(1 Samuel 3:1, NKJV)

Throughout Israel’s history, there were seasons when God chose to be silent. This silence was not due to His absence or lack of concern, but rather, it was part of His divine strategy to test, refine, or awaken His people. The Lord’s silence is often a means to reveal the true condition of hearts.

> Now the boy Samuel ministered to the Lord before Eli. And the word of the Lord was rare in those days; there was no widespread revelation.
>
> (1 Samuel 3:1, NKJV)

In this verse, we are introduced to a critical moment in Israel’s spiritual life. The absence of prophetic revelation was not due to a lack of need, but because the people had turned away from God. When sin becomes normalized, God sometimes withdraws His active voice to allow the consequences of rebellion to manifest.

 Divine Silence is Not Divine Abandonment

Even in His silence, God remains sovereign and attentive. He sees everything.

> The eyes of the Lord are in every place, keeping watch on the evil and the good.
>
> (Proverbs 15:3, NKJV)

This principle is clearly shown in the house of Eli. Though Eli was a priest, he failed to discipline his sons—Hophni and Phinehas—who were abusing their priestly office. They treated God’s sacrifices with contempt and engaged in sexual immorality with women who served at the entrance of the tabernacle (1 Samuel 2:12–17, 22)

 Grace Should Not Be Misinterpreted as Approval

God’s patience and silence should never be mistaken for His approval or indifference.

> Do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?
>
> (Romans 2:4, NKJV)

Hophni and Phinehas had become so hardened by sin that they no longer feared God. They presumed upon His silence and continued to defile the tabernacle. But the day came when God declared His judgment through young Samuel:

> In that day I will perform against Eli all that I have spoken concerning his house, from beginning to end. For I have told him that I will judge his house forever for the iniquity which he knows, because his sons made themselves vile, and he did not restrain them.
>
> (1 Samuel 3:12–13, NKJV)

 Judgment Begins at the House of God

This warning echoes the New Testament truth:

> For the time has come for judgment to begin at the house of God; and if it begins with us first, what will be the end of those who do not obey the gospel of God?
>
> (1 Peter 4:17, NKJV)

In one day, both sons of Eli were killed, and the ark of God was captured (1 Samuel 4:10–11). The Lord demonstrated that though He may seem silent, He is never inactive. His justice, though delayed, is sure.

 Don’t Mistake Delay for Denial

Even today, many walk confidently in sin, thinking that because no judgment has come, they are safe. People come to church immodestly dressed, participate in Holy Communion while living in sexual sin, and even some pastors commit fornication with members—just like Hophni and Phinehas—thinking God is pleased because they still hold positions of authority.

> Nevertheless, the solid foundation of God stands, having this seal: ‘The Lord knows those who are His,’ and, ‘Let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity.
>
> (2 Timothy 2:19, NKJV)

 The Altar Is Holy – Don’t Defile It

God’s altar is not a stage for comedy, politics, or entertainment. It is sacred. To use it for personal fame or manipulation is spiritual abuse and invites divine judgment.

> Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. For our God is a consuming fire.
>
> (Hebrews 12:28–29, NKJV)

Even Under Grace, God Judges

Some falsely claim, “We are under grace—God doesn’t judge anymore.” But consider Ananias and Sapphira, who were part of the early church. They lied about their giving, and God struck them dead (Acts 5:1–11). This was not the Old Covenant. It was the New Covenant, post-Pentecost, in the era of grace.

Their sin was not stealing—it was dishonesty in a vow to God. What then will happen to those who live in open rebellion yet partake of the Lord’s Supper?

> Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord... For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep [have died].
>
> (1 Corinthians 11:27–30, NKJV)

Let Us Fear and Repent Before It’s Too Late

We are living in perilous times. The Lord’s silence today does not mean He has accepted sin. He is testing the hearts of His people, distinguishing the faithful from the hypocrites. But a day is coming when His voice will thunder again, and on that day, “the ears of all who hear it will tingle.” (1 Samuel 3:11)

Let us not wait for His judgment to wake us. Let us respond now, with repentance, reverence, and renewed holiness.

> Blow the trumpet in Zion, consecrate a fast, call a sacred assembly… Let the priests, who minister to the Lord, weep between the porch and the altar; let them say, ‘Spare Your people, O Lord.
>
> (Joel 2:15, 17, NKJV)

Maranatha! The Lord is coming. Let every heart be prepared.

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