

God did call Samuel again, and Samuel answered as Eli had said. God told Samuel that He had seen all the terrible things Hophni and Phinehas had done and that Eli had not stopped them.

God said they would be punished. He explained that someday there would be a battle with the Philistines and that both sons would be killed in battle. Eli would also die soon after that. No one in Eli's family would ever work in the temple again.

And even worse, the ark, the most sacred piece of furniture, would be captured by the enemy, and God's presence would be gone from the temple.

What did God say to you last night?

Please tell me, even if it is hard to do.



Er . . . I'd rather not say.

You can read this story in 1 Samuel 3.



So Samuel told Eli everything. "It is the Lord," said Eli, "He must do what He thinks is fair."

It happened just as God said. Read this sad story in 1 Samuel 4. When Eli heard that his sons had been killed and the ark captured by the Philistines, he fell off his chair, breaking his neck, and died.

His daughter-in-law was in labor giving birth to Eli's grandson, and she died too, crying out, "The glory is departed." And it was.

This message was the first of many that God sent to Samuel. Samuel became a famous prophet throughout Israel and surrounding countries. He was sent by God to anoint the first and the second kings of Israel. Samuel also wrote at least two books in your Bible. Write their names here: _____

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GOD'S YOUNG FRIENDS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

LESSON 5 Samuel: Friend of God

Samuel was a "prayed-for" son. Which other friend of God in our lessons so far was also a "prayed-for" child? _____ (Hint: Lesson 1)

Samuel did not come from a "perfect" home. Samuel's father, Elkanah, had two wives. One was named Peninnah. The other was Hannah. Peninnah had several children, but Hannah had none. Year after year passed and still no babies for Hannah.

Hannah felt terrible about this. Elkanah was a kind man, and tried to comfort her, but Peninnah teased her and was mean. Where they lived, a woman who could not have children was considered cursed by God.



God must not love you or He would give you a baby. See, God thinks I am a better person than you are! Look at my baby.

You can read her story in 1 Samuel 1:2-8.



I do not know if God would want to be my friend. There is a lot of fighting at my house. My parents and my brother are yelling and shouting at each other all the time. Would God still be my friend?

During the week I live with my mother. On most weekends I go stay with my father and his new wife. Would God still want to be friends with someone who has a family like mine?



Our family does not have much money. We do not live in a nice part of town and there are a lot of bad things that happen in our neighborhood. Even some of the people in my family do bad things. Would God still want to be my friend? Could I still be God's friend?

What do you think? What about you? Do you think He wants to be friends with you? Look up this promise from God. Romans 8:38, 39. Hint: Look in the list of books in front of your Bible to find the book of Romans.



Write your answer here:



One night when Samuel was just falling asleep . . .

**Samuel!
Samuel!**



Here I am!

I didn't call you. Go back to bed.



Later . . .

**Samuel!
Samuel!**



Here I am!

I didn't call you. Go back to bed.



When it happened the third time, Priest Eli realized that God must be calling Samuel. He told Samuel, "Go back to bed. If you hear your name called again, say, 'Speak, Lord, for I am listening.'"

I am God's friend, but some people who say they are God's friends are not very good friends. Sometimes they are mean to other people. Should I still be friends with God? What about God? Is He really good?



Of course! God is always good, even when I do not understand why some things happen. I know He always loves me!



What do you think?

Circle the answers.

1. If God is good and loves you, should you stop being friends with Him because someone else is doing wrong things?

YES

NO

2. What do you think Samuel would have said?

A. Hophni did something really mean today, so I am not going to be friends with God anymore.

B. Hophni may be mean, but God is always good. I know He still loves me, and I will love Him, no matter what other people do!

Hannah was so depressed about not having children that when she and the family took their yearly trip to worship at the temple, she decided to talk to God about it. She stood near the entrance and cried as she talked to God. She knew God could hear her even if she was not talking out loud, so she prayed silently to Him. She promised God that if He gave her a baby, she would give the child back to Him to work in the temple.

High Priest Eli saw her standing there, tears rolling down her cheeks, lips moving with no sound coming out of them. Which of the following speech boxes tell what Eli thought?



Draw a line from Eli the priest to the box that tells what he was thinking.

This poor woman must be awfully upset about something!

How disgusting! To be drunk already, and it is still morning!



I think this woman needs medical attention.

Check your answer by looking up 1 Samuel 1:13, 14.



If Eli had really understood Hannah's problem, which of the speech boxes would tell what he thought. Draw a circle around this one.

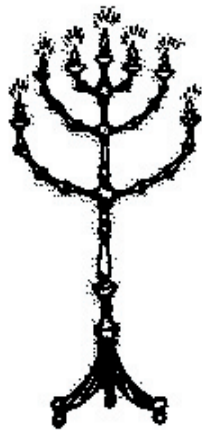
Hannah told Eli her problems. Eli realized he had judged her unfairly and encouraged her to believe that God would answer her prayer.

The next year, only Elkanah and Peninnah came to the temple with their children. Hannah was home with her new baby! She named him Samuel. When he was still very little, she brought him to the temple as she had promised and left him with Eli.

Every year she came to visit him and brought him new clothes. Samuel grew up in the temple. He wore little priest clothes and worked in the temple with the priests.



Match Samuel's jobs with the furniture in the temple.



Putting water in the laver so the priests could wash their hands and feet.

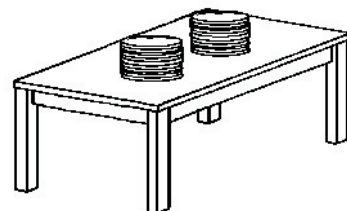
Polishing the golden candlesticks.

Putting fresh spiced bread on the table.

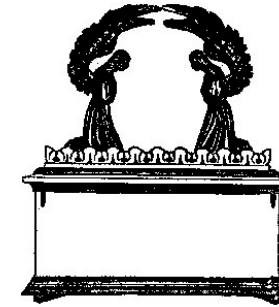


Putting fresh incense on the altar of incense.

Adding oil to the candlesticks.



One place in the temple was special. Samuel never went in there. It was the Most Holy Place. Only High Priest Eli was allowed to go in there, and that was only once a year. The ark was there with golden angels on top, and the law of God was inside. The presence of God Himself was actually there, between the angels, close to His people.



Samuel saw things that bothered him. Hophni and Phineas were Eli's two grown up sons. They were priests too, but they were bad priests. Often when people brought offerings for God, Hophni and Phineas took them for themselves. Some sacrifices were to be shared between God and the person bringing them. Sometimes Hophni and Phineas would not give the other part back to the person. They treated the worshippers unfairly and were mean to them.

Isn't God watching?



How can He let these things go on right in His house?

Doesn't He care?

Some people might choose not to come to the temple anymore, as long as Hophni and Phineas were there, but not Samuel. He was still a friend of God, even if some of God's priests were not doing what was right.