

LESSON 2

THE BOY SAMUEL

BEFORE YOU TEACH

Samuel: Priest-in-Training

Samuel “ministered to the Lord before Eli the priest” (1 Sam 2:11). In other words, Samuel was Eli’s helper or assistant. In this role, Samuel’s responsibilities would have included opening the tabernacle doors each morning (1 Sam 3:15), cleaning the furniture, and sweeping the floors. As he grew older, Samuel would have assisted Eli in offering sacrifices. The fact that he was wearing a linen ephod (a long, sleeveless vest made of plain linen worn only by priests) shows that he was a priest-in-training (1 Sam 2:18).

The Sin of Eli and His Sons

As priests and Levites, Eli and his sons Hophni and Phinehas were entitled to a share of all the offerings brought to the temple. However, Eli’s sons abused this privilege when their greed and lust took hold of them. Before the sacrifices were even offered to God on the altar, they began to take their part. They were also eating meat before the fat was burned off. This was against God’s laws (Lev 3:3-5). In addition, they committed the great sin of sleeping with the women who served at the tabernacle (1 Sam 2:22).

Although Eli knew that his sons were doing such evil, he did little to correct them or stop them, even when the integrity of God’s sanctuary was threatened. According to the law, anyone who defiantly sinned against the Lord had to be cut off from his people (Num 15:30-31), or in other words, put to death. However, because Eli refused to discipline his sons, God exacted His own discipline, taking away the priesthood from Eli’s house forever.

Philistines Attack and the Death of Eli

Some years later, when Samuel had grown up, the Philistines attacked Eben-Ezer, eventually capturing the ark of the covenant from the Israelites and killing Eli’s sons, who accompanied the ark to battle as priests. Eli, who was ninety-eight and blind, was unaware of this until he asked a man who had come to Shiloh to report on the battlefield events. When Eli was told what had happened, he fell over backwards, broke his neck, and died. He had been a judge over Israel for a total of forty years.

BIBLE TEXT

1 Samuel 2:12-20; 3:1-21

BIBLE TRUTH

God punishes the wicked but rewards the faithful.

LESSON OBJECTIVES

1. To learn to do right even when others are doing wrong.
2. To learn to continue serving God with obedience and follow Jesus with a pure heart.

MEMORY VERSE

"Do not grow weary in doing good."

(2 Thessalonians 3:13b)

PRAYER

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we pray. We thank You, Lord, for guiding us and protecting us in this past week. Today is Your holy Sabbath, and we have come here to worship You and learn Your word. Please guide us today as we learn about Samuel and how he chose to do right even when others around him were doing wrong. Please give us the strength and wisdom to do right all the time. Hallelujah! Amen.

UNDERSTANDING YOUR STUDENTS

Eli's sons and Samuel all served in the temple. Eli's sons did evil things in the sight of the Lord, but Samuel did not follow in their ways and instead chose to serve God faithfully. The results of their actions were evident: Eli and his sons were destroyed in the end, while Samuel became the prophet of the Lord, beloved by God and men.

This week, you will help your students understand that the wicked will be punished, but the good will be blessed. Your students may already be experiencing the pressures of conforming to the people around them. They will find that choosing to do what is right is not always easy. Encourage students to share their experiences of choosing to do what is right even when under peer pressure from their friends. Help your students remember that doing the right thing is always worthwhile. Even though we can't

always see the value of it right away, at some point God will reward our efforts. God's word says, "Let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart" (Gal 6:9).

Your students may feel lonely for being the few who choose to do what is right. They may feel that no one understands the frustration they feel and that things aren't fair. But God understands them and cares for them very much. No matter what others may do, God wants us, His children, to do what is right. When it seems easier to cheat on a test or not to say grace in front of their school friends, the students can talk to the Lord about how they feel. He understands us and will give us the strength to do what is right.

