

# Fren-07 Samuel the Prophet

by Art Katz

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of waiting for God's call, being obedient to His voice, and having the character of a prophet, which includes selflessness, humility, and the fear of God.*

**Duration:** 1:09:16

**Scripture:** 1 Samuel 3:1

**Topics:** "Samuel"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of hearing and obeying the word of the Lord. He uses the example of Samuel, who faithfully listened and spoke the words that God commanded him. The speaker highlights the need for individuals to have the character of Jesus and to be obedient to the word of the Lord. He also discusses the battle that awaits believers, referring to the spiritual enemies that need to be challenged and overcome. The sermon also addresses the religious condition of the age, describing a priest whose eyesight was dim and who was unable to discipline his sons.

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## Transcript

May you be impelled toward sainthood because of tonight. By his own word begot he us. And except that we are begotten by his word, we ain't begotten.

It doesn't happen by virtue of the operation of our mind. Or of flesh or blood or the will of man. But of God.

This is not my text tonight, but I just have something humming in my spirit. The phrase, the holy prophets of old. The word holy is almost always affixed to the word prophet.

The holy apostles and the prophets. We even read this morning from Acts, the third chapter. That Jesus must be contained in the heavens until the restoration of all things.

Which God has spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began. I want that to hum in your spirit also. It's a fixed conjunction.

You're not holy. You're not a prophet. The two are inseparable.

And then it goes on to speak about what Moses said unto the fathers that a prophet shall be. The Lord your God raised up unto you. Him shall you hear in all things.

And it shall come to pass that every soul which will not hear that prophet shall be destroyed from among the people. Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel and those that follow after as many as have spoken have foretold of these days. You are the children of the prophets.

Prophet, prophet, prophet, prophet, prophet. Prophet, prophet, prophet, prophet. It's a wonder that we've gone on so long without this consciousness.

And that somehow if we needed holy prophets of old that we can somehow subsist without them now. So may God restore again holy prophets. And it's in my heart tonight to speak of the origin of one of them, the beginning of one of whom we've been speaking so far in these days.

The prophet Samuel and his beginning. His call. How did it begin? What was the origin? You say, why are you occupied with beginnings? Just a little fascination I have with Alpha and Omega.

That somehow the beginning has everything to say about the end. Surely that was true for the beginning of the Apostle Paul. Any conversion that began as radically as that has got to have a conclusion equally as radical.

And I think that there's a particular instruction for us tonight in the way that Samuel himself began. Because we know that it was a barren time of spiritual dryness. And it is said that the word of the Eternal was rare.

The word of God was rare in those days. Maybe a time like ours. A time where we speak a lot about God.

But where God speaks little. Had they had our technology then they too would have been inundated in all kinds of cassette messages. We are virtually swimming in messages of all kinds.

And yet the word of the Lord is rare in these days. There's a remarkable correspondence in my seeing from the age in which Samuel was birthed and our own. There was a religious establishment then as there is now.

And its eyesight was dim. It was defunct and full of contradiction. So I'm going to ask my brother to read from chapter 3 of 1 Samuel.

Amen. I was very touched and impressed coming through Athens to see that in a particular church where we spoke it was time to pray for the Lord's blessing on the Word. All of the saints arose.

I want to pray the Lord's blessing on this word, and I'm going to ask you to arise also. From the way I'm looking at you tonight, you look very French, very languid and at ease. Your arms kind of folded over your chest, a leg crossed here and there, saying, let's hear what this man is going to say.

Ready to rub your chin in a thoughtful way. And critically analyze his exegesis of the text, as if God has given it for that purpose. We need to rise from our French posture and come to a renewed and holy reverence for the word of God.

For the blessing that I'm going to ask is his own speaking. For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. And let him give us a prophetic commentary from a prophetic text.

Not that we should weigh and analyze, but be smitten. And so I ask that tonight, Lord. Come and deal with our crusty and cultured lives.

This languid air of cynicism and doubt that wants to analyze and weigh. That somehow exalts when it can find defect in the speaker. By which one's own self-esteem can be elevated.

