

# Samuel Helps God in the Tabernacle

## Overview



### Materials You'll Need

- no extra materials are needed for this lesson



### Scriptures

1 Sam 1:24-28; 2:18-19, 26

### Bible Truth Objective(s)

God wants all of us to be His good helpers

### Behavioral Objective(s)

To teach the children that they can worship God by being a good helper even though they are young

### Memory Verse

"Worship the Lord." (Ps 96:9)



## Bible Knowledge

### Samuel

As the son of Elkanah and Hannah, Samuel grew up to be the last great judge in Israel. He was also one of the first prophets. When Samuel was born, Hannah's heart-felt prayer for a son was answered. In return, she kept her promise to God and took Samuel to the shrine at Shiloh to be trained by Eli the priest. Hebrew children were often nursed for two or three years, possibly more. Therefore, Samuel was probably between three and five years of age when Hannah brought him to live at the tabernacle.

### Eli and His Sons

Eli was the high priest in charge of the tabernacle located at Shiloh. 1 Samuel 1:9 refers to the tabernacle, or worship tent. Eli's two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, were a disgrace. They would not listen to their father, and God warned Eli of their terrible fate. Later, they were both killed in a battle against the Philistines. When Eli heard that God's ark had been captured, he collapsed and died (1 Sam 1-4).

### Priests

Those who are called priests are Levites. The Levites were chosen by God from among the Israelites. They were to be set apart from the other tribes for religious duties. Priests had many duties, mostly connected with the tabernacle, temple sacrifices, and worship. But the most important duty was to teach the people the Law of God.

### The Tabernacle

The tabernacle, or the "tent of meeting," was a small provisional meeting place of God and His people. When the Jews settled in Canaanite territory the tabernacle was made into a more permanent form at Shiloh (Josh 18:1; Jdg 18:31). It was permanent enough to be called a temple, to provide rooms for Samuel and Eli, and to require that the entrance doors be opened and closed (1 Sam 3:2, 15). After the Philistines had destroyed Shiloh, they also captured the ark of the covenant. It was eventually returned via Beth Shemesh (1 Sam 6:1-10) and Kiriath Jearim (1 Sam 7:2). Even then, the ark of the covenant was kept in some kind of tent-temple (2 Sam 6:17; 7:2). It remained there until Solomon built a permanent temple.



## Understanding Your Students

Despite their young age, we want our students to have a positive “can do” attitude (1 Tim 4:12). As today’s story teaches, they are not too young to be God’s good helpers. Some of them may also be familiar with David and Goliath’s story. We need to explain why serving God is important—serving is an important way of worshipping. God loves us. We want to show God we love Him, and the best way to show we love Him is to worship Him.

If the students are not sure what the word “worship” means, back up to easier questions. Ask the students why they come to church. What do they do when they are in church? When the meaning of worship is established, talk about the different ways they’ve seen our brothers and sisters worshipping in church. Be sure to share that worship doesn’t just involve praying to God or sitting in the chapel to listen to the sermon. It also means serving God.

Because the students are young, they may feel that they are incapable of carrying out the work that

they have witnessed older members completing (e.g. interpreting a sermon, cleaning the bathrooms, cooking in the kitchen). Together, brainstorm age-appropriate chores the students can carry out. Begin with your own classroom by listing things such as wiping the boards, pushing in the chairs, picking up garbage from the floor, straightening the bookshelves, and tidying up the supply area. As they grow up, they will find other age-appropriate chores to do. The most important point is to allow the students to understand they are not too young to be God’s helpers and that helping can come in many forms. If time permits, talk about specific things the students can do at home to worship God (e.g. family altar, praying to God, helping parents).

Remember also that positive reinforcement techniques can definitely help to encourage the students as they serve God. When the children pick up scrap papers or do other considerate things, thank them. Praise them for doing good things, and they will be eager to continue being helpful. Relate their service to today’s lesson so that there will be a connection to the Bible and their daily lives.



