

1 Samuel 3: Listening *for*, then Listening *to*...God's Voice

Review of Chapter 2

- Hanna sang the song of **God's Strength** after giving birth to Samuel
- Hanna **did not retaliate** against her rival for mocking her (because Hannah had no children)
- Hanna understood Romans 12:19; **leave room** for God's wrath and vengeance is the Lords. She trusted He would take care of everything...and He did
- Hophni and Phinehas (Tadpole and Darkness) were "worthless men"...**priests who didn't understand privilege**. Vessels of dishonor
- Their father Eli "honored his sons" above God and will be rebuked in chapter three for not restraining them.
- Proverbs 13:24 says...He who spares the rod (does not discipline) **hates** his sons
- God tells Ely both his sons will die on the same day for their wickedness (taking advantage of worshipers and sleeping around)
- Though young Samuel lived with wickedness all around Him, he honored the vow his mother made...to be separated unto God
- Samuel is now 12 and the Lord is about to call him
- During this lesson, think about what **you** would like God to speak to you about

The Call

1Now the boy Samuel was ministering to the LORD before Eli And **word from the LORD was rare** in those days, visions were infrequent.

- What if the Word was rare today? If someone looking for Truth was completely unable to find it?

Amos 8: 11 "Behold, days are coming," declares the Lord GOD,
"When I will send a famine on the land,
Not a famine for bread or a thirst for water,
But rather for hearing the words of the LORD. 12"People will stagger from sea to
sea . And from the north even to the east;
They will go to and fro to seek the word of the LORD,
But they will not find it.

- What if there was no one and nothing you could trust?
- The Word of the Lord was rare

2It happened at that time as Eli was lying down in his place (now his eyesight had begun to grow dim and he could not see well), 3 and the lamp of God had not yet gone out, and Samuel was lying down in the temple of the LORD where the **ark of God** was, 4 that **the LORD called Samuel**; and he said, "**Here I am.**"

The Ark of God/ The Ark of the Covenant: A Picture of Christ

(Show picture and quick description)

- **Only** item in the Most Holy Place
- Acacia wood covered with gold (Humanity and Lordship)
- 45x27x27 inches
- Lid was solid gold: Atonement cover or **Mercy** seat
- Cherubim faced each other looking to the Mercy seat
- 4 Items inside: Two Tablet of the ten Commandments (law), a cup of Manna (His provision) Aarons dead rod that budded (new life)
- In the temple outside the Holy Place is where Samuel was sleeping

3 and the lamp of God had not yet gone out, and Samuel was lying down in the temple of the LORD where the **ark of God** was, 4 that **the LORD called Samuel**; and he said, "**Here I am.**" 5Then he ran to Eli and said, "Here I am, for you called me." But he said, "I did not call, lie down again." So he went and lay down. 6The LORD called yet again, "Samuel!" So Samuel arose and went to Eli and said, "Here I am, for you called me." But he answered, "I did not call, my son, lie down again." 7 **Now Samuel did not yet know the LORD, nor had the word of the LORD yet been revealed to him.**

- There is a **definite** time of conversion
- Samuel had been ministering (doing God stuff) but did not yet know the Lord (age of accountability, understanding)

8So the LORD called Samuel again for the third time. And he arose and went to Eli and said, "Here I am, for you called me." Then Eli discerned that the LORD was calling the boy. 9And Eli said to Samuel, "Go lie down, and it shall be if He calls you, that you shall say, 'Speak, LORD, for Your servant is listening.'" So Samuel went and lay down in his place. 10Then the **LORD came and stood and called as at other times**, "Samuel! Samuel!" And Samuel said, "**Speak, for Your servant is listening.**" 11The LORD said to Samuel, "Behold, I am about to do a thing in Israel at which both ears of everyone who hears it will tingle.

Listening **for**...then...listening **to** God's voice

- Because Samuel listened **for** God's voice, He was then able to listen **to** God's voice
- Samuel had his spiritual antenna up and was prepared to hear
- We can be prepared in several ways to listen **for** God, then listen **to** God
 1. **Ministering:** We keep our words, thoughts and actions pure through discipline led by the Holy Spirit:

Psalm 19:14 Let the words of my mouth and the **meditation** of my heart Be acceptable in Your sight ,O LORD, my rock and my Redeemer.

