

Hearing God's Voice and Embracing His Call

In a time when true revelation was rare—when **“the word of the LORD was precious”** (1st Samuel 3:1, NKJV)—young Samuel was faithfully serving before Eli. One night, as Eli settled into bed, Samuel retired to his room. In the quiet of the night, he suddenly heard someone calling, “Samuel! Samuel!” Startled and unsure, he ran to Eli and asked, “Did you call me?” But Eli replied, “No, I did not call you; go back to sleep.”

This happened more than once. Each time Samuel heard his name echo in the darkness, he dashed to Eli until, finally, Eli realized, **“Perhaps the LORD is calling you.”** He instructed Samuel, **“If you hear your name again, say, ‘Speak, LORD, for Your servant is listening.’”** And so Samuel obeyed. When the voice called again, he answered, **“Speak, LORD, for Your servant is listening”** (1st Samuel 3:9, NKJV).

In that moment, God spoke a solemn message to Samuel—one that included a promise to carry out judgment on Eli's household for their iniquities. God declared that He would bring to pass everything He had spoken against Eli's house because Eli had failed to restrain his sons.

This passage challenges me in several ways:

- **Attentiveness to God's Call:**

Like Samuel, we are invited to listen closely for God's voice—even when it seems unexpected or when we feel unprepared. There are moments in life when God's call might come softly or repeatedly in the stillness of our daily routine. When I pause and listen, I often find that God is already speaking to my heart.

- **Obedience in Uncertainty:**

Samuel's initial confusion and repeated response remind me that true obedience isn't based on having all the answers. Even though he didn't fully understand the message at first, Samuel's willingness to respond—**“Speak, LORD, for Your servant is listening”**—shows a heart ready to follow, no matter what. We, too, are called to trust God and obey, even when His plan isn't immediately clear.

- **The Cost of Leadership:**

God's warning to Eli's household reveals that ignoring responsibility—in his case, failing to correct his sons—brings serious consequences. This challenges me, especially if I'm in a position of leadership or influence, to take seriously the responsibility of guiding others with integrity. It reminds me that God's standards are high and that our commitment to accountability matters.

- **Sharing God's Word Without Fear:**

After the vision, Samuel was initially afraid to tell Eli what he had heard. Yet, when Eli pressed him to share every detail—warning that God would deal with him if he withheld anything—Samuel obeyed. Eli's response, **“It is the LORD; let Him do what seems right”** (1st Samuel 3:17, NKJV), models a spirit of submission to God's judgment and mercy. I am

encouraged to be honest about what God reveals to me, trusting that His ways are always right—even when the message is challenging.

As Samuel grew, the LORD was with him. Soon, everyone from Dan to Beersheba recognized Samuel as the true prophet of the LORD, and God continued to reveal Himself through His word at Shiloh. This reminds me that our humble beginnings—our small acts of obedience—can lead to a profound and lasting impact. When we listen to God and respond in faith, He uses our lives to speak to others in ways we never imagined.

May this passage encourage you as it does me:

- **Be vigilant for God’s call**, even in quiet or unexpected moments.
- **Respond with a willing heart**, saying, “Speak, LORD, for Your servant is listening.”
- **Embrace accountability** in every area of life, knowing that God’s standards are for our good.
- **Trust that God’s plan is unfolding**, even when we can’t see the full picture right away.

In every season, let us remain attentive, obedient, and courageous—ready to step into the purpose God has for us.