VOCABULARY

- priest:** someone in charge of worship; he offered sacrifices
- prophet:** a messenger who spoke for God; he told people what was going to happen and what God wanted them to do
- greed:** wanting more than one deserves
- ephod:** a garment normally worn by priests

REVIEW

Last week, we learned about a very special woman named Hannah. Why was Hannah so sad in the beginning of the story? (She had no children.) Who would always tease her because she didn't have any children? (Peninnah, the other wife.) But Hannah had a husband who loved her very much. Every year they would go to the house of the Lord to offer sacrifices. One time they went, Hannah did something very important. What did she do? (She prayed to the Lord for a son.) After she had prayed to the Lord, she went home happy and feeling much better. Not long afterwards, the Lord gave her the son she had prayed for! What did we learn from Hannah's story? (That we can pray to God about anything. He knows us and understands us, and most importantly, He loves us very much. He will listen to our prayers and do what is best for us.)

This week, we will learn about the boy Samuel and how he grew up in the house of the Lord. Eli's sons also served in the house of the Lord; however, they were very different from Samuel. What do you think they did that made them very different from the beloved Samuel? [Encourage students to make predictions of the personalities or character of Eli's two sons.] The Lord loved Samuel because he was good and did what was right, but the Lord was unhappy with Eli's sons because they purposefully did evil things.

BIBLE STORY

Eli's Evil Sons

Do you know what a priest did back in that time? [Pause for students to answer.] A priest was in charge of the worship and offered sacrifices to God. It was an important job in God's temple. Priests had to keep themselves holy at all times to serve the Lord. Even though Eli's two sons Hophni and Phinehas were priests in God's temple, they served themselves instead of God. Eli's two sons used their power and authority for their own gain. They took the offerings of the Israelites and ate them. The Lord did not like their terrible greed because it showed that they had no respect for the sacrifices the people offered, and, most importantly, that they had no respect for God.

Hannah Visits Samuel Every Year

While Eli's sons were doing evil against God and the people, the boy Samuel grew in stature and in wisdom in the temple. Not only was he growing taller, he was also becoming wiser. Samuel lived in the temple at Shiloh. He served the Lord faithfully and wore special linen clothing, called an ephod, just as the priests did. Each year, his mother Hannah would come with her husband to offer sacrifices, and she would bring Samuel special clothes and an ephod she had made for him. Even though she only saw him once a year, she wanted to show her love and let him know how much she missed him.

Eli the priest would give Elkanah and his wife his blessing. He would say, "Samuel was born in answer to your prayers, and you have given him to the Lord. May the Lord bless you with more children to take his place." Indeed, God later blessed Elkanah and Hannah with two daughters and three more sons. From Hannah's example, we learn that when we make a vow to God, it's very important that we follow through with what we have promised Him. When we keep our promises, God will then bless us even more.

The Lord Speaks to Samuel

Samuel served the Lord by helping Eli the priest. He was young and didn't have his father, mother, sisters, or brothers around, but God watched over and loved him daily. God allowed Samuel to grow in good health; he grew taller and taller with each passing year. God also gave him wisdom. When we feel lonely and unloved, we can remember that God is always there to care for us, just like He cared for Samuel.

Samuel was an obedient boy who listened to Eli. Even though Eli's evil sons were older, Samuel did not follow their bad example. He did not eat from the offerings of the people, but continued to serve God before Eli. We can imagine how hard it must have been for the young Samuel not to give in to the bad influence from Eli's two sons. What do you think you would do if you were in Samuel's shoes? Would you act any differently? [Encourage

students to think-pair-share.] As young as Samuel was, his absolute loyalty was to Eli and to God first.

In those days the Lord did not often speak to people or appear to them in dreams. One night, Eli, who was almost blind, was in bed. Samuel was sleeping on a mat in the place of worship. The lamp was still burning when the Lord called out to him.

Samuel answered, "Here I am." He thought Eli was calling him. Samuel did not grumble, complain, or do things slowly. Even though it was late and he was already sleeping, Samuel answered quickly, got up, and ran to Eli. He was young, but he was still a very faithful servant. When he reached Eli, he said, "Here I am, sir. What do you want?" Samuel was not only ready to get up and come to Eli, but also ready to do anything else Eli asked him to do.

Eli replied, "I didn't call you. Go back to bed." So Samuel went back. Samuel was gentle and good-mannered because he didn't get angry after being called for no reason.

Once more, the Lord called Samuel's name. Samuel got up and went to Eli and said, "Here I am. What do you want?" We can see that Samuel was very patient. He did everything he did the first time without arguing.

But Eli told him, "Son, I didn't call you. Now go back to sleep."

