

1 Samuel 3:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

That the LORD called Samuel: and he answered, Here am I.

Analysis

The divine call is simple and personal: 'Samuel.' God knows and speaks the name given by Hannah, meaning 'heard of God.' The boy's response 'Here am I' (hineni) uses the classic formula of availability seen throughout Scripture (Abraham in Genesis 22:1; Moses in Exodus 3:4; Isaiah in Isaiah 6:8). Samuel's response is correct but misdirected - he assumes Eli is calling. Hearing God's voice requires learning to recognize it, distinguishing it from human voices and internal thoughts. Samuel's training has only begun.

Historical Context

The divine address by name appears at crucial moments in biblical narrative. Jacob (Genesis 46:2), Moses (Exodus 3:4), and others received personal address from God. The doubled name ('Samuel, Samuel' in verse 10) intensifies the call, as with Abraham (Genesis 22:11) and Moses (Exodus 3:4).

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. How do you distinguish God's voice from your own thoughts or others' opinions?
2. What does your response to God's call reveal about your availability?

Interlinear Text

הִנֵּנִי תַּיְ אָמַר שְׁמוּאֵל אֶל יְהָוָה יְהִי כַּא
called That the LORD H413 Samuel and he answered H2005
H7121 H3068 H8050 H559

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 6:8 (References Lord): Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me.

Psalms 99:6 (References Lord): Moses and Aaron among his priests, and Samuel among them that call upon his name; they called upon the LORD, and he answered them.

Exodus 3:4 (References Lord): And when the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I.

Genesis 22:1 (Parallel theme): And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, here I am.