

Samuel - an Epoch Making Vessel

by Stephen Kaung

The sermon emphasizes the importance of prevailing prayer, faithfulness in small things, and serving by revelation in becoming an epoch-making vessel, which is a corporate vessel made up of overcomers who respond to God's call.

Duration: 40:03

Scripture: 1 Samuel 3:1

Topics: "Spiritual Leadership", "Faithful Obedience"

Description

This sermon focuses on the story of Samuel from 1 Samuel, highlighting the importance of prevailing prayer, faithfulness in small things, obedience, and the need for revelation in spiritual service. It emphasizes the transition from judgeship to kingship, the significance of being an epoch-making vessel, and the call for overcomers in the church today.

Transcript

Will you please turn to 1 Samuel, 1 Samuel chapter 3, and we'll start with verse 1. And the boy Samuel ministered to Jehovah before Eli, and the word of Jehovah was rare in those days. A vision was not frequent. And it came to pass at that time, when Eli lay in his place, now his eyes began to grow dim.

He could not see. And the Lamb of God had not yet gone out. And Samuel lay in the temple of Jehovah, where the ark of God was.

Then Jehovah called to Samuel, and he said, Here am I. And he ran to Eli and said, Here am I, for thou hast called me. And he said, I did not call. Lie down again.

And he went and lay down. And Jehovah called again, Samuel. And Samuel arose and went to Eli and said, Here am I, for thou callest me.

And he said, I did not call, my son. Lie down again. Now Samuel did not yet know Jehovah, neither had the word of Jehovah yet been revealed to him.

And Jehovah called again the third time, Samuel. And he arose and went to Eli and said, Here am I, for thou callest me. And Eli perceived that Jehovah was calling the boy.

And Eli said to Samuel, Go, lie down. And it shall be, if he call thee, that thou shalt say, speak, Jehovah, for thy servant here is. So Samuel went and lay down in his place.

And Jehovah came and stood and called as at the other times, Samuel, Samuel. And Samuel said, Speak, for thy servant here is. And then verse 19, And Samuel grew, and Jehovah was with him, and let none of his words fall to the ground.

And all Israel, from then even to Beersheba, knew that Samuel was established a prophet to Jehovah. And Jehovah appeared again as shallow. For Jehovah revealed himself to Samuel as shallow by the word of Jehovah.

Let's pray. Dear Lord, as we continue in thy presence, we do expect thee to speak to us. Speak, Lord, thy servant here is.

We commit this time to your head. Trust that thou will speak to our hearts. Reveal thy mind to us, and bring us to where thou want us to be, and to thee be the glory.

We ask in thy precious name. Amen. Last last day, we spoke of Hannah.

It is because whenever God is going to make a move, to make a change, he always gave some who are close to him, his burden. He will burden them with prayer, and they will respond in prevailing prayer. They prevailed in prayer.

And out of the prevailing prayer, God will raise up his vessel or vessels to change the time. So, brothers and sisters, even though we do know that it is God who does the work, man can do nothing. Only God can do his work.

But even so, God is so gracious to man, that he wants man to join with him in his burden. So, it is of tremendous importance, brothers and sisters, we cannot expect God to act alone, because it is his will that we will act with man. And this is mercy.

This is grace. So, first of all, we need to remember that prevailing prayer is the beginning of God's work. Now, this morning, we would like to continue on with Samuel, the epoch-making vessel.

After Samuel was weaned, he was brought to Eli, because his mother has promised God, if God should give me a son, I will lend it to God. Throughout his life, he will be a Nazarite unto God. So, Samuel was brought as a boy to Eli to minister unto the Lord.

Brothers and sisters, we often think that what a young boy can do. But here you find a boy, young as he was. He ministered in the temple before God.

Now, as a boy, of course, he couldn't do great works, many works. So, he was in charge of opening the doors and close the doors of the temple. Now, awkwardly, it may seem to be a very small work.

But actually, it is a very important work, because if the boy did not open the door, then people could not come in and worship. But here you find this boy was diligent. He opened the door in the morning and closed it in the evening.

He was not only diligent, but he was obedient. He ministered unto the Lord before Eli. Even if his ministry was simple, and yet he was faithful.

So, brothers and sisters, oftentimes we think the boys or girls could do nothing. But the Bible tells us that they could minister unto the Lord. In their small way, in their little way.

So, spiritually speaking, we may think that people who are just saved or newly saved, they couldn't do anything. But dear brothers and sisters, it is the desire of the Lord that every member in the body of Christ should serve. Each has a part in the house of God.

Even those people who are newly saved may not know much. And yet, brothers and sisters, there are some work that they can do, such as putting up the chairs or folding up the chairs, doing such manual work. And I believe it is the desire of the Lord that even the youngest in our midst, the newest saved in our midst, they should begin to minister unto the Lord by doing these small and little works.