Lord, this is not a mentality appropriate. Either for the hearing of your word or the becoming of prophets ourselves. Deal with us and give us such a respect for the holy word of God.

That we tremble even so much as to hear it read. And wait upon your words that can change us. Do it tonight, we pray.

Only you can. We ask it of you in Jesus' holy name. And God's people said, Amen.

You may be seated. It says in my English text that the boy Samuel was ministering to the Lord before Eli. Some texts use the word child.

It's remarkable that God had some use of him. And it was a diligent and sincere service. Though as we have heard already, he did not yet know the Lord, for the word of the Lord had not yet been revealed to him.

Yet in that condition, he was ministering before the Lord. Before Eli. And I want to underline that in your heart.

Because I think it's a kind of a dot addressed to our independent mentalities. We don't mind a service unto God. But we're very skittish about it being unto men.

But there's a conjunction here that is critical for our understanding. He ministered to the Lord before Eli. Indeed, true service will always require us to minister before men.

And anything that has no need of man and that is abstract and sufficient in itself is not a true service. And it happened at that time that Eli was lying down in his place and his eyesight had grown dim and he could not see. The lamp of God had not yet gone out.

But it was dangerously flickering. And there in those few words, God gives us a sketch of the religious condition of the age. As the priest, so also the people.

His eyesight was dim. His sons were fornicating at the door of the tent of the sanctuary. God describes them as sons of Belial.

And this priest was unable even to chastise or reprimand or discipline his sons. That's the ultimate end of man-pleasing churches. Whose fear of man is greater than fear of God.

Your sons will run riot. And you shall not be able to control them. Your eyesight will be dim.

You'll not be able to glimpse the purposes of God. Nor see nor understand the hour. And the light of God will flicker dangerously out.

But even as this religious system hardens and is fading. A prophetic kingdom is in process of being birthed. Waiting for the word of the Lord that must come.

To a child who waits in the bosom of the old system. But before the ark of God. That's the place to wait.

That's where Samuel waited. He was lying down, it says in the third verse, in the temple of the Lord. Where the ark of God was.

That which stands for the law of God. Righteousness and truth. Is the place to wait.

If the voice of the Lord is going to come to us. To call us to our prophetic task. To bring us from childhood to manhood.

By the word that comes and not by evolution. We had better be found waiting in the right place. However much a child Samuel was.

His heart instinctively knew where to wait. And indeed the Lord called to Samuel there. Here I am, he said.

Aren't those precious words? Here am I. Of course he thought it was Eli calling. And that's even the greater marvel. That this old doddering priest whose eyesight is dim.

Should call him in the wee hours of night. And the youth disrupted from his convenience. Says here am I. I'm impressed by this attitude.

This total and unconditional availability. What a servant's heart. Here am I. God is waiting and looking for such hearts.

That must first express themselves before men. Before they can hear from God. Even men who are wanting and defunct.

But whose office needs to be respected. To him Samuel said, here am I. Instant and unbegrudging he came. The fifth verse says, then he ran to Eli.

None of this French ease and mindset. That takes its sweet old time. Murmuring even as it comes.

What has that old fool for me at this hour? Couldn't he have waited for morning? And other such comments. He ran. Not because he was Jewish.

Not because he was reflecting the culture of his generation. But because he reflected the culture of heaven. God despises slack souls.

Who come at their own disposition. And they're in their own time. When they're ready.

The old man called. And Samuel ran. Can you not help love such a one as this? Called from his mother's womb.

Appointed to be the prophet of God. In an age that was barren. In which there was no open vision.

And the word of the Lord was rare in those days. And Eli said, I didn't call you. Go lie down again.

So he went and laid down. And the Lord called as before. Samuel.

Here I am for you called me. No murmuring. No indignation.

No something rising and welling up in his heart of the kind that we continually experience. The kind of contemptuous disdain that the younger generation has for an older. Why doesn't the old fool make up his mind? Is he calling or he's not calling? What does it take for a man to get his sleep? So he arose and he

came.