Since this was the first time the Lord had spoken to Samuel, he did not realize it was the voice of the Lord and not Eli. When the Lord spoke to him a third time that night, Samuel again went to Eli and said, "Here I am. What do you want?" This shows us that Samuel was also caring. Even though he had been called two times before for no reason, he still was willing to get up a third time to serve Eli.

Eli now knew that it was the Lord who was speaking to Samuel, and Eli told him, "Go back and lie down. If someone speaks to you again, answer, 'Lord, I am Your servant. Speak, and I will listen.'" Once again, Samuel went back and lay down.

The Lord came and stood beside Samuel. He called out as He had done before, "Samuel! Samuel!"

The boy replied, "Lord, I am Your servant. Speak, and I will listen." It must have seemed strange for Samuel to answer from his bed instead of going over to see Eli, but he obeyed Eli's instructions. Because he obeyed, he was able to receive an important message and prophecy from God.

The Lord said, "Samuel, I am going to do something that will shock everyone who hears about it! I will punish Eli and his family, just as I promised. He knew what terrible things his sons were doing, and he did not try to stop them, even though I said I would punish his family forever. I warned Eli that sacrifices and offerings could not wipe away the terrible things his family had done."

Samuel Tells Eli About the Vision

We can imagine that Samuel must not have slept very well in the night, after getting up three times to go see Eli and then listening to God's words. Yet, he was responsible with his duties and got up to open the temple doors in the morning. We sometimes find excuses not to do our chores, but we should learn to be like Samuel and do our duties even though we may not feel like it. Even though nobody else may be watching, God knows and He will reward us for our service.

Samuel was afraid to tell Eli what the Lord had told him. But Eli sent for him and said, "What did the Lord say to you? Tell me everything! May the Lord punish you severely if you do not tell me every word He said!"

Samuel told Eli everything and did not keep anything secret. Eli spoke again, "He is the Lord and will do what He knows is right." Eli knew that the Lord was a just God. He didn't dare to say anything else to defend his sinful

sons.

The Lord Is with Samuel

God was with Samuel as he continued to grow up because he was an obedient and responsible servant to Eli. The Lord made everything Samuel said to Eli come true.

When the Philistines later attacked the Israelites, Eli's two sons died on the battlefield at the same time. They were punished for their wickedness against the Israelites and against God. When a messenger brought this bad news to Eli, he fell off his chair and died the same day. In contrast to the sad ending of Eli's family, Samuel became an important prophet with God's abiding power. Everyone in the country, from the city of Dan in the north to the city of Beersheba in the south, knew for sure that Samuel was the Lord's prophet. At Shiloh, the Lord continued to speak to Samuel and worked with him to guide the Israelites.

CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

- 1. What did Samuel do while he lived at the temple in Shiloh?** He served the Lord by helping Eli.
- 2. What happened one night as Samuel was sleeping?** The Lord called to him.
- 3. What did the Lord tell Samuel He would do?** Punish Eli and his family.
- 4. Why was the Lord going to punish Eli and his family?** Eli's sons were doing terrible things, and Eli didn't try to stop them.
- 5. When Samuel grew up, everyone knew that he was...** the Lord's prophet.
- 6. Why did God choose Samuel instead of Eli's sons to be His prophet?** Samuel always did what was right in the eyes of God, but Eli's sons sinned against God.
- 7. What happened to Eli and his two sons in the end?** Eli's two sons died on the battlefield at the same time, and when Eli heard the news, he fell off his chair and died on the same day.

MEMORY VERSE PRACTICE

Please reinforce the memory verse every week.
You can practice the memory verse with your students anytime during class.

"Do not grow weary in doing good." (2 Thessalonians 3:13b)

SPIRITUAL TEACHING & LIFE APPLICATION

1. Continue serving God with obedience.

While Eli's sons were sinking further and further into disobedience and sin, Samuel was growing into a person whom God could use. The Bible said that during this period of Israel's history, "the word of the Lord was rare in those days; there was no widespread revelation" (1 Sam 3:1). However, it was through Samuel that God revealed His purpose by way of a prophecy concerning the family of Eli and his two sons Hophni and Phinehas.