Because the Bible tells us, if we are faithful in little things, God will entrust us with big things. In other words, if we are not faithful in small things, God will not trust us with big things. And this boy Samuel, how he was faithful in small things.

Not only faithful, he was obedient. Here you find how he was obedient to Eli. Even Eli was old, he couldn't see, weak, and yet you find Samuel was so obedient to him.

For a boy to sleep, usually he will sound asleep, and he will not hear anything or care for anything. But here you find when God began to call Samuel, he didn't have any experience of spiritual things yet. His service is merely traditional but obedient and faithful.

Yet you find when God called, he ran to Eli and said, Here am I. Three times. Now think of that. He must be a very obedient boy.

Even though Eli told him, no, I have a calling. Lie down. He went.

And second time, the third time. Until Eli began to realize that God was calling Samuel. So brothers and sisters, we would like to do great things.

Some people may think, well, I will not open my mouth. But if I should open my mouth, 3,000 will be saved. Brothers and sisters, you will never open your mouth.

We have to begin with small things. And if we are faithful, God will entrust us with big things. And you find how Samuel was faithful and obedient.

Not only that, we may think that Eli ministered in the house of God. He had the best environment. But no.

We find that Eli's two sons, they did not respect the Lord. How they rebelled against the Lord in spiritual things. And even in their physical lives.

So in other words, Samuel was growing up not with a perfect environment. Rather, he was growing up with a very bad environment. Because the two boys of Eli who was ministering, they were actually examples, as it were, to Samuel.

How bad examples they gave. And yet you find Samuel was not affected by that. Now why so? I believe it was because of the prayer of his mother.

And I must be praying for him. And the prayer of the mother was answered by God. And it is through the mother's prayer that he was kept from the bad examples of Eli's son.

So brothers and sisters, how important it is to parents to bring up their children according to the admonition of the Lord. Even if your children will be placed in a bad environment, but if the parents should instill into the children's hearts the fear of the Lord or the love of God, that will keep them from bad examples. So I do feel how important it is for parents.

We have to bring up our children in the admonition and the discipline of the Lord. In modern times, it is as if the parents are supposed to let the children grow as they will. They are not disciplined to bring up their children in the fear of the Lord.

And that's what's happening in this country today. It is because there is no discipline at home. So brothers and sisters, I think as we read the life of Samuel, he gave us a very clear lesson that people as parents, you have a responsibility to raise up your children in the fear, in the love of God.

You do not know what bad environment they will encounter as they grow up. But however, it is not the environment that makes a man. It is the man who should make that environment.

So hopefully, brothers and sisters, here we as parents should really pray before the Lord and ask the Lord to give us burden to pray for our children, that our children will grow up fearing God, loving God, and in spite later on in school or in society, they do not have a perfect example, perfect environment, they will be able to serve the Lord according to God's will. But as we know, spiritual service needs revelation. You can serve in a traditional way, but if you want to really serve God in a spiritual way, revelation is a must.

For instance, Saul of Tarsus, he grew up in Judaism. He received the best tradition of Judaism. And yet because he was serving in tradition, he persecuted the church.

Not until he received revelation from above, then you find his ministry completely changed. Instead of working against God, now he is working for God. And the same way is true, brothers and sisters.

We all begin our ministry in a traditional way, but then God, he wants to bring us into a spiritual way. And the spiritual way is you need revelation from above. So here you find Samuel, because he was faithful in small things.

Or to put it another way, he was faithful in the traditional way. Therefore, the Lord appeared to him, and the Lord called him. And after Samuel received that revelation from God, you find the Bible said, And Samuel grew, and Jehovah was with him, and let none of his words fall to the ground, until all Israel knew that God has raised up a prophet among them.

And then God began to reveal himself and to reveal his word. So how important it is for a person who really has revelation and serves under revelation, and by that you find God has raised up an epic-making vessel. Now as we go into Samuel's ministry, Samuel had a long ministry, and he served very faithfully through prayer, how God worked wonders, delivered the children of Israel.

But Samuel's greatest ministry is to make the change of time. He was the last judge, and as the last judge, he was the epic-making vessel. Why? Because he was to end judgeship and bring the nation into kingship.

You know, it is very strange. Samuel has such a spiritual ministry, and he was faithful. But here you find he worked himself faithfully until he lost his ministry.

In other words, he was the last judge. He was used by God to bring in kings. But as soon as the kingship began, Samuel has lost his ministry.

And that is what real ministry is. Ministry is not to promote himself or herself. If it's a real ministry, you work yourself until you lose it.

Brother Nee used to use an example. He said ministry is like building the scaffold. When you are building a house, you need a scaffold.

Otherwise, you're not only able to build a tall building. But after the building is finished, the scaffold will be all taken down. There is no need of it anymore.

Now, have you seen a house that has been built and the scaffold continues on? That would be ridiculous because the scaffold is for the building. And when the building is finished, the scaffold is taken down. It's no use.

