

# Hearing God

It wasn't schizophrenia that Samuel was experiencing as he kept hearing a voice calling his name (1 Samuel 3:6). Thinking the call was from Eli, the High Priest of Israel, he leapt from his bed and ran to his master's aid exclaiming, "You called for me." Eli explained that God was calling him and that his response should be, "Speak, Lord, for Your servant hears" (1 Samuel 3:10). Thus began the service of one of Israel's most noble prophets and their last judge.

Of course, God no longer speaks directly to people as He did from the beginning through the miraculous events of the New Testament (cf. 1 Corinthians 13:8b-13); nevertheless, He is still calling and can still be heard, just in a less intrusive manner in His methodology. If, for whatever reason, you are hearing voices in the night, you should understand that whomever it might be, it is not a heavenly message from the Father. God speaks to us through the record of the Holy-Spirit-inspired writers, which puts hearing God into the category of individual accountability.

God has never directly imposed Himself upon humanity and, whereas His desire is that all would be saved (2 Peter 3:9) and having made accommodations for every living soul (John 3:16), He still doesn't force Himself upon anyone. Hence, Samuel could well have rejected God's evening invitation, rolled over and went back to sleep (as many still do regularly on Sunday morning). Samuel, however, being an obedient and submissive servant, responded in obedience to the call. It's no different today, even if the way in which God calls us has changed. We still have the choice of responding or just fading back into the slumber of sin.

This begs the question: Do you hear God? That He still calls is not in question but there still remains the question of a response. Samuel's response was immediate, focused and submissive. The minute he heard the voice of God, even thinking it was his master, Eli, calling, he got up and got to it. He headed directly for Eli, as he was accountable to him. And, he rendered himself fully available to whatever the demand might be.

The child of God today has this same opportunity. We can hear God if we will study His Word (2 Timothy 2:15) and our ready answer should be immediate, focused and submissive.