

How God Is Waking Up an Army of Spiritual Samuels

Samuel played a pivotal role as a bridge between the judges and the kings of Israel. The times of the Judges spans over 300 years from the death of Joshua to the coronation King Saul. “In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes” (Judg. 21:25).

Though that sounds good, if everyone does their own thing instead of God’s thing, chaos results. That era was defined by this sad cycle:

- **Apostasy:** Israel backslid into idolatry.
- **Oppression:** God allowed their enemies to invade and rule over them.
- **Repentance:** Israel desperately cried out to God.
- **Deliverance:** God raised up deliverers to liberate them and lead revival.

Samuel was a priest, the last judge and the first prophet after Moses. He’s listed among the heroes of faith (Heb. 11:32) and was one of Israel’s greatest spiritual leaders (Jer. 15:1). Ten statements summarize Samuel’s story:

1. **Samuel’s name is significant:** Fittingly, his name means “asked of God” or “God hears.” His barren mother, Hannah, prayed so desperately for God to give her a son that Eli, the high priest, thought she was drunk (1 Sam. 1:9-17). If you’ve asked God for something sincerely in faith, He heard your prayer and will answer in His time and way. A delay does not mean a denial.
2. **Samuel was dedicated by his parents, but he dedicated himself to God.** When Samuel was weaned, Hannah brought him to Eli to serve in the tabernacle. “I asked the Lord to give me this boy, and he has granted my request. Now

I am giving him to the Lord, and he will belong to the Lord his whole life" (1 Sam. 1:27-28, NLT). His devout parents raised him as a strict Nazarite (1 Sam. 1:11), but Samuel had his own encounter with God. Having Christian parents doesn't automatically make us saved. We can't make it to heaven on anyone's coattails. We must develop our own relationship with God. God doesn't have any grandchildren, just children!

3. **Samuel served God by serving Eli.** Samuel was trained as an apprentice in the priesthood under Eli. He started out as Eli's helper, a gopher, doing grunt work and small jobs. Ministry doesn't start in the pulpit or on a platform; it begins by being faithful over little things. Samuel proved himself faithful, and God promoted him. There are too many celebrities in the church and too few servants like Samuel. We serve God by serving others.
4. **Samuel was spiritually awakened at an early age.** Samuel was falling asleep when he literally received a wake-up call from God. Josephus said Samuel was 12 years old when he first heard God's voice. Figuratively, a wake-up call is an experience that makes you realize you need to change or that changes your priorities. God uses circumstances to awaken us from our spiritual slumber to pursue His higher purpose.
5. **Samuel was never stained by scandal.** He's a rare Bible character with no major flaw. Samuel was a rose among thorns—proof that we can live clean lives in a corrupt environment. Eli's sons, Hophni and Phinehas, were corrupt to the core. They were called "sons of Belial" (1 Sam. 2:12, KJV), a title for Satan (2 Cor. 6:15), which means "worthless, wicked or lawless." Their sin was twofold: 1. Greed (they took more than their share of the sacrifices). 2. Immorality (they lured women worshippers into sexual sin—1 Sam. 2:12-17). Eli should

have banned them from the priesthood, but his apathy invited judgment. There's a big difference between being religious and righteous. Samuel stayed pure even in a polluted priesthood.

6. Samuel heard God's voice when others weren't listening.

With a negligent high priest and his vile sons ignoring His voice, God spoke to a boy with a sincere heart and a sensitive ear (1 Sam. 3:1). Aging Eli's eyes were dim, and his ears were spiritually dull, so God bypassed him and spoke to the next generation. The question is not if God is speaking; the question is, are we listening?

7. God spoke when Samuel was still. "Samuel was lying down"

(1 Sam. 3:3b, MEV). The key was, he wasn't distracted. We often miss God's voice because we don't stay still long enough to hear it. Our lives are so fast-paced and cluttered. "Life is a rat race, and the rats are winning!" Smartphones control us with constant notifications. Communication has never been better, but is God's voice drowned out by all the other voices competing for our attention? When Elijah retreated to a cave, God spoke to him in a unique way. First, he heard a strong wind, then he saw a violent earthquake and then a fierce fire. God wasn't in any of them. Finally, God spoke in "a gentle whisper" (1 Kings 19:11-12, NLT). To hear a whisper, you must be still and quiet. If we want God's attention, we must give Him our full attention and "Be still and know that [He is] God" (Ps. 46:10).

8. Samuel didn't recognize God's voice initially. "Now

Samuel did not yet know the Lord, nor had the word of the Lord been revealed to him" (1 Sam. 3:7, MEV). Samuel knew plenty about God, but he'd never encountered Him personally. There's one main way to learn God's voice—by spending time in His presence. If a friend or relative calls, you immediately recognize their voice. Why? Because you've heard it so many times. The more you hear

God's voice, the more familiar it becomes. Jesus said, "The sheep hear His voice. He calls His own sheep by name ... And the sheep follow Him, for they know His voice" (John 10:3-4).

9. **God's voice sounded like Eli's voice.** The first three times God called Samuel, he thought it was Eli and ran to his room. We make the same mistake. How many times has God spoken to us through our spouse, children, friends or ministers, and we shrugged it off because we thought it was just "them" when it was really God speaking through them?
10. **Once God woke Samuel up, He used him to awaken others.** Only a person who is awake can awaken others. A spiritually awakened Samuel later anointed the first two kings of Israel, Saul and David. Because he listened to God, people listened to him. His words had impact! "And Samuel grew, and the Lord was with him and did not let any of his words fall to the ground. And all Israel ... knew that Samuel was proven to be a prophet of the Lord" (1 Sam. 3:19-20).

It all started when God woke Samuel up and spoke to him. God is waking up an army of spiritual Samuels who know His voice. Have you had your wake-up call from God? If not, this is it!

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