

Israel is in freefall--in a state of moral & spiritual decline—God was looking for a man but He first needed to get a woman, Hannah--pain often purifies our prayers. She agonized for years being barren—mocked by Peninnah her rival—Hannah in anguish prayed for a son & dedicated him back to God. He was to turn the nation of Israel **back to God**. After he was weaned she brought him to the tabernacle in charge of Eli the HP. God in return blessed her w/ five children in her honor for God.

*1 Now the boy Samuel was **ministering** to the LORD before Eli. And word from the LORD was **rare** in those days, visions were infrequent. 2 And it happened at that time as Eli was lying down in his place (now his eyesight had begun to grow dim and he could not see well), 3 and the lamp of God had not yet gone out, and Samuel was lying down in the temple of the LORD where the **ark** of God was, 4 that the LORD called Samuel; and he said, “Here I am.”*

Samuel according to Josephus (1stC Jewish historian & military leader) was about 12yrs others put him at 6yrs. Interesting to note from God’s point of view--**SS kids may be ministering to Lord more than adults in church.**

Ministering speaks of subservience, a willingness to obey, under authority as Joshua called the minister of Moses 40 yrs. A preparation to lead.

Rare--precious --God wasn’t speaking because the people weren’t listening. They’d rather listen to & be entertained by the world--indulge in **fleshly** appetites instead of **spiritual** pursuits. *Isaiah 59:1 Behold, the LORD’s hand is not so short That it cannot save; Neither is His ear so dull That it cannot hear. 2 But your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God, And your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He does not hear.*

Samuel serving by keeping seven branch candlestick lit morning & evening to light tabernacle—symbol of light of God’s presence. **Sad only symbol no reality**

Audible voice woke Samuel w/ an immediate *'here I am'*. Those who minister are also those who respond when Lord speaks **NS house to house**

5 Then he ran to Eli and said, "Here I am, for you called me." But he said, "I did not call, lie down again." So he went and lay down. 6 And the LORD called yet again, "Samuel!" So Samuel arose and went to Eli, and said, "Here I am, for you called me." But he answered, "I did not call, my son, lie down again." 7 Now Samuel did not yet know the LORD, nor had the word of the LORD yet been revealed to him.

God accommodates us to the degree of our understanding of Him. He meets us at our level of spiritual maturity. Samuel had heard of & been taught about God but didn't have close encounter w/ Him. **Job 42:5** *"I have heard of You by the hearing of the ear, But now my eye sees You.*

He is about to have an intimate, close encounter w/ God. Our knowledge & nearness to God does not have to **stagnate**--but can be ever growing and maturing. **Pr 4:18** *But the path of the righteous is like the light of dawn, which shines brighter and brighter until full day.*

Moses a good example when he prayed **Ex 33:13** *'I pray Thee, if I have found favor in Thy sight, let me know Thy ways that I may know Thee so that I may find favor in Thy sight'*

Knowing God is more than intellectual ascent. It's a personal acquaintance & knowledge of God to where we have fellowship w/ Him. He speaks w/ us and to us.

8 So the LORD called Samuel again for the third time. And he arose and went to Eli, and said, "Here I am, for you called me." Then Eli discerned that the LORD was calling the boy. 9 And Eli said to Samuel, "Go lie down, and it shall be if He calls you, that you shall say, 'Speak, LORD, for Thy servant is listening.'" So Samuel went and lay down in his place. 10 Then the LORD came and stood and called as at other times, "Samuel! Samuel!" And Samuel said, "Speak, for Thy servant is listening."

Being willing to hear God is the first step in Him speaking to us. Visual appearance Lord came and stood lit to present oneself before another.

The message was a follow up & fulfillment of the unnamed man of God's word of judgment to Eli & sons 2:27-36. No jealousy that God speak to a boy and not Eli. Some leaders will not let others rise above them.

11 And the LORD said to Samuel, "Behold, I am about to do a thing in Israel at which both ears of everyone who hears it will tingle. 12 "In that day I will carry out against Eli all that I have spoken concerning his house, from beginning to end. 13 "For I have told him that I am about to judge his house forever for the iniquity which he knew, because his sons brought a curse on themselves and he did not rebuke them. 14 "And therefore I have sworn to the house of Eli that the iniquity of Eli's house shall not be atoned for by sacrifice or offering forever."

Tingle a common word used when a person was to hear some great calamity that is coming as God is about to fulfill the prophecy 2:27-36. God declaring to Eli that he has honored his son more than Me—greed, lust, shame. XXL

Eli's sons brought a curse XXL 'Blasphemed God' by their wickedness & nothing was done. Reached a point of no return....The would no...they could not. Eli was warned earlier intending to change his dealings w/ the sins of his son. No response, no change **Rev 3:16** church of Laodicea Amp ***So because you are lukewarm (spiritually useless), and neither hot nor cold, I will vomit you out of My mouth [rejecting you with disgust]. Zeph 1:11 "It will come about at that time That I will search Jerusalem with lamps, And I will punish the men Who are stagnant in spirit, Who say in their hearts, 'The LORD will not do good or evil!'***

There is a time we know not when; A place we know not where; Which marks the destiny of men To heaven or despair. How long may men go on in sin? How long will God forbear? Where does hope end, and where begins The confines of despair? One answer from those skies is sent: Ye who from God depart; While it is called today, repent, And harden not your heart'

*15 So Samuel lay down until morning. Then he opened the doors of the house of the LORD. But Samuel was afraid to tell the vision to Eli. 16 Then Eli called Samuel and said, "Samuel, my son." And he said, "Here I am." 17 And he said, "What is the **word** that He spoke to you? Please do not hide it from me. May God do so to you, and more also, if you hide anything from me of all the **words** that He spoke to you." 18 So Samuel told him everything and hid nothing from him. And he said, "It is the LORD; let Him do what seems good to Him."*

Gods word *Dabar* revealed to Samuel--key term used thruout

OT—Dabar/word came w/ Gods authority & power--His will & character.

Eli is not moved, he has no fight in him, consigns himself his own sowing and reaping. Sad when a person gives up and gives in to consequence when repentance and forgiveness is the heart of God.

Ps 145:8,9 The LORD is gracious and merciful; Slow to anger and great in lovingkindness. 9 The LORD is good to all, And His mercies are over all His works. 86:5And Ready to Forgive....

19 Thus Samuel grew and the LORD was with him and let none of his words fail. 20 And all Israel from Dan even to Beersheba knew that Samuel was confirmed as a prophet of the LORD. 21 And the LORD appeared again at Shiloh, because the LORD revealed Himself to Samuel at Shiloh by the word of the LORD.

Samuel grew up in a bad environment yet he chose to follow the Lord & he hears God speak. His ministry is characterized by longevity and integrity.

Dan to Beersheba a common description of the land of Israel North to South. Dan to extreme North Beersheba far South.

Prophecy of Lord one who announces word and will of God.

Ps 119:9 How can a young man keep his way pure by keepingit according to Thy word'

Eccl 12:1 Remembe your creator in the days of your youth before the evil days come and the years draw near when you say I have no delight in them'.