Have you called? One such man as this can save an entire Israel. And entire France. A whole Switzerland.

I did not call my son. Lie down again. Now Samuel did not yet know the Lord.

Nor had the word of the Lord yet been revealed to him. In my Bible I've underlined the word revealed. Because that's the condition for which we must wait and cannot compel nor for which any alternative can be found.

We are condemned and compelled to remain as children however sincere and well-meaning. We cannot properly know the Lord. We may know about him.

But we do not know him that we can express him and convey his person to others until the word of the Lord comes until it's revealed. My, how little we understand this. And we have thought by intellectual endeavor by cramming our brains full by seminary training by wrestling with concordances that somehow we could come to the maturity as servants.

The text contradicts this. We are children until he calls. What an offense to our age for the whole spirit of it is impatient.

It wants what it wants and it wants it now. And if you've graduated a seminary you're qualified to preach and to minister. And I don't know how many months of instruction at the YWAM schools and you're an evangelist.

It's the instant age for tea, for soup, for ministers. We have no disposition to wait. And waiting is at the heart of priestliness and needs again to be understood and found by God's people.

So I want to ask you evangelical sophisticates a question tonight. Will you abandon that sophistication and choose to be as a child not knowing, but waiting lying down before the ark of God until he shall call by name. Then can you run.

Not only are we swimming in cassettes but inundated in ministries. Mostly initiated by men. But where are those that are initiated by God that come in his time his moment for which he will allow an entire generation to be barren without an open vision and the word of the Lord is rare until it is revealed to a single one a child who waited in the right place and served God before men.

However lacking that man's condition was this is already a revelation of the character of God that must be found in his servants especially his prophets for the foundation of the church is laid by the apostles and the prophets not only in what they speak not only in what they know but especially in what they are for if the church is to be a glory it must reveal its king as the apostle and the prophet so also the church and how shall the church wait how shall it again reveal the word of God that comes how shall it again esteem the revelation that God alone can give except it sees all these things demonstrated in the character and life of the men who are its very foundation so I want to ask you again are you willing to be as a child and to forsake your sophisticated understanding and your

clever exegesis and wait before the ark of the Lord until his voice shall call and the word of the Lord shall be revealed unto you then shall you know him then may you serve him then can the word of the Lord

again come to the Israel of God for it has come unto its Samuel Eli said to Samuel go lie down again it shall be if he calls you that you shall say speak Lord for thy servant heareth then the Lord came and stood and called as before Samuel Samuel what would we have done in such a moment now persuaded indeed it's very Lord calling would we not rise to our full stature in God and express all of our rhetorical gifts and say yes Lord I have long waited on this moment and I know that when your call comes blah blah blah but do you know what Samuel said exactly the words that Eli said that

he should speak go and lie down in your place how many of you are in that place tonight the place that God intends for you and not that which you have attained for yourself however much it has elicited the esteem and the appreciation of men go and lie down in your place down lowly place in humiliation still a child though everyone else is growing in leaps and bounds everyone is speaking prolifically about the body of Christ and submission and authority and discipleship and community and there you are as a child and you cannot speak for you do not yet know for the word of the Lord has not yet been revealed to you and you are not going to seek for yourself an alternative in hearing the cassettes of others or straining through the pages of the concordance that you with equal facility and

glibness can also speak about the body of Christ impressively and not understand one bit its mystery go and lie down again in your place and when the Lord shall call this is what you shall say speak Lord for your servant heareth and when the Lord called despite the grandeur of the moment this simple child could not be distracted from his obedience and spoke exactly the words which he had been commanded nothing more, nothing less would this not be for us an embarrassment a loss of our much cherished individuality no opportunity to exhibit our profound spirituality speaking the words that another man has commanded us whose own eyesight is dim and cannot even control his own sense and those are the words that Samuel spoke as the holy prophets of old how we need them again such a character

the very character of Jesus for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy this selflessness this humility this obedience that hears even the voice of men and rushes and runs to obey do you have such a spirit I think there is a God waiting to call if he can but find one with this spirit in the place that God intends laying down in that place waiting for the word alone that reveals or you'll be an embarrassment you'll be a reproach your colleagues will pass you by their ministries will move you to envy and you're still waiting never coming to maturity simply before the ark of God for the word which alone must come that cannot be compelled and comes in God's own moment then the Lord came and stood and called as in the past times and when he said speak Lord for thy servant heareth the

