

INTRODUCTION

In our text we see an example of the LORD calling one of His children, young Samuel, into His service!

The Scripture says that the LORD called Samuel into service **to keep the lamp of God from going out in the temple of the LORD.**

Eli was the Priest of the LORD at this time in Israel, but there was a problem! — Eli's son's were wicked before the LORD! And because Eli knew what his sons were doing and didn't do anything about it, the LORD scolded him and promised him judgment or chastisement that would not be lifted. **(3:13)**

Eli's sons had at least three marks against them according to the Scripture:

- 1. They knew not the LORD. (2:12)**
- 2. They stole part of the sacrifice that belonged to the LORD and took it for themselves and caused the people of the LORD to abhor the offering of the LORD. (2:13-17; 29)**
- 3. They committed immorality at the very door of the tabernacle of the congregation.(2:22)**

Now understand that the LORD expected Eli to do something more than just TALK to his sons, because Eli had talked with them! **(2:23-25)**

The problem is that Eli had failed to properly bring his sons up in the nurture and admonition of the LORD!

Let me just say right here that parents—primarily fathers, but both fathers and mothers—have a responsibility to bring their children up to know the LORD!

Psalm 127:3—“Lo, children are an heritage of the LORD: and the fruit of the womb is his reward.”

That means we are stewards of the children that the LORD allows us to have!

Parents have a responsibility to teach their children the difference between right and wrong and to cleave to that which is right and to abhor that which is wrong!

Parents have a responsibility to teach their children to give the LORD what belongs to Him and not to take what is His!

Parents have a responsibility to teach their children not to live their lives seeking to fulfill the desires of the flesh!

Parents have a responsibility to do all they can to restrain their children from doing wickedly!

But Eli failed to do any of this and the LORD held him accountable for his failure to carry out his God-given responsibilities as both parent and priest! **(2:27-36)**

So, in our text we see that the LORD's call went out to Samuel, not only to fulfill the **Priests office**, but also to be a **Prophet** of the LORD!

We see that the young child, Samuel, did not recognize the voice of the LORD at first.

I dare say that there are probably some today who are much like Samuel! Unfortunately, many of the LORD's children don't recognize the LORD's voice at first. This often leads to the circumstance of missing out on the blessings that come from being in the center of the LORD's will!

I want us to look at the Scriptures and see how we can recognize the voice of the LORD as He calls us to follow Him.

I. IN WHAT WAYS HAS THE LORD SPOKEN TO MAN THROUGH THE AGES?

A. How Has God Spoken To Mankind In General?

HEARING THE VOICE OF THE LORD-PART 1
1 SAMUEL 3:1-15

1. **God Speaks To Men Through The Creation!**

Romans 1:20—“For the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse.”

Psalm 19:1-3—“The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handywork. 2 Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge. 3 There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard. 4 Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world.”

That is why the Bible can truthfully say:

Psalm 14:1—“The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God.”

2. **God Speaks To Men Through The Conscience!**

Romans 1:19—“Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath showed it unto them.”

That again is why the Bible can truthfully say:

Psalm 14:1—“The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God.”

3. **God Speaks To Men Through The Clergy (i.e. Men of God!)**

I don't like that word, but it was the only one I could find that started with a "C".

God raised up His Prophets at times to speak to His own people Israel, but also sometimes **to speak to OR to speak against** even wicked Gentile nations.

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They spoke with authority from God, *“Thus saith the LORD. . .”* (exp. Jonah to Ninevah)

4. **God Speaks To Men Through Circumstances (of life)!**

(e.g. The Centurion soldier at the foot of the cross of Christ!)

5. **God Speaks To Men Through Chastenings!**

(e.g. The 10 plagues against Pharaoh and the Egyptians.)

6. **God Speaks To Men Through The Christ!**

John 1:18—“No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared Him.”

7. **God Speaks To Men Through The Comforter (The Holy Ghost)! (John 16:7-13)**

8. **God Speaks To Men Through The Canon (of Scripture)!**

2 Peter 1:18-21—“We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: 20Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. 21For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.”

So, we see how *God has spoken to Mankind in General.*

B. How Has God Spoken To His People?

1. **Before The Fall, God Spoke To Man Face To Face. (Genesis 1-3)**

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Praise God when Redemption is fully consummated, we will speak once again to God face to face again!

2. **After the Fall, God Spoke In An Audible Voice With His Glory Veiled. (Exodus 33:18-23)**

3. **During the Age of The Law, God Spoke Through His Prophets And Priests.**

2 Kings 17:13a– “Yet the LORD testified against Israel, and against Judah, by all the prophets ... ”

Again, men of God came speaking, “*Thus saith the LORD God. . .*”

4. **During the Incarnation, God became flesh and dwelt among us.**

God spoke to His people in the person of Christ!

John 1:14– “And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.”

Hebrews 1:1-2a-- “God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, 2Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son. . .”

1 John 1:1-2– “That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; 2(For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;)

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5. **In the Early Church, God spoke by the apostles which was confirmed by outward manifestations of the gifts of His Holy Spirit.**

Hebrews 2:3– “How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; 4God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?”

6. **After the completion of the Canon of Scripture, God now speaks through His completed Revelation, the written Word of God.**

2 Timothy 3:15-17– “And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. 16All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: 17That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.”

- a. **The Bible is the written MANIFESTATION of the Living Word, Jesus Christ.**
- b. **The Bible is the REVELATION of the will of God the Father to man.**
- c. **The Bible is ILLUMINATED by the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives.**

So, We have seen how God spoken to man through the ages—both mankind in general and to His people.

We’re going to stop right there and come back next week and answer the question—What Is God Saying To People Today?

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Conclusion

Listen to me, the voice of the LORD is not silent! He is still speaking today!

How have you responded to how the LORD is speaking in your life?

The LORD **is** speaking. The question is are WE listening?

As Eli advised Samuel so long ago, I encourage you to respond to His voice today with, "*Speak, Lord, thy servant heareth.*"