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**BIBLE STUDY**

**Straightway Church of Christ, Inc.**

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**THE PRECIOUS WORD AND NO OPEN VISION**

**1 Samuel 3:1-21**

***I Samuel 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."***

The severity of Israel’s apostacy caused a dearth of God’s revelatory work. The condition was perpetuating and self-defeating. By God’s grace, the prophetic institution would receive renewed impetus and standardization in the person and work of Samuel.

***Judges 21:25***

***25In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes.***

***Provers 29:18***

***18Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he.***

The idea of the "Word of the LORD being precious" means that there was very little of the Word of God spoken to men in those days. This made the thing that happens to Samuel, in this lesson, even more special. "Vision", in this particular verse above, means seeing something in the spirit that those around you do not see. “No open vision” means this type of vision had not happened in a long time. We will see both of these things happen to Samuel, here. Perhaps, this is because there was no sin in Samuel's life. From birth, he had been dedicated to God.

***I Samuel 3:2 "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;"***

We do not know the exact age of Samuel, or of Eli, here. We do know that the sight of Eli had deteriorated. His physical and his spiritual sight has deteriorated. We know the LORD did not like him overlooking the sins of his sons. The fact that the eyes had gradually gotten dim, indicate that his blindness is from his age.

***I Samuel 3:3 "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];"***

We know that the lamp of God was never to go out in the tabernacle where the ark was. One of the duties of the priest was to fill the lamp with oil twice a day, once in the morning, and once in the evening. This was to be a perpetual light. Samuel lay down to sleep, because it was night.

***I Samuel 3:4 "That the LORD called Samuel: and he answered, Here [am] I."***

We can safely assume that Samuel had never heard the voice of God at this time. He answered "Here am I", when he heard his name, thinking it was Eli calling him. He had served Eli all of his life. He is, probably, still under 12 years old at this point. We know he is still a youth.

***I Samuel 3:5 "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."***

The commitment that had been made on Samuel's life had been made by Samuel's mother. Perhaps, it is time for Samuel to decide for himself. Eli had no idea, at first, that this was the LORD calling Samuel. We know the condition of Eli's sons, and the LORD was angry with Eli, as well. They had not heard the voice of God, and now, Samuel hears God, but thinks it is Eli calling.

***I Samuel 3:6 "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."***

This reminds me of the way God calls all of us to be his sons. He calls, and we do not recognize His voice at first. Sometimes He calls several times, before we even realize it is God calling. Again this second time Samuel hears the voice and mistakes it for Eli's voice. He runs to serve Eli, but Eli had not called him. Notice, Eli calls him son here. He had been as a son to Eli.

***I Samuel 3:7 "Now Samuel did not yet know the LORD, neither was the word of the LORD yet revealed unto him."***

Babies are many times dedicated to the LORD by their parents. This does not save the person. All a dedication is, is a promise to raise the child in the way of God. When a person comes to the age, that they are responsible enough to make their own decisions, they must come to God themselves. We call it the age of accountability. We know that Samuel had been raised right, but now, he must make his own decision to follow God. He did know about God, because he had worked in the sanctuary. He did not know the LORD personally, however. He did not know the Word of God either. Notice, the word revealed, in the verse above. We can read the Word of God, and still not know what it means, until it is revealed to us by the Holy Spirit.

***I Samuel 3:8 "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."***

We see from this that, the LORD continued to call, until somehow, Samuel could know this was the LORD calling. Eli finally realizes that this is the LORD calling Samuel. We must remember that Eli was the only spiritual leader that Samuel had had. We must never discount the fact that God might be speaking to someone. When they tell us something has happened to them, we, who teach, must listen carefully to what they are saying. Then, we may give our opinion. Now, we see that Eli realizes this is the LORD. Eli still understood about visions and Words from God. The man of God had spoken to Eli, you remember.

***I Samuel 3:9 "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."***

Now, Eli explains to Samuel how to answer this voice. We see, from this, that Samuel was obedient to Eli. He tells Samuel exactly what to say, when the voice calls him.

***I Samuel 3:10 "And the LORD came, and stood, and called as at other times, Samuel, Samuel. Then Samuel answered, Speak; for thy servant heareth."***

This means that while Samuel was fully awake, the presence of the LORD came into the room where Samuel was, and spoke to him. The other times, there had just been a voice. This time, the presence is in the room with Samuel. Samuel does not call the presence by name, because he is not acquainted with Him.

***I Samuel 3:11 "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."***

This happening will be of such impact, that those who hear of it will have their ears tingle from the hearing.

