

Communication Failures

- Why do people communicate?
- How do people communicate?
- Why does the message sometimes not have the desired effect?
 - The message wasn't clear
 - The recipients don't get the message
 - The recipients can't do what it says
 - The recipients choose not to do what it says
- Is God's message to us having its desired effect in us?

1

When the Adults weren't Listening...

1 Samuel 3

bib.ly/1Sa3+NIV

2

Setting for 1 Samuel 3

- The people of Israel entered the Promised Land
- 12 “Judges” led the people in a downward spiral ~300 years
- Eli the head priest over the tabernacle (God’s presence)
 - Eli had sons who became corrupt priests
 - A prophet declared God’s judgment against Eli’s household
 - “Those who honor me I will honor,
but those who despise me will be disdained.” *1 Samuel 2:30*
- Samuel was a miracle son
 - From his youth, he lived in service in the temple under Eli

despise = ignore

disdained = rejected

3

Reading 1 Samuel 3

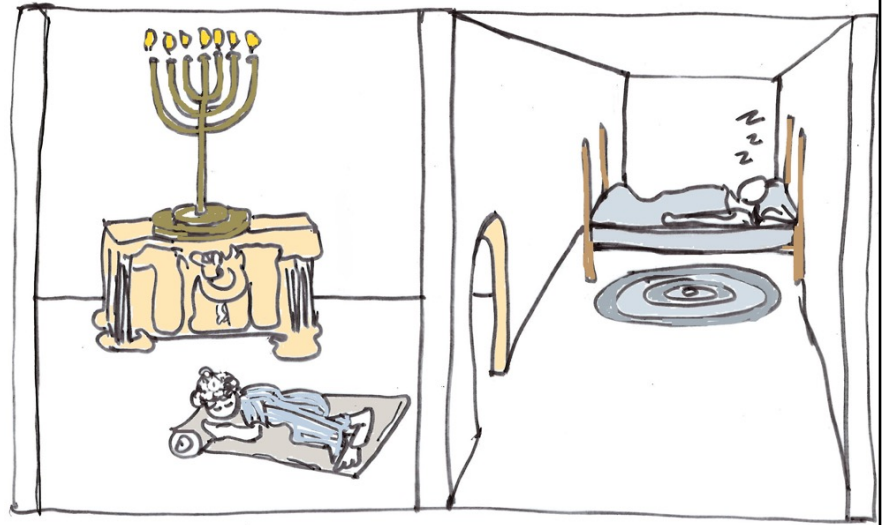
- Reading from a combination of
the New International Version (7-8th grade)
and the New International Reader’s Version (3rd grade)

4

1 Samuel 3

The boy Samuel ministered before the Lord under Eli. In those days the word of the Lord was rare; there were not many visions.

One night Eli, whose eyes were becoming so weak that he could barely see, was lying down in his usual place.



5

The lamp of God had not yet gone out, and Samuel was lying down in the house of the Lord, where the ark of God was.



6

Then the Lord called Samuel.

Samuel answered, “Here I am.” And he ran to Eli and said, “Here I am; you called me.”

But Eli said, “I did not call; go back and lie down.” So he went and lay down.

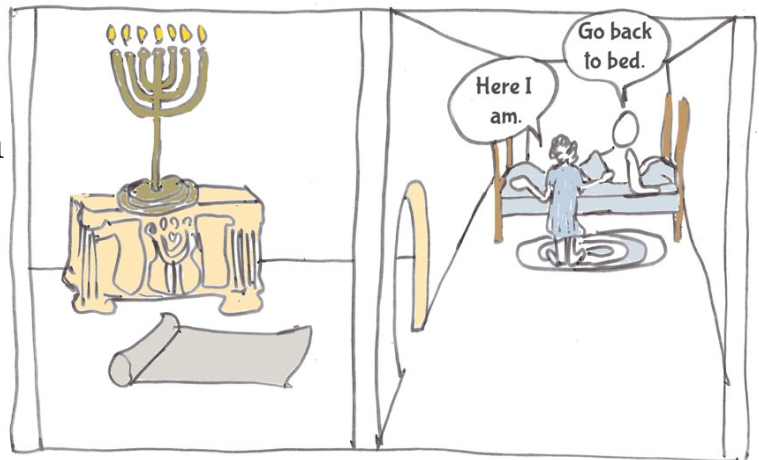


7

Again the Lord called out, “Samuel!” Samuel got up and went to Eli. He said, “Here I am. You called out to me.”

