Oaks Early Risers Bible Class

The Oaks Baptist Church
Grand Prairie, Texas

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FOOD FOR THOUGHT

THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK:
God will prepare us to answer His call. Like Isaiah, may we respond, "Send me!"

PRAYER FOR THE WEEK:
Jesus, thank You for calling and enabling me to serve You. Help me to see this as a privilege and to serve You willingly

SCRIPTURE FOR THE WEEK:
Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying: "Whom shall I send, And who will go for Us?" Then I said, "Here am I! Send me."
(Isa 6:8 NKJV)

(from "Our Daily Bread", Sept 08, 2021)

Series: Generations: From Canaan to Jerusalem

UNIT 3: From Judges to Kings

NEXT WEEK
Israel Recommits to God
(1 Sam 7:3-11, 15-17)

The Prophet is Called
1 Samuel 3:8-20

Lesson Background and Introduction

Today's lesson picks up partway through what scholars call Samuel's "prophetic call narrative" (compare Exodus 3-4; Isaiah 6; Jeremiah 1; Ezekiel 1). The chapter begins by noting that it was uncommon for the people of Israel to hear from God directly or to see him (1 Samuel 3:1). God was not absent from the Israelites, but it may have felt like it. A later prophet will describe such times as a "famine" (Amos 8:11-12). Samuel was being raised in the tabernacle, the tent structure that housed the Ark of the Covenant at Shiloh, because his mother had promised him to God. Samuel's mother, Hannah, could not conceive and prayed for God to grant her a child (1 Samuel 1:10). She vowed to dedicate him to God's service if God answered her prayer (1:11). Eventually, young Samuel was old enough to minister "before the Lord under Eli the priest" (1 Samuel 2:11), although he was still a "boy" in that capacity (2:18; 3:1). One night, while Samuel was asleep in the tabernacle, he heard a voice calling his name (3:3-4). Assuming it to be Eli, Samuel hurried over to his elderly mentor's bed to see what he needed (3:5). Eli sent Samuel back to sleep. A little while later, Samuel heard his name called a second time and rushed over to Eli - and again Eli sent him back to bed (3:6). Today's text begins with the third calling of Samuel's name

In the Old Testament, prophets were called to proclaim God's word. Young as he was, Samuel proved himself to be a faithful prophet, receiving the word of the Lord and declaring all of it despite the difficulty of the message. Perhaps his mother's determination to fulfill her vow to God weighed into his understanding and actions (1 Samuel 1:11, 24-28). Many other Old Testament prophets also faced the challenge of giving hard messages. Jeremiah, for example, spoke God's words to the prophet's personal detriment (Jeremiah 37:1-38:9). However, the honor and respect each prophet gave God in faithfully serving and obediently speaking is worthy of emulation. The human perspective is skewed when it comes to the consequences of sin. God's justice requires righteousness, which results in negative consequences for those who refuse to obey him. Sometimes, what God deems "good" feels ugly, harsh, or disappointing. The prophet's role was often to foretell unpleasant outcomes when people refused to heed warnings. This ministry was difficult—it required great fear of the Lord, a desire to serve him alone, and a substantial love for the people to whom the message pertained. Their call was vitally related to the commandments on which Jesus would say that "all the law and the prophets" hang: (1) "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind" and (2) "Love your neighbor as yourself" (Matthew 22:37-40). Still today, there is substantial love in a willingness to obey God by proclaiming hard-to-accept truth.

(*Adapted from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary*)

NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

God Calls (1 Sam 3:8-14)

The call identified (8-9)

A calling of God to holiness (2 Tim 1:8-9)
A calling of God to accomplish His purposes (Rom 8:28)
A calling of God into justification and glorification (Rom 8:30)
A calling of God to live a holy life (1 Thess 4:7)

The call is responded (10)

Responded by accepting His call (Exodus 3:4)
Responded by recognizing the voice of Jesus (Acts 9:10)
Responded by recognizing the authority of Jesus (John 20:16)
Responded like Jesus who offered to sacrifice Himself (Heb 10:5-7)

The call's message (11-14)

Message of revelation (Amos 3:7)
Message of destruction (Josh 23:15)
Message that will be carried out (Num 23:19)
Message of judgment (Ezek 7:3)

Prophecy Revealed (1 Sam 3:15-20)

Samuel's fear of the prophecy (15)

Fear of being a child (Jer 1:6)
Fear that desires someone else to do it (Exodus 4:13)
Fear of the reception of the prophecy (Dan 4:19)
Fear of God's anger (Mic 2:7)

Eli's request for the prophecy's message (16-18)

Requested because of knowledge of sin (Judg 10:15)
Requested knowing that one must accept the trouble as well as good (Job 2:10)
Requested because being silent in the past (Ps 39:9)
Requested without complaining (Lam 3:39)

Samuel's establishment as prophet (19-20)

A prophet who spoke as God led him (Acts 3:24)
A prophet that God established (Acts 13:20)
A prophet that God reveals Himself to (Num 12:6)
A prophet all of his life (1 Sam 7:15)