***I Samuel 3:12 "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."***

This is speaking of the day that God kills Eli's two sons, and Eli dies. The man of God had brought news before, that God was displeased with Eli for the way he handled the sins of his sons. Probably, Eli had not shared that with Samuel. Now, the LORD is telling Samuel, before it happens.

***I Samuel 3:13 "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."***

Samuel needs to know why the LORD will destroy Eli and his sons. The LORD, also, makes Samuel aware that Eli has already been told of this. The main thing, he tells Samuel of what Eli's sin is, so that Samuel will never make the same mistake.

***I Samuel 3:14 "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."***

The sacrifice and offering are speaking of the bloody and the bloodless offering. Whatever they do to try to repent, God will not accept, because they had time to repent, and did not.

***I Samuel 3:15 "And Samuel lay until the morning, and opened the doors of the house of the LORD. And Samuel feared to shew Eli the vision."***

This does not say that Samuel slept. It is almost certain that he did not sleep after such an encounter with the LORD. He did stay lying down until time to open the sanctuary, however. Perhaps, this was so he would not disturb Eli. Samuel was reluctant to tell the vision to Eli, because it condemned Eli and his sons.

***I Samuel 3:16 "Then Eli called Samuel, and said, Samuel, my son. And he answered, Here [am] I."***

In all of this, we must take notice of the obedient spirit that Samuel had.

***I Samuel 3:17 "And he said, What [is] the thing that [the LORD] hath unto thee? I pray thee hide [it] not from me: God do so to thee, and also, if thou hide [any] thing from me of all the things that he said thee."***

***I Samuel 3:17 "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."***

From the statement Eli made here, we can see that he knew this was to be news of the same thing the man of God had said to him. He knows it is not good news, or Samuel would have been anxious to tell him. Samuel knows he must tell him.

***I Samuel 3:18 "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."***

Samuel obeyed Eli and told everything the LORD had told him. Eli already knew in his heart what he had said. He humbly accepts the punishment of the LORD upon himself and upon his sons.

***I Samuel 3:19 "And Samuel grew, and the LORD was with him, and did let none of his words fall to the ground."***

In this one sentence, Samuel grew from a youth to a man. He was not an idle talker. All of his words were for a good purpose. He only spoke, when the words were of use to the LORD.

***I Samuel 3:20 "And all Israel from Dan even to Beer-sheba knew that Samuel [was] established [to be] a prophet of the LORD."***

Samuel was not only a prophet of God, but the last of the judges, as well. He was such a Godly man, that all knew he was called of God. We know that Eli, probably, told everyone about why Samuel was living with him, instead of with his mother and father. He, perhaps, even told of the call of the LORD to Samuel. He, probably, had turned many of his duties over to Samuel.

***I Samuel 3:21 "And the LORD appeared again in Shiloh: for the LORD revealed himself to Samuel in Shiloh by the word of the LORD."***

The ark was at Shiloh in the tabernacle. The ark symbolized the presence of the LORD. This had not been just in a symbolic form that Samuel had heard the voice of the LORD. It was, in fact, the presence of the LORD that spoke to Samuel. The Word of God is Jesus Christ. We know this revelation of Himself in His Word, is what this is speaking of. Samuel's spiritual eyes were opened, and he understood the Scriptures.

**QUESTIONS**

1. What was meant by the "Word of the Lord being precious" in those days?
2. What is "vision", in verse 1, speaking of?
3. Who does both of these things happen to in this lesson?
4. What was the condition of Eli in those days?
5. What did the LORD have against Eli?
6. Eli's blindness was from \_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
7. The lamp of God was to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ go out.
8. What was one of the duties of the priest?
9. How often was the lamp to be filled with oil?
10. Who called Samuel, while he was lying down to rest?
11. Who did he think it was?
12. How did Samuel answer?
13. How old was Samuel is at the time of verse 4 and 5?
14. What did Eli tell him to do?
15. How many times did the LORD call Samuel, before Eli realized who was calling?
16. Why did Samuel not know this was the voice of the LORD?
17. What does a dedication by your parent do for you?
18. He knew \_\_\_\_ God, but did not know Him personally.
19. Who was the only one who had ever taught Samuel?
20. Why was Eli able to perceive that the LORD called Samuel?
21. What did Eli tell Samuel to answer to the voice?
22. What did the LORD do differently the fourth time?
23. How did Samuel answer?
24. In verse 12, the LORD tells Samuel He is against whom?
25. What had the sons done?
26. Why was Eli being punished for what his sons did?
27. What was the usual way of being purged from sins?
28. Will the LORD accept this for the sons of Eli?
29. Why did Samuel lie there, until the morning?
30. Why had Samuel not told Eli what the LORD had said?
31. What reaction did Eli have?
32. Who accepted Samuel as a prophet of the LORD?