

Thought for the Day 14th May 2020 – Alan Griggs

Readings: 1 Samuel 2:27-35; Acts 2:37-47

Eli was a wise and very old priest living in the Temple. It was expected that after his death his two sons would replace him, but they were pleasure seekers and did not follow God's ways. Samuel, still a boy, also slept in the Temple. One night he woke up, thinking that Eli had called him; so he ran to Eli; But Eli had not called him and he sent Samuel away. This happened twice more; On the third time Eli realised that it was God who was speaking to him and told him to wait for God's message. When the message came it was a severe warning that God was abandoning Eli's family, and that they would be disgraced. From then on it was going to be Samuel who would be God's messenger.

In the book of Acts we read about the way Peter warned his hearers not to be like those who ignored God's word, and urged them to become followers of the way of Jesus, Many joined the church that day and grew in their life of discipleship and prayer, and being attentive to the needy.

God still speaks to us in many different ways. But there is a worry that we may be so caught-up in what we call 'normal living' that we don't hear the voice of God trying to speak with us. The message may be very ordinary- make contact with someone who is lonely or housebound- and there have been many in our locality who have responded gladly to a message like that during the present crisis.

God may want us to make more use of the opportunity to grow in our own discipleship, to take time to be quiet and hear what God is wanting to say, or to think about the way we spend our time. Do we spend too little or too much time on our smart phones, or watching TV? Some of us (and I include myself) have had to spend a lot of time coming to terms with Face-time, Zoom meetings and all the other new technology! Or it may be that we need to reflect on how we live. Were we doing too much before March and should we be kinder to ourselves and have more space in our lives?

I much enjoyed the Stations of the Cross that were put up round the outside of St. Chad's on Good Friday, and especially some of the sonnets of Malcolm Guite. The one about Mary Magdalene ends like this:

She turns but cannot focus through her tears,
Or recognize the Gardener standing there.
She hardly hears his gentle question 'Why
Why are you weeping? or sees the play of light,
That brightens as she chokes out her reply,
'They took my love away, my day is night.'
And then she hears her name, she hears Love say,
The Word that turns her night, and ours, to day.

Sometimes God makes us pause, before we can hear Him speak