**A Man Who Loves the Word of God**

1 Samuel 3:1-4:1

G**ood Morning Beloved,**

* Our new series in 1 Samuel is guiding us to see what it means to be a man after God’s own heart.
	+ What does a godly man look like?
	+ What does a virtuous lady look like?
		- Our prayer is that God would raise up…
			* + Men of Faith, Hope, and Love
				+ Women of Honor, Chasity, and Wisdom
* This would be a modern-day Reformation…
	+ not a doubling down to duty in the strength of the flesh (Zech 4:6)[[1]](#footnote-1)…
	+ not a pride that makes us the haughty toward others (Luke 15:29-30) [[2]](#footnote-2)…
		- BUT a sincere and simple HEART for God (Eze. 11:19)
		- As we delight in the WORD of GOD (James 1:18).
* Our passage today shows us the patient kindness of our God as the Word contrasts…
	+ A Deadness to the Living God
	+ A Quickening by the Loving Spirit

**Reading of God’s Word**

*3:1 Now the boy Samuel was ministering to the Lord in the presence of Eli. And the word of the Lord was rare in those days; there was no frequent vision.*

*2 At that time Eli, whose eyesight had begun to grow dim so that he could not see, was lying down in his own place. 3 The lamp of God had not yet gone out, and Samuel was lying down in the temple of the Lord, where the ark of God was.*

*4 Then the Lord called Samuel, and he said, “Here I am!” 5 and ran to Eli and said, “Here I am, for you called me.” But he said, “I did not call; lie down again.” So he went and lay down.*

*6 And the Lord called again, “Samuel!” and Samuel arose and went to Eli and said, “Here I am, for you called me.” But he said, “I did not call, my son; lie down again.” 7 Now Samuel did not yet know the Lord, and the word of the Lord had not yet been revealed to him.*

*8 And the Lord called Samuel again the third time. And he arose and went to Eli and said, “Here I am, for you called me.” Then Eli perceived that the Lord was calling the boy. 9 Therefore Eli said to Samuel, “Go, lie down, and if he calls you, you shall say, ‘Speak, Lord, for your servant hears.’” So Samuel went and lay down in his place.*

*10 And the Lord came and stood, calling as at other times, “Samuel! Samuel!” And Samuel said, “Speak, for your servant hears.” 11 Then the Lord said to Samuel, “Behold, I am about to do a thing in Israel at which the two ears of everyone who hears it will tingle. 12 On that day I will fulfill against Eli all that I have spoken concerning his house, from beginning to end. 13 And I declare to him that I am about to punish his house forever, for the iniquity that he knew, because his sons were blaspheming God, and he did not restrain them. 14 Therefore I swear to the house of Eli that the iniquity of Eli's house shall not be atoned for by sacrifice or offering forever.”*

*15 Samuel lay until morning; then he opened the doors of the house of the Lord. And Samuel was afraid to tell the vision to Eli. 16 But Eli called Samuel and said, “Samuel, my son.” And he said, “Here I am.” 17 And Eli said, “What was it that he told you? Do not hide it from me. May God do so to you and more also if you hide anything from me of all that he told you.” 18 So Samuel told him everything and hid nothing from him. And he said, “It is the Lord. Let him do what seems good to him.”*

*19 And Samuel grew, and the Lord was with him and let none of his words fall to the ground. 20 And all Israel from Dan to Beersheba knew that Samuel was established as a prophet of the Lord. 21 And the Lord appeared again at Shiloh, for the Lord revealed himself to Samuel at Shiloh by the word of the Lord.*

