences from last week's lesson study. Have them begin the readiness activity of your choice.

1

Readiness Activities

Select the activity most appropriate for your situation.

You Need:

- audio recording device or
- screen

A. Who Am I?

In advance, record voices of people that the children will know saying: "I hope you are listening for Jesus every day of your life." Have one voice that the children will not recognize. Play back the recording and ask the children to guess who is speaking. If you do not have access to a recording invite four or five people to stand behind a screen and speak.

Debriefing

Ask: **How many voices did you recognize? Which voice was the easiest to recognize? Why? What did you think if you did not know one of the voices?** (puzzled, wondered who it was) Say: **In our story today, a young boy did not recognize the voice that was calling him. He had a big surprise when he learned who it was. Today's message is:**



I WILL LISTEN AND ANSWER WHEN GOD SPEAKS TO ME.

Say that with me.

B. I Love You

Form small groups. Ask each group to think of a way to say "I love you" to a baby, or a deaf person, or someone who does not speak their language. Ask them to act it out for the whole group.

Debriefing

Ask: **What made it difficult for you to get your message across? Do you think that God ever has trouble speaking to us? Why? Name some different ways God uses to talk to us.** Allow discussion. **Today's message is:**



I WILL LISTEN AND ANSWER WHEN GOD SPEAKS TO ME.

Say that with me.

C. Are You Listening?

Let the children choose a project (see the "You Need" box, p. 43), and get interested. After two to three minutes, stand on the other side of the room and softly ask them to come to you. Keep asking and raising your voice slightly each time.

Debriefing

Ask: **Did you hear the first time I called you? Why? Do you know how many times I called? Why did it take longer for some to come?** (They were involved and did not want to come.) Say: **Sometimes God talks to us, and we do not hear because we are not listening! In our story today God spoke to a young child; but the child did not recognize God's voice. We will learn more about ways that God speaks to us today. Today's message is:**

You Need:

- Choose one of the following:
- building things
 - puzzle
 - art supplies



I WILL LISTEN AND ANSWER WHEN GOD SPEAKS TO ME.

Say that with me.

Prayer and Praise

Any Time



Fellowship

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). Allow time for sharing experiences from last week's lesson study and review the memory verse. Acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Give a special, warm greeting to all visitors.



Suggested Songs

- "Samuel" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 112)
- "Jesus Bids Us Shine" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 133)
- "Come Into His Presence" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 14)
- "He's Able" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 40)
- "Trust in the Lord" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 111)



Mission

Use *Children's Mission*. Highlight the ways God talked to the people in the story.



Offering

Say: **The offerings we give are used to help others learn to hear and listen to God's voice.**

You Need:

- offering container



Prayer

Say: **God speaks to us in many ways. One way is through silence. When we pray today, I will name a subject and you can pray silently about it.** Ask for prayer requests. To close, mention the silent and collective prayers.

2

Bible Lesson

You Need:

- towels or blankets for floor covering
- candles
- recording of male voice (optional)
- flash cards

Experiencing the Story

Character: Eli

Encourage the children to act out the story as you read or tell it.

If possible, darken the Sabbath School room and light candles. Let the children pretend to be Samuel and lie on towels or blankets. Choose one child or a teacher to be Eli. Play the recording of "God's voice" (or have a hidden person speak) at the appropriate point.

When you say:	The children do:
Samuel	Put hand behind an ear.
Eli	Shake their head.

Read or tell the story.

The little boy was an answer to his mother's prayers. Hannah had prayed for a son, and had promised God that she would give her child to Him to be His servant. And so it was that she took her little boy, **Samuel**, to live with priest **Eli** in the tabernacle. **Samuel** and the old priest became very close.

"**Samuel** was helpful and affectionate, and no father ever loved his son more tenderly than did **Eli** this youth" (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 573).

As **Eli** grew older, he was filled with anxiety and sorrow for the evil ways of his own sons, and "he turned to **Samuel** for comfort" (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 573). **Samuel** became a joy for the old priest, and **Samuel** loved the old man.

"In those days the Lord did not speak directly to people very often" (1 Samuel 3:1, ICB). But God would soon speak to **Samuel** in a most unusual way.

Eli's eyesight was failing. He was almost blind, and he really needed **Samuel's** help. One night **Eli** and **Samuel** had gone to their rooms and were about to fall asleep when suddenly the boy heard a voice calling "**Samuel!**"

Samuel sat up with a start. A lamp still burned nearby. Did **Eli** need him? He got up and went to **Eli's** room. "Here I am," he said. "You called me."

But **Eli** said, "I didn't call you. Go back to bed."

Samuel quietly returned to his bed. *I'm sure Eli called*, he may have thought.

Again **Samuel** heard a voice. "**Samuel! Samuel!**"

The boy sat up, looked around, then scurried out of bed and dashed to **Eli's** side. "I am here," he said. "You called me."

"No, **Samuel**, I didn't call you," responded **Eli**. "Go back to bed."

So **Samuel** returned to his bed. *I'm sure I heard Eli*, he likely thought as he snuggled under his blanket again.

