

## Story Time pt3

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Story Time / 1 Samuel 3:1–21

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The prophet Samuel is one of the most faithful people mentioned in the whole Old Testament. He is the person who stood against tyrants and false priests. He was unafraid to speak the truth in love even at risk of his own life. And he was faithful to God, and God was faithful to Him.

Samuel was an answer to a prayer. His mom, Hannah, had no kids and she desperately wanted to be a mom. So she cried out to the Lord and in His time He answered her prayer. And she responded to God's blessing by following thru on her promise to God and delivering her son to the Lord's service in the Temple.

**You could say Samuel came from a line of faithfulness.**

And when He was still a boy, God began to speak to Samuel. And that is where I want to linger today. The pattern of faithfulness that Samuel displays is important, and in it is a lesson for all of us, about listening AND obeying when the Lord speaks.

So, turn with me to [1 Samuel 3](#) and let's look at what the Word has to say.

So, look at verses **1-9**. First note, that Samuel "**does not know the Lord.**" That means he had never heard from God before.

**1, 2 Samuel (1) The Lord Reveals to Samuel His Judgment against the House of Eli (3:1–18)**

Because he did not initially know the Lord, however, Samuel at first went to Eli for further instructions

This is an experience he is not used to. And if you look at verse 1, you get a clue that it is not just Samuel, God is not speaking much in these days- and the reasons will be revealed in the coming verses.

### **1, 2 Samuel (1) The Lord Reveals to Samuel His Judgment against the House of Eli (3:1–18)**

In the days of Eli, prophetic revelations in the form of visions and divine words had been “rare” (v. 1; lit., “precious”), **a circumstance that can be linked to divine displeasure (cf. 14:37; 28:6) and helps explain why society was so degenerate at that time**

Samuel’s unfamiliarity with being spoken to by God is like ours in some ways. **We are not sure all the time whose voice we are listening to.** We have a lot of voices yelling at us all the time.

- Our own appetites
- Other people
- Media
- Work
- on and on...

And sometimes we get confused as to which voices to listen to or how to recognize God’s voice when He speaks- and in fact some of us are not sure IF God even speaks anymore.

I get that, and I want you to know **you are not alone in trying to discern which voice is God’s.** In our day and time, we can go to scripture and check what we think is God’s voice vs His Word. And we can recognize Him better the more familiar we are with His Word.

But in Samuel’s time, they have fewer resources. **Thankfully Samuel has Eli to direct him.** Eli who HAS heard God before and who realizes what is going on.

So, look at Eli's response- **go tell God you are listening and that He is your Lord.**

2 key things there-

1. Acknowledge that you hear God
2. Recognize He is the Boss

That's the counsel still. When you hear God's voice, shut it all down but His voice AND acknowledge who is in control- not you.

**1, 2 Samuel (1) The Lord Reveals to Samuel His Judgment against the House of Eli (3:1-18)**

The similarity suggests that this moment was as important in Samuel's life and for all Israel as the parallel moments were in the lives of the earlier heroes of the faith. **Samuel obediently identified himself as the Lord's "servant" (v. 10; cf. 1:11) and urged the Lord to speak.**

So now go to verses **10-15**.

This isn't a fun message.

I would imagine verse 15 is an understatement. Eli is who Samuel sees to be dependent on for his food and shelter. He is the man in charge. And the message God has for Eli thru Samuel is I am gonna end you.

We can get all kinds of words from the Lord

- Conviction
- Encouragement
- Judgment
- Comfort
- Hope
- Discipline

**God is faithful in that He tells us what we need to hear even when we do not want to hear it.**

That is easy enough when it is just us, but sometimes God gives us a word for someone else. Now when the word is GOOD that's an easy word to share, but when it is bad, that's hard. That can be a wrestling match. (Story about one of those times in my life)

**What do we do when confronted with this situation?**

1. Confirm with the Word
2. Seek the counsel of others
3. Be faithful to what God has told us to do

Now I know what you are thinking, I can do all that but what about the results?

Friend, those are not up to you.

That's why Samuel is afraid. But the results are not what God is looking for from us. He is just looking for us to be faithful.

And here is what is interesting as well. God has ALREADY told Eli what was going to happen to him. **Samuel was afraid of Eli's reaction b/c he did not know that God was already speaking to Eli.**

**1, 2 Samuel (1) The Lord Reveals to Samuel His Judgment against the House of Eli (3:1–18)**

The Lord's terrifying revelation was in fact **a confirmatory repetition of the judgment against the house of Eli given by the unnamed prophet (2:30–36)**. Though prophetic messages could be conditional—warnings of possible consequences resulting from continued disobedience (e.g., Jonah 3:4)—in the case of the words spoken against the house of Eli they were certain. Every promised outcome—“from beginning to end” (v. 12)—would become reality

You never know what God has done to attempt to prepare the heart of someone God wants you to speak to, nor do you know how they have responded. So **quit assuming you know how they will react and simply be faithful.**

Now go to verse **16-21**.

Samuel is faithful. He speaks even out of his fear because he trusts God and fears the Lord more than Eli.

### **1, 2 Samuel (1) The Lord Reveals to Samuel His Judgment against the House of Eli (3:1–18)**

But Samuel did not enter into his role as the Lord's spokesman without hesitation: "He was afraid to tell Eli the vision" (v. 15). Eli's fatherly reassurances and stern admonition provided the encouragement the lad needed to perform his duty

Friends, that is who we have to be. We have to speak the truth that God reveals to us. And we need to speak it in love.

See even when we have a truth to speak, how we say it matters. And in our day and time that is vital. We cannot obscure the message by being a crappy messenger. We can say the right thing in a way no one would ever hear it.

### **Samuel is humble and honest.**

Church we need more of that today. Humble and honest.

We need to present the Gospel that way. We need to correct sin that way. We need to build one another up that way. We need to speak the truth that way.

We need to lead in truth and humility.

And look at the results of Samuel's obedience

God was with him and faithful to him

**1, 2 Samuel (1) The Lord Reveals to Samuel His Judgment against the House of Eli (3:1–18)**

The interaction between Eli and Samuel in vv. 17–18 conveys an idealized model of prophetic activity in society: the addressee encourages the prophet to speak the full revelation, the prophet does so, and the addressee accepts it willingly. In these verses both the seriousness of the prophetic responsibility and a model of its proper discharge are presented. Samuel's alert, expectant reception of the divine message (v. 10b) and his full disclosure of the Lord's revelation (vv. 17–18a) in spite of personal misgivings (v. 15) are the proper responses of a prophet to a revelatory divine visitation

He was seen as a person who knew and spoke for God

And God continued to speak to him

**1, 2 Samuel (2) The Lord Makes Samuel a Prophet to All Israel (3:19–4:1a)**

"The LORD was with Samuel" (v. 19). The drumbeat of the writer is that the Lord was at work in Samuel's life—from the moment of his conception (1:19–20), through his early development (2:21, 26), into his entrance into the prophetic ministry (3:4, 6, 8, 10), and now in the maturation of that ministry. The Lord did not let Samuel's prophetic pronouncements "fall to the ground"; the young man's words, like those of any authentic prophet, were authoritative and trustworthy because they were the Lord's words. Samuel's success was in fact the Lord's success

Church what if that was how we were known and how we interacted with God? What if we became people who God spoke to more because we were faithful when we heard Him the first time?

It's not too late.