Lord did speak and what a word he gave him a word of judgment absolute and terrifying ultimate and irreversible total judgment on a defunct religious system that cannot be salvaged because the Lord had told Eli before to judge his own house because his sons had brought a curse on themselves but he did not rebuke them the Lord had told him but he did not do it he did not hear in order to do and therefore brought judgment upon himself what a contrast in these two a religious system so caught up in itself so unhearing of God so without discipline and the ability to discipline so loath to exercise judgment and to offend men that it must itself finally be judged of God by one who is even presently in its very midst but not yet really recognized because it appears so much as a child without

intellectual or theological distinction and yet that child is about to be called of God and itself bring the word that shall judge that religious system you say you're taking liberties with the text it's a prophetic license so Samuel lay down until morning in the 15th verse and opened the doors of the house to the Lord but he was afraid to tell the vision to Eli how much like Jeremiah I'm a child and cannot speak do you know who

expressed that this evening I did in my own room across the street in anticipation of this meeting I'm 53 years old how old I must have, I said 53 children Lord forgive him 18 years in the Lord's service spiritual adventures and encounters and demands of all kinds and yet for you tonight I trembled and I confessed before the Lord I'm as a child and I don't know

how to speak I came with trembling and I'm not intimidated because you're French speaking but because I wanted something that's holy a continuing unfolding of God's heart toward us that these days might be consummated as an event fitted into the history of the church from the beginning the calling and the releasing of prophetic men and women even in these days even through the word that comes as message and who is sufficient for these things Samuel trembled from the first call of God to speak the word that he received and as his life began in trembling I think it always continued in trembling because as one begins so must one conclude this is the alpha of his life but it describes to us also his omega a prophet who trembles to speak the word of the Lord fearful because it can be a word

that destroys it's a word of judgment it's not opinion not commentary not exegesis it's the Lord's own word and when it is spoken through men it becomes an event and a fact for ill or for good and who is sufficient for these things and yet he was obedient he was afraid to tell the vision to Eli but more fearful before God than before men Eli called and said Samuel my son and he said here am I these precious words of availability what would be the old priest's response how would he receive this terrible word of judgment we know that the prophets are not popular they are slain between the porch and the altar they are stoned to death men hate their message and cannot disassociate the word from the man and if they cannot reject the word they will often reject the man and that unto death the

word Samuel itself means heard of the Lord because he himself hears in order to obey you want to be a mouthpiece for God to speak the words that he will give no matter what they are even if they should offend you and bring upon your head reproach and misunderstanding God is waiting for men who will hear in order that they might faithfully speak it says that Samuel told him everything and hid nothing from him what a way to commence a prophetic ministry his first statement is full of fearful judgment even to the house of God he told him everything and hid nothing from him that's why he was holy because he lived in the fear of God he might have been echoed by Paul later on who said I did not withhold from you the entire counsel of God told him everything Samuel told him everything and hid

nothing from him oh for the absoluteness of obedience that does not withhold that does not determine what it speaks by looking out at the faces oh I could tell you stories of the episodes through which I've passed in the largest charismatic centers in the United States I'll tell you this one because it began in a television studio in CBN in Virginia and there I bumped into a man who is nationally known in my country great charismatic personality with a significant church and even their own seminary I had met him some years ago in the parking lot of his church and I couldn't get away fast enough you say why? because he said Art how would you like to speak in our church? and before I could answer he said I'll cede with that you'll get at least \$500 that night that's all that I had to hear I

was sick in my soul at this male imitation of Catherine Kuhlman and wanted never again to darken the door of that church and years later here I bump into him in the television studio he said and where are you going from here? oh I told him it's the very state where his church is he said do you have a free night?

