



“For God speaks once, yea twice, yet man regards it not.” – Job 33:14

WHAT DO YOU HEAR?

37. *Pilate therefore said to Him, You are a king then? Jesus answered, You say that I am a king. For this was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Everyone that is of the truth hears my voice.*

38. *Pilate says to Him, What is truth? ...*

–Jn. 18:37-38

What is truth? Jesus said, *“I am the way, the truth, and the life ...”* (Jn. 14:6). It is important that we understand that Jesus said HE is truth. God appointed Jesus to be truth to man. That is quite a statement. It implies a specific and inviolate communication.

Thus, God gives truth and life to men. He always has. He even sent his Son to communicate truth to us. Today, Jesus Himself brings truth to man.

It is the nature of God to communicate to man. He still speaks to us through his Son, and we can still hear Him.

GOD SPEAKS TO MAN

9. *And Yahweh God called to Adam ...*

–Gen. 3:9

15. *And God spoke to Noah ...*

–Gen. 8:15

15. *And God spoke to Israel ...*

–Gen. 46:2

2. *And God spoke to Moses ...*

–Ex. 6:2

2. *Yahweh our God spoke to us in Horeb ...*

–Dt. 1:6

17. *And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This (Jesus) is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*

–Mtt. 3:17

When God “speaks” to men we may envision an audible voice. Apparently God did use audible voices at times to speak to men ... but not always. God communicates in other ways as well:

1. *Then Yahweh answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said ...*

–Job 38:1

2. *And God spoke to Israel in the visions of the night ...*

–Gen 46:2

28. *And Yahweh opened the mouth of the donkey, and she said to Balaam ...*

–Nu. 22:28

I’ve heard people say they wish God would speak to us like He did in Bible times.

I’ve pondered this over the years, and I’ve concluded that: 1. We are living in “Bible times,” and 2. God still speaks to us.

God doesn’t change. Therefore, if we don’t hear Him today then maybe it is we who have changed – not Him.

Perhaps we have stopped listening. Or maybe we are being distracted by the noise and the cares of the world. Is it possible that living in a faithless society has affected our perception so that we are tuned out and can’t hear Him?

5. *And the light shines in darkness; and the darkness comprehends it not.*

–Jn. 1:5

19. *And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil.*

–Jn 3:19

If men love darkness rather than light, would they hear his words when He speaks?

15. *For this people’s heart is waxed gross, and their ears*

are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them.

—Mt 13:15

According to Jesus, men can close their ears so that they do not hear Him when He speaks. Perhaps when He speaks to men today they tend to dismiss it as mere fancy or transient imagination. If we have been preprogrammed to think that God doesn't speak to us, then our faith could be withered so that we are insensible and unable to hear Him when He speaks.

7. To day if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.

—Heb. 4:7

20. Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me.

—Rev. 3:20

Before we assume that God doesn't speak to us we should first consider the possibility that maybe we are just not listening.

We must also consider the fact that communication is a two-way proposition. If God speaks to man but no one is listening, this is not communication. For God to communicate with us we must be listening.

There is another factor. The Bible record shows that God has spoken to man in various ways ... ways that men sometimes did not recognize. So they didn't hear.

I contend that if men will listen correctly they will hear (discern) when He speaks to them ... even when He speaks in ways they don't anticipate.

Consider this: Over the thousands of years in the Bible record He never once appeared visibly to any man.

18. No man has seen God at any time ...

—Jn. 1:18

16. Who alone holds immortality, dwelling in light to which no man can approach; whom no man has seen, nor can see ...

—1Tim. 6:16

12. No man has seen God at any time.

—1Jn. 4:12

And yet Scripture tells us that man can see God by observing his creation:

19. Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them (his creatures); for God has revealed it to them.

20. For the unseen things of him from the creation of the world are perceived, being understood by his workmanship, even his everlasting power and godly

nature; so that they (all men) are without excuse:

—Rm. 1:20

So, while men cannot see God visibly, He can be seen by his handiwork ... if we are perceptive.

We can hear Him ... if we earnestly listen. He may not speak in an audible voice. But think about it. In the Bible's record of thousands of years most people never heard God speak in an audible voice. Furthermore, when He did speak by an audible voice it was usually through a messenger.

It is illogical to suppose that He led all those millions of people for all those millennia by speaking only a few times. To have led all those folks He must have communicated many times in many ways. If this is true, then we need to consider the various ways He communicates with men. Does He still communicate in these ways?

1. God, who at sundry times and in divers manners, spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets,

2. Has in these last days spoken to us by his Son whom He has appointed Heir of all things, through whom also He arranged the ages.

