

Worship Material
Recognising when and how God calls
Materials from Roots Bible Study
Sunday 14th January

Begin with an opening prayer

Vibrant God, call us afresh today
to a new vision of your kingdom,
to a new understanding of your purposes,
to a new knowing of how best to serve you,
to a new appreciation of your presence with us,
to a new awareness of all that you would have us do,
as your people in this place and time.

In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen.

Read 1 Samuel 3:1-10, (11-20)

Bible notes

In the dark days at the tail end of the time of the Judges, a time in Israel when life was chaotic and violent, and when the people had forgotten their links with God, a child is born. The birth of a child is often the harbinger of a new move of God. Samuel was born to a faithful mother, Hannah, who pledged to give her son to the service of God. So, here he is in the Temple with the old reprobate priest, Eli. People had forgotten what God's voice sounded like.

But one night, God calls Samuel's name. The boy had no idea it could be God, so he runs to Eli thinking he's called him for something. After this has happened a couple of times, Eli twigs that it is God calling Samuel. So, the old priest tells him what to do and, when God calls again, Samuel is ready.

As ever, when it comes after a long absence, God's presence is both welcome and unsettling. The new move of God would involve judgement on the house of Eli before renewal of the house of Israel. And the young Samuel faced a stern test. Eli instructed him to repeat all that God had said. What a tough ask for a young boy who had been raised by this elderly priest. But Samuel delivers the message God has given him and Eli believes it and submits to his fate. Samuel grows in stature and Israel is reborn under his leadership. It is an object lesson in God choosing who God pleases – even a child – to be both the messenger and instrument of renewal.

Prayer

A prayer of praise

We praise you, God of grace, for bringing into our lives
those who draw us closer to you,
those who speak your words of encouragement,
those who believe in your calling for our lives,
those whose testimonies inspire, excite and move us,
and those who reflect your love, faithfulness and compassion,
day by day.

Amen.

A prayer to conclude

So now we go out with confidence in you,
our loving God who leads us;
you know our weaknesses and our strengths.

**Lord, call us, guide us,
and strengthen us in your service.**

Amen.