## Vocabulary

### Tabernacle

a special tent where the people worshiped God

### Worship

to praise and love God

### Priest

someone who took care of God’s temple, and taught the people about God and what He wanted them to do

### Levite

a worker in the temple; a Levite helped the priest, and also helped the people understand God’s teachings



## Before You Teach

When we think about worship, we often think about all the things we do within the church. For example, we worship God by attending service, singing hymns, and praying in one accord. We also worship God through our service to Him (e.g. cleaning the church, translating on the pulpit, leading hymns). These are all wonderful ways to show God how much we love Him. However, true worship also involves worship in spirit and in truth. Jesus said that the greatest commandment is to love the Lord with all our heart and soul. The second is to love our neighbor as ourselves. That is true worship. That means that almost anything we do can potentially

be a means to worship our God. It can be things we do at the office; it can be the words we say to a friend; it can be what we do when no one is watching. When we worship God wholeheartedly, we will act differently than the people of the world. We are supposed to be set apart and stand out for Christ. When we love God, we will be careful of what we say. Our words will be seasoned with salt and our lips will speak forth God’s praise. And when no one is watching, we still want to draw near to God. We will stay away from filthy things and we will not want to do things that will hurt God or put our status as a Christian in jeopardy. Let us be encouraged to worship our God with all our strength and might so that His name may constantly be glorified.



## Bible Story

In our last quarter, we learned many stories about Jesus. We learned about many miracles He performed. We also learned many teachings about the kingdom of heaven. Those stories are found in the New Testament. In this quarter, we are going to learn from the Old Testament. These stories happened before Jesus came into the world. But they are still important stories.

### **A Young Boy Called Samuel**

Today, we will learn about a young boy in the Bible who was a great helper of God. His name was Samuel. Samuel was a very special boy because he learned to be a good helper of God when he was very young. He started to help God when he was probably just about your age.

Samuel didn't go to a church like the one we go to today. During that time, there was no church building for the Israelites to worship God in. Instead, they went to a special tent. God gave it a special name, called the tabernacle. (Teacher may want to show the students pictures of the tabernacle.) That's a difficult word. Let's say "tabernacle" together. (Have students practice a few times.) So it was in the tabernacle that the Israelites went to talk to God and worship Him.

### **Samuel's Mother Keeps Her Promise**

Samuel learned to worship God and be His helper in the tabernacle when he was just a little boy. Do you know why he went there to be God's helper even though he was so young? There was a good reason. His mother, Hannah, loved God very much and wanted Samuel to know how great God was. You see, before Samuel was born, his mother prayed very hard to have a baby. She promised God that if God would let her have a little boy, she would take him to God's tabernacle. He would live there and help in the tabernacle. And do you know what happened after that? God heard Hannah's prayer and blessed her with a son. That was how Samuel was born. Hannah loved Samuel very much and it was probably hard not to be able to be with him every day. But she remembered her promise to God. Do you remember the promise? She said she would

let Samuel live in the tabernacle and grow up there so he could learn how to help God. So when Samuel was old enough, Hannah took Samuel to the tabernacle. Samuel was probably around your age, maybe four or five years old when his mother took him to live in the tabernacle. It was probably hard for Samuel when his mother left him there because he was so young. But Hannah understood the best place for Samuel to grow up was in God's tabernacle. She knew God would take care of Samuel and he could learn to be a good helper. Samuel didn't really understand what was happening. But he had seen his parents go to the tabernacle to worship God when he was a young boy. He knew it was good to be in God's house. So he obeyed his parents and stayed in the tabernacle. That made him very special in God's eyes.

Samuel did not stay in the tabernacle by himself. He was too young to take care of everything by himself. There was someone else who lived in the tabernacle. His name was Eli. He was a Levite and he was the priest. The Bible tells us that in the old days, God chose the Levites to be His helpers in the tabernacle. Eli was a priest. A priest was also God's helper. His job was to take care of all the things that happened in the tabernacle. It is just like at church today. We have many people who help do God's work and take care of the church. For example, we have pastors who spend all their time helping God. There are also other grown-ups who make sure the church has everything ready for the members who come to worship each Sabbath. So Samuel stayed in the tabernacle with Eli, the priest. Before Hannah left Samuel there, she said something to Eli.

Hannah said, "A long time ago, I stood here in this tabernacle and prayed that a baby boy would be born in our family. God answered my prayer so now I have brought Samuel here to serve the Lord as long as he lives."

Eli was happy and thanked God for his new helper.

