

## LESSON 4: HEARING GOD SPEAK

God speaks to us through a variety of ways. It is imperative that we learn to hear and discern God's voice.

### GOD SPEAKS THROUGH ANGELS

#### Read ***Daniel 9:20-23***

- ▶ Who speaks to Daniel in these verses to give him insight and understanding?
- ▶ Who are the angels that we know by name in the Bible?

Only two angels are named in the Bible (Michael and Gabriel) plus Satan.  
Michael was the Archangel who replaced Satan.

#### Read ***Daniel 10:12-13***

- ▶ How long did it take Gabriel to get to Daniel to answer his prayer?
- ▶ Why did it take so long for Gabriel to get there?

Gabriel said it took three weeks for him to get to Daniel after leaving God. He was delayed due to a battle with the Prince of the Persian Kingdom. Gabriel was not referencing a man, because a man could not stop an angel. In the Old Testament we see one angel in one night kill 186,000 men. Gabriel is referring to demonic organizations that are ruling at least in part over this planet. Paul referred to the fact that we wrestle against spiritual powers, authorities, and rulers. There was a spiritual battle in Persia that was able to stop Gabriel in midflight. Gabriel and the prince of Persia battled for 21 days. Gabriel cannot get the upper hand so he calls on Michael, the Archangel of God, to come and assist him. Gabriel finally breaks through and gets to Daniel. It took 3 weeks for God to answer Daniel's prayer. We cannot have the McDonalds' point of view where we want it our way and quickly. If we want to hear God, we must accept the fact that it may take a period of time.

(There will be separate lessons on angels and demons that will explain more about them in detail.)

#### Read ***Acts 8:26, 29***

<sup>26</sup> But an angel of the Lord spoke to Philip saying, "Get up and go south to the road that descends from Jerusalem to Gaza." (This is a desert road.) <sup>27</sup> So he got up and went; and there was an Ethiopian eunuch, a court official of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, who was in charge of all her treasure; and he had come to Jerusalem to worship, <sup>28</sup> and he was returning and sitting in his <sup>[i]</sup>chariot, and was reading the prophet Isaiah. <sup>29</sup> Then the Spirit said to Philip, "Go up and join this <sup>[i]</sup>chariot."

- ▶ Who led Phillip in these verses?
- ▶ What are the two ways Phillip was directed?
  1. An angel gave directions to go to the road.
  2. The Holy Spirit tells him to go to the chariot.

One time God used one way to communicate and give directions to Phillip, and another time used a different way. I do not know the reason for the different choice by God.

There is a tendency for us to sometimes think that angelic speaking is done only in the Old Testament, but this verse clearly shows us angels speak to people in both the New and Old Testaments.

#### GOD SPEAKS THROUGH DREAMS

Not all dreams are messages from God. Some dreams are caused by what we eat or what we have been watching. This section will look at how dreams work and how you know if they are God telling you what to do.

#### **Read *Mathew 2:12-14***

- ▶ How did Joseph know that God wanted him to go to Egypt?
- ▶ Was it very clear to Joseph what God wanted him to do?

#### **Read *Genesis 37:5-11***

- ▶ How did Joseph know what God had planned for his future?
- ▶ Did his brothers and father have a clear understanding of the message of the dream?

When Joseph told his father and brothers the dream, all of them understood it to mean that Joseph would reign over and rule them.

In *Genesis 41:1-37* Pharaoh has a dream that Joseph interprets. Pharaoh prepares for the coming good years and then the famine.

Two things to remember about God speaking through dreams:

1. God can speak through dreams.

2. There will never be difficulties in understanding the meaning of the dream.
  - a. When Joseph had a dream. Joseph leaves and takes Mary and Jesus to Egypt.
  - b. When Daniel interpreted Nebuchadnezzar's dream, God told him the dream and God interpreted the dream. Nebuchadnezzar accepted answer and acted accordingly.
  - c. Joseph told his brothers of his dream, and they quickly understood that it means that he will rule over them. They acted quickly and threw him in a pit and then later sold him.

If you have a dream that you do understand, then maybe it is from God. But if have a dream that you do not understand, it is not from God. If God is speaking through a dream to you, you will know and understand the dream. There has to be absolute clarity in what the dream means in order to attribute the dream to God. If not do not understand the dream, then do not accept the dream as from God.

#### GOD SPEAKS DIRECTLY AND LOUDLY

##### **Read Acts 9:1-7**

- ▶ How does God speak to Saul in these passages?
- ▶ Did Jesus speak in a loud voice or a still, small voice?

Everyone with Saul heard a voice but only Saul was able to understand the words. This was a loud moment for Saul.

At times God will speak to us in a loud manner. This usually occurs when we are not walking with the Lord.