—Heb. 1:1-2

God's communication with men was improved when his Son stepped onto the scene. In Christ, communication was more available and understandable. However, while this certainly is a blessed means of God speaking to men, through his Son, there is no indication that it is his only way. Jesus is God's greatest communication to men, but not his only communication.

Jesus is "The Logos." The Greek word "logos" describes what Jesus does. "Logos" is usually translated "word" in English versions of the Bible. "Logos" is the Greek term, but it is also an English term ... not often used in English, but it should be. The term "word" does not adequately translate "logos." It means much more than "word." But without some knowledge of Biblical Greek you wouldn't know that.

"Logos" means "communication." It is a concept that, whether spoken, written or otherwise, is both transmitted and received.

A word may be spoken and not heard. But a logos is both spoken and heard. Thus, we can grasp to a greater extent the great thing that was accomplished through Jesus. God COMMUNICATED through his Son: the Logos. Through Jesus, God spoke ... and was heard.

It is interesting to analyze God's communication (logos) with man historically.

1. In the beginning was the logos (communication), and the logos was of God, and the logos was God.

4. Life is that which exists in Him; and the life is the light of men.

—Jn 1:1, 4

In the beginning, God communicated with man. It

started with Adam. That communication (logos) was “of” Himself. And that communication (logos) was Himself. Through that communication God breathed “life” into Adam. Subsequently Adam rejected that life.

Later, John The Baptist witnessed of God’s “light” and “life,” declaring that it came from God and caused men to be born anew:

5. *And the light is shining in darkness; and the darkness does not perceive it.*
6. *There was a man sent from God, named John.*
7. *The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the light, that all men through him might believe.*
8. *He (John the Baptist) was not that light, but was sent to bear witness of that light.*
9. *The true light that is enlightening each man was coming into the world.*
10. *He was coming into the world, and the world was existing through him, and the world knew him not.*
11. *He came to his own, and his own received him not.*
12. *But as many as receive him, to them he gives power to become sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:*
13. *Which are born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.*

—Jn. 1:6-13

The light was shining. Some saw it, and some didn’t. Then the logos (communication from God) was manifested in a new way more readily perceived by men:

14. *And the logos was made flesh, and dwelt among us. And we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.*
18. *No man has seen God at any time; the only begotten God (Jesus) who is in the bosom of the Father, He declares (explains) Him.*

Jesus “declares” God to men. He (his life) speaks of God. Christ is God’s logos (communication) to men ... thus Jesus became “the logos made flesh.”

As an aside ... in this passage Jesus is referred to as “the only begotten God.” The word “god” is a translation of the Greek “theos.” “Theos” means “mighty one.” Thus, Jesus is called “a mighty one” as were various other men in positions of power (i.e., judges, kings, etc.). The fact that He was “begotten” differentiates Him from his Father.

So we see that Yahweh communicates with men. He communicates in many, many ways. If we don’t hear (perceive) God’s communication it is not because He doesn’t speak to us. It is because we aren’t listening.

To bring the point down to a level perhaps easier to grasp, consider for example the difference between two students: one who pays attention, and one whose mind wanders and doesn’t pay attention.

Both students attend the same class, and the teacher speaks to both of them. When class is over, one student has gained information, but the other student has not.

Another example is two children born and raised in the same home. One inherits the spirit of their father, while the other does not. What made the difference? One had interest to pay attention, but the other didn’t. The father treated both sons the same. One heard the words of his father, and the other one didn’t. Witness Jacob and Esau.

Like light of the Sun, the light of Jesus (communication from God) emanates to all men. But some men prefer darkness, and they reject light. Likewise, God speaks to all men. But some men avoid his words ... eventually losing their ability to hear Him at all.

ELIJAH LEARNS HOW TO LISTEN

9. *And he (Elijah) came to a cave, and lodged there; and, behold, the word of Yahweh came to him, and He said to him, What are you doing here, Elijah?*
11. *And He (God) said, Go forth, and stand upon the mount before Yahweh. And, behold, Yahweh passed by. And a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before Yahweh; but Yahweh was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but Yahweh was not in the earthquake:*
12. *And after the earthquake a fire; but Yahweh was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice.*
13. *And it was so, when Elijah heard it that he ... went out and stood in the entrance of the cave. And behold, a voice came to him ...*

—1 Kings 19:9-13

You don’t have to go to a cave to hear God, but for Elijah it helped. This passage is an example of how some men are likely to look for God in great and visible events (earthquakes, storms, fire, signs in the heavens, etc.). But here we read that God spoke not in great visible or audible events. Elijah found that God spoke to him in a “still small voice.” He couldn’t hear it until he was quiet.

