



# Samuel

The Listening Prophet

Track 23



Inside the temple, you couldn't hear a sound – not even a squeak or a shuffle or a whisper.

The boy Samuel lay fast asleep on his mat. Only the lights from the lamp of God flashed and flickered in the night.

Suddenly, a voice called out, "Samuel!"

Samuel awoke, startled. *That must be Eli*, he thought. Samuel helped the old priest, Eli, each day in the temple. Now Eli could barely see, and Samuel had to help him even more than ever.



Samuel ran to Eli's room. "Here I am," he said.

Eli didn't answer. Samuel moved close to Eli and shook his arm gently. Eli grunted in his sleep. Then he opened his eyes.

"Here I am," Samuel repeated. "You called me."

"I did not call you," Eli answered. "Go lie down." The old man rolled onto his side and closed his eyes again.

Samuel returned to his mat. *Maybe it was just a dream*, he thought. Soon he fell asleep.

"Samuel!" a voice called.

Samuel sat up. This wasn't a dream. He raced back to Eli. "Here I am. You called me," he said.

"I did not call, my boy," mumbled Eli, half asleep. "Now go lie down, and let me get some rest."

Samuel lay awake on his mat. WHO was calling him? Then he heard his name for the third time. It *had* to be Eli. He was sure of it.

Samuel got up and went to Eli. “Here I am. You called me,” he said.

This time Eli sat up. “The Lord must be calling you,” he said. “If you hear Him say, ‘Speak, Lord, for your servant listens.’”

*The Lord?* Samuel thought. In those days, hardly anyone heard from the Lord. Even if God did say something, the sinful Israelites probably wouldn’t listen.

Samuel’s heart beat fast. What would God tell him? He hurried back to his mat and waited for the voice.

“Samuel! Samuel!” God called.

“Speak, for your servant listens,” answered Samuel.

The Lord told Samuel that He was about to punish Eli and his family. Eli’s two sons were wicked priests in God’s house, and Eli never stopped them from doing wrong.



Samuel lay awake until morning. What hard news! What would he say to Eli? He watched the lights flutter on the wall.

At sunrise, Samuel opened the doors of the temple as he always did. But today, Eli was waiting. “What did God tell you?” asked Eli. “Don’t hide it.”

Samuel knew he must tell the truth. He told Eli everything God said. Then the white-haired priest bowed his head and said, “Let the Lord do what seems good to Him.”

From this day on, God kept talking to Samuel. Samuel listened to God’s Word and told others what He said. All of Israel knew him as a prophet of the Lord. Every one of the words God spoke to Samuel came true.



**Learn from  
Samuel’s biography:**

- God’s Word always comes true.
- Today God speaks to you in His Word, the Bible. Listen and obey what He says.

# Parent Ideas

## Samuel, the Listening Prophet

Scripture: 1 Samuel 3

### KEY LEARNING POINTS

- God's Word always comes true.
- Today God speaks to you in His Word, the Bible. Listen and obey what He says.

**1. Read-together activity** – To enter into the setting, read the biography together by candlelight. This is also an easy biography to dramatize. While you read, ask your child to play the role of Samuel and another family member to play the role of Eli. They can pantomime the story action (act without speaking, using only gestures and expression).

**2. Discussion activity** – Ask your child simple questions like these to make sure she understands what happened in the biography:

- Why did Samuel run to Eli's room?
- How many times did God call?
- What did Samuel say and do when God called the fourth time?

Then ask questions to help your child engage more personally with the biography:

- What would you do if you heard a voice call you in the night?

- Who would you think was calling?
- What would you do if you found out God was calling you? Would you be like Samuel? Why or why not?

Parents, explain that God DOES talk to us today, in the Bible. Stress the importance of being ready to listen carefully and obey what God says in Scripture.

**3. Application activity** – Explain that Samuel was a prophet, which means he listened to God's Word and told God's Word to others. Discuss with your child the importance of knowing the Bible, God's Word, and sharing it with others. For example, it's important because God's Word always comes true, and we need to know the truth. It's important because it helps us know God and how He wants us to live.

Then play a simple whispering game to reinforce the lesson of listening to and then telling others about God's Word. Gather your family and maybe a few friends

around the table. Find a relatively short verse in the Bible (or in your child's Sparks handbook). Ask the first person to whisper this verse into the ear of the person on his left. The second person should listen carefully and then whisper the verse to the person on his left. Continue whispering around the table until it reaches the last person. The last person should stand up and recite the verse as he heard it. The first and last person should compare whether the verse recited is the correct version of the verse. You'd be surprised how much it can change during transmission!

**4. Application activity** – Make a commitment to read the Bible with your child each day this week. Then think of someone you know who needs to hear God's Word. Call or visit that person, and ask your child to recite to the person a few verses she has learned from Sparks or from your daily Bible reading.