*4 And the word of Samuel came to all Israel.*

**Preaching of God’s Word**

1. **Deadness to the Living God**
	1. So far in the book of 1 Samuel we have seen God communicate truth in contrast with one another.
		1. Peninnah mocks Hannah, but then Hannah sings…
			1. *“My heart exults in the Lord;
			    my horn is exalted in the Lord.
			My mouth derides my enemies,
			    because I rejoice in your salvation. (1 Sam. 2:1)*
		2. Elkannah poorly comforts Hannah, but she doesn’t take comfort in her husband’s presence, but in the presence of the LORD…
			1. *“There is none holy like the Lord:
			    for there is none besides you;
			    there is no rock like our God. (1 Sam. 2:2)*
		3. Eli harshly condemns Hannah for her prayers, but Hannah rejoices…
			1. *Talk no more so very proudly,
			    let not arrogance come from your mouth;
			for the Lord is a God of knowledge,
			    and by him actions are weighed. (1 Sam. 2:3)*
		4. The Sons of Eli are lustful and greedy, but Samuel *continued to grow both in statue and in favor with the LORD and also with man* (1 Sam. 2:26) as Hannah prayed….
			1. *“He will guard the feet of his faithful ones,
			    but the wicked shall be cut off in darkness,
			    for not by might shall a man prevail.* (1 Sam. 2:9)
	2. POINT: The Word of God accomplishes the purposes of God.
		1. The Hymn of Hannah ended with this refrain…
			1. *The adversaries of the Lord shall be broken to pieces;
			    against them he will thunder in heaven.
			The Lord will judge the ends of the earth;
			    he will give strength to his king
			    and exalt the horn of his anointed.” (1 Sam. 2:10).*
	3. The contrast continues as Eli is a foil for Samuel.
		1. The powerless and pure Samuel is contrasted with the powerful and corrupt Elide priesthood at Shiloh[[3]](#footnote-3)… not only in their actions toward men, but in their relationship with the Living God.
			1. At this point in history, there is an active religious system based on the scriptures.
				1. Elkannah is making the pilgrimage yearly to offer sacrifices… but the reality is this…

*And the word of the Lord was rare in those days; there was no frequent vision.*

The idea of rare (*yaqar)* could be…

Option #1 - The Lord did not speak through his prophets and the era was one of silence.

Option #2 – The Word of the Lord was not highly valued and the era was one of superficiality.

* + 1. The spiritual reality of both the people of God and the religion of the people is seen in verse 2.
	1. *2 At that time Eli, whose eyesight had begun to grow dim so that he could not see, was lying down in his own place.*
		1. The spiritual reality is this…
			1. There was a dimness to the light of God’s Word…
			2. There was a domestication of the worship of God…
			3. There was powerlessness to confront evil…
				1. Eli reveals a deadness to the Living God.
	2. Transition: Then… amid a society based on sensual gratification… THE Powerful and Patient LORD God ALMIGHT starts a new Era.
		1. The Creator of the Ends of the Earth call to the young boy sleeping next the Ark of the Covenant.
			1. Not knowing what to do… the boy responds to the call of God by going to Eli in the middle of the night with a quickened attentiveness.
				1. “Here I am, for you called me” (3x) to a man…

Why?

Vs. 7 - *Now Samuel did not yet know the Lord, and the word of the Lord had not yet been revealed to him.*

* + 1. Then in a way that won’t let us write off Eli completely…
			1. *Then Eli perceived that the Lord was calling the boy.*
				1. Amid all the deadness there seems to be a faint spiritual pulse in this man’s soul.
			2. *9 Therefore Eli said to Samuel, “Go, lie down, and if he calls you, you shall say, ‘Speak, Lord, for your servant hears.’” So Samuel went and lay down in his place.*
	1. Application: Beloved the greatest sorrow we can experience is a famine of the WORD of the LORD.
		1. Amos 8:11-13 - ***11****“Behold, the days are coming,” declares the Lord God,
		    “when I will send a famine on the land—
		not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water,
		    but of hearing the words of the Lord.****12****They shall wander from sea to sea,
		    and from north to east;
		they shall run to and fro, to seek the word of the Lord,
		    but they shall not find it.*

***13****“In that day the lovely virgins and the young men
    shall faint for thirst.*

* + 1. In Eli’s day, there was a famine of the Word of the LORD, but in our day… let this congregation of God’s people be marked by these practices that Thomas Watson advocates in *The Godly Man’s Picture*….
			1. Diligently read the scriptures daily (Acts 17:11).
				1. Thomas Watson – “A godly man’s heart is the library to hold the word of God: it dwells richly in him (Col. 3:16).
			2. Meditate on the scriptures (Ps. 119:97).
				1. Dale Ralph Davis – “Starvation may not come from absence of food but from lack of appetite.”
			3. Delight in the scriptures (Jer. 15:16)
				1. Don Upton – “If I think a sermon alone is enough… I’m fooling myself.”
			4. Hide the scriptures (Ps. 119:11)
				1. B.B. Warfield from “The Religious Life of Theological Students”

“‘Take heed how ye hear’: that if you do not find Christ in the conference room it is because you do not take him there with you; that if after an ordinary day’s with you are too weary to unite with your fellows in closing the day with common prayer, it is because the impulse to prayer is weak in your heart. If there is no fire in the pulpit it falls to you to kindle it in the pews. No man can fail to meet with God in the sanctuary if he takes God there with him.

