

Samuel and Eli

1 Samuel 1:21-2:11, 3:1-21

The next time Elkanah and his family went to offer their yearly sacrifice, he took along a gift that he had promised to give to the Lord. But Hannah stayed home, because she had told Elkanah, "Samuel and I won't go until he's old enough for me to stop nursing him. Then I'll give him to the Lord, and he can stay there at Shiloh for the rest of his life."

"You know what's best," Elkanah said. "Stay here until it's time to stop nursing him. I'm sure the Lord will help you do what you have promised." Hannah did not go to Shiloh until she stopped nursing Samuel.

When it was the time of year to go to Shiloh again, Hannah and Elkanah took Samuel to the Lord's house. They brought along a three-year-old bull, a twenty-pound sack of flour, and a clay jar full of wine. Hannah and Elkanah offered the bull as a sacrifice, then brought the little boy to Eli.

"Sir," Hannah said, "a few years ago I stood here beside you and asked the Lord to give me a child. Here he is! The Lord gave me just what I asked for. Now I am giving him to the Lord, and he will be the Lord's servant for as long as he lives."

The Elkanah and Hannah went back home to Ramah, but the boy Samuel

Storyteller: *Place Elkanah, Hannah, and Samuel (as a small boy) down in front of the tabernacle (lying down)* After Samuel was born, Hannah did not go to the Tabernacle with Elkanah. She waited until Samuel was old enough to stop nursing.

Move Samuel, Hannah and Elkanah over to the Tabernacle and stand them in front (use blutack to get them to stand up). The year that Samuel stopped nursing, when it was the time of year to go to the Lord's House again, Hannah and Elkanah took Samuel to the Lord's House.

Put Eli in front of the Tabernacle facing Hannah. Hannah told Eli, "Sir, a few years ago I stood here beside you and asked the Lord to give me a child. Here he is! Now I am giving him to the Lord.

Put Elkanah and Hannah back in the basket. Elkanah and Hannah went back home to Ramah, but the boy Samuel stayed to help Eli serve the LORD.

Put Eli and Samuel lying down inside the tabernacle. Put Samuel close to the Veil, and Eli close to the door. One night, while Eli and Samuel were sleeping, the LORD called out Samuel's name. "Here I am", Samuel said.

Pick up Samuel and move him over next to Eli Then he got up and ran to Eli and said "Here I am! What do you want?"

"I didn't call you," Eli answered. "Go back to bed!"

Lie Samuel back down again. Repeat the same movements the next two times Samuel hears his name. Samuel went back. Again the LORD called out Samuel's name. Samuel got up and ran to Eli and said "Here I am! What do you want?"

"I didn't call you," Eli answered. "Go back to bed!"

The LORD called out Samuel's name a third time. Samuel got up and ran to Eli

Story Materials

Tabernacle

Dolls

Hannah

Elkanah

Samuel

Eli

Tray for tabernacle, and the Samuel basket

<p>stayed to help Eli serve the Lord.</p> <p>Samuel served the LORD by helping Eli the priest, who was by that time almost blind. In those days, the LORD hardly ever spoke directly to people, and he did not appear to them in dreams very often. But one night, Eli was asleep in his room, and Samuel was sleeping on a mat near the sacred chest in the LORD's house. They had not been asleep very long when the LORD called out Samuel's name.</p> <p>"Here I am!" Samuel answered. Then he ran to Eli and said, "Here I am. What do you want?"</p> <p>"I didn't call you," Eli answered. "Go back to bed."</p> <p>Samuel went back.</p> <p>Again the LORD called out Samuel's name. Samuel got up and went to Eli. "Here I am," he said. "What do you want?"</p> <p>Eli told him, "Son, I didn't call you. Go back to sleep."</p> <p>The LORD had not spoken to Samuel before, and Samuel did not recognize the voice. When the LORD called out his name for the third time, Samuel went to Eli again and said, "Here I am. What do you want?"</p> <p>Eli finally realized that it was the LORD who was speaking to Samuel. So he said, "Go back and lie down! If someone speaks to you again, answer, 'I'm listening, LORD. What do you want</p>	<p>When the LORD called out his name for the third time, Samuel went to Eli again and said, "Here I am. What do you want?"</p> <p>Eli finally realized that it was the LORD who was speaking to Samuel. So he said "Go back and lie down! If someone speaks to you again, answer, "I'm listening, LORD. What do you want me to do?"</p> <p>Once again Samuel went back and lay down.</p> <p><i>Hold your hand next to Samuel with the fingers pointing straight up – the same way we hold the hand for the "pillar of smoke" in the Moses story.</i> The LORD then stood beside Samuel and called out as he had done before, "Samuel! Samuel!"</p> <p>"I'm listening," Samuel answered. What do you want me to do?"</p> <p>The LORD said, "Samuel, I am going to punish Eli because his sons have done evil, and he let them get away with it."</p> <p><i>Pick up Samuel and Eli, and hold them together in front of the Tabernacle</i> The next morning, Eli asked "What did God say to you?" Samuel told him everything. Then Eli said "He is the LORD, and he will do what is right." <i>Put Eli back in the basket.</i></p> <p><i>Hold Samuel cradled in your hands and hold him out to the children to see.</i> Samuel grew up and was truly the LORD's prophet, for the LORD appeared to him and told him what to say.</p>	
<p>me to do?"</p> <p>Once again Samuel went back and lay down.</p> <p>The LORD then stood beside Samuel and called out as he had done before, "Samuel! Samuel!"</p> <p>"I'm listening," Samuel answered. "What do you want me to do?"</p> <p>The LORD said: "Samuel, I am going to do something in Israel that will shock everyone who hears about it! I will punish Eli and his family, just as I promised. I knew that his sons refused to respect me,</p>	<p>and he let them get away with it, even though I said I would punish his family forever. I warned Eli that sacrifices or offerings could never make things right! His family has done too many disgusting things."</p> <p>The next morning, Samuel got up and opened the doors to the LORD's house. He was afraid to tell Eli what the LORD had said. But Eli told him, "Samuel, my boy, come here!"</p> <p>"Here I am," Samuel answered.</p> <p>Eli said, "What did God say to you? Tell</p>	<p>me everything. I pray that God will punish you terribly if you don't tell me every word he said!"</p> <p>Samuel told Eli everything. Then Eli said, "He is the LORD, and he will do what's right."</p> <p>As Samuel grew up, the LORD helped him and made everything Samuel said come true. From the town of Dan in the north to the town of Beersheba in the south, everyone in the country knew that Samuel was truly the LORD's prophet. The LORD often appeared to Samuel at Shiloh and told him what to say.</p>