

God Calls Samuel

Young Samuel hears God calling his name in the night. With Eli's guidance, he learns to respond, 'Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening.'

1 Samuel 3:1-21

CHARACTERS: Samuel, Eli, God

THEMES: Hearing God's voice, Obedience, Calling

THE BOY SAMUEL ministered before the Lord under Eli. In those days the word of the Lord was rare; there were not many visions. Eli, whose eyes were becoming weak, was lying down in his usual place. 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.

Then the Lord called Samuel. 'Here I am,' Samuel answered, and he ran to Eli. 'Here I am; you called me.'

'I did not call,' Eli said. 'Go back and lie down.'

The Lord called again, 'Samuel!' And Samuel got up and went to Eli. 'Here I am; you called me.'

'My son,' Eli said, 'I did not call. Go back and lie down.'

Now Samuel did not yet know the Lord; the word of the Lord had not yet been revealed to him.

A third time the Lord called, 'Samuel!' And again Samuel went to Eli. 'Here I am; you called me.'

Then Eli realized that the Lord was calling the boy. So Eli told Samuel, 'Go and lie down, and if he calls you, say, "Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening."'

Samuel went and lay down in his place. The Lord came and stood there, calling as at the other times, 'Samuel! Samuel!'

Then Samuel said, 'Speak, for your servant is listening.'

The Lord told Samuel difficult news—that He was about to judge Eli's family because of the sins of Eli's sons, which Eli knew about but failed to restrain.

Samuel lay down until morning, then opened the doors of the house of the Lord. He was afraid to tell Eli the vision. But Eli called him. 'What was it he said to you? Do not hide it from me.'

So Samuel told him everything. Eli said, 'He is the Lord; let him do what is good in his eyes.'

The Lord was with Samuel as he grew up, and he let none of Samuel's words fall to the ground. All Israel recognized that Samuel was a prophet of the Lord.