“My son,” Eli said, “I didn’t call you. Go back and lie down.”

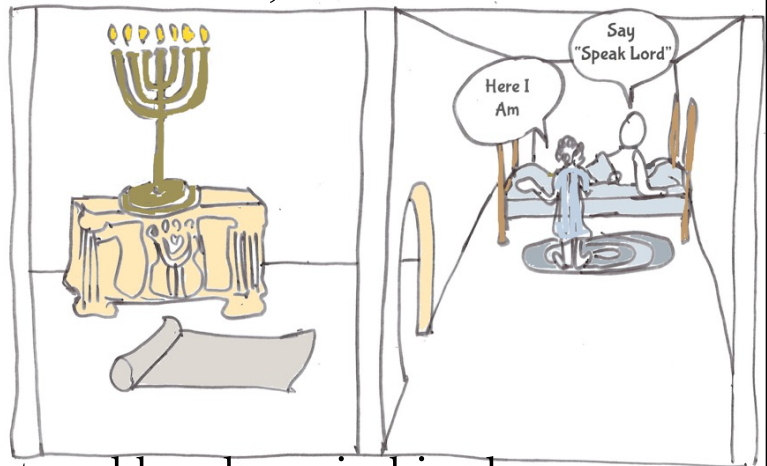
Samuel didn’t know the Lord yet. That’s because the Lord still hadn’t given him a message.



8

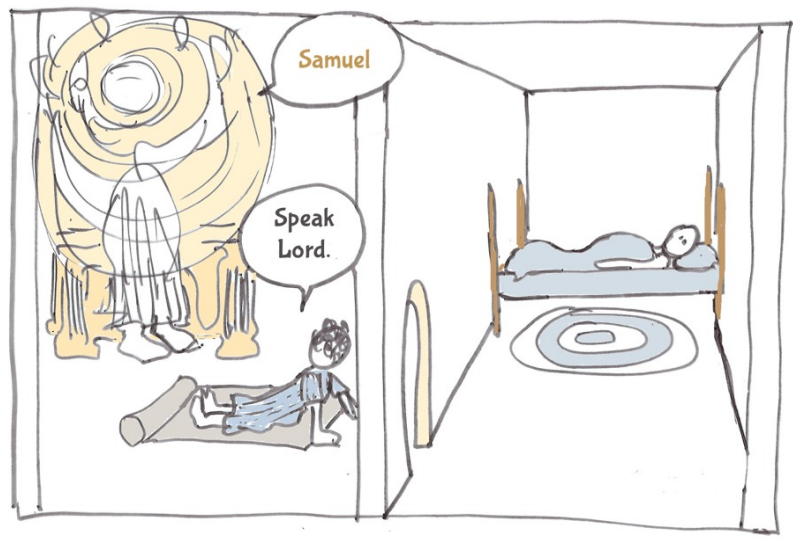
The Lord called out for the third time. He said, “Samuel!” Samuel got up and went to Eli. He said, “Here I am. You called out to me.”

Then Eli realized that the Lord was calling the boy. So Eli told Samuel, “Go and lie down. If someone calls out to you again, say, ‘Speak, Lord. I’m listening.’” So Samuel went and lay down in his place.



9

The Lord came and stood there. He called out, just as he had done the other times. He said, “Samuel! Samuel!” Then Samuel replied, “Speak. I’m listening.”



10

The Lord said to Samuel, “Pay attention! I am about to do something terrible in Israel. It will make the ears of everyone who hears about it tingle. At that time I will do everything to Eli and his family that I said I would. I will finish what I have started. I told Eli I would punish his family forever.



