

Samuel – God’s Kingdom and its King. (4) ‘Speak, Lord, for your servant hears’ – the call of Samuel.

refs for Bible study 17/10/19: 1Sam.3v1-21.

A familiar story maybe, but easy to miss the fact that it’s challenging and disturbing. We do well to focus not upon Samuel or Eli, but upon the God who calls. Then may our response be: ‘Speak, Lord, for your servant hears!’

God calls: v1-10. Samuel’s call is unique. A divinely ordained prophet for a specific time. Yet we have the same God, who still calls – to salvation, to godly lives, to service. God called him by name: ‘Samuel! Samuel!’.

- **God’s knowledge:** God knew Samuel before he knew God. God’s knowledge is complete, it is personal.
- **God’s patience:** This was a big step for the boy. God calls patiently and tenderly, Is.42v3. ‘The Lord came and stood and called’, v10. ‘In the form of a man, though not the flesh of a man’. The pre-incarnate Christ.
- **are we obedient?** Are we ready and listening when God calls us, through his Word. Are we listening?

God burdens: v11-18. God gives Samuel a burden, literally ‘an ear-buzzing word’, v11. The long-promised judgement (2v27-36) on the house of Eli will happen. Eli was guilty for failing to restrain his sons, v13. They were hardened beyond the point of repentance, v14. Samuel tries to sleep on it, but he is afraid, v15.

- **fearful messenger:** We can sense his emotions. This is a burden. We also have a burden, for we do not relish warning men of judgement to come. See 2Pet.3v4-9.
- **faithful messenger:** Eli makes it easier for him, v16-17. Samuel faithfully passes on the entire message, hiding nothing, v18. Eli’s response is fatalism rather than gracious submission, for he does nothing about it.
- **are we faithful?** All preachers know (or should know) this burden. Pray for them!
All believers should know this burden, we have a responsibility to perishing sinners. Are we faithful?

God speaks: 3v1, 3v19-4v1. God is a God who speaks. He speaks through his Word.

- **through his Word:** God’s Word was scarce, v1. This ‘famine’ was itself a judgement. Compare Amos 8v11-12. Yet God graciously speaks again, 3v18-4v1. Why did things change? Samuel was a man of prayer, Jer.15v1. Doubtless he learnt from Hannah. When things are in a poor state we should pray, pray, pray!
- **by his Son:** Samuel was forerunner of The Prophet, i.e. Jesus Christ, the Eternal Word, Acts 3v22-24, Heb.1v1-2. We now have the completed Scriptures. The whole of the Bible is about him.
- **are we listening?** Let us not have hearing deadened by sin and unbelief! Are we listening to him? Mk.4v9.