

# Lower Elementary

## Samuel

# Checklist

cardstock

Listening ears template

## Introduction:

Have children play a round of telephone.

Was it always easy to understand what you were being told?

Does the message get confused because the person speaking is saying something different, or because the person listening is hearing something different?

(the person listening)

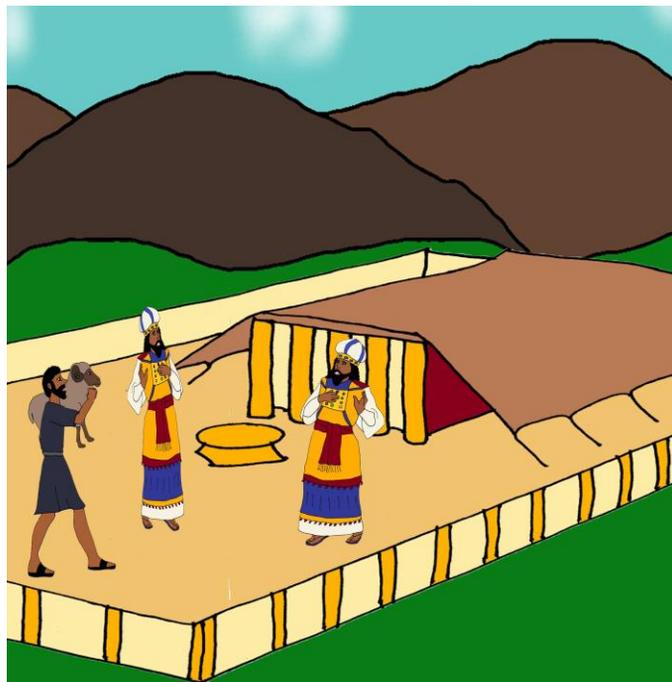
Do you think it's easy or hard to listen to God?

It might seem hard at first, but the more you practice listening in prayer and when you learn about God, the easier it gets.

Samuel lived at the house of worship with Eli, where he learned how to do the work of a priest from him, like an apprentice. Samuel served the Lord by helping Eli the priest, who was by that time almost blind.



Eli had two grown sons who also served as priests there. But their hearts did not really follow God. Eli just let them be priests because they were his sons. God had given His priests rules about the sacrifices. They would get paid a fair amount for their work. But Eli's sons were greedy. They took more than God had said they were supposed to. God had given them other rules about how to live that they ignored, too.



Each night, Eli slept in his room and Samuel slept on his cot at the foot of the Ark of the Covenant. One night, shortly after they had each fallen asleep, Samuel heard a gentle whisper.

“Samuel,” God called to him. Samuel woke up, thinking it had been Eli calling him. He rushed to Eli’s room and asked what he wanted.

Confused and tired, Eli asked Samuel why he had woken him up.

“You called me,” Samuel explained, feeling confused and tired, as well.

“Go back to sleep,” Eli mumbled, as he rolled over and fell asleep again.



Samuel went back to bed, but just as before, God called his name the moment he fell asleep. Again, Samuel rushed to Eli's bed, only to be told he was dreaming and shouldn't have woken him.

Samuel didn't realize it was God calling his name, because the Lord had not spoken to Samuel before, so Samuel did not recognize His voice. But God wanted to speak to Samuel, so He called his name a third time.



Samuel woke Eli up again, saying, “Here I am. What do you want?”

This time, Eli realized that it had actually been God calling Samuel’s name, and not just a dream.