11

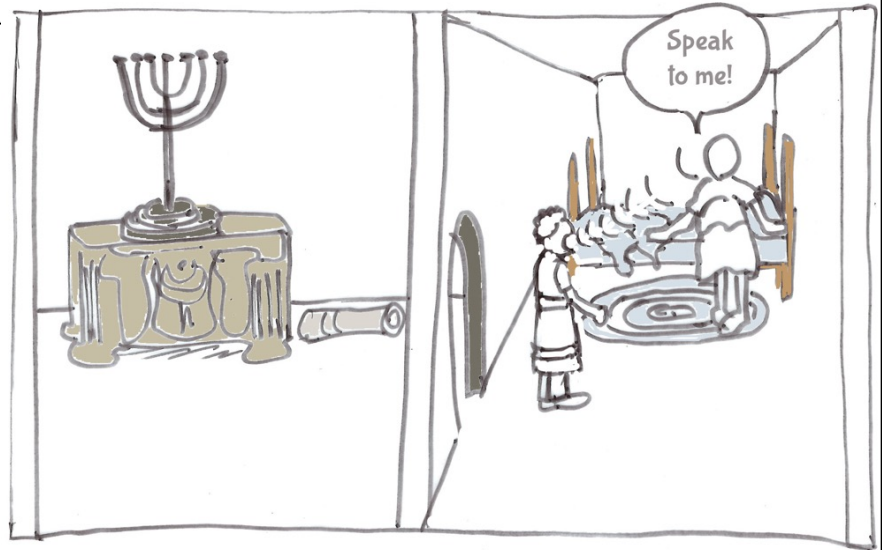
He knew his sons were sinning. He knew they were saying bad things about me. In spite of that, he did not stop them. So I made a promise to the family of Eli. I said, ‘The sins of Eli’s family will never be paid for by bringing sacrifices or offerings.’ ”



12

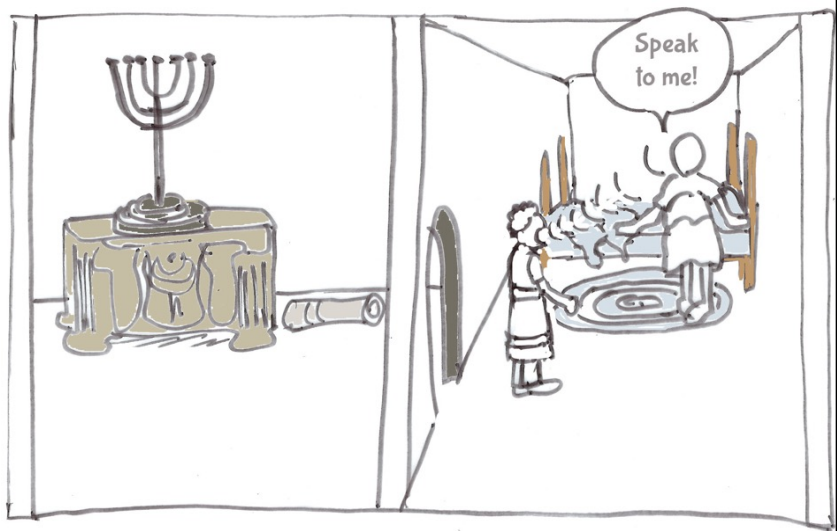
Samuel lay down until morning. Then he opened the doors of the Lord's house. He was afraid to tell Eli about the vision he had received. But Eli called out to him. He said, "Samuel, my son."

Samuel answered, "Here I am."



13

"What was it he said to you?" Eli asked. "Do not hide it from me. May God deal with you, be it ever so severely, if you hide from me anything he told you." So Samuel told him everything, hiding nothing from him. Then Eli said, "He is the Lord; let him do what is good in his eyes."

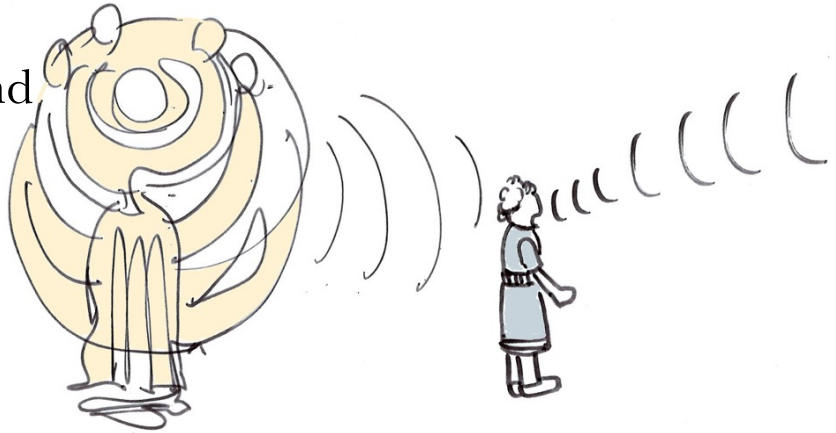


14

The Lord was with Samuel as he grew up, and he let none of Samuel's words fall to the ground. And all Israel from Dan to Beersheba recognized that Samuel was attested as a prophet of the Lord.

