

Your Servant Is Listening

1 Samuel 3:1-21

I. Samuel Did Not Expect to Hear God

A. God said little when Samuel was a child. And the child Samuel ministered unto the LORD before Eli. And the word of the LORD was precious in those days; there was no open vision. (1 Samuel 3:1)

1. God has His silent times. We see not our signs: there is no more any prophet: neither is there among us any that knoweth how long. (Psalm 74:9)
2. Silence can turn into spiritual famine. Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD: And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the LORD, and shall not find it. (Amos 8:11-12)

B. One ordinary evening God spoke to Samuel and Samuel assumed it was Eli.

And it came to pass at that time, when Eli was laid down in his place, and his eyes began to wax dim, that he could not see; And ere the lamp of God went out in the temple of the LORD, where the ark of God was, and Samuel was laid down to sleep; That the LORD called Samuel: and he answered, Here am

I. And he ran unto Eli, and said, Here am I; for thou calledst me. And he said, I called not; lie down again. And he went and lay down. (1 Samuel 3:2-5)

C. God continued to speak and Samuel continued to misunderstand what he heard - God Had Not Yet Equipped Samuel to Hear . And the LORD called yet again, Samuel. And Samuel arose and went to Eli, and said, Here am I; for thou didst call me. And he answered, I called not, my son; lie down again. Now Samuel did not yet know the LORD, neither was the word of the LORD yet revealed unto him. (1 Samuel 3:6-7)

D. It is a great thing to hear God and not everyone has the capacity or discernment. But let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD. (Jeremiah 9:24)

E. Eventually Eli understood God was revealing Himself to Samuel and advised him to turn to God. And the LORD called Samuel again the third time. And he arose and went to Eli, and said, Here am I; for thou didst call me. And Eli perceived that the LORD had called the child. Therefore Eli said unto Samuel, Go, lie down: and it shall be, if he call thee, that thou shalt say, Speak, LORD; for thy servant heareth. So Samuel went and lay down in his place. (1 Samuel 3:8-9)

1. The context of revelation can keep people from perceiving what God is saying. For God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not. In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed; (Job 33:14-15)
2. With spiritual maturity, vision sharpens. When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known. (1 Corinthians 13:11-12)

II. At the Right Time God Explained

A. Eventually, Samuel was ready to respond to God. And the LORD came, and stood, and called as at other times, Samuel, Samuel. Then Samuel answered, Speak; for thy servant heareth. (1 Samuel 3:10)

B. God began Samuel's call with a warning. And the LORD said to Samuel, Behold, I will do a thing in Israel, at which both the ears of every one that heareth it shall tingle. (1 Samuel 3:11)

C. God promised to execute the judgment Eli's family had earned. In that day I will perform against Eli all things which I have spoken concerning his house: when I begin, I will also make an end. For I have told him that I will judge his house for ever for the iniquity which he knoweth; because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not. And therefore I have sworn unto the house of Eli, that the iniquity of Eli's house shall not be purged with sacrifice nor offering for ever. (1 Samuel 3:12-14)

III. The Lord Was with Samuel

A. Samuel was afraid to tell Eli what God said. And Samuel lay until the morning, and opened the doors of the house of the LORD. And Samuel feared to shew Eli the vision. (1 Samuel 3:15)

- B. Eli forced Samuel to tell him what God said. Then Eli called Samuel, and said, Samuel, my son. And he answered, Here am I. And he said, What is the thing that the LORD hath said unto thee? I pray thee hide it not from me: God do so to thee, and more also, if thou hide any thing from me of all the things that he said unto thee. (1 Samuel 3:16-17)
- C. Eli advised submission to God. And Samuel told him every whit, and hid nothing from him. And he said, It is the LORD: let him do what seemeth him good. (1 Samuel 3:18)
- D. God continued to speak to Samuel and to prosper his ministry. And Samuel grew, and the LORD was with him, and did let none of his words fall to the ground. And all Israel from Dan even to Beersheba knew that Samuel was established to be a prophet of the LORD. (1 Samuel 3:19-20)
- E. The word of God returned through Samuel. And the LORD appeared again in Shiloh: for the LORD revealed himself to Samuel in Shiloh by the word of the LORD. (1 Samuel 3:21)