

IN EXCELSIS DEO

ADVENT 2024

Wednesday, December 18

Read: 1 Samuel 3:1-10

The story of Samuel is one of my favorites. So much so, that when we collaborated with a community group in Slovakia to design an early childhood education center for Roma children, I suggested naming it The Samuel Center.

One detail I always strive to understand more deeply from this passage is that, while Eli's sight is failing, he is the one who sees most clearly what young Samuel is experiencing. The one who cannot see and doesn't hear God's voice, is nevertheless the one who realizes that it is God calling Samuel. Samuel -- blessed with youth and potential -- is ironically the one at risk of missing the divine moment.

At this stage of my life, I resonate more with Eli than with Samuel. I have already seen the glory of God in profound ways. The founding and continuation of The Samuel Center, which I mentioned earlier, is one such example. Another is being with thousands of believers at an outdoor pavilion in Nigeria as we celebrated Jesus, witnessing God's glory during worship among diverse cultures. Or hearing Broadmoor's choir lift the spirits of the entire congregation with an anthem and handbells.

Samuel needed Eli's guidance to fully understand God's call. Eli and Samuel together comprehended what God was doing, each limited in different ways but enriched by one another. The young and the old, the experienced and the novice, encountered God's glory together in community.

Today, consider those in your community: the children who speak candidly during Sunday's children's sermon and the saints whose quiet wisdom comes from decades of walking with Jesus. By living in community together in God's presence, how can you experience God's glory?

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