### **Hannah Loves Samuel**

Samuel's parents knew it was good for Samuel to grow up in the tabernacle, but they probably still missed him. So every year, on a special day, Samuel's parents would come to God's tabernacle to worship the Lord and to see Samuel.

"Samuel, you've grown!" his mother probably

said. She also gave him a new robe every year she came to see him. (Explain that clothes during biblical times were different. Draw or prepare a picture of a robe so the students see the difference.) Hannah made the robe every year by herself because she loved Samuel very much. When Samuel wore the robe, he could remember how much his mother loved him, even though she didn't live with him. God also loved Samuel and his parents because they had good faith. God blessed Hannah with more children after Samuel went to live in the tabernacle.

### **Samuel Helps in the Tabernacle**

Samuel lived in the tabernacle for many years and grew up there. He learned about God and became a great helper. Eli the priest was like a teacher to him and taught him all about God. Samuel was a very good student. He paid very close attention to his teacher and did what Eli told him to do in the tabernacle. He was a good helper because he obeyed Eli.

When Samuel was not learning from Eli, he would worship God. He worshiped God in different ways. One way was by praying. He and all the other people who came to the tabernacle prayed and talked to God. In their prayers, they asked God to take care of them and told God how thankful they were to Him for loving them. Samuel helped the people, including his parents who came to worship

God, to give thanks to God. There was another special way Samuel worshiped God. He took care of the tabernacle. Samuel probably opened the doors to the tabernacle so the people could come and worship God. He helped to keep the tabernacle clean and tidy. Why is keeping the tabernacle clean and tidy important? For one thing, the people would not want to go into a dirty and messy place to worship God. Also, by cleaning the tabernacle, Samuel showed how much he loved God. Even though Samuel was just a young boy, he was ready to help God. He obeyed Eli and God and did his best.

### **We Can Be God's Helper Too**

In today's story, we learned that Samuel worshiped God by helping in the place where he learned about God. We can worship God this way too. This is our room (refer to the classroom) where we come and learn about God. We can take care of our classroom the way Samuel took care of the tabernacle. What are some things we can do to take care of our classroom? (Let the students volunteer their answers.)

Samuel didn't think he was too young to worship God and be God's helper. We can learn from Samuel. We are not too young to help do God's work. We are not too young to pray to God and worship Him in church.



### Check For Understanding

- 1. Who was the boy who lived in the tabernacle?** (Samuel.)
- 2. Why did Samuel live in the tabernacle?** (Samuel's mother promised God that if she had a son, she would bring him to the tabernacle to be His helper.)
- 3. How did Samuel learn about God?** (Samuel learned about God from a priest named Eli.)
- 4. What kinds of things did Samuel do in the tabernacle?** (Samuel learned from Eli, he

cleaned the tabernacle, he worshiped God.)

- 5. How do we worship God today?** (We worship God by coming to church every Saturday, by praying to God in church and at home, by listening to the teacher when a Bible story is being told, etc.)
- 6. Can you name some ways that you can help in church?** (Let the children respond. Possible answers are cleaning up the classroom, putting things where they belong, and being helpful when the teacher or others needs help.)



## Life Application Story

### Praying For Others

It was Sabbath day. Rachel was especially excited today because her favorite teacher, Miss Johnson, was scheduled to teach the kindergarten class. Rachel liked all her teachers, but she especially liked Miss Johnson. She always brought all kinds of fun stickers and stamps for the class. Best of all, she always prepared fun games to play and new songs to share. Rachel and all her friends always had a great time in Miss Johnson's class learning about God.

"I wonder what cool stickers I will get from Miss Johnson today. I'd better pay attention in class. If I do well, maybe I will receive extra stickers," Rachel thought to herself as she ate her breakfast. Rachel knew Miss Johnson would give out special stickers to those who listened in class.

After Mrs. Hayes parked the car in the church parking lot, Rachel happily skipped to the classroom. She couldn't wait for class to start. But to her surprise, it was not Miss Johnson in the classroom. Instead, it was Miss Ross.

Rachel couldn't help but say to Miss Ross, "I thought it was Miss Johnson teaching this week."

"Rachel, why don't you sit down with the rest of the class? I have an announcement to make when everyone is ready," said Miss Ross.