Millions of people today go through their daily lives without ever listening for God; without ever asking God if He wants to tell or show them something; without ever asking themselves if they are overlooking something that God wants them to see, or if He is trying to get their attention.

Some years ago I heard a humorous anecdote that illustrates this. A flood had come and entrapped a man, and he climbed up to the roof of his home where the rising waters had not yet reached.

A man in a boat approached him and asked if he needed help. The man on the roof replied, “No thanks, God will save me.”

Soon another man's boat came to save the man as the waters continued to rise. But the man on the roof repeated, "No thanks. I have faith that God will save me."

A little later a helicopter flew above him and offered to take him to safety. The man gave the same reply, letting them know that he believed that God would save him.

Eventually the flood engulfed the house and the man, and he drowned.

Later after he had died, the man came before God. He asked God why He didn't save him from the flood. God replied, "I sent two boats and a helicopter for you. What more did you want?"

Well, the story is fanciful, but it makes a point. Most folks just don't pay attention when God is trying to communicate with them or help them. God intervenes in our daily lives in ways we don't notice or acknowledge.

When a truth or an answer comes to us in the night, do we consider that it might have come from God? What about when an answer or a blessing comes from a friend, or from a hardship, or some other event?

Often, only a split second or a few inches separate us from an accident, or a fatal catastrophe. It is just that easy for God to step in and change the outcome of our lives.

In Manhattan on the morning of September 11, 2001, certain people's lives were spared. Some who were headed to work in the World Trade Towers forgot something back at home and returned to get it. The delay saved them from being in the buildings when others were dying. Other folks stopped at a shop to pick up some last minute item, and were delayed just long enough to save their lives.

In each of our lives there are moments each day when a few inches, or a split second alters our lives drastically. God holds those inches and seconds in his hand.

It is easy to put off such things as mere chance or just random luck. In some cases perhaps they are. But not often. In each of our lives there are times when something outstanding happens and the only rational explanation is that God caused it. These cannot be dismissed as mere chance.

God is in our lives every day, and He speaks to us in many different ways. If we listen we can learn that life is a wonderful learning experience. However, if we have scales over our eyes as Paul did before Jesus confronted him on the road to Damascus ... or if our ears are trained on the noises of the world rather than listening for teaching from on high, then we will remain unaware; unstrengthened; unblessed. It is up to us. We can gather truth and wisdom from God, or we can follow the errors of the walking dead who don't/won't listen or pay attention.

Learning requires that we listen and pay attention ... a discipline that few people seem to have these days.

Abraham was listening when a messenger of God called to him (Gen. 22:11). Jacob listened when God spoke to him through a messenger during a dream (Gen. 31:11, 46:2). Young Samuel heard when God spoke to him (1 Sam. 3:1-10). Isaiah was listening when God spoke to him (Isa. 6:8). Cornelius was listening when God spoke to him concerning Peter (Acts 10:1-8).

These are some of the acknowledged times that men were listening when God spoke to them. How many other

times have men missed what He was saying because they were not listening? God speaks to the many, but only a very few listen. Most listen to the noises of the world.

DISTRACTIONS

Some have interest in listening for God. But sadly, most don't. They are sheep who don't recognize their Shepherd. They hear noise instead of the Shepherd's voice.

15. *Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.*

—Mt 7:15

8. *And he said, Take heed that you be not deceived: for many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and the time draws near: go you not therefore after them.*

—Lk. 21:8

Jesus warns us to avoid the many deceivers, especially those who acknowledge that He is Christ. These are the pseudo-Christians (churchgoers) who speak his name but deny Him by their beliefs and actions (see Mtt. 7:20-23).

This has been a problem from the beginning. Adam listened to a false shepherd and lost his spirit. Millions since then have fallen by the same error.

21. *Not every one that says to me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that does the will of my Father which is in heaven.*

—Mt 7:21

Don't be distracted by noise and disinformation. Keep your mind alert, trained and fit. Don't rely on explanations you don't understand. Look for God in your life every day. Don't allow anyone or anything to usurp God's place in your life. Honesty is essential. If a man is honest his conscience is his hotline to God.

17. *... you say, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and know not that you are wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:*

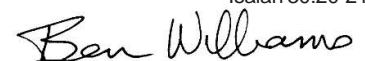
18. *... anoint your eyes with eyesalve, that you may see.*

—Rev. 3:17-18

20. *And though the Lord give you the bread of adversity, and the water of affliction, yet your teachers shall not be removed into a corner any more, but your eyes shall see your teachers:*

21. *And your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, This is the way, walk you in it, when you turn to the right hand, and when you turn to the left.*

—Isaiah 30:20-21



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