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## Samuel Called

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### to God's Service

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**S**AMUEL was a young boy, possibly no older than some of you who are reading this page. He did not live in his own house but in God's house, the Temple, with an old man called Eli, who was one of God's priests. Samuel lived there because his mother was so pleased God had given her a little boy that she had brought him to help in God's house. Eli would be pleased to get this help.

One night, Samuel had gone to sleep when he was awakened by a voice calling him. So he ran to Eli, but Eli told him that he had not called him and to go back to bed. But, when he did this, Samuel heard the voice calling him again, "Samuel!". So, thinking it must be Eli this time, he got out of bed the second time and went to Eli. Possibly Eli thought Samuel was dreaming, for he told him to go back to bed again. What do you think happened this time? Yes — he heard the voice calling him again! You can imagine Samuel at first asking himself if he had really heard the voice, but because he was sure that he had heard it he went to Eli for the third time.

Now Eli was a godly old man, and by this time it began to occur to him what was happening. Can you think what was happening? Well, there was someone

else in God's house besides Eli and Samuel. It was God Himself. God was calling Samuel. Now the Bible tells us that Samuel did not know God. Think of that! Samuel was helping in God's house, but he did not know God! So Eli told him to lie down again and, if he should hear the voice again, to say, "Speak, Lord; for thy servant heareth". (A servant is someone who works for someone else. Samuel was Eli's servant, and Eli was teaching him these words because he wanted Samuel to work for God also.)

So Samuel lay down again, and God called him by his name again. Maybe, because Samuel did not know God, he was a little frightened, for he did not repeat exactly what Eli said; but he did say, "Speak; for thy servant heareth", which shows that he was ready to listen to God.

This was the beginning of Samuel listening to God and working for God. There is more about Samuel in the Bible, where we read about his famous life as one of God's servants. You may read about it in the Old Testament, in the First Book of Samuel.

Now, we can also learn a few lessons from this story:

First, you may feel that you are too small for God to pay attention to you. You may feel that He only pays attention to adults, the "grown-ups". But this little story shows that *God pays attention to children and speaks to them*. Now, you know that God speaks to us nowadays in the Bible and this story shows us that *God wants you to listen to the Bible* and, when you are old enough to do so, to read it yourself.