Another time in the Bible when God is loud is when He speaks to Moses through the burning bush (Exodus 3).

The reason Saul had a loud moment is because he was killing Christians and was not a believer. Moses had a loud moment after killing a man and running away from the plan God had for him.

We seldom see God speak in a loud manner in the Bible. This will not be the primary way God speaks to you. For most people this will not occur more than once in their lifetime.

#### GOD SPEAKS THROUGH OTHER PEOPLE

##### **Read Acts 11:27-28**

- ▶ Who tells the people in Antioch that a great famine was coming?
- ▶ By whose authority does he speak this message?

God designed us to be a people that fellowship together. Sometimes God will speak to us through a Christian brother or sister. God will often confirm to you through another Christian what He has been speaking to you.

## GOD SPEAKS THROUGH CIRCUMSTANCES

There are events that happen in your life, that when they happen, they bring clarity to God's word and how it applies to you.

### ***Read Mark 6:49***

- ▶ How does God use this circumstance to speak to the disciples?

These verses are the account of Jesus walking on water and calming the storm. Even though the disciples had just watch Jesus feed 5000 plus people with five loaves and two fish they did not understand that He is God. When they experienced Jesus walking on water and calming the storm, their hearts were softened to where they could understand what Jesus had been teaching them. It was their circumstances that helped them to understand.

Circumstances, by themselves, should not be seen as God speaking. When God speaks to you through circumstances, He will confirm the message with the Bible.

This following passage is a guiding light for understanding anything you hear. This controls how you interpret what you hear or dream.

### ***Read 2 Peter 1:20-21***

- ▶ How can we know that what we learn in circumstances is truly from God?

<sup>20</sup> *But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation,*  
<sup>21</sup> *for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.*

The Holy Spirit wrote the Bible. If the Scriptures were written by the Holy Spirit and you understand a clear objective truth from the Scriptures, and you have a dream that contradicts the Scriptures, then what you are saying is the Holy Spirit contradicts Himself. He will never do this. If anything you hear violates the Scriptures, then you should not pay attention to it. You should be very cautious in trusting this means of communication from God in your life. Everything learned through circumstances should be tested against the Scriptures before you accept it as truth.

## GOD SPEAKS THROUGH A LOW WHISPER

### **Read 1 Kings 19:9-19**

- ▶ How does God speak to Elijah?

Elijah had just experienced the challenge between God and the prophets of Baal and had seen God prove Himself as the only true God. Being a prophet, Elijah was accustomed to hearing God's voice. When it appears that God is speaking loud in the wind, earthquake, and fire Elijah does not come out because Elijah knows that God is not in the wind, fire, and earthquake. When Elijah hears the low whisper, he comes out and listens as he knows this is from God. This is the main way the Holy Spirit will speak to you.

### **Read Philippians 4:6-7**

*<sup>6</sup> Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. <sup>7</sup> And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*

- ▶ What two things do these verses tell us that God guards?

God's peace will guard your heart and your mind to keep you from missing what God has for you.

1. Heart= emotions
2. Mind= intellect

God will guide you in a low whisper as He guards your emotions and thoughts. This is the **predominant way** that God will speak to you. You will have a "Holy Hunch" on what God is speaking to you.

### **Read 2 Peter 1:20-21** again

These verses teach on both the written word and the spoken word.

Logos- = written word

Ramas= spoken word

The most powerful way that God speaks to you is when both written word and spoken word come together in your life.

*Example: You are reading a passage and the words jump off the page and speak application into your life. You know that God has a message for you in what you are reading. This is the written word and spoken word coming together in your life. This perfect combination of the peace of God and the Word of God occurs and you can walk forward in confident obedience to God.*

## OBEDIENCE IS MANDATORY

**Read *John 14:15-21***

- ▶ These verses teach us that if we love God we will...
- ▶ How is the Holy Spirit described in these verses?
- ▶ In verse 21, what does God promise He will do if we walk well with Him?

God tells us that if we truly love Him, we will obey His commandments. God gives us the Holy Spirit as a Helper to strengthen us and to disclose God to us as we walk well with Him.

Jesus says that for me to hear God, I must be obedient. If I want to have God's guidance in my life, then I will have to be obedient to Him. You cannot ignore God and His Word in your life and then expect to hear from Him. The basis of God disclosing Himself to you is based on you keeping His commandments.

It is your obedience in Christ that gives you the ability to hear God and to experience the peace and unrest that God uses to drive your life through His word and through Holy hunches. When you hear God's voice then you can know exactly how to pray, know exactly what to do, and know exactly what God wants for your life.

If you disobey, you damage your ability to pray and to hear God. How you live affects how you hear God's voice. Most people know what God wants, but they do not want what God wants. You must choose to be obedient to what God is telling you, even when it does not fit your agenda!