

**Spiritual Sight & Hearing Test!**

1 Samuel 3<sup>11-20</sup>; Psalm 139<sup>1-9</sup>; Revelation 5<sup>1-10</sup>; John 1<sup>43-end</sup>

*You will see greater things than these.  
(John 1<sup>50</sup>)*

One of the most successful advertising strap-lines in recent years must be, **YOU SHOULD HAVE GONE TO SPEC SAVERS!** They do hearing tests, too. Pardon? THEY DO HEARING TESTS TOO!

But how do you test your spiritual sight or hearing?

- ✦ Our Old Testament reading is about how, at a time when God seemed silent, Samuel hears God and doesn't recognise him. It took the old and discredited priest to tell Samuel to ask God what he wanted. It is a great thing to read that God is about to do something that **will make the ears of anyone who hears of it tingle!** It was bad news for Eli and his faithless sons - it cannot be easy to hear that there **shall not be expiation or sacrifice for ever.** Yet this established Samuel as a **trustworthy prophet of the Lord.**
- ✦ The Psalmist makes it clear that God knows us - that is never in question. It simply begs the question about how well we know God?
- ✦ Revelation 5 is fascinating. In the previous chapter, God the Father has been at the centre of the worship of heaven with the hymn, **holy, holy, holy the Lord God the Almighty, who was and is and who is to come,** but here the focus shifts to the Son - **a lamb standing as if it had been slaughtered** and the hymn is **worthy is the Lamb that was slaughtered to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honour and glory and blessing.** At first the Lamb of God was not recognised, but recognition gave way to worship because of what he had done.
- ✦ The Gospel has that wonderful exchange between Nathanael and Jesus. The encounter follows the initiative taken by Jesus in calling Philip, the fisherman, to be a disciple. It is clear that it didn't begin well: Nathanael's comment, **Can anything good come out of Nazareth?** But Jesus' response was generous - Nathanael was, in Jesus' judgement **a true Israelite in whom**

**there is no deceit.** Here is someone, blunt perhaps, but with no duplicity: a great thing to have on your reference from Jesus! Nathanael continues in his blunt approach and asks **where did you get to know me?** Jesus response, **under the fig tree,** may be supernatural insight or picking up a Jewish metaphor for meditation and prayer. So, at the beginning of the Gospel, Nathanael recognises Jesus as the Messiah: **Rabbi, you are the Son of God!**

God knows us - but we usually need some help in seeing and hearing God.

This ability to be able to recognise what God says and to understand what he does is one of the reasons that I want as many of us as possible to pursue this Retreat In Daily Life (and why Mary is here today to answer any questions).

There can't be a person here who wouldn't value better (spiritual) sight and better (spiritual) hearing. All that it needs to begin the journey - and help is at hand.