

FIFTH SUNDAY BIBLE READING

May 29 2022

On the week leading up to Sunday May 29, you are invited to read the Bible text in advance and think about it a bit. Why? So that, if you would like to, you can join in the Sunday morning conversation with Judith about what this reading might have to say to *us*, 21st-century Christians looking at an ancient story told in a time and place very different from ours.

Instead of “preaching a sermon”, Judith will facilitate some informal conversation on that Sunday, with no pressure on anyone to talk unless they feel like talking. Here’s the reading:

1 Samuel 3:1-10

Now the boy Samuel was ministering to the Lord under Eli. The word of the Lord was rare in those days; visions were not widespread.

At that time Eli, whose eyesight had begun to grow dim so that he could not see, was lying down in his room; the lamp of God had not yet gone out, and Samuel was lying down in the temple of the Lord, where the ark of God was. Then the Lord called, ‘Samuel! Samuel!’ and he said, ‘Here I am!’ and ran to Eli, and said, ‘Here I am, for you called me.’ But he said, ‘I did not call; lie down again.’ So he went and lay down. The Lord called again, ‘Samuel!’ Samuel got up and went to Eli, and said, ‘Here I am, for you called me.’ But he said, ‘I did not call, my son; lie down again.’ Now Samuel did not yet know the Lord, and the word of the Lord had not yet been revealed to him. The Lord called Samuel again, a third time. And he got up and went to Eli, and said, ‘Here I am, for you called me.’ Then Eli perceived that the Lord was calling the boy. Therefore Eli said to Samuel, ‘Go, lie down; and if he calls you, you shall say, “Speak, Lord, for your servant is listening.” ’ So Samuel went and lay down in his place.

Now the Lord came and stood there, calling as before, ‘Samuel! Samuel!’ And Samuel said, ‘Speak, for your servant is listening.’

Good news/bad news principle

I was taught this principle at seminary. Basically, it says that every Bible reading shows some sort of trouble in the world (the bad news) and offers God’s response to that trouble (the good news). Then a good preacher (so I was taught) will identify a similar trouble in *our* world and propose God’s response to *us*. Maybe this principle could help us discuss the Bible reading above.... ~Judith