I said only Thursday because there's been a cancellation oh he said that's the night of our midweek service and the Lord said go I said well I'm available came that night some weeks later and I was bowed

before the Lord in prayer for that night service really groaning what's the Lord's word for this significant charismatic congregation?

Lord I have no inclination of my own to be there but it's pleased you to arrange this so you must have a distinct word I don't want to have to shop around for something appropriate I want your word and all that I got in prayer was this a little leaven leavens the whole lump and with that little word I went that night I don't think I'll forget that night it was a very great crowd with an appropriate anticipation full of the kind of excitement and charismatic fervor that many of us know and yet in my own spirit was a strange soberness when I came to the platform these were my first words I said what would you like tonight? a message or an event they said with one voice event I said ok you asked for it and then I prayed the Lord confirmed that I should speak a little leaven leavens the whole

lump and I began and the Lord began to unfold a very sharp and penetrating word I remember one particular moment in that message in which I heard myself saying that there comes to every man and to every congregation a moment of truth and if we will not yield to that truth in that moment if we swallow that moment down or look away in that very moment a little leaven enters the lump and has finally its ultimate sway in a whole corruption that comes and I went on like that and all of a sudden to my utter astonishment I had never heard this before I was interrupted in the middle of my message by the pastor himself with these words don't flay the sheep he said preach the gospel I stopped astonished and I thought well that's what I am doing and I went right on preaching and the message came to

a close and I gave an invitation for those who were conscious that their lump was corrupted by leaven to come and to be purged at the altar of the Lord and there was a remarkable breaking out of the congregation and there was a remarkable breaking out of the congregation some were deeply affected, some were weeping and for me it was evident that the Lord had spoken and this was not some process of psychological manipulation this was the breaking of God rare enough on any occasion and before it continued this man came up to the platform to the microphone the picture of religious assurance and took authority against the spirits that had come into the congregation that were heavy and oppressive through my speaking of which I myself was not conscious and then in a very condescending and

patronizing way he said something like this I have always appreciated our dear Jewish brother's ministry but it's evident that he has some need let's pray for our brother that his need be met and they all stood up like the sheep that they were and bowed their heads dutifully as this kind of prayer went forth that wasn't the end of it when the meeting was over I was taken to the pastor's office I was grilled and interrogated by four men how dare you by what authority do you speak these things and I said did you find that what I had to say was somehow unscriptural no they said that was not the problem there was nothing to be faulted there well I said that I had to express some heretical doctrine no no nothing there I said what then is your offense well brother you should have looked out on

the congregation and have seen how young some of these believers are and they can't take a word like yours it's too severe you should look and see and determine what you speak on the basis of what you see I said never never will I ever determine what I shall speak by any natural seeing by any calculation of my own mind by something that I determine to be expedient or acceptable I said all I know is this I came tonight with trembling and this afternoon in prayer as I was bowed before God the spirit breathed a word into my soul a little leaven leavens the whole lump and I could not speak any word other than that there's a system that's dying away its sight is increasingly dim not only will it not chastise and not rebuke and not judge it will not receive the preliminary judgments of God that

it might be saved from a greater a judgment that is total and irreversible Samuel told him everything and hid nothing from him and the old man said it is the Lord thus we read Samuel grew and the Lord was with him and let none of his words fail may God do as much for this Samuel let none of my words fail fall to the ground become merely ceremonial religious utterance placating men filling the requirement of the hour for a sermon that's letting the word fail the Lord was with him and let none of his words fail because he had honored God's word and would speak nothing more nor nothing less than the word of the Lord that is revealed what would our church be today the church of Jesus Christ in the earth if they could come Sunday by Sunday and hear that word the word that is given the word

