

Samuel's Lesson

Week of Nov. 11 - 17, 2019

Introduction

The story of Samuel begins with a promise. Samuel is the literal answer to his mother's prayers for a child after many barren years. In this week's lesson, Samuel is 'born again' as he hears the voice of his Lord. Eli, the elder priest has taken Samuel under his wings, and together they serve before God's altar. Like a tender midwife, Eli helps Samuel receive the gift of life and prophecy.

Lesson 1 Samuel 3:1 - 19

1The boy Samuel ministered before the Lord under Eli. In those days the word of the Lord was rare; there were not many visions.

2 One night Eli, whose eyes were becoming so weak that he could barely see, was lying down in his usual place. **3** The lamp of God had not yet gone out, and Samuel was lying down in the house of the Lord, where the ark of God was. **4** Then the Lord called Samuel. Samuel answered, "Here I am." **5** And he ran to Eli and said, "Here I am; you called me." But Eli said, "I did not call; go back and lie down." So he went and lay down.

6 Again the Lord called, "Samuel!" And Samuel got up and went to Eli and said, "Here I am; you called me." "My son," Eli said, "I did not call; go back and lie down."

7 Now Samuel did not yet know the Lord: The word of the Lord had not yet been revealed to him. **8** A third time the Lord called, "Samuel!" And Samuel got up and went to Eli and said, "Here I am; you called me." Then Eli realized that the Lord was calling the boy. **9** So Eli told Samuel, "Go and lie down, and if he calls you, say, 'Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening.'" So Samuel went and lay down in his place.

10 The Lord came and stood there, calling as at the other times, "Samuel! Samuel!" Then Samuel said, "Speak, for your servant is listening."

11 And the Lord said to Samuel: "See, I am about to do something in Israel that will make the ears of everyone who hears about it tingle. **12** At that time I will carry out against Eli everything I spoke against his family—from beginning to end. **13** For I told him that I would judge his family forever because of the sin he knew about; his sons blasphemed God, and he failed to restrain them. **14** Therefore I swore to the house of Eli, 'The guilt of Eli's house will never be atoned for by sacrifice or offering.'"

15 Samuel lay down until morning and then opened the doors of the house of the Lord. He was afraid to tell Eli the vision, **16** but Eli called him and said, "Samuel, my son." Samuel answered, "Here I am."

17 "What was it he said to you?" Eli asked. "Do not hide it from me. May God deal with you, be it ever so severely, if you hide from me anything he told you." **18** So Samuel told him everything, hiding nothing from him. Then Eli said, "He is the Lord; let him do what is good in his eyes."

19 The Lord was with Samuel as he grew up, and he let none of Samuel's words fall to the ground.

Questions

1. Why does God speak to Samuel and not Eli? God may speak to anyone he wishes. Are you ready to listen?
2. It takes four times for Samuel to answer God. Why do we sometimes struggle to hear what God has to say?

3. God was persistent and patient with Samuel. Is God patient and persistent with you?
4. Samuel was being called to be a prophet. How do you think Samuel was feeling?
5. Eli asked Samuel what God had said to him. Even though he knew that it was not going to be easy to hear, Eli was ready to hear the truth and to help Samuel tell the truth. Can you think of a time when the truth was hard to hear? How can we help others discover or tell the truth?
6. "Speak, for your servant is listening." Don't you think this is a great way to come before God?
7. Samuel was young, Eli was old. Do you think this passage is showing us how important it is for the old to instruct the young? For the young to listen to elders?

Prayer

Dear Lord, Thank you for being patient and persistent with me. Please help me come to you ready to hear what you have to say and with a heart that is ready to serve you. Help me and redirect me when I look and listen without seeing and hearing you right in my midst. "Speak, for your servant is listening." Amen