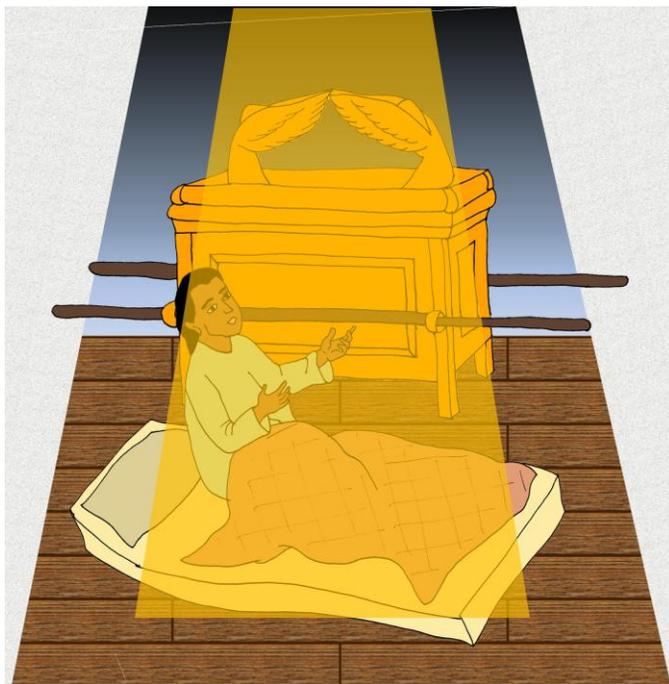
“Go back and lie down again,” Eli told him. “This time, when you hear your name, answer with, ‘I’m listening, Lord. What do you want me to do?’ and wait for God’s reply.”



Samuel went back to bed. As he lay there, the Lord stood beside him and called his name.

“I’m listening,” Samuel answered God. “What do you want me to do?”

“Eli’s sons are bad priests,” God explained. “They have been dishonest and done other terrible things. Even though Eli has been a good priest, he knew what his sons were doing and chose to look the other way. That is never acceptable and all three of them will be punished for it. They may no longer serve Me here.”



The next morning Eli was so excited to hear what message God had given to Samuel. In those days, God rarely spoke to His prophets directly, and hardly ever appeared to people in dreams. So, Eli knew it must be something special.

“So?” Eli asked eagerly. “What did the Lord say?”

Samuel just stood there terrified. How could he repeat what God had told him? But Eli quickly realized by the look on Samuel’s face that it must be bad news.

“Tell me,” Eli ordered him. “I can take it.”

So, Samuel repeated God’s words to Eli.

Eli slowly nodded his head in acceptance and said, “He is the Lord. Whatever He decides is right.”



God's word came true, and when Samuel grew up, he took over serving the Lord. Throughout all Israel, Samuel was the most respected man in the country. Everyone knew that God spoke to him and that he was the Lord's true prophet.

He continued living at Shiloh, where God would frequently appear to him and give him messages.



## Closing Discussion:



Who was Eli's helper? (Samuel) Did Eli's sons help him the way they were supposed to?

Did Eli stop his sons from their bad behavior? (no) Should parents stop their children when they are doing wrong things? (yes) Does this mean they don't love their children? (no, it means they want to teach them right from wrong)

When God called to Samuel in his sleep, who did Samuel think was calling him? (Eli) What did Samuel say? (Here I am)

When Eli realized it was God, what did he tell Samuel to do? (go back to bed and wait, then answer, "Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening.")

What was God's message? (to tell Eli his sons needed to be punished) Does this sound like good news? Would you like to have to tell someone they would be punished? Did Samuel obey?

## Craft:

Samuel's Listening Ears

## Closing Activity:

Because Samuel listened to God and followed His instructions, he became a great prophet for God. God wants us to listen to Him. He also wants us to obey His instructions. If your parents call you and you listen, but then ignore their instructions, they will be upset.

Have children pretend to sleep. Call their names, one by one. When a child is called, they should get up and say, "Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening." Give them a simple instruction (touch your nose, wave your hand). Tell them, "Well done, my good servant."