When God called Samuel as he was lying down, Samuel thought it was Eli calling. Samuel ran to Eli to see what he wanted. Do you know what this tells us about Samuel? He had an obedient and willing spirit to serve. He was eager to be of service even though his sleep had been interrupted. Even though he was young, he had already learned to minister (1 Sam 2:11). On Eli's instruction at the fourth calling, he answered God: "Speak, for Your servant hears" (1 Sam 3:10). Notice the choice of words used by Samuel in his reply to God. "Your servant hears" shows his understanding of the greatness of God, his humble position in the sight of God, and his willingness to listen to God and His word.

Samuel is indeed a great example of what attitude we should have toward God when we serve. It is those who have a willing and servant's heart whom God can use. You are never too young to serve God. You are never too young to be used by Him. The key is to be faithful and willing to serve Him.

When God told Samuel to tell Eli that his family was going to be judged because of the sin his two sons had committed, Samuel was afraid (1 Sam 3:15). It was a challenge for Samuel to give bad news to Eli, who was much older than he. In spite of his fear and despite what Eli's sons were doing, Samuel didn't go home and quit; he continued to be obedient and kept himself pure and upright. We need to continue serving God with an obedient heart no matter what may happen. Samuel remained faithful and obedient to the calling God had placed on his life. Like in Samuel's case, there is nothing easy about serving the Lord, but we need to be faithful and obedient in serving the Lord in the house of God.

2. Rely on God's power to resist peer pressure.

Children as young as three already face peer pressure on a regular basis either in the classroom or on the playground. It is extremely important for us to encourage our students to rely on God and to find the courage to say "no" to peer pressure. Even when everyone is doing the wrong thing, we, as children of God, want to follow the boy Samuel's footsteps and not waver from what is right. [Take some time for students to share their experiences with peer pressure at school and how they have handled them. Did they succeed in doing the right thing after all or did they do what their friends told them to do?] Brainstorm some of the ways that the students can respond to peer pressure, and write them down on the board. After letting students compile their own list, compare it with the following list to explore more ways to stay strong in the face of peer pressure:

1. Say a silent prayer to ask God for courage to say "no"
2. Say no and leave
3. Change the subject
4. Ignore the person and walk away
5. Suggest an alternative
6. Say you're not allowed
7. Give a reason why you can't
8. Give a reason why it's not a good idea
9. Go hang out with someone else
10. Keep praying to God for more strength to stay firm

If class time allows, please discuss a few of the following scenarios with the students, and talk about how they can best handle the different types of peer pressure.

- It's quiet reading time in class. Your friend tries to distract you from reading quietly on the carpet. What do you do?
- You are having recess at school. Your best friend tells you that he saw a cool object sitting on the teacher's desk. He wants you to sneak back into the classroom to get that object. What do you do?
- You are at school taking a test. The person sitting next to you is cheating and offers the test answers to you. What do you do?
- It's getting dark and you're playing outside. Some of your friends decide it would be fun to throw rocks at some cars. What do you do?

Saying "no" to your friends is not an easy thing to do. We sometimes also make mistakes in pressuring our friends to do things that are not so good, but bring pleasure to us. Let's continue to pray for one another and ask God to help us stay alert and strong so we can keep doing what is right in His eyes. Remember, God will reward us in the end for making the right choice!

ACTIVITIES

1

Warning Signs

Objective: To remind students that God gives us warning signs to keep us safe.

Materials

- Copies of the activity handout, one for each student

Instructions

Before class, print or make copies of the handout for each student.

1. Give each student a copy of the handout, and have them examine the pictures.
2. Explain to the class that each picture is a sign that gives us a warning. See if they can identify each warning.
3. After everyone has had a chance to make their guesses and write down their answers, go over each picture and let the students know the answers.

The signs shown on the handout are as follows:

Don't Smoke	Keep Away from Children (medicine)	Stop
Do Not Enter	Railroad Crossing	Yield
Curving Road	Caution, stairs	Hazardous Waste
Poison	School Zone	Slippery When Wet

Ask students if they have ever seen signs that give us warnings. There are also warnings we get from people around us. For example, when a teacher sees students running in the hallway, she tells them not to run but to walk so that no one gets hurt. When a mother sees her child playing in the kitchen, she gives warnings to the child and stops such behavior, so that no one gets hurt in the kitchen. These warnings actually help to protect us and others. Therefore, they are extremely important.

