

Scripture Reference: 1 Kings 19:1-14

Date: August 24, 2014

Title: "That Still Small Voice"

Focus: God speaks with the inner voice of mankind - Hearing God 5 out of 10

In the Bible, God reveals Himself speaking with humanity in a variety of forms. He uses dreams, visions, voices, extraordinary events, i.e. burning bush, pillar of smoke and fire, and ultimately, personally in Jesus. However, when people think about God talking, it is usually limited to the extraordinary, the dynamic, the *booming voice out of heaven*. However, with very few exceptions, God does not speak in the manner we are anticipating. While we look for the thunder from heaven, He speaks in a still small voice

We should not confuse the manner of God's speaking with the significance of what He says. Because God at times will move extraordinarily, but, this does not mean that message is more important than the times when He does not. If we believe the *spectacular* is normative, it is no longer spectacular and we miss what is really normal.

When comparing the ways God has spoken with humanity, according to Hebrews 1:1, all prior means do not compare to the written word (the Bible) and the Living Word (Jesus). When examining further those times when God has spoken, it is seen that the "still small voice" has a distinct place.

The phrase, a “still small voice,” comes from Elijah’s encounter with YHWH on the mountain. What is witnessed is that majesty and greatness accompanied God’s presence. But, when YHWH speaks, it is in a “still small voice.”

What is a “still, small voice”?

It is a voice that is calm, quiet, and unassuming. Actually, it is quite the opposite of what people expect to hear from God.

Samuel confused God’s *still small voice* with that of the old man Eli (1 Sam. 3).

Solomon wrote that the *still small voice* of God was synonymous with the “spirit of man.”

Prov. 20:27 (NAS); “*The spirit of man is the lamp of the Lord, searching all the innermost parts of his being.*”

Prov. 20:27 (NET); “*The human spirit is like the lamp of the Lord, searching all his innermost parts.*”

Prov. 20:27 (GNB); “*The Lord gave us mind and conscience; we cannot hide from ourselves.*”

Prov. 20:27 (NIV); “*The lamp of the Lord searches the spirit of a man; it searches out his inmost being.*”

Solomon came to understand that the little voice inside him, what people *mislabeled* as conscience, is in reality the light of God shining, searching and leading humanity. Leading him or her to what? To Him.

To some degree, the speaking of the *still small voice* of God applies to everyone. This is why having a *hard heart* (Ex. 9:12) or a *seared conscience* (1 Tim. 4:1-2) is so serious. It leaves a person deaf to the voice of God.

You may not have realized it until now, you have already heard the voice of God

A Case in Point

Luke 12:11-12; "*When they bring you before the synagogues and the rulers and the authorities, do not worry about how or what you are to speak in your defense, or what you are to say; for the Holy Spirit will teach you in that very hour what you ought to say.*"

Acts 6:8-10; "*Stephen, full of grace and power, was performing great wonders and signs among the people. But some men from what was called the Synagogue of the Freedmen, including both Cyrenians and Alexandrians, and some from Cilicia and Asia, rose up and argued with Stephen. But they were unable to cope with the wisdom and the Spirit with which he was speaking.*"

There is no indication of God speaking in defense of Stephen from heaven. We witness no account of miraculous events attributed to God. What those priests witnessed was a man saying things they could not refute.

What is apparent, considering Jesus' promise in Luke 12, is that God was speaking to and through Stephen to these men and later to the high priest (Acts 7).

There is a Danger Inherent in a *Still Small Voice*

Because God speaks in such an unobtrusive manner, it is easy for Him to be overlooked, disregarded, discounted or even despised. Note that later Stephen was stoned for what God had to say.

The danger is in placing a premium upon a particular *method* of speaking, loud and dynamic, rather than the content, sound and steady. As a consequence, people miss the truth, accept the flashy lie, and miss God.

Why a "still small voice"?

a. A "still small voice" requires a person to get close

Proximity does not matter when someone is loud and boisterous. You can "hear them across town."

But, proximity matters to God. He desires for you to draw near to Him (Psalm 91:4).

b. A "still small voice" requires attention

A person doesn't have to pay attention to hear a loud voice. Which is why one resorts to raising his or her voice.

If people want to hear God, they have to be listening, paying attention. If they are not willing to, they won't do what God's wants even if they were to hear Him (Luke 16:31).

c. A "still small voice" requires familiarity

To be able to distinguish one voice from another necessitates being familiar with the voice of the one speaking.

People are all wrapped up in *what* God has to say. God is concerned that He been known. That is why He is speaking.

The Last 18 Inches

That little voice inside of you may well be the "still small voice" of God. How can you know?

Does it line up with what God has spoken already in the Bible and Jesus?

Then celebrate! You have heard God!!

Foster the hearing of that voice:

Get closer to God, that you may Him better.

Be quiet with God that you can discern His voice against a background of other noises.

Spend time in God's word that you would pick up on the cadence, rhythm and pattern of His voice.

Start today, listen for His voice - what has God to say?

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