The Lord continued to appear at Shiloh, and there he revealed himself to Samuel through his word.

And Samuel's word came to all Israel.



15

- We go from “The word of the **LORD** was rare” to “all Israel...recognized that Samuel was attested as a prophet of the **LORD**.”
confirmed by God
- God's communication sometimes seems very earthly
– It can seem like a human voice!
- God wanted Samuel to learn to listen to Him
– Eli taught Samuel something Eli didn't know very well
- Samuel had to have courage to speak a message of judgment against Eli!

16

Big Idea

God speaks
to His people and **through** His people
 who will listen
 and take to heart His word
**Adjust attitudes, words and actions
 based on the reliability of God's word**

17

“The gatekeeper opens the gate for [the shepherd, who is Jesus], and the sheep **listen to his voice**. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because **they know his voice**. But they will never follow a stranger; in fact, they will run away from him because **they do not recognize a stranger's voice**.” *John 10:3-5*

“Whoever has ears, let them hear.” (a common phrase)

18

Big Idea

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19

Application

Listen

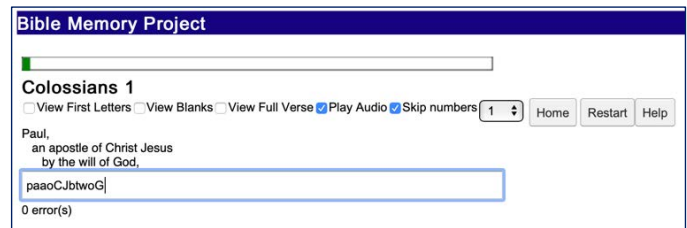
- What it means to hear God
 - God speaks in many ways:
 - the Bible, songs, books, speakers, other people (young & old), an impression, conviction, a thought that comes to mind, dreams, visions, ...
 - The clearest and the final authority: the Bible
 - The Bible is communication from God, rather than a textbook or rulebook. So listen personally...
 - We hear better with practice and together → discernment

20

Application

Listen

- Genuinely listen → God speaks to each of His children
 - Have a heart that wants to hear
 - Listen for the voice of God in all parts of life
 - Be eager to be corrected by God (and through others)
- Quiet other things
 - Confess & repent
 - Remove distractions
 - Take time
 - Meditate, memorize, pray, ...



Together

21

Application

Listen

- “What did He say this morning?”
 - “Eli could barely see...”
- **Most of the things we “forget” we never really knew**
- When God speaks, are we **really** listening?

22

Application

Listen

Take God's word to heart: Obey & Speak

- If we ignore what we already know or have heard,
 - Don't expect to hear more
 - Even what we have heard already may be taken away
- Parable of the Four Soils *Mark 4*
 - Seeds left sitting on the path get eaten
 - For seeds to be effective: "hear, accept, produce a crop"

23

Application

Listen

Take God's word to heart: Obey & Speak

- Proclaim the Kingdom of God and Jesus
 - God uses and can speak through any of his people
(Priesthood of all believers)
 - Women and men
 - Younger and older
 - Poorer and richer
 - Sicker and healthier
 - Citizen of any country
 - New Christians and long time Christians
- So He can use you and me
 as His voice to others!
**When the adults weren't listening,
 God called a child to speak**

24

Big Idea

God speaks
to His people and **through** His people
 who will listen
 and take to heart His word

Has God spoken to you me today?

When God speaks tomorrow, will we be genuinely listening?

What will it look like for each of us to take His Word to heart?

25

Jesus said...

- my sheep **listen to my voice**
- I call my sheep by name and lead them
- My sheep **know my voice**
- My sheep will never follow a stranger because
they do not recognize a stranger's voice

“Whoever has ears, let them hear.”

“Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening and ready to obey.”

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