Do you notice that warnings do not just come from signs or people around us? The Bible is also full of warnings, and they are just as important. In fact, they are more important, because obeying the warning signs in the Bible not only protect us, they make us better people. The Bible says, "Therefore you shall be careful to do as the Lord your God has commanded you; you shall not turn aside to the right hand or to the left. You shall walk in all the ways which the Lord your God has commanded you, that you may live and that it may be well with you, and that you may prolong your days in the land which you shall possess" (Deut 5:32-33).

Where can we find the warnings that God gives us? (By reading the Bible and learning more about Jesus.)
How can we know what the Lord's will is? (By knowing what the Bible says, and by allowing the Holy Spirit to direct us in our actions.)

2

Samuel Loved God, Do You?

Objective: To identify actions that show love for God and actions that don't.

Materials

- Poster board
- Markers

Instructions

Samuel showed his love for God by being good. Take some time to brainstorm with students what actions of ours can show love for God and what actions can't.

1. Split your students into groups of 3 or 4 with one student from each grade. The older ones can help with the writing.
2. Draw a line down the middle of the poster board, making two columns. In the left column, the students can list actions that show love for God. In the right column, they can list actions that don't show love for God.

I CAN SHOW LOVE FOR GOD BY:	I DO NOT SHOW LOVE FOR GOD BY:
Singing hymns	Being selfish
Helping the poor	Lying to others
Reading the Bible	Fighting with my brothers and sisters
Praying to God	Playing when I should be doing my homework

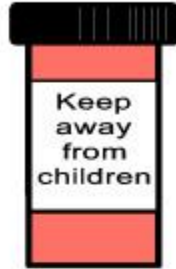
3. At the end of class time, have students come up to the front to share their posters.

HOMEWORK ANSWER KEY

1. "Do not grow weary in doing good." (2 Thessalonians 3:13b)
2. A
3. C
4. A
5. ephod
6. three
7. False
8. True
9. Draw pictures to tell the story
10. Answers may vary.

**What do these warning signs mean?
See how many you know and write down your answer.**

























E1 Year 2 Book 1 Lesson 2—The Boy Samuel

Homework Assignment

Name: _____ Parent signature: _____ Date: _____

Bible Truth: God punishes the wicked but rewards the faithful.**Lesson Objectives:** 1. To learn to do right even when others are doing wrong.
2. To learn to continue serving God with obedience and follow Jesus with a pure heart.**Bible Reading:** Please put a checkmark in the space when you complete the reading each day.**Prayer:** Please put a checkmark in the space provided on the days you prayed to God.

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Bible Reading							
Prayer							

Memory Verse

Please write down this week's memory verse.

(2 Thessalonians 3:13b)

What I Learned from the Bible This Week

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Homework Assignment

Understanding What You Have Learned

1. Write down the memory verse for this week.
-

Multiple Choice

2. ____ : What was a priest's job?
- He took charge of worship and offered sacrifices for people.
 - He cooked food for people to eat after their worship.
 - He collected money from people who came to worship in the temple.
3. ____ : What did Samuel do after he went to live with the priest Eli in the temple?
- He went to school every day.
 - He didn't do anything but sleep and eat in the temple.
 - He became Eli's trusted helper in the temple.
4. ____ : What did God tell Samuel in the vision?
- He would punish Eli and his two sons for all the wrong things they had done.
 - He was mad about the Israelites because they didn't listen to His words.
 - He would reward Samuel and make him the next king.

Fill In the Blank

5. When Hannah went to see Samuel every year, she would make a new vest-like garment for Samuel to wear. This special garment is called an _____.
6. God called Samuel _____ times before he realized it was God calling him.

True or False

7. Hannah regretted giving Samuel to God, and she cried every day because she wanted to get her son back. _____
8. Eli's two sons did evil things in the eyes of God and later got punished for what they did. _____

Drawing Time

9. Use your imagination and draw the scenes in the spaces provided below. Use your pictures to tell the story!

Storyline	Draw your picture(s) here:
The boy Samuel helping Eli in the temple.	

<p>Eli's sons did evil things to make God sad.</p>	
<p>God called Samuel three times and talked to him in the vision.</p>	

Life Application Questions

10. Are there ever times when the people around you are doing what is wrong, but you want to do what is right?

The next time you find that it is hard to do what is right, what will you do?