How easy it is to roll the blame of our cold hearts over upon the shoulders of our religious leaders! It is refreshing to observe how Luther, with his breezy good sense, dealt with complaints of lack of attractiveness in his evangelical preachers.

He had not sent them out to please people, he said, and their function was not to interest or to entertain: their function was to teach the saving truth of God, and, if they did that, it was frivolous for people in danger of perishing for want of the truth to object to the vessel in which it was offered to them.

* + - 1. Prefer the scriptures (Ps. 119:72)
				1. King Edward the Sixth, age nine, at his coronation…

Was presented three swords to signify that he was monarch of three kingdoms… to which he relpied… “there is still one sword missing… the Holy Bible, which is the ‘sword of the Spirit” and is to be preferred before these ensigns of royalty”

* + - 1. Talk about the scripture (Ps. 119:27)
				1. Ask friends and family… what is your favorite verse in the Bible… then if they return the question share yours.
			2. Conform to the scriptures (2 Tim. 4:7)
				1. Kris Lungaard in *The Enemy Within* (p. 149) – “Happy Thanksgiving! You will win. You will fight, and you will see your flesh crumble. It is God’s pleasure not only to rescue you from hell, but to glorify you with Christ by making you like him.”
	1. Beloved, why would you give yourself to the reading… meditating… delighting… hiding… preferring… talking… and conforming of scripture to your life?
		1. Because you have been…
1. **Quickened by the Loving Spirit**
	1. Samuel responds… *Speak, for your servant hears.*
		1. Then… the new prophet gets a very difficult task.
	2. The Lord declares…
		1. *12 On that day I will fulfill against Eli all that I have spoken concerning his house, from beginning to end. 13 And I declare to him that I am about to punish his house forever, for the iniquity that he knew, because his sons were blaspheming God, and he did not restrain them. 14 Therefore I swear to the house of Eli that the iniquity of Eli's house shall not be atoned for by sacrifice or offering forever.”*
			1. Beloved, you are only comforted by the Word of God and never corrected… you are not reading the scriptures of the LORD.
				1. The scriptures are useful for *teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work (2 Tim. 3:16-17)*.
	3. The Word of God rightly rebukes Eli and all he can say is…
		1. *It is the Lord. Let him do what seems good to him.”*
			1. Then our passage concludes with judgment looming over Eli’s house as Samuel’s fame spreads.
	4. Beloved, we are a people who love the WORD of GOD.
		1. Not simply because it is true… beautiful…. Clear… and accurate.
			1. We love the inspired and infallible scriptures because they reveal the GOSPEL of JESUS Christ.
		2. Jesus Christ is the Final WORD from the Awesome God.
			1. We would always shrink back in fearful resignation of the Holy God’s justice… just like Eli.
				1. Charles Spurgeon – “If any man thinks ill of you, do not be angry with him, for you are worse than he thinks you to be.”

We would simply have to resign ourselves to judgment.

* 1. BUT in the Gospel we see that Jesus Christ is God Immanuel.
		1. He is the perfect one who did the will of his Father (John 17:4-5).
	2. And the unblemished perfection of the Son’s obedience is this…
		1. John 1:14 – The Son reveals the Father… and we are left savoring glory… full of grace and truth.
		2. Hebrews 1:1-3 – The Father reveals the Son… and we savor the radiance of the glory of God… for he made purification for our sins on the CROSS.
			1. Being quickened… made alive by the Spirit (Eph. 2:4)… we then love the Word of God

**Prayer (1 Thessalonians 3:12-13)**

*May the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, as we do for you, 13 so that he may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints.*

**Benediction (Numbers 6:22-25)**
*24 The Lord bless you and keep you;*

*25 the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you;*

*26 the Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace.*

1. WCF XVI.iii – “Their ability to do good works is not at all of themselves, but wholly from the Spirit of Christ. And that they may be enabled thereunto, besides the graces they have already received, there is required an actual influence of the same Holy Spirit to work in them to will and to do of his good pleasure; yet are they not hereupon to grow negligent, as if they were not bound to perform any duty unless upon a special motion of the Spirit; but they ought to be diligent in stirring up the grace of God that is in them.” [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. WCF XVI.ii.–“These good works, done in obedience to God's commandments, are the fruits and evidences of a true and lively faith: and by them believers manifest their thankfulness, strengthen their assurance, edify their brethren, adorn the profession of the gospel, stop the mouths of the adversaries, and glorify God, whose workmanship they are, created in Christ Jesus thereunto, that, having their fruit unto holiness, they may have the end, eternal life.” [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Dempster, *Dominion and Dynasty, 137* [↑](#footnote-ref-3)