that is revealed not the word that is striven for fabricated, devised to please and to soothe men to guarantee their return rather than risk speaking the whole counsel of God hiding nothing letting the consequences be what they will for the fear of God is greater than the fear of men O for such men in their pulpits who will wait for such a word and speak it when it comes telling everything hiding nothing I assure you with all my heart tonight that the Lord will be with such men and let none of their words fail they shall accomplish the purpose whereunto it is sent even if men scowl even if they writhe in their seats in discomfort even if they yawn in your face or they look at you with anger and bitterness God's word shall accomplish his purpose and his purpose is our purpose we have no

other purpose than his holy prophets of old may God send such men again who will wait who will hear who will speak who will hold back nothing that the word of the Lord can come again to Israel because the Lord revealed himself to Samuel by the word of the Lord and the fourth chapter begins with these words thus the word of Samuel came to all Israel now Israel went out to meet the Philistines in battle what a significant continuation just to stop right there that the word of the Lord came to a man a boy who became a man in the moment of hearing and obedience because he ran the word of the Lord came to Israel through Samuel now Israel went out against the Philistines for the word had come and there's a battle that's waiting us there's an ultimate engagement that's waiting us the ancestral

enemies of the spirit of God principalities and powers that brood over the great cities of the earth that have never been challenged nor dislodged waiting for a people to whom the word of the Lord has come that they might go out and meet the Philistines in battle by the same quality of obedience by the same way in which things are revealed and given in another character and quality of prayer no longer religious, nor ceremonial, nor polite powerful, prophetic, and swelling for even their prayer is the word that is revealed have you not even experienced that? that your own prayers are inadequate and to wait for His prayer that there might be an agreement in earth with that in heaven and for the word of the Lord to come and something to well up in your own heart beyond what you yourself have

contemplated God's own word of prayer weighty and powerful however impolite for the word that has come whether it's message or prayer direction, guidance the church is built upon this foundation of the apostles and the prophets holy men who wait before the ark of the Lord willing to be children who don't know how to speak until the Lord Himself gives His word you know what my prayer for this night has been? that this very message would be a God speaking to someone Samuel, Samuel someone who has been waiting someone who has seen the light dangerously flickering on pained and grieved by the condition of the church though it wallows in its charismatic frivolity it swims in cassettes and messages knows that He knows that the word of the Lord is rare and waits in His place until the word of

the Lord comes calling by name that the Lord Himself might be revealed in His word that a man might be called to bring the word of God even in judgment to the church and to nations who need to hear it before

the fearful coming of the day of the Lord I want us to bow our heads now if God might find such a heart such a waiting spirit such a here am I a total availability that runs even to men that it might run also for God precious Jesus great prophet, priest, and king whose spirit is the spirit of prophecy who has given this word tonight Lord, I ask even now that this word is more than message it itself is a calling it's a word that is being revealed it has come to someone who has been waiting at the ark of God whom you are calling by name even now as a prophet of God to speak the word of

the Lord which comes let it be, Lord even now may you hear from that one here am I however fearful the words that you shall put in my mouth however much they offend men however much it boggles their understanding I shall speak all that you shall give me and hide nothing speak, Lord for thy servant heareth where are you in this audience tonight who is saying to God, here am I can you raise your hand before him I want to seal something in God I want to seal your calling I think I have a bit of authority to do that it will not offend God I want to seal this call that there might be a release in the earth of holy men and women who know the fear of God who wait for that which is revealed and will not withhold it when it comes precious God every hand that has gone up before you see them call

them by name seal something in heaven and earth tonight a divine calling one that men cannot initiate for themselves who are compelled to remain children incapable of speaking or doing until your word comes again and again children who cannot speak except that which is revealed seal them precious God these precious men and women who shall not withhold your word and shall bring it to men however destructive the looting up and the plucking out that there might be a building and a planting in the earth of that which cannot be shaken your unshakable kingdom let tonight constitute an act of God a moment of history in the church of Jesus Christ in the earth in a calling to men and women that is irrevocable holy, solemn that the word of the Lord can come again to Israel through this people that

we might go out against the Philistines and be triumphant seal all these things I pray for I ask it in Jesus' holiness amen

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