I always say no use is to be used in other buildings. So ministry is to work itself until it is no longer needed, as it were, and it has to be used in other places. That's ministry.

Ministry is not bringing people to oneself. It is to bring God's will to be done. And if it is done, then the ministry is finished.

Samuel was faithful to God. But when he was old, because his sons were not faithful, so that is the excuse for the children to ask for a king like the nations. Now, brothers and sisters, it is God's will to change from judgeship to kingship.

But God's will must come in God's time. But here you find because of the unfaithfulness of Eli's sons, the people asked for king, but a king according to the nations, not according to God. And Samuel at first was against it.

But God said, they are not against you. They are against me. They do not want me to be their king.

They want to have men to be their king. So, tell them what the king will be, and then give them the king. So, brothers and sisters, here you find Samuel, how he was obedient to God.

Listen, he would not allow his own feeling to stand in the way, even if he was rejected as it were. And yet, he was faithful to God, so he faithfully telling the people what the king will be. But the people said, we want the king.

So finally, God bid, gave them the king. And the king was. Now so, when we read in 1 Samuel, we find he was not a bad person.

Why? Because he was obedient to his father. When his father lost the asses and asked him to go and search for it, he went. And he was not only obedient, but he was faithful, because he searched everywhere.

He wanted to finish the job that his father had sent him. And even though God revealed to him that he will be the king, he was humble, because when he was chosen, they couldn't find him. He hid himself.

So Saul was not a bad person. You find he had learned many good things in his life. And yet, he was a natural man.

And brothers and sisters, the natural man does not understand the things of God. And they cannot obey God. Why? Because they don't understand.

They think he is not wise. And they think they are wiser than God. The natural man does not know the law of God.

And he's not able to follow God's law. So in spite of all his good things in his life, and yet we find when it comes to God's will, he just couldn't understand, and he couldn't wait, and he couldn't obey. He did things according to what he thinks was right.

So eventually you find in Samuel chapter 15, God has to reveal to him in chapter 15 verse 22. And Samuel said, Has Jehovah delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in hearkening to the voice of Jehovah? Behold, obedience is better than sacrifice, attention than the fat of rams, for rebellion is as the sun of divination, and self-will is an iniquity and idolatry. So brothers and sisters, you find that eventually, because Saul the king, he wanted to do things in his way.

He couldn't obey God, and he was rejected. But thank God, God used Samuel to raise up David to be the right king. And we find in Acts, David, the Bible said, He was a man after God's own heart, who will do all his will.

Now even though as we look in the life of David, he wasn't perfect. As a matter of fact, we find he committed serious sins. And yet how he repented before God, and allowed God to work out his will in his life.

So eventually you find Samuel was used by God to raise up David as king. So here you find in the life of Samuel, how he was the epoch-making vessel. Because he changed the age of judgeship into the age of kingship.

So brothers and sisters, as at our past conference, we were talking about the epoch-making vessel. I think it is important for us to know how the epoch-making vessel comes about. As a matter of fact, in the past, it seems as if God used individuals as epoch-making vessels.

But we believe that now it is not individual, it is corporate. Because as we come to the final, the perfect will of God, you will find God is looking for a corporate vessel, not just an individual vessel. So probably there is no wonder why today we do not find such individual giants as we had in past histories.

Because God is changing his ways. He is using corporate, not individual, to be his epoch-making vessel. And that's the reason why you find in the book of Revelation, in chapters 2 and 3, the calling of God is for overcomers.

God is calling overcomers to every church. In every place, God is calling for overcomers. People who will respond to him.

People who will take up his burden and pray. People who will offer themselves to God. People who receive revelation from God, who serve not by tradition, but by revelation.

And people who are not trying to bring attention to themselves. But instead, they will work themselves until they lose, as it were, their work. And that is the epoch-making vessel that God is looking for.

So, brothers and sisters, my burden is very simple. Even though we are nobody, but God is able to raise up nobody to be epoch-making vessel. If we think we are somebody, God will not use us.

But if you realize that we are nothing, nobody, you are the person that God is looking for. And he is able to make you an epoch-making vessel. So thank God, brothers and sisters, we are encouraged to give ourselves to the Lord and see what God can do with simple people such as we are.

So may the Lord have mercy on us. Dear Lord, as we wait before Thee, we praise and thank Thee that Thou art looking for epoch-making vessel. We thank Thee that Thou art not looking for such vessel in great man, but Thou are looking for in simple persons.

So we just want to come to Thee and say, Lord, we want to offer ourselves, each and every one of us, to Thee, Lord. We cannot, but Thou can. So deliver us from ourselves and enable us to just look off unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.

Lord, use us, if He pleases Thee, to change the time and bring back the King. We ask Thee in Thy precious name.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/TIbAsejBwJo.mp4>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/stephen-kaung/samuel-an-epoch-making-vessel/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net