

A Voice in the Night

Samuel is called by God

1 Samuel 1; 2:11; 3

Character Trait: Wisdom

(Estimated Lesson Time: 90 minutes)

Objectives:

- Children will recognize that it was God who was calling Samuel.
- Children will explain the different ways we can hear God's voice.
- Children will discuss ways to respond to various tasks and chores with wisdom rather than complaining.

Supplies:

- *A Voice in the Night* loaded onto a tablet or phone in the *Bible App for Kids*
- Small strips of sturdy paper or poster board cut to the size of a bookmark *(one for each child)*
- Pencils, pens and/or crayons
- A variety of coloring supplies
- Stickers *(optional)*
- A hole punch
- A small piece of ribbon *(one for each child)*

Welcome Activity:

(5 minutes)

Welcome the children. Ask the children to raise their hand if they can think of a way to communicate a message to someone. Call on a few volunteers to share aloud. *(Answers will vary but may include speaking, writing a note, sending a text, or using sign language.)*

SAY: In today's lesson, we will be learning about a boy named Samuel who received a message from God!

Review:

(5 minutes)

Guide the children in a brief review of the previous lesson by asking the following questions:

- **What did Ruth do differently than Orpah?** *(Orpah stayed in Moab, but Ruth went with Naomi back to Israel.)*
- **How did Boaz help Ruth and Naomi?** *(He gave Ruth food, told his workers to watch over her, bought Elimelech's land, took care of Naomi and Ruth, and married Ruth.)*
- **What did Naomi tell Ruth that Boaz was to them?** *(Kinsman-redeemer)*
- **Who is our Kinsman-Redeemer?** *(God's Son, Jesus)*

Today's Bible Story:

(10-15 minutes)

Show *A Voice in the Night* from the *Bible App for Kids* or share the story aloud:

- Hannah was sad because she had no children.
- She prayed, and God gave her a son, Samuel.
- She was very grateful, so she gave Samuel to God to serve Him.
- Hannah left her little boy at the tabernacle with Eli, the priest.
- Samuel helped old, blind Eli.
- He even slept in the tabernacle, while Eli slept in a room nearby.
- One night, Samuel heard someone call his name.
- He got up and ran to Eli.
- "Here I am," he said.
- "I didn't call you," Eli grunted. "Go back to bed."
- Samuel crept back to bed.
- He heard his name again.
- Samuel ran back to Eli.
- "Here I am," he said.
- "I didn't call you," Eli sighed, sleepily. "Go back to bed."
- After Samuel heard the voice a third time, Eli said it was the Lord.
- "If He calls again," said Eli, "say, 'Speak, Lord, Your servant is listening.'"
- So Samuel did.
- "Samuel," God said, "can you be My prophet and pass My words faithfully on to My people?"
- "I can," said Samuel.
- And he did, until he was an old man.

Discussion:

(15 minutes)

Encourage the children to think more about the story by asking the following:

- **Why did Hannah leave her little boy, Samuel, at the tabernacle with Eli?** *(She was very grateful, so she gave Samuel to God to serve Him.)*
- **Who did Samuel think was calling out for him?** *(Eli, the priest)*
- **Who was really calling out for Samuel?** *(God)*
- **Who figured this out?** *(Eli, the priest)*
- **What did Eli tell Samuel to do?** *(Eli said to say, "Speak, Lord, Your servant is listening.")*
- **What did God ask Samuel to do?** *(Be His prophet and pass His words faithfully to His people)*
- **How can we hear God's "voice" today?** *(Through His Word, the Bible, through the example of Jesus, through the Holy Spirit living inside of us, through the wise words of others)*

SAY: Samuel heard an audible voice, a voice that he could hear with his ears three different times! When Samuel received God's message, he chose to obey. Jesus also talked to God, the Father, and chose to obey His will—even unto death!

SAY: We may not hear a voice with our ears like Samuel did, but God is still speaking to all of us today through His Word, the Bible.