"**Samuel! Samuel!**" That voice again! **Samuel** jumped up and rushed to **Eli** again. "I'm here," he spoke softly. "You called me."

"No," **Eli** answered. "I didn't call you." Then **Eli** realized that the Lord must be speaking to **Samuel**. So he told **Samuel**, "Go to bed. If he calls you again, say, 'Speak, Lord. I am your servant, and I am listening'" (1 Samuel 3:9, ICB).

Again the Lord spoke to **Samuel** and **Samuel** answered as **Eli** had told him. Then God said, "I am going to do something that will shock those who hear about it. I will do to **Eli** and his sons everything I have promised because his sons have done terrible things."

Samuel was shocked. He probably didn't sleep much the rest of the night. In the morning he quietly went about his duties. He was afraid to tell **Eli** what

God had said. But **Eli** soon approached **Samuel** and asked, "What did the Lord say to you? Don't hide it from me."

So **Samuel** revealed all that the Lord had said. And **Eli** knew that God had made **Samuel** His messenger.

God gave **Samuel** the first of many messages he was to deliver to God's people in the years to come. **Samuel** truly was God's servant throughout all his life and you can be God's messenger too. You can share with others what God says as you learn more of His Word, the Bible.

Debriefing

Ask: **How would you like to live in a church?** (not the most comfortable place; lonely during the week)

Who would you think was calling you if you heard a voice in the middle of the night? (mother, father, brother, sister)

How do you think Samuel must have felt when he realized that it was actually God who was talking to him? (afraid, excited)

Say: **God still speaks to people today. He speaks to us through the Bible, through the messages our pastor gives us in church, and He speaks to our minds as we are impressed to serve Him each day. Let's say our message together:**



I WILL LISTEN AND ANSWER WHEN GOD SPEAKS TO ME.

Memory Verse

Have the children open their Bibles to 1 Samuel 3:9 and point to the words: "**Speak, LORD, for your servant is listening.**"

Say: **Draw two big ears on paper. Write the memory verse on each ear. Cut out the ears and**

You Need:

- Bibles
- paper
- pencils
- scissors

hold them over your real ears. Then we will say the memory verse together several times. Lead the children as they say the verse several times. Then ask for volunteers to say it without help.

Bible Study

Say: **Samuel was not the only child to whom God spoke.** Form four groups. Give each group a text and ask them to discover to whom God spoke and how. (Adults assist as necessary.)

2 Kings 12:2 (Joash—through his uncle Jehoida, the priest)

2 Kings 6:5–7 (boys at the schools of the prophets—through Elisha and a miracle)

Acts 16:11; 2 Timothy 3:15 (Timothy—through his mother)

Psalms 19:1–3 (David—through nature)

Allow time for each group to report.

Debriefing

Ask: **What do you think about God talking to children?** (pleased, excited)

How does God talk to us today? (through adults, family, Bible, pastor, nature)

What do you think is the most important thing that God is trying to say to you today? (He loves me.) **God wants us all to know that He loves us and wants us to live with Him in heaven.**

What will you do when God speaks to you? If you really mean it, let's say today's message together:



I WILL LISTEN AND ANSWER WHEN GOD SPEAKS TO ME.

You Need:

- Bibles

3

Applying the Lesson

You Need:

- large paper/ plastic bag
- letter
- Bible
- Sabbath School lesson
- CD
- leaf
- flower
- pine cone
- picture of church
- chalkboard or whiteboard
- chalk or marker

God Speaks

Make a touchy-feely bag from a large paper bag, and put inside a selection of the suggested items, or others that can represent how God communicates with us. If you have a large group, you may want to have more than one bag.

Invite the children to come one or two at a time and feel inside the bag, but not to say anything.

When everyone has had a chance to feel in the bag, say: **God speaks to children in many different ways!** **Let's write down all the things you can remember from the bag.** List the responses where all may see.

Debriefing

Take the items out of the bag one by one and talk about any that they missed.

Ask: **What other ways does God speak to us?**

It is not enough for someone to talk to us; what do we need to do as well? (We need to listen.)

Say: **God talks to us every day. He may not call us when we are asleep, but He uses other things to talk to us.** Have the children name some.

Let's repeat our message together:



I WILL LISTEN AND ANSWER WHEN GOD SPEAKS TO ME.

4

Sharing the Lesson

Reminder Poster

Ask each child to think of a way that God communicates to people today.

Say: **Sometimes we do not hear God because we are so busy doing other things. Adults have the same problem. Let's make posters to put up around our church to remind everyone that God wants to talk to them.**

Lead a discussion and list several "slogans" that might be written on the posters. Here are some ideas to help get you started:

God speaks to us through the message of the sermon.

God speaks to us when we read the Bible.

God speaks to us in nature.

God speaks to us in the quiet time.

God speaks to us through our family and friends.

Stop and listen for God to speak.

Allow time for the children to make their posters. Assist anyone who needs help.

