

1 SAMUEL

The Call of Samuel

1 Samuel 3

Icebreaker

Share a time you fasted from food or liquids for an extended period of time (or maybe you fasted from something that was a big part of your life). What did you think about when you first started your fast? Did you reach a point where you no longer craved whatever it was you were fasting from?

Context

In today's passage, we see the nation of Israel in crisis. From all indications, not many people seemed to be concerned about their crisis, but, fortunately for them, God is aware of their need and starts the process of raising up a man of God who can provide leadership to Israel. God's plans and choices can go in directions that we do not expect. God chooses a boy to be the next prophet of God, and there is much to learn from how God calls Samuel to be that prophet.

Discuss

1. In the Jewish culture, a boy is not considered to be a man until the age of 13. **What is the significance that Samuel is described as a boy in verse 1, even as he is ministering to the Lord? Name some ways we can encourage children and students to serve the Lord in the church.**
2. **In your opinion, what does it mean that "the word of the Lord was rare in those days?"** Read Amos 8:11-12. **Is God's word being rare a problem for God's people? Why or why not?**
3. **Have you ever experienced a time when it felt like there was a famine of God's word in your own life? What was it like when that "famine" was broken?**
4. **Are you the type of person who takes each day as they come or do you prefer to have specific goals/objectives that you are working towards?**
5. Read Proverbs 29:18. **According to this passage, why is it important to live by a prophetic vision?**
6. In Scripture, a vision is a revelation from God as to what he is planning to do, which usually includes a call to a deeper relationship with him. (You may or may not want people to answer these questions out loud)



- a. **What is God's vision for your life?**
 - b. **What is God's vision for your family?**
 - c. **What is God's vision for your work life?**
7. Read 1 Samuel 2:35. **What did God see in Samuel's life but not Eli's life that God would choose Samuel and judge Eli?**
 8. (No one slept in the sanctuary area of the temple, but in the areas surrounding the temple.) **Why is it significant that Eli was "lying down in his own place" but Samuel was "lying down in the temple of the Lord"?**
 9. **What clues do we see in verses 3 and 7 that let us know hope was not lost for Israel?**
 10. **How important is hope in the Christian life?** (See 1 Corinthians 13:13). (Other verses that can help us define and understand hope would include 2 Thessalonians 2:16; Galatians 5:5; Colossians 1:23, 27; Titus 1:2 & 2:13; & Hebrews 11:1)
 11. **If you had been Samuel, what would you have thought/felt about hearing of God's judgment on Eli's household? Do you think it was easy for him to answer Eli's question?** When a person needs to deliver difficult news to someone, why do many people hesitate to tell people the bad news? (Are we protecting them or trying to protect ourselves?)
 12. **Why did God choose to let us know that Samuel "opened the doors of the house of the Lord" that next morning?** Share a time when you knew that a significant change had taken place in your life and it was a new beginning.
 13. **Who or what has changed in Israel from verse 1 compared to what is described in verses 20 & 21?**

Next Steps

Ask yourself the following questions:

What is God calling/had called you to be or do? If you don't know, then ask God to share his word and reveal himself to you. God has a plan for you, and he wants to share it with you. Seek his face and put yourself into position to hear God's call.

Are you running from God's call? Remember, God calls us to "God-sized" tasks, so it can be intimidating when we hear what he has called us to do. If you are running from God's call, ask the Lord to give you courage to say, "Here I am."

If you are unsure what God is calling you to do, look and see where God is at work around you. God often reveals where he is at work, then invites us to join him in the work. Ask the Lord to open your eyes and ears to see and hear what the Lord is doing.

