

### 1 Samuel Chapter 03 Commentary

**1Sa 3:1 ¶** "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. 2 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; 3 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;"

We are told here that Samuel ministered unto the Lord under the tutelage of Eli, and that there were no open visions from the Lord to Israel. "**And the word of the LORD was precious in those days;**" Apparently, there is no preaching and teaching of the word of God.

Eli is now old, and his eyesight is very bad. He can no longer tell if the lamp of God is lit in the temple, wherefore, Samuel is now sleeping where he can keep an eye on the lamp and refuel it and keep it burning, according to the commandment of God seen in: **Ex 27:20-21; 20 ¶** "And thou shalt command the children of Israel, that they bring thee pure oil olive beaten for the light, to cause the lamp to burn always. 21 In the tabernacle of the congregation without the vail, which is before the testimony, Aaron and his sons shall order it from evening to morning before the LORD: it shall be a statute forever unto their generations on the behalf of the children of Israel."

**4** "That the LORD called Samuel: and he answered, Here am I. 5 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. 6 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. 7 Now Samuel did not yet know the LORD, neither was the word of the LORD yet revealed unto him. 8 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. 9 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."

Samuel has not had a revelation from the Lord yet. God has not spoken to him. Thus, Samuel does what anyone who was in his place would do, which is to assume that Eli had called him. Upon the third call, Eli realizes that God is calling Samuel, and instructs him on what to do if God speaks to him again.

This gives us the picture of children brought up in church, who may not know Christ in a personal way, yet we understand that Christ will reveal himself to them at the proper time. As Samuel is schooled in the proper actions required of God to be within the temple of God, so we can teach our children to worship God, in accordance with the scriptural directions. However, we cannot reveal Christ to them. The revelation of Christ, to a child of God, is the work of the Holy Spirit, not the work of a man, or person.

We understand; God had to reveal himself to Samuel, for Samuel to be born-again, and for Samuel to be established as a prophet of God. This is a picture of Samuel being born-again and receiving the call to the office of prophet at the same time. Samuel is already serving in the office of temple priest.

**10** "And the LORD came, and stood, and called as at other times, Samuel, Samuel. Then Samuel answered, Speak; for thy servant heareth. 11 ¶ And the LORD said to Samuel, Behold, I will do a thing in Israel, at which both the ears of everyone that heareth it shall tingle. 12 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. 13 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. 14 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 forever. 15 And Samuel lay until the morning, and opened the doors of the house of the LORD. And Samuel feared to shew Eli the vision."

The Lord calls Samuel again, and Samuel acknowledges; he hears the Lord calling to him. God tells Samuel all that is going to befall Eli, and his family, because Eli did not rebuke, admonish, and remove his sons from the priesthood. This was a great sin in Israel and caused Israel to abhor the temple worship of God, because of the actions of Eli's sons, who were devils.

**1Sa 3:14** "**that the iniquity of Eli's house shall not be purged with sacrifice nor offering forever.**" We understand; "**the iniquity of Eli's house**" is identifying to us; the sons of Eli and their sins. This does not include

Eli, who is a priest of God. God had such abhorrence for Eli's sons and their crimes, that he says no sacrifice can be offered for them. What an awful judgement. Since, we know that Eli's sons did not know God, and the sins of Eli's sons cannot be purged; we understand; they are doomed to the eternal lake of fire.

God has such abhorrence; that Eli did not perform his duties as a father and a priest, that he will punish the remaining lineage of Eli. However, Eli was a prophet of God, and even though he must suffer judicial judgment here in time, he did know God and will be in heaven. God will cause Eli and his sons to die in one day. Eli's actions of nonobedience bring destruction upon all his lineage. What an awful thought, to think that we may do so sorrily that God will punish those who are the future of our families. How careful we ought to be in serving our Saviour and Lord in keeping with the "***thus saith the Lord.***"

In the morning, Samuel does his normal duties, but avoids Eli, because he does not want to tell Eli what God has showed him.

