

1 Samuel 3:1-21

## SAMUEL

### A PROPHET OF JEHOVAH

Introduction:

1. A picture has been painted for us of the stark contrast between the character of Samuel and that of Eli's sons.
2. We have learned that God has rejected Eli and his children as his priests.
3. Now, God has chosen Samuel as the spiritual guide for His people.
4. However, he will be more than a priest – Samuel will be a prophet of God.

- I. Samuel – *A Humble Heart* (3:1-9)
  - A. At this time, Samuel was still a child – the word refers to a boy or lad from infancy to adolescence.
    1. He was probably about 12 years old.
    2. However, it is possible that he was younger.
  - B. It is revealed that Samuel had not outgrown his noble character, for he continued to serve the Lord before Eli.
  - C. However, it was a dark time for the children of Israel.
    1. Because of the corruption of Eli's sons, God was not revealing His will through the priesthood.
      - a. Keep in mind that only a few books of the Bible had been written at this time.
      - b. Genesis – Joshua, possibly Judges and probably Job
    2. Eli's eyesight was failing him – his physical lack of sight symbolizing the spiritual darkness that had fallen upon him and his family.
    3. The light of the candlestick in the Holy Place represented the light of God's Word to the people – yet, the Tabernacle had become a den of iniquity.
  - D. Into this land of darkness, a light shined – for God spoke.
  - E. Yet, he chose to speak to a young boy who had a humble heart and a willingness to serve.
  - F. God called to Samuel three times and, each time, Samuel thought it was Eli calling for him.
    1. Samuel had never heard the voice of the Lord.
    2. He had never had a message revealed to him by God.
    3. Thus, we can understand his confusion.
  - G. Each time God called, Samuel immediately ran to be of service to Eli – again, revealing his character and the heart of a servant.
  - H. On the third time, Eli understood that it was God who was calling Samuel.
    1. This must have caused mixed emotions in Eli.
    2. On one hand, there was joy for the Lord was revealing His will again.
    3. On the other hand, He was not revealing it to Eli or his sons.
    4. Eli understood that a new order was replacing the old, and that his time as Israel's leader was ending.
    5. Yet, instead of being bitter or cruel, Eli gave Samuel the instruction he needed.
  - I. He told Samuel to listen for God's voice and, when he heard it, to say, "Speak Lord, for thy servant heareth."

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- II. Samuel – *A Listening Ear* (3:10-14)
- A. Notice that it was not just a voice that Samuel heard, but the Lord stood in place as he called the young boy.
  - B. When the Lord called, Samuel responded with a listening ear.
  - C. However, the message God had for him was not pleasant.
  - D. God informed Samuel of His planned punishment of Eli's sons and the judgment of his house.
    - 1. Obviously, Samuel had some knowledge of the wickedness of Hophni and Phinehas.
    - 2. God said that they had made themselves vile – meaning, “accursed, dishonorable, despicable.”
    - 3. Now, Samuel learns that God will remove them from His service.
    - 4. He also learned that Eli had some blame in their sinfulness.
  - E. Verse 14 records a tragic statement about the condition of Eli's sons.
    - 1. There was no sacrifice that could be offered to remove their sins.
    - 2. There is no sacrifice for deliberate, rebellious sins (Numbers 15:30-31; Hebrews 10:26-31).
- III. Samuel – *A Faithful Mouth* (3:15-18)
- A. After receiving this message from God, Samuel began the new day as he always did – doing the work of serving the Lord.
    - 1. He opened the doors to the house of the Lord.
    - 2. He was not filled with delusions of grandeur, nor was he lifted up with pride.
  - B. However, the word he had received troubled him, and he did not want to reveal it to Eli.
  - C. Yet, when Eli demanded to know what God had said, Samuel “told him every whit, and hid nothing from him.”
    - 1. This is a necessary characteristic to serve as a spokesman from God.
    - 2. There must be a willingness to declare God's Word exactly as revealed without fear or favoritism.
  - D. Upon hearing the message, Eli demonstrates both submission and resignation to the will of God.
- IV. Samuel – *A Prophet of God* (3:19-21)
- A. All three of these characteristics were essential to Samuel's work as a prophet.
    - 1. A humble heart – *to submit completely to Jehovah*
    - 2. A listening ear – *to hear and learn the Word of God*
    - 3. A faithful mouth – *to proclaim God's Word completely*
  - B. Thus, Samuel grew both physically and spiritually.
  - C. Unlike Eli, the Lord was with Samuel.
  - D. Everything that he spoke or predicted came to pass.
  - E. Thus, he was proven to be a prophet of Jehovah – and, he was established in that role throughout the entire land of Israel.
  - F. As time went on, God continued to reveal himself to Samuel in Shiloh and, once again, God's Word was known among His people.