Rachel sat down and wondered what happened to Miss Johnson.

When all the children arrived, Miss Ross said to the whole class, "I know I told you last week that it would be Miss Johnson's turn to teach you this week. But she called me yesterday to tell me that she was not feeling well. She was afraid if she came today, she might spread the germs around, so she asked me to teach you today."

Upon hearing this, all the kids said, "But we love Miss Johnson!"

Seeing the children's reaction, Miss Ross said, "I know Miss Johnson is a wonderful teacher and you are disappointed that she couldn't be here today. But she is very sick. I am sure you would want her to feel better, right?"

Tommy raised his hand, "Can we make a card for Miss Johnson? One time, when my grandpa was

sick, I drew a picture for him. Grandpa told me later that my picture made him feel better."

"That's a wonderful idea, Tommy," said Miss Ross. "Is there anything else we can do to help Miss Johnson feel better?"

Some children said they could draw flowers; others said they could make get-well cards too. Miss Ross welcomed all the ideas and she was happy everyone wanted to do something. Rachel wanted to do something too. She thought really hard. She wanted Miss Johnson to feel better. What could she do to help? Then Rachel thought of a good idea. She raised her hand.

"Miss Ross, can we say a special prayer for Miss Johnson today? My mom says that God will help sick people feel better soon!"

Miss Ross's face lit up. "Of course! Thank you all for being so thoughtful. Yes, we should say a special prayer for Miss Johnson today. I am sure when I tell Miss Johnson, she will be very happy to know that you all care so much about her. Let's pray together for Miss Johnson."

Everyone knelt down, closed their eyes, and clasped their hands together.

"In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ we pray. Dear heavenly Father, thank you for the holy Sabbath. Thank you for all the blessings of the past week. Lord, please take care of Miss Johnson. She is sick and cannot be here today. We miss her. Help her to feel better. We love her and we dedicate this prayer in your name. May all the glory and praise be onto your name. Hallelujah! Amen!"

The children felt less sad after the prayer. They missed Miss Johnson but they were glad that God listened to their prayer and would make her feel better.

### Questions to Think About

1. **What did the children want to do to help Miss Johnson feel better?** (They wanted to make get well cards and say a prayer for her.)
2. **What do you think is the best way to help those who are in need?** (Allow students to respond.)
3. **Have you ever prayed for others? How do you feel when you pray for others?** (Allow students to share their answers.)



### Activity 1

#### **Help Hannah Bring Samuel to the Tabernacle**

Look at maze. Help Hannah bring Samuel to the tabernacle where he can learn to be God's good worker.



### Activity 2

#### **Who Is Being a Good Helper?**

Look at each set of pictures. Who is being a good helper? Circle the word "Yes" if the person is being a good helper. Circle the word "No" if the person is not being a good helper. Discuss why the "Yes" examples are good examples to follow.

1. One child is putting the Bibles away while the other is talking on the phone.
2. One child is helping with the groceries while the other is busy playing with a toy.
3. One child is helping to fold the clothes while the other is playing with blocks.