God's Bigger Story:

(5 minutes)

SAY: When Samuel received instructions from God, he chose to obey them. Jesus also did what God, His Father, sent Him to do, even unto death. Today, God's followers still receive guidance from Him. We can learn how to obey God by reading His Word, the Bible.

Memory Verse:

(10 minutes)

And the LORD *(point both hands up)*
came and called as before *(cup hands around your mouth)*,
"Samuel! Samuel!"
And Samuel replied, "Speak, your servant is listening *(cup hand around your ear)*."

1 Samuel 3:10 (NLT)

Activity:

(15 minutes)

SAY: We will play a game called "Simon Says." You are to do any action that begins with the phrase "Simon Says." But if you complete an action that does not begin with this phrase, you are "out" of the rest of the game.

(Sample instructions can include jump in place, clap your hands, stand on one foot, and put your hands on your head.) Continue playing as time permits or until only one child is left standing.

SAY: During the game, it was tricky to always follow the instructions carefully and correctly. But obeying God's will in our daily lives can be much more difficult. That is why it is so important to "listen" for His guidance in the words of the Bible.

Response Activity:

(10 minutes)

SAY: During the game, you did two things. First, you heard the instructions; then you chose to either obey or ignore them. These are the same two steps that Samuel did, and it is the same two things we can do today. We receive God's instructions through the Bible. Then, we choose to obey or not.

SAY: Now, you will each make a special bookmark as a reminder to listen to God just like Samuel did.

Provide each child with a strip of sturdy paper or poster board. Instruct the children to write "**'Speak, your servant is listening'** 1 Samuel 3:10" on their bookmark. Provide a variety of coloring supplies and stickers *(optional)* for the children to decorate with. Help the children finish their bookmarks by punching a hole near the top of the bookmark and tying a ribbon to it.

For younger children...
Make the activity simpler and easier for younger children by having the holes already punched and the Scripture already written on the bookmarks prior to decorating.

For older children...
Extend the activity by challenging older children to write down the Ten Commandments *(as taught in "God Makes a Way" or found in Exodus 20:3-17)* on the other side of their bookmarks.

Character Trait: Wisdom

(10 minutes)

SAY: Wisdom is the ability to respond to what we know in the proper ways. Eli, the priest, shared his wisdom with Samuel. Eli knew it was God calling Samuel. Then, he told Samuel how to respond. Samuel showed wisdom, too, by doing just as Eli said.

Encourage the children to think more about wisdom by asking the following:

- **Can you think of a time that you showed wisdom?** *(Answers will vary.)*
- **What is the opposite of wisdom?** *(Answers will vary but may include knowing the right thing to do and choosing not to do it or not listening/obeying.)*
- **How can wisdom help us?** *(Answers will vary but may include by protecting us and others and helping us make good/beneficial/right decisions.)*

Connect with Others:

(5 minutes)

SAY: One way we can act wisely is by choosing not to complain. When someone in authority over us, such as a parent, caregiver, or teacher, asks or tells us to do something, it is wise to obey because that person likely has a good reason. Obedience without complaining shows wisdom because it also shows respect to those above us.

Obedience is important. However, it is important to be wise about obedience, too. No one has the right to hurt or abuse you. If you are ever asked to do something that does not sound or feel right or if anyone ever asks you to keep a secret to cover up or hide a hurt, tell someone else that you trust right away.

SAY: Think of a chore or task you dislike. What are some specific examples of how you can respond wisely to it? *(Allow a few volunteers to share aloud. Answers will vary but should include completing the chore or task without complaining and to the best of their abilities.)*

Challenge the children to respond with wisdom the next time they feel the urge to complain about a specific task or chore.

Closing:

(2 minutes)

SAY: Samuel showed wisdom by choosing to obey God's will. God's own Son, Jesus, showed wisdom by obeying the Father's will all the way to His death on the cross. We can show wisdom, too, by choosing to obey and follow God's guidance as provided in the Bible.

Prayer:

(2 minutes)

SAY:

Dear God,
We are grateful that You are faithful to guide and speak to all of us still today. Thank You for providing Your Word for us to follow. Help us to respond with wisdom to Your instructions and Your will.
Amen.

Notes