

# Week 19: Samuel - Hearing the Voice of the Lord

*A Sabbath Family Bible Study*

## **Introduction:**

The story of Samuel reminds us that God is never silent, He is always speaking, but His people must be willing to listen. In the days of Eli, the word of the Lord was rare because hearts were hard and obedience was lacking. Yet God called a child, Samuel, who served humbly and responded, "Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth." This study invites us to cultivate listening hearts in our homes, training ourselves and our children to hear and obey the voice of the Lord.

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## **Scripture Reading: 1 Samuel 3:1–21 (KJV)**

*With Commentary Throughout*

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### **1 Samuel 3:1–3**

*1 And the child Samuel ministered unto the LORD before Eli. And the word of the LORD was precious in those days; there was no open vision.*

*2 And it came to pass at that time, when Eli was laid down in his place, and his eyes began to wax dim, that he could not see;*

*3 And ere the lamp of God went out in the temple of the LORD, where the ark of God was, and Samuel was laid down to sleep;*

### **Commentary:**

The days of Eli were marked by deep spiritual decline. Corruption in the priesthood and indifference among the people left Israel without clear vision or direction. God's voice was rare, not because He had changed, but because His people no longer listened. Yet even in that silence, God was at work. He raised up Samuel, a young child serving faithfully in the tabernacle. This shows us that God delights to reveal Himself to those who walk in humility, purity, and obedience, no matter their age.

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### **1 Samuel 3:4–8**

*4 That the LORD called Samuel: and he answered, Here am I.*

*5 And he ran unto Eli, and said, Here am I; for thou calledst me. And he said, I called not; lie down again. And he went and lay down.*

*6 And the LORD called yet again, Samuel. And Samuel arose and went to Eli, and said, Here am I; for thou didst call me. And he answered, I called not, my son; lie down again.*

*7 Now Samuel did not yet know the LORD, neither was the word of the LORD yet revealed unto him.*

*8 And the LORD called Samuel again the third time. And he arose and went to Eli, and said, Here am I; for thou didst call me. And Eli perceived that the LORD had called the child.*

**Commentary:**

When God first called Samuel in the night, the boy did not recognize the Lord's voice and assumed it was Eli. This reminds us that learning to discern God's call is not always immediate or obvious. It often requires the wisdom and confirmation of those further along in faith. Eli, though imperfect, served as the mentor who helped Samuel recognize the voice of God. In the same way, spiritual guides and parents play a vital role in teaching younger believers how to listen and respond.

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**1 Samuel 3:9–15**

*9 Therefore Eli said unto Samuel, Go, lie down: and it shall be, if he call thee, that thou shalt say, Speak, LORD; for thy servant heareth. So Samuel went and lay down in his place.*

*10 And the LORD came, and stood, and called as at other times, Samuel, Samuel. Then Samuel answered, Speak; for thy servant heareth.*

*11 And the LORD said to Samuel, Behold, I will do a thing in Israel, at which both the ears of every one that heareth it shall tingle.*

*12 In that day I will perform against Eli all things which I have spoken concerning his house: when I begin, I will also make an end.*

*13 For I have told him that I will judge his house for ever for the iniquity which he knoweth; because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not.*

*14 And therefore I have sworn unto the house of Eli, that the iniquity of Eli's house shall not be purged with sacrifice nor offering for ever.*

*15 And Samuel lay until the morning, and opened the doors of the house of the LORD. And Samuel feared to shew Eli the vision.*

**Commentary:**

Samuel's simple reply, "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth," reveals a heart ready to receive God's word. The Lord does not compete with noise or distraction; He speaks to those who are still, attentive, and willing to obey. In this moment, Samuel moved from serving in the tabernacle to truly hearing the voice of God. His example calls every believer to adopt the same posture, daily inviting God to speak, and yielding our hearts and homes in readiness to listen and obey.

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**1 Samuel 3:16–21**

**16** *Then Eli called Samuel, and said, Samuel, my son. And he answered, Here am I.*

**17** *And he said, What is the thing that the LORD hath said unto thee? I pray thee hide it not from me: God do so to thee, and more also, if thou hide any thing from me of all the things that he said unto thee.*

**18** *And Samuel told him every whit, and hid nothing from him. And he said, It is the LORD: let him do what seemeth him good.*

**19** *And Samuel grew, and the LORD was with him, and did let none of his words fall to the ground.*

**20** *And all Israel from Dan even to Beersheba knew that Samuel was established to be a prophet of the LORD.*

**21** *And the LORD appeared again in Shiloh: for the LORD revealed himself to Samuel in Shiloh by the word of the LORD.*

**Commentary:**

God continued to speak to Samuel because Samuel continued to listen. Unlike many in Israel, Samuel valued the word of the Lord and obeyed what he heard. As he grew, both in age and in faith, his influence spread throughout the nation, and the Lord confirmed him as His prophet. A listening heart became a lasting vessel of God's truth. This passage reminds us that lasting impact does not come from talent or position, but from treasuring God's Word and walking faithfully in it.