# Samuel

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

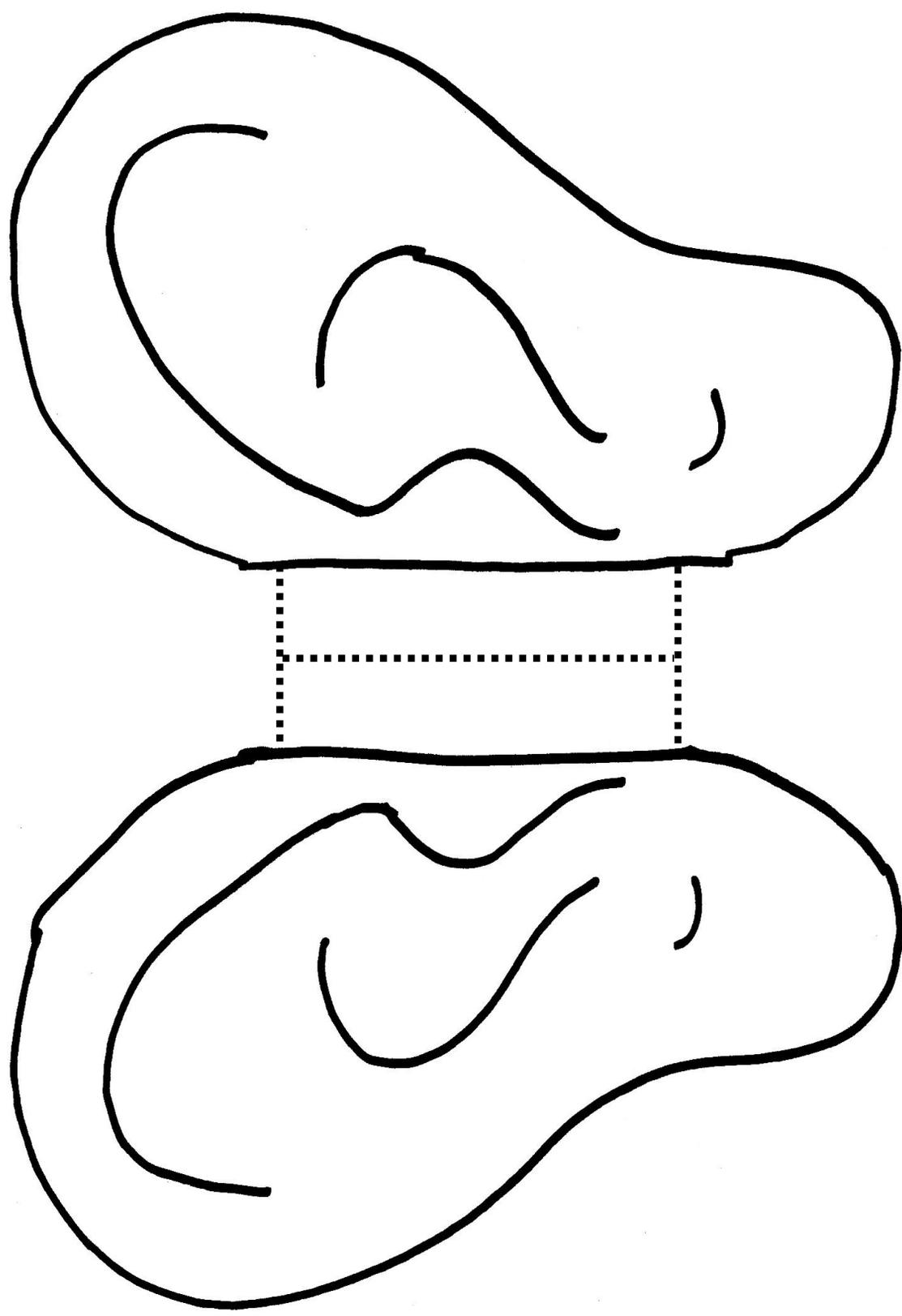


**Speak Lord, for Your servant is listening.**

**~ 1 Samuel 3:9**

- ❖ Print “Speak Lord...” onto cardstock
- ❖ Children color and cut out ears
- ❖ Teacher measures paper around child’s head and adds necessary amount of extra cardstock
- ❖ Teacher staples ears onto paper OR
- ❖ Children glue ears onto paper





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servant is listening.

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