

Sunday 14th January 2018

Epiphany 2

White



Collect

Almighty God, in Christ you make all things new: transform the poverty of our nature by the riches of your grace, and in the renewal of our lives make known your heavenly glory; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen**

1 Samuel 3:1-10[11-20]

The LORD Calls Samuel

3¹ Now the boy Samuel was ministering to the LORD in the presence of Eli. And the word of the LORD was rare in those days; there was no frequent vision. ² At that time Eli, whose eyesight had begun to grow dim so that he could not see, was lying down in his own place. ³ 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. ⁴ Then the LORD called Samuel, and he said, “Here I am!” ⁵ 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. ⁶ And the LORD called again, “Samuel!” and Samuel arose 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.” ⁷ Now Samuel did not yet know the LORD, and the word of the LORD had not yet been revealed to him. ⁸ And the LORD called Samuel again the third time. And he arose and went to Eli and said, “Here I am, for you called me.” Then Eli perceived that the LORD was calling the boy. ⁹ Therefore Eli said to Samuel, “Go, lie down, and if he calls you, you shall say, ‘Speak, LORD, for your servant hears.’” So Samuel went and lay down in his place. ¹⁰ And the LORD came and stood, calling as at other times, “Samuel! Samuel!” And Samuel said, “Speak, for your servant hears.”

[¹¹ Then the LORD said to Samuel, “Behold, I am about to do a thing in Israel at which the two ears of everyone who hears it will tingle. ¹² On that day I will fulfill against Eli all that I have spoken concerning his house, from beginning to end. ¹³ And I declare to him that I am about to punish his house forever, for the iniquity that he knew, because his sons were blaspheming God,^[a] and he did not restrain them. ¹⁴ Therefore I swear to the house of Eli that the iniquity of Eli's house shall not be atoned for by sacrifice or offering forever.” ¹⁵ Samuel lay until morning; then he opened the doors of the house of the LORD. And Samuel was afraid to tell the vision to Eli. ¹⁶ But Eli called Samuel and said, “Samuel, my son.” And he said, “Here I am.” ¹⁷ And Eli said, “What was it that he told you? Do not hide it from me. May God do so to you and more also if you hide anything from me of all that he told you.” ¹⁸ So Samuel told him everything and hid nothing from him. And he said, “It is the LORD. Let him do what seems good to him.” ¹⁹ And Samuel grew, and the LORD was with him and let none of his words fall to the ground. ²⁰ And all Israel from Dan to Beersheba knew that Samuel was established as a prophet of the LORD.]

Footnote. a. or *blaspheming for themselves*.

COMMENT: This story of Samuel's call to be God's prophet in Israel has the flavor of an ancient folktale. Before being written down, it was told and retold by one generation to another because Samuel was such a towering figure in Israel's religious and political history. The story reveals yet another instance when God was believed to have intervened to change in the direction of the nation's history. This was seen as God keeping the covenant made long before with Abraham and with Moses.

John 1:43-51

Jesus Calls Philip and Nathanael

1 ⁴³ The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, “Follow me.” ⁴⁴ Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. ⁴⁵ Philip found Nathanael and said to him, “We have found him of whom Moses in the Law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.” ⁴⁶ Nathanael said to him, “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?” Philip said to him, “Come and see.” ⁴⁷ Jesus saw Nathanael coming towards him and said of him, “Behold, an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no deceit!” ⁴⁸ Nathanael said to him, “How do you know me?” Jesus answered him, “Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you.” ⁴⁹ Nathanael answered him, “Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!” ⁵⁰ Jesus answered him, “Because I said to you, ‘I saw you under the fig tree’, do you believe? You will see greater things than these.” ⁵¹ And he

said to him, “Truly, truly, I say to you,^[a] you will see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man.”

Footnotes: a. John 1:51 The Greek for *you* is plural; twice in this verse.

COMMENT: John’s Gospel tells of many incidents in Jesus’ ministry not found in the other gospels. The way Jesus gathered his disciples in one such instance. Those who followed Jesus did so solely because they were convinced that he was God’s Messiah. Certain details found in John’s Gospel often give us a different synoptic view than do the so-called Synoptic Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke. The figure of Nathanael stands out in this passage as a disciple who does not appear elsewhere in the gospels, yet one who obviously had attracted Jesus’ special attention. Inconclusive attempts have been made to identify him with Bartholomew, Matthew, James the son of Alpheus, John the son of Zebedee, and Simon the Cananaean. For good reason he remains unique. His appearance here symbolises the pious Israelite, who though good as he is, is still incomplete. His confession that Jesus is the Son of God and King of Israel is nothing short of a full messianic declaration of faith. Despite his deeply sincere religious life and faith as a Jew, he was willing to set aside his intellectual doubts and difficulties to put his trust in Jesus.

Psalm 139:1-5,12-18 *Domine, probasti* Grail Psalter

℟ Lead me, O Lord, in the path of life eternal.

¹ O Lord, you search me and you know me,

² you know my resting and my rising,
you discern my purpose from afar.

³ You mark when I walk or lie down,
all my ways lie open to you. **℟**

⁴ Before ever a word is on my tongue
you know it, O Lord, through and through.

⁵ Behind and before you besiege me,
your hand ever laid upon me. **℟**

¹² even darkness is not dark for you
and the night is as clear as the day. **℟**

¹³ For it was you who created my being,
knit me together in my mother's womb.

¹⁴ I thank you for the wonder of my being,
for the wonders of all your creation. **℟**

Already you knew my soul

¹⁵ my body held no secret from you
when I was being fashioned in secret
and moulded in the depths of the earth.

℟ Lead me, O Lord, in the path of life eternal.

¹⁶ Your eyes saw all my actions,
they were all of them written in your book;
every one of my days was decreed
before one of them came into being. **℟**

¹⁷ To me, how mysterious your thoughts,
the sum of them not to be numbered!

¹⁸ If I count them, they are more than the sand;
to finish, I must be eternal, like you. **℟**

**Glory be to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit,
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen.**

COMMENT: God's intimate knowledge of all we are, all we think and do may be very frightening, but it also gives a security which faith can celebrate. Yet this constant awareness of God's presence is both comforting and empowering.

Short Preface

And now we give you thanks because, in the incarnation of the Word, a new light has dawned upon the world, that all the nations may be brought out of darkness to see the radiance of your glory.

Post Communion

God of glory, you nourish us with your Word who is the bread of life: fill us with your Holy Spirit that through us the light of your glory may shine in all the world. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

Blessing

Christ the Son of God perfect in you the image of his glory and gladden your hearts with the good news of his kingdom; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among *you*, and remain with *you* always. **Amen.**