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**Discussion Questions for All Ages**

**Young Children:**

- Who called Samuel in the night?
- What did Samuel say when God called him?
- How can we listen to God today?

#### **Older Children & Teens:**

- Why was God's voice rare in Samuel's time?
- How can you train yourself to recognize when God is speaking?
- What might distract us from hearing God's Word?

#### **Adults:**

- How can you cultivate a listening environment in your home?
- What are some ways God speaks today (e.g., through Scripture, prayer, godly counsel)?
- What hinders us from hearing and obeying God's voice consistently?

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## Psalm Reading

### **Psalm 25:4–10 (KJV)**

*4 Shew me thy ways, O LORD; teach me thy paths.*

*5 Lead me in thy truth, and teach me: for thou art the God of my salvation; on thee do I wait all the day.*

*6 Remember, O LORD, thy tender mercies and thy lovingkindnesses; for they have been ever of old.*

*7 Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions: according to thy mercy remember thou me for thy goodness' sake, O LORD.*

*8 Good and upright is the LORD: therefore will he teach sinners in the way.*

*9 The meek will he guide in judgment: and the meek will he teach his way.*

*10 All the paths of the LORD are mercy and truth unto such as keep his covenant and his testimonies.*

**Commentary:**

This psalm reflects the very posture of Samuel's heart, a longing to be taught and led by the Lord. The psalmist prays for God's ways and truth to be revealed, acknowledging that true guidance comes only from Him. God promises to instruct and bless those who keep His covenant, walk humbly, and submit to His paths. Just as Samuel listened in the stillness of the night, this psalm calls every believer to embrace humility, obedience, and trust, so the Lord's mercy and truth may direct our steps.

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 **Hymn: "Speak, Lord, in the Stillness"**

**By Emily May Grimes (1890)**

**1.**

Speak, Lord, in the stillness,  
While I wait on Thee;  
Hushed my heart to listen  
In expectancy.

**2.**

Speak, O blessed Master,  
In this quiet hour;  
Let me see Thy face, Lord,  
Feel Thy touch of power.

**3.**

Speak, Thy servant heareth,  
Be not silent, Lord;  
Waits my soul upon Thee  
For the quickening word.

**4.**

Fill me with the knowledge  
Of Thy glorious will;  
All Thine own good pleasure  
In Thy child fulfill.

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 **Family Application Points**

- 1. Make Room for Silence:**  
Set aside time daily for quiet listening, no phones, no noise. Teach your children that hearing from God begins with stillness.
  - 2. Pray Samuel's Prayer Together:**  
Encourage everyone in the household to say, *"Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth."* This simple prayer forms hearts ready for direction and correction.
  - 3. Prioritize God's Word:**  
Reading Scripture aloud daily helps your home become a place where God's voice is honored and heard. His Word is His voice.
  - 4. Train Children to Recognize God's Call:**  
Like Eli did for Samuel, guide your children in discerning God's leading through prayer, Scripture, and wise counsel. Help them answer God's call early in life.
  - 5. Value Spiritual Mentorship:**  
Whether in the home or church, encourage relationships where younger believers can grow through the wisdom and correction of elders.
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### **A Sabbath Feast Prayer: (Used later when the Sabbath Meal is Ready)**

*"Heavenly Father, we thank You for Your Sabbath - a holy day of rest, joy, and renewal. As we partake in this meal, may our hearts be lifted in gratitude for Your provision and peace. Let this table reflect the peace of Your Kingdom and the love that binds our household together in Christ. In Jesus' name, Amen."*

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### **Closing Prayer**

*Speak, O Lord, for we are listening. In a noisy world full of confusion and distraction, teach us to still our hearts before You. Help us to recognize Your voice and obey without delay. Let our home be like Shiloh, a place where You dwell and speak. Raise up sons and daughters who respond like Samuel, saying, "Here am I." May we grow in wisdom, favor, and faithfulness as we hear and do Your will. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.*