

NOTES

SERIES TAKEAWAY

A champion generation isn't raised by accident. It's formed in a house, by an ear that listens, a mouth that tells the truth, and a hand that lets go at the right time.



© 2025 by EVERYNATION BRISBANE®

All rights reserved.

Scripture quotations are from The Holy Bible, English Standard Version® (ESV®), Copyright© 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Permission to photocopy this material is granted for local church use. This is not for sale.



OPENING PRAYER

Father, there are a lot of voices around us, but tonight we want to hear Yours. Speak, Lord, for Your servants are listening. Amen.

OPENING QUESTION_(OPTIONAL)

What's your go-to "snack" that spoils your appetite before dinner? Is there a food you just can't resist even when you know a proper meal is coming?



WORD

1 Samuel 3:1–18

Now the boy Samuel was ministering to the Lord in the presence of Eli. And the word of the Lord was rare in those days; there was no frequent vision.

2 At that time Eli, whose eyesight had begun to grow dim so that he could not see, was lying down in his own place. 3 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 Then the Lord called Samuel, and he said, “Here I am!” 5 and 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 again, “Samuel!” and Samuel arose and went to Eli and said, “Here I am, for you called me.” But he said, “I did not call, my son; lie down again.” 7 Now Samuel did not yet know the Lord, and the word of the Lord had not yet been revealed to him. 8 And the Lord called Samuel again the third time. And he arose and went to Eli and said, “Here I am, for you called me.” Then Eli perceived that the Lord was calling the boy. 9 Therefore Eli said to Samuel, “Go, lie down, and if he calls you, you shall say, ‘Speak, Lord, for your servant hears.’” So Samuel went and lay down in his place. 10 And the Lord came and stood, calling as at other times, “Samuel! Samuel!” And Samuel said, “Speak, for your servant hears.” 11 Then the Lord said to Samuel, “Behold, I am about to do a thing in Israel at which the two ears of everyone who hears it will tingle. 12 On that day I will fulfill against Eli all that I have spoken concerning his house, from beginning to end. 13 And I declare to him that I am about to punish his house forever, for the iniquity that he knew, because his sons were blaspheming God, and he did not restrain them. 14 Therefore I swear to the house of Eli that the iniquity of Eli's house shall not be atoned for by sacrifice or offering forever.” 15 Samuel lay until morning; then he opened the doors of the house of the Lord. And Samuel was afraid to tell the vision to Eli. 16 But Eli called Samuel and said, “Samuel, my son.” And he said, “Here I am.” 17 And Eli said, “What was it that he told you? Do not hide it from me. May God do so to you and more also if you hide anything from me of all that he told 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.”

Background:

1 Samuel 2:12–17, 22–36

Supporting:

Deuteronomy 8:3;

John 10:27;

Hebrews 1:1–2;

1 Thessalonians 5:19–21;

2 Samuel 7:1–17



MAIN REFLECTION POINTS

Israel still had a tabernacle, sacrifices and priests, but “the word of the LORD was rare in those days” (3:1). The priesthood was corrupt from the inside. Eli’s sons took God’s portion of the sacrifices for themselves and abused their office, and Eli rebuked them but never restrained them.

The narrator sets two generations side by side. Eli is old and his sight is failing, and he lies down in his own place. Samuel lies down in the temple near the ark, while “the lamp of God had not yet gone out” (3:3). Then God breaks the silence and calls first. Samuel answers “Here I am” each time but runs to the wrong person, not because he is rebellious but because he “did not yet know the LORD” (3:7).

Eli, whose own sight is fading, is the one who recognises what is happening and teaches the boy to say, “Speak, LORD, for your servant hears.” Samuel learns to recognise God’s voice with help. God’s first word to him is not about Samuel but a heavy word about Eli’s house, and though Samuel is afraid, he tells Eli everything (3:15–18).

This story points us to Jesus. The God who called “Samuel! Samuel!” has now spoken supremely through His Son (Hebrews 1:1–2). Jesus, the Good Shepherd, says, “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me” (John 10:27).

Key Reflections:

- Hearing God is life. “Man does not live by bread alone, but... by every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD” (Deuteronomy 8:3). Jesus stood on those words in the wilderness. Make His Word your daily bread, not an occasional extra.
- God calls first, and He knows your name. Samuel didn’t go looking for the voice. The voice came looking for him. Answer like Samuel did: “Here I am.”
- Getting it wrong isn’t the end. Samuel missed it three times. Even the prophet Nathan got it wrong and had to go back to David (2 Samuel 7). Don’t stop listening because you missed it once. Get up and go again.
- We learn to hear with help. Recognition is a discipline: Scripture, prayer, stillness and community.
- Samuel was a carrier of God's word. Hearing God for others takes courage, honesty and love, especially when it’s hard. Samuel was afraid, but he hid nothing.
- Eli was a helper for others to hear God. A fading, flawed leader still pointed a boy to God. You don’t need to have it all together to help someone take their next step.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Which voices tend to be the loudest in your week: work, family, news, group chats, your own inner voice? Why do you think that is?
2. Read 3:1–3. What differences do you notice between where Eli is lying down and where Samuel is lying down? What does it look like for us to “position” ourselves to hear God?
3. Samuel ran to the wrong person three times, and Nathan had to correct himself in 2 Samuel 7. Have you ever been sure God said something and later realised you got it wrong? How did that affect how you listen now?
4. How can we test whether something is from God? How could this Life Group help each other weigh what we sense God is saying, with Scripture, prayer and wise counsel?
5. Verse 7 says Samuel “did not yet know the LORD.” Why is it encouraging that confusion and false starts are part of learning to hear God?

Gospel Invitation:

- God knows your name. If you’ve never heard God’s voice or known Him personally, He’s calling. You might just have been going to the wrong source.
- Respond to Jesus tonight with Samuel’s prayer: “Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening.”
- Come back after getting it wrong. If fear of missing it again has made you stop listening, surrender that fear. He’s patient. He called Samuel four times.

Missional Activation:

- Identify one thing that’s spoiling your appetite for God, such as doom scrolling, noise or a habit. Replace that time with Scripture. Start every morning this week with “Speak, Lord, your servant is listening.”
- Bring it to the group. If you sense God saying something to you, bring it to Life Group next week and weigh it together. If you know someone who isn’t in a Life Group yet, invite them along.

CLOSING PRAYER

Lord, You speak, and Your Word is our life. Take away our appetite for things that can distract us, and make us hungry for You. Teach us to recognise Your voice together, give us courage to carry what You say, and make every one of us a helper for someone else. Speak, Lord, for Your servants are listening. Amen.