Ring of Truth daily devotion

Ring of Truth provides 366 daily 'proofs' that the Bible is consistent throughout from Genesis to Revelation and relevant for our lives today!

2 March

1 Samuel 3:9

So Eli told Samuel, "Go and lie down, and if He calls you, say 'Speak Lord, for your servant is listening.'" So Samuel went and lay down in his place.

The chapter starts, ***"In those days the word of the Lord was rare; there were not many visions."***

Eli was the High Priest but regrettably a poor one. He had allowed his sons to dishonour the priesthood. He should have stopped them but being 'weak', he did nothing but tell them off and thus ended up condoning their actions. He might not have been able to change their character and actions but he could have stopped them acting as priests at the same time.

No wonder Paul is so forceful in the New Testament about the appointment of elders and deacons. As he says, ***"If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?"*** (1 Timothy 3:5)

Is it any wonder, therefore, that we read ***"in those days the word of the Lord was rare"***? God is not mocked nor is He stupid. He is a God of order. He will not waste His words on those who will not listen and obey. However, in Samuel, God had found someone who would listen. Notice Samuel heard at once. He may not have understood the voice to be that of God but he heard it. To be fair to Eli, he did realise what was going on in the end and stood by Samuel even when Samuel told him the bad news.

Where are you on the scale of hearing, listening to, and being obedient to God's voice? One of my biggest fears, if not the biggest, is that because I stop being obedient, I will stop hearing and stop listening; and worst of all, God will stop talking to me. God stopped talking to Eli and so his family and the whole nation of Israel suffered. Let us stir ourselves up to be more readily obedient to the will of God and what He says to us.

Maybe you are thinking - I've never heard God - what do you mean - how can I know? I believe hearing from God is a learned experience. Just like using all the gifts of the Spirit. They have to be learned, tried and developed and we all start as babies - wearing nappies and getting it wrong - but maturity does come with use and sanctification.

So the first thing is to ask God to speak to you. Then take time to listen. We live in an instant society - but it doesn't develop relationships. God wants to develop a relationship with you so give Him time. He speaks to us through His Word, the Bible. We can be reading it, when suddenly it seems to jump out of the page - that is God speaking to us. He also brings thoughts or pictures to our minds. (So does the enemy, so we need to check them out.)

Then, once you have heard, share it with a trusted Christian friend, and over time your confidence and listening ability will grow. Don't give up - God loves to speak with us and develop an intimate relationship with us.

He also likes to *talk to us* instead of having to *listen to us* all the time. He longs for it to be a two-way communication.

Why not stop for a few quiet moments right now and hear what He says to *you*?