

# 1 Samuel: God Speaks, Samuel Hears

## 1 Samuel 3:1-21

In 1 Samuel 3, we are left in the wake of Eli's sons' wicked deeds as their family of priests does not faithfully stand in the gap between God and people. Meanwhile, God in his mercy comes to Samuel to appoint him as the one who will bridge that gap so that people can truly experience the Word of the Lord. Ultimately, God will send Jesus as the final and perfect priest to be the bridge for us to the Father forever. And this isn't just any relationship we can have with God—it is a personal, experiential relationship with our Creator who changes everything.

## Application

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1. Samuel endures staying in the right place during a difficult time. Where are you enduring and waiting patiently so that God can work? If you're not, where do you need to stay in the right place doing the right thing instead of moving to something else?
2. You can experience truth as *propositional* (content and fact) but not know God *personally* (experience and feeling). Is your experience of God only propositional or personal, or do you have both? What is an example of how your personal relationship with God is or is not consistent with the content that he has revealed about himself?
3. There is a fierce, radical realignment of relationships when you have an encounter with God (e.g. spouse, child, boss, government, friends). Have you had an encounter with him like this? What relationships in your life need to change or have already changed? What changes about them?
4. What does it mean to just "accept God's will" rather than have true faith and belief? How might you hide behind the sovereignty of God? Where do you need to act? Where do you need to hope?
5. How has your experience with the Word of the Lord united you with God's people that you don't have much in common with? If it hasn't, what holds you back from experiencing that kind of unity and power?

6. Align yourself with God's purposes as much as you understand them and seek God, not answers. Instead of waiting to act until you get some big thing figured out, what is the next simple thing you need to do?

## Key Points

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- Eli and his sons stand in the way of God speaking to his people, so God comes to Samuel for Samuel to take their place as the priest.
- Even though Samuel waits for God for years, he endures and stays in the right place doing the right thing during a difficult time. Because of Samuel's patient endurance in God's perfect timing, God reveals himself to Samuel.
- Sometimes God wants to work in the middle of our difficult circumstances (anywhere from boredom to adversity), but we run from the hard things before he can do something great. Sometimes, we need to endure.
- In a "wooden" (word-for-word) translation of 1 Samuel 3:7, "Samuel did not know YHWH. The Word of YHWH had not yet been revealed to him", "know" and "revealed" are key words to understanding the personal aspect of God. They connote relationship not content, intimacy not distance, and vulnerability not hiding.
- In Job 42:1-6, Job lives with ideas and theology, but at the end of the day he just needs the Lord to reveal himself to him.
- In the midst of wanting to hold God accountable for injustice, trust him not because you understand him but because you could never imagine in your wildest dreams a God who could love you as much as he does.
- If you have a relationship with God, all other relationships will shift because there is only ONE to whom you owe loyalty.
- The Word of the Lord brings unity and prepares the way for God's people to be powerful.
- Align yourself with God's purposes as much as you understand them, seek God not answers, and realize that if you do these things it will disrupt your comfort and your relationships.

## Other Scripture References

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[Job 42:1-6](#)

[John 1:1](#)

[John 1:14](#)

[1 Samuel 2:11](#)

[1 Samuel 3:7](#)

[1 Samuel 3:1](#)