

Samuel Called by God

Text: I Samuel 3:1-21

Introduction:

- This chapter is ordinarily reserved for children- we need to take this story out of the nursery and realize it's for all saints!
- Samuel is an important figure in the OT because he bridges the gap between the Judges and the Kingdom. Here we see the start of his ministry

I. THE WORD OF THE LORD WAS PRECIOUS V. 1

- a. God's methods of revelations
 - i. Hebrews 1:1-3- God up to this point revealed himself directly through visions, or dreams. Now he would speak through a prophet. Today God is revealed through the Living Word (Christ) and the Written Word (Bible)
 - ii. V. 1-The only word of the Lord we read of in the first two chapters of 1 Samuel is the word of judgment brought by the man of God against Eli.
- b. Rare or sporadic
 - i. Most likely because Israel stood under His judgment-Because of the hardness of heart among the people of Israel and the corruption of the priesthood. God will speak, and guide, when His people seek Him, and when His ministers seek to serve Him diligently.
 - ii. God's silence is a sign of judgment (Amos 8:11-12, I Sam 28:6, 15)
- c. God's word can become rare because of problems on the receiving end!
 - i. Do we have "ears to hear?"
 - ii. Starvation is not always from a lack of food, but from a lack of appetite

II. SAMUEL CALLED BY GOD- V. 4-10

- a. It is God who calls men into ministry

- i. Notice Samuel had already been serving, before he was officially called
- ii. We don't know for certain how old Samuel was. The ancient Jewish historian Josephus said Samuel was 12 years old. However old he was, God spoke to Samuel.
- iii. V. 4- This is a beautiful way to respond to God's Word. It isn't that God does not know where we are, but it tells God and it reminds us we are simply before Him as servants, asking what He wants us to do. Samuel is among several others who also said, "Here I am" when the Lord spoke to them: Abraham (Genesis 22:1), Jacob (Genesis 46:2), Moses (Exodus 3:4), Isaiah (Isaiah 6:8), and Ananias (Acts 9:10).
- iv. V. 10- Then the Lord came and stood and called: This was audible and visible because it says "the Lord stood." It may be that this was a unique appearing of the Lord, a Christophany. This was not a dream or a state of altered consciousness.

b. God's patience

- i. The verb call is used 11 times in verse 4-10!
- ii. V. 7-Samuel did not yet know the Lord- experientially. He was on untraveled ground!
- iii. God does not sigh, or get exasperated, but gives time for Samuel to catch on
- iv. Likewise we ought to learn from God's example in the work of discipleship!

c. God's call today

- i. God is looking for preachers!- I Tim 3:1- A God-given desire
- ii. There is a difference between a burden and a call
- iii. Verses to consider on calling- I Cor 9:16, Jer. 20:8-9
- iv. God's calling network- Matthew 9:37-38
- v. God has already called every believer to serve him right where they are!

III. SAMUEL'S FIRST PROPHECY V. 11-14

- a. The Prophet's Task
 - i. The office of a prophet- God's mouth piece
 - ii. To predict, and to proclaim
 - iii. Differed from a priest which represented the people before God.
 - iv. Sometimes it's a difficult job- I Samuel 3:15, Isaiah 6:9-10
- b. Coming judgment
 - i. Through the word of the man of God in 1 Samuel 2:27-36, Eli already heard of the judgment to come. This word to young Samuel was a word to confirm the previous message from God.
 - ii. V. 14- The iniquity of Eli's house shall not be atoned for by sacrifice or offering forever: What a terrible judgment! This means, "It's too late. Now the opportunity for repentance is past. The judgment is sealed."
- c. Samuel matures and is established by God
 - i. Let none of his words fall to the ground: This means all of Samuel's prophecies came to pass, and were known to be true words from God. Therefore, all Israel... knew that Samuel had been established as a prophet of the Lord.
 - ii. Since the days of Moses (some 400 years before the time of Samuel) there were not many prophets in Israel, and certainly no great prophets. At this important time in Israel's history, God raised up Samuel as a prophet.
 - iii. Coming in this place in Israel's history, Samuel is rightly seen as Israel's last judge and first prophet. Samuel bridges the gap between the time of the judges, and the time of the monarchy when prophets (such as Nathan, Elijah, and Isaiah) influenced the nation.

Conclusion:

- Mr. Wesley, at the age of 87, in a letter to Alexander Mather, uttered these thrilling words: "Give me one hundred preachers who fear nothing but sin and desire nothing

but God, and I care not a straw whether they be clergymen or laymen: such alone will shake the gates of hell..."

- God is still looking for willing servants today!