

PREPARING AT HOME

May 27-June 3, 2018

Focus reading: 1 Samuel 3:1–10–20 (<http://bible.oremus.org/?ql=388726228>)

Other lectionary readings: Psalm 139:1–6, 13–18; 2 Corinthians 4:5–12; Mark 2:23—3:6

Theme: Listening, Speaking, Acting

This week's reading takes place during a time of chaos. Considering the history of this area, that comes as no surprise. It is important to remember, however, that the corruption and abuse of power that we have come to expect in the politics of this culture extended into worship as well. Eli and his sons were ministering in the sanctuary where the Arc of the Covenant was kept. Eli was a good man, but his sons were not. It was a dark time, and the "word of the Lord was rare in those days" (verse 1). Perhaps that is why Eli and Samuel failed to recognize God's voice. Samuel slept in a room with the Arc of the Covenant, which represented God's presence, while Eli slept in another part of the temple. In the middle of the night, Samuel was literally "called" by God, although he thought the voice must have been Eli's. Eli assured him that he did not call out to Samuel and eventually taught Samuel to hear and respond to God's call. At the time, Israel was ruled by judges; but a transition was about to occur whereby Israel would be ruled by kings. Samuel would be a key figure in this transition. God gave a message to Samuel, declaring that Eli's corrupt sons would not be in line for the future kingship. Instead, God had chosen Samuel to lead the people of Israel. It was a difficult message for Samuel to share with his mentor; but Eli, aware of his sons' corruption and his own inability to turn things around, accepted God's will. God had chosen a new leader in young Samuel.

MENTORS IN THE FAITH

Eli was Samuel's mentor. Current research shows how important it is for young people to be in relationship with older people who model the Christian faith for and with them. Who are those people in your child's life? With your child, name those people. Who would your child like to have on that "list?" Together brainstorm ways in which you can strengthen those intergenerational relationships.

CALLING NEW LEADERS

Throughout history God has chosen particular leaders for particular times. Martin Luther King, Jr. is an example of one such leader. Talk with your child about King's leadership and vision. While children may have learned about Dr. King in school, do they know about his background in the church and how his faith shaped his leadership? Using the Internet, search for information about King's Baptist faith and his role as a pastor. What are some other examples of leaders who were called by God for particular times?

PRAYER

Loving God,
We thank you for leaders who have answered your call.
Teach us to hear your call and to answer
"Here I am, Lord!"
Amen.

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