



LOOKING FOR THE MESSIAH

Handout for week of 1/8/18 John 1: 35-42 (43-51) & 1 Sam 3: 3b-10, 19  
Connie May © 12/8/17

[www.theark1.com](http://www.theark1.com)

Drawings with permission by Fr. Robert Beck

Link to [Beck](#) (paywall) other [Beck](#)

Stone, Naomi. [How does the Beloved call You](#)

Rolheiser, Fr. Ron. [Less People are going to Church....](#)

[Monastery Sunday Homilies](#)

1 Sam. 3: 3b and the lamp of God was not yet gone out, and Samuel was laid down to sleep in the temple of the LORD, where the ark of God was, 4 that the LORD called Samuel; and he said: 'Here am I.' 5 And he ran unto Eli, and said: 'Here am I; for thou didst call me.' And he said: 'I called not; lie down again.' And he went and lay down. 6 And the LORD called yet again Samuel. And Samuel arose and went to Eli, and said: 'Here am I; for thou didst call me.' And he answered: 'I called not, my son; lie down again.' 7 Now Samuel did not yet know the LORD, neither was the word of the LORD yet revealed unto him. 8 And the LORD called Samuel again the third time. And he arose and went to Eli, and said: 'Here am I; for thou didst call me.' And Eli perceived that the LORD was calling the child. 9 Therefore Eli said unto Samuel: 'Go, lie down; and it shall be, if thou be called, that thou shalt say: Speak, LORD; for Thy servant heareth.' So Samuel went and lay down in his place. 10 And the LORD came, and stood, and called as at other times: 'Samuel, Samuel.' Then Samuel said: 'Speak; for Thy servant heareth.'

19 And Samuel grew, and the LORD was with him, and did let none of his words fall to the ground

#### COMMENTARY:

Does anybody else wonder what God had to say to Samuel, once he got his attention? You know the story about the boy Samuel hearing a voice calling in the night during the time he was staying with the priest Eli. Thinking it was Eli calling, the boy went to him to ask what he wanted. Three times.

Finally Eli suggested that the next time he heard the call Samuel should simply answer, "Speak, Lord, your servant is listening." So did Samuel this.

End of story.

What the Lord so wanted to say to Samuel never gets mentioned. What was so urgent that it required such persistence? We don't know. Clearly the storyteller's interest was in the manner of the call, and not the content. So that must be where we're expected to find the lesson.

Maybe we should look at the dynamics of Samuel's call, and its repeated misdirection before he finally gets it right, as the real point of interest. Maybe the reading is about the process of discernment rather than the results.

These days we are early in the Ordinary Church Year, and we can expect some attention given to calls, vocations, and their discernment. And it is true: sometimes it takes a while before we figure out what God wants of us. Sometimes it takes repeated tries before we finally get it right. 1/18/2009. Witness column. Fr. Robert Beck