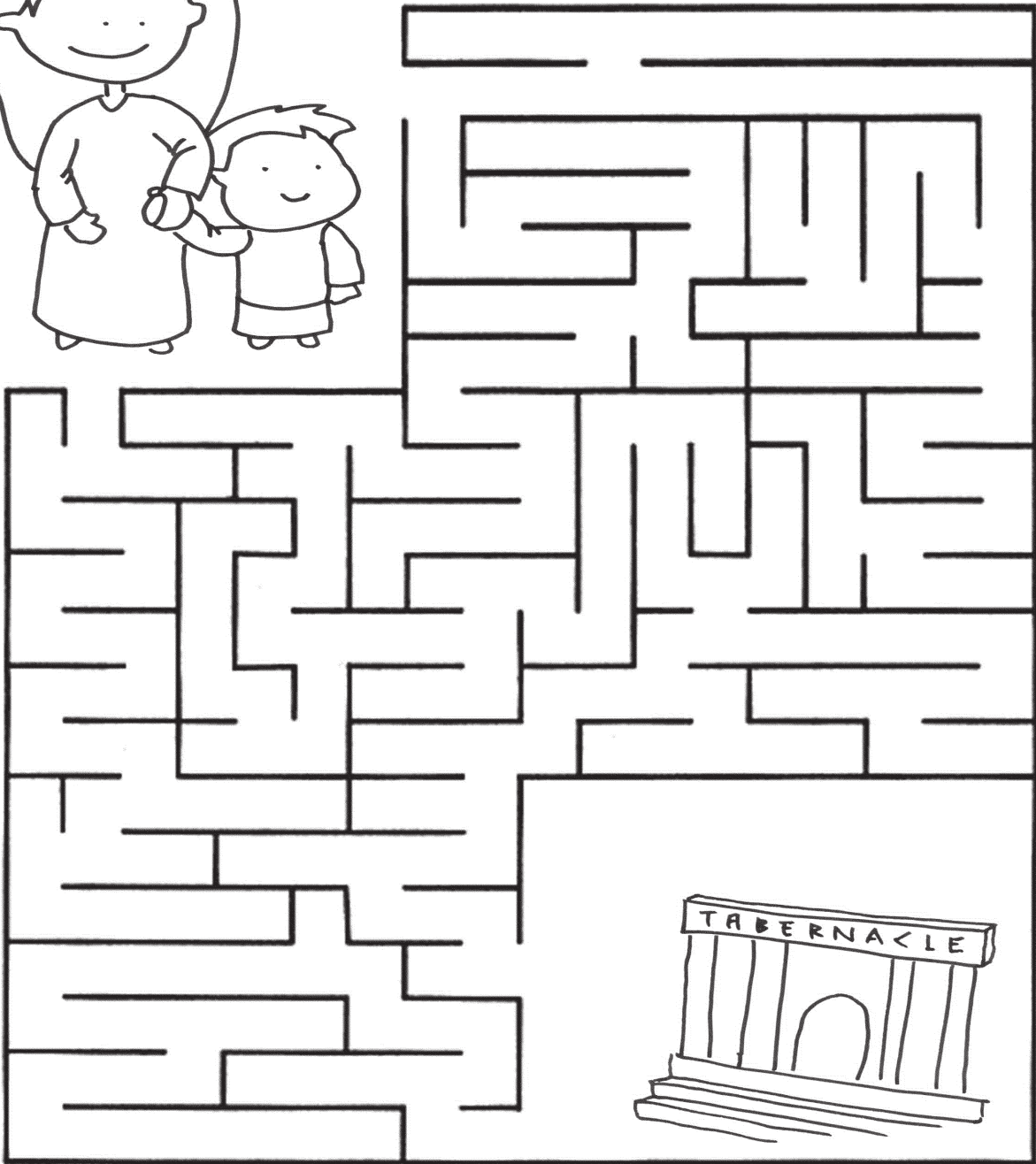
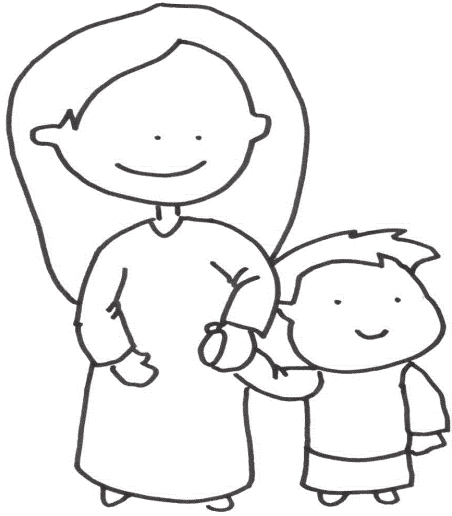
### Activity 3

#### **Let's Be God's Helpers and Clean Up!**

After the lesson, encourage the students to clean up the room. Organize them into pairs so that they can be responsible for something together. They can clean the board, wipe the tables, throw out the trash, and organize the Bibles and hymn books. This is a good opportunity to get the students involved and put their learning into action. Remind them that they are good helpers of God.

Activity 1:1

# Help Hannah Bring Samuel To The Tabernacle



Activity 1:2

Who Is Being A Good Helper?

Look at each set of pictures. Who is being a good helper?  
Circle the word "Yes" if the person is being a good helper.  
Circle the word "No" if the person is not being a good helper.