2. We can be prepared to hear God by **adversity** (fight/church story)
3. We can be prepared to hear God through **suffering** (funerals people are very receptive)
4. Frustration can make us cry to God for an answer

Romans 8:19 For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God. 20For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope 21that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God.

- God will **do what it takes** to get our attention (we have no excuses)
 - We have a choice to **respond** or to **rebel** (pretend we didn't hear, be consumed with other things, keep our music loud and our minds cluttered)
 - Samuel has that choice as he is told the fate of Eli and his sons

12 "In that day I will carry out against Eli all that I have spoken concerning his house, from beginning to end. 13 "For I have told him that I am about to judge his house forever for the iniquity which he knew, because his sons brought a curse on themselves and he did not rebuke them. 14 "Therefore I have sworn to the house of Eli that the iniquity of Eli's house shall not be atoned for by sacrifice or offering forever." 15 So Samuel lay down until morning. Then he opened the doors of the house of the LORD But Samuel was afraid to tell the vision to Eli.

Oswald Chambers concerning Samuel being afraid to give Ely the bad news:

God never speaks to us in dramatic ways, but in ways that are easy to misunderstand. Then we say, "**I wonder if that is God's voice?**" Isaiah said that the Lord spoke to him "with a strong hand," that is, **by the pressure of his circumstances** ([Isaiah 8:11](#)). Without the sovereign hand of God Himself, nothing touches our lives. Do we discern His hand at work, or do we see things as mere occurrences? Get into the habit of saying, "**Speak, Lord,**" and life will become a romance ([1 Samuel 3:9](#)). Every time circumstances press in on you, say, "Speak, Lord," and make time to listen. Chastening is more than a means of discipline— it is meant to bring me to the point of saying, "Speak, Lord." Think back to a time when God spoke to you. As we listen, our ears become more sensitive, and like Jesus, we will hear God all the time. Should I tell my "Eli" what God has shown to me? This is where the dilemma of obedience hits us. We disobey God by becoming amateur providences and thinking, "I must shield 'Eli,' " who represents the best people we know [good people]. God did not tell Samuel to tell Eli— he had to decide that for himself. God's message to you may hurt your "Eli," but trying to prevent suffering in another's life will prove to be an obstruction between your soul and God. It is at your own risk that you prevent someone's right hand being cut off or right eye being plucked out

- Can we tell those "good people" in our lives that they are going to hell without repenting of self righteousness and bowing before Jesus?

16 Then Eli called Samuel and said, "Samuel, my son." And he said, "Here I am." 17 He said, "What is the word that He spoke to you? Please do not hide it from me. **May God do so to you**, and more also, if you hide anything from me of all the words that He spoke to you."

- Or, may God curse you if you don't tell me...my son

18 So Samuel told him everything and hid nothing from him. And he said, "**It is the LORD**; let Him do what seems good to Him." 19 **Thus**

Samuel grew and the LORD was with him and let none of his words fail.

- Ely knew it was the Lord because he got the same message last chapter
- "Thus Samuel grew..." because he was obedient to hear and speak the truth.
- God could trust him with the "hard things"

20All Israel from Dan even to Beersheba knew that Samuel was confirmed as a prophet of the LORD. 21And the LORD appeared again at Shiloh, because the LORD **revealed Himself to Samuel at Shiloh by the word of the LORD.**

Conclusion: God desires to speak to us; He created us for "His good pleasure!"

- God is all about communication. Even one of Jesus names speaks of communication!
- **John 1:1** (Read) In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God
- **John 1:14** (Read) And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.
- Adam and Eve knew God as the one who walked with them in the cool of the day!
- **Genesis 3:8** They heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day...
- Samuel knew God as the One who stood at his bedside and called his name
- **Samuel 3:10** Then the **LORD came and stood and called as at other times, "Samuel! Samuel!"**

Prayer Groups: This week let's listen **for** God, and then listen **to** God. Pray about hearing God's voice speak into your situation this week and we will talk about how He spoke to you next week.

Be prepared this week and pray as David did:

Psalm 19:14

Let the **words of my mouth** and the **meditation of my heart** Be acceptable in **Your** sight, O LORD, my rock and my Redeemer.