Debriefing

Say: **God knows your name, and He loves to talk to you! This week let's make sure that we take time to stop and listen.**

Our posters remind us of how we can hear when God talks to us. Let's repeat our message for today together:



**I WILL LISTEN AND ANSWER
WHEN GOD SPEAKS TO ME.**

Note: It is important that you follow through and place the posters throughout the church where church members and the children will see them.

Closing

Gather the children in a circle around their posters. Pray that God will use the posters to remind others in your church family that He wants to talk to them as well.

You Need:

- paper
- crayons/
markers

I'm Listening

References

1 Samuel 3;
Patriarchs and
Prophets,
pp. 581, 582

Have you ever heard your mom calling and pretended that you did not hear? The opposite happens in today's story. Samuel heard someone calling him and tried to answer.

Memory Verse

"Speak, LORD, for
your servant is
listening"
(1 Samuel 3:9, NIV).

The Message

I will listen and
answer when God
speaks to me.

The little boy was an answer to his mother's prayers. Hannah had prayed for a son. She had promised God that she would give her child to Him to be His servant.

And so it was that she took her little boy Samuel to live with priest Eli in the tabernacle. Samuel was very helpful and was like a son to Eli.

Samuel became a joy and delight for the old priest. And Samuel loved the old man.

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But Eli said, "I didn't call you. Go back to bed."

Samuel quietly returned to his bed. *I'm sure Eli called*, he may have thought as he closed his eyes.

Again Samuel heard a voice. "Samuel! Samuel!"

The boy sat up and looked around. Then he scurried out of bed and dashed to Eli's side. "I am here," he said. "You called me."

"No, Samuel, I didn't call you," responded Eli. "Go back to bed."

So Samuel returned to his bed. *I'm sure I heard Eli*, he likely thought as he snuggled under his blanket again.

"Samuel! Samuel!" That voice again!

Samuel jumped up and rushed to Eli again. "I'm here," he spoke softly. "You called me."

"No," Eli answered. "I didn't call you." Then Eli realized that the Lord must be speaking to Samuel. So he told Samuel, "Go to bed. If he calls you again, say, 'Speak, Lord. I am your servant, and I am listening.'" (1 Samuel 3:9, ICB).

This time when Samuel heard the voice call him, "Samuel! Samuel!" he answered as Eli had told him. "Speak, for your servant is listening." Then the Lord said, "I am going to do something that will shock those who hear about it. I will do to Eli and his sons everything I have promised because his sons have done terrible things."

Samuel was shocked. He probably didn't sleep much the rest of the night. In the morning he quietly went about his duties. He was afraid to tell Eli what God had said. But Eli soon approached Samuel and asked, "What did the Lord say to you? Don't hide it from me, Samuel."



So Samuel revealed all that the Lord had said. And Eli knew that God had made Samuel His messenger.

God gave Samuel the first of many messages Samuel was to deliver to God's people in the years to come. Samuel truly was God's servant throughout all his life. And God wants you to serve Him too. You can be God's messenger. You can share with others what God says as you learn more of His Word, the Bible.

Daily Activities

Sabbath

- If possible, go for a walk with your family. See who can hear the most sounds.
- Ask your mom or dad to help you discover who, apart from your pastor, works in your church.
- Find a quiet place and read your lesson story together.
- Thank God for the gift of hearing.

Sunday

- Draw a big pair of ears and cut them out. Write your memory verse on the ears. Don't forget the reference. Write or draw pictures on the back showing all the different ways you can listen to God. Put the ears where you will see them often.
- Sit very quietly for three minutes. What do you hear?
- Ask God to help you hear His voice.

Monday

- During family worship read about Samuel in 1 Samuel 3.
- Ask your family to help you look up the word *listen* in a concordance. Count the number of times it is mentioned. Look up one or two of the texts and discuss them together.
- Write your memory verse in your own words.

Tuesday

- Make an "I can listen to God" mobile. Cut pictures out of magazines or draw pictures of ways God speaks to us today. Tape them to pieces of string and tie the strings to a clothes hanger.
- Ask your family to tell you ways that God talks to them.

- Sing "Jesus Bids Us Shine" (*Sing for Joy*, no. 133). Then thank God for your family.

Wednesday

- During family worship, think of five or six sounds you can easily create. For example, turning the pages of a book. Ask your family to close their eyes. See how many sounds they can recognize. Talk about things that might drown out God's voice.
- Together, write a poem, song, or rap about listening to God.
- Pray that God will help you and your family shut out the things that drown out His voice.

Thursday

- Before worship, collect four or five things that remind you of God. Put them in a bag. During family worship, ask everyone to feel inside the bag. See how many things they recognize.
- Listen to your favorite songs about Jesus. What do the words tell you and your family about Him?
- Name people in the Bible to whom God spoke directly. Read about one during worship.
- Thank God that He finds so many different ways to reach us.

Friday

- Ask your parents if you can have family worship by candlelight.
- Act out the story of Samuel with your family. Imagine what it was like in the tabernacle.
- Say your memory verse together.
- Ask God to help you and your family listen when He speaks to you.