**16 "Then Eli called Samuel, and said, Samuel, my son. And he answered, Here am I. 17 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 anything from me of all the things that he said unto thee. 18 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."**

Eli senses that Samuel does not want to tell him what God has said. He tells Samuel, if you hide any part of what God has told you from me, I am praying that what you withhold will fall upon you. Samuel tells all, and Eli knows this is what God has already told him would happen in **1 Sa 2:27-36.**

**"let him do what seemeth him good."** By this statement of Eli: we know that he is declaring; I am guilty as charged, and God is good and right in all his judgments. It is sad to realize: this declaration of judicial judgment against Eli, his sons, and his following lineage, does not spark humble repentance, and there is no attempt to do that which is right in the sight of God.

What a contrast to what happened when God pronounced judicial judgment against the city of Nineveh. At the preaching of Johan, who proclaimed God's message, the whole nation repented and was spared. We understand that Hophni and Phinehas did not know God and they could not repent, but Eli was God's servant and priest. There is no excuse for his complacency at the announcement of God's judicial wrath. This seems to demonstrate: when we get out of God's pathway of righteousness, our hearts become hard, and they lose their affinity with the Spirit of God. Therefore, the judgments of God do not prick our hearts and cause us to repent.

This leads us to the question: are we acting complacently about the voice of God which is speaking to us? What an awful thought. The voice, or word, of God speaking to us, of judicial judgment coming in our lives, should evoke repentance, prayers for forgiveness by God, and active obedience to "***thus saith the Lord.***"

**19 ¶ "And Samuel grew, and the LORD was with him, and did let none of his words fall to the ground. 20 And all Israel from Dan even to Beersheba knew that Samuel was established to be a prophet of the LORD. 21 And the LORD appeared again in Shiloh: for the LORD revealed himself to Samuel in Shiloh by the word of the LORD."**

Samuel grows, not only in natural stature, but in spiritual soundness of faith in God. God does what he says he will, as we shall see in the following chapters. It is known to Israel; God has chosen Samuel to be a prophet of the Lord, and he will be the last judge over Israel.

**1 Sa 3:21 "And the LORD appeared again in Shiloh: for the LORD revealed himself to Samuel in Shiloh by the word of the LORD."** How did God reveal himself to Samuel? By his word. He did not appear in any visible form, as he had to some of Israel's leaders in the past. He just speaks to Samuel. Now, let us make some present day application to this in our own personal lives in Christ.

How does God speak to us today?

- He speaks to us by the written word. God has preserved the King James bible for us today, and as we read and study God's word, he speaks to us by revelation of Jesus Christ from his word of truth.
- He speaks to us by the preached word, the gospel of our Lord, and Saviour, Jesus Christ.
- God speaks to us by our actions toward others, when we fully exemplify Christian living, by manifesting our love to one another, and to others who are not in church fellowship.
- When we give our alms to the poor.

- When we comfort one another in love.
- When we fall before God in humble subjection to his will, laying our own will aside.
- When we make our public confession of faith and are baptized, God is using us to speak to others.

God may communicate to us via dreams or visions. There are many ways that God speaks to us. For instance, as you look around, and see the glorious natural creations of God in this world, and understand that it is God's creation; you know that God is speaking to you. You may feel his Holy Spirit presence, in your heart and mind, and you know that God is speaking to you. You may sense the Holy Spirit presence when you are fellowshipping with others.

The question is: if you know God is speaking to you; are you being obedient to his voice and his word? When we hear instruction from God, we are to yield ourselves to faithful service unto him, just as Samuel is setting the example for us in this book of the bible. We are not to be like Eli and his sons.

Thank you, Lord Jesus, for sending the Comforter to be with us, who strengthens us in our daily walks with the Lord. Praise, and glory, to God, for his written, and revealed, word of truth. Give God thanks if you can hear his voice speaking to you. Hallelujah! Amen!