

The Voice of the Lord at Christmas and Always

Text: Deuteronomy 28:2: "And all these blessings shall come on thee, and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God."

Matthew 11:15: "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."

Hebrews 3:7, 15; Hebrews 4:7: "...To day if ye will hear His voice...."

God has a message and is speaking to His servants, even today! Let's go back to the original Christmas story and see what we can learn about the way God speaks. God loves us and He has a message for His people.

How does God speak to us?

I. GOD SPEAKS IN THE MIDST OF TRIALS.

Matthew 1:19-20

"Pain insists upon being attended to. God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks in our conscience, but shouts in our pain: it is His megaphone to rouse a deaf world."

-C.S. Lewis-

A. God tells us to rest.

Matthew 1:20; Matthew 2:12, 13, 19

Look how often the Lord spoke to his servants at their most relaxed state of mind -- in their sleep.

Often times during a crisis our world gets rather chaotic. A trial is multi-faceted.

Job 1:14a: "And there came a messenger unto Job..."

Job 1:16a: "While he was yet speaking, there came also another..."

Job 1:17: "While he was yet speaking, there came also another..."

Job 1:18a: "While he was yet speaking, there came also another..."

The messenger came and told Job the barbaric Sabeans fell upon his servants kidnapping and killing them. Then before that messenger could finish his story, another messenger came and disclosed that fire fell from Heaven and burned up the sheep, plus more of the farm hands. As the second servant was telling the sad news to Job, another servant came with the bad news that three bands of the ruthless Chaldeans stole Job's camels, and killed the camel keepers with their swords. As the third report was given to Job, another servant brought the saddest news of all, a great wind rose up and in a raging storm, took the lives of Job's ten children.

In times of crisis the human response is to become very busy trying to work the problems out. Look at Job's response in the midst of his greatest trial in Job 1:20, 21: "Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down

upon the ground, and worshipped, And said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD." There is resolution in rest!

The Bible teaches us to rest in the Lord. In Psalm 37:7 we read, "Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for him: fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass."

B. God tells us not to fear.

Matthew 1:20; Luke 1:30; Luke 2:10

A great part of the Christmas message is "fear not!"

C. God reminds us He is at work.

Matthew 1:20. Conception is a work of God. In the matter of Mary's conception, this was an extraordinary miracle because she was a virgin. In every trial that we go through, we need to realize that God is at work.

D. God often reveals His purposes to those who are close to Him.

Matthew 1:21-23

Amos 3:7: "Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets."

Psalms 25:14: "The secret of the LORD is with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant."

II. GOD SPEAKS THROUGH EVENTS.

Matthew 2:2: "...Where is He that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen His star in the east, and are come to worship Him."

When things happen out of the ordinary, we should observe and hear what God is saying. When God spoke to Moses from the burning bush, the Bible said in Exodus 3:4, "And when the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I."

III. GOD SPEAKS THROUGH HIS WORD.

Matthew 2:4, 5, 17,19; Luke 2:28

Isaiah 55:11: "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it."

Jeremiah 1:12, "Then said the LORD unto me, Thou hast well seen: for I will hasten my word to perform it" (the Word of the LORD).

IV. GOD SPEAKS THROUGH PROGRESSION.

Matthew 2:19-22

God spoke to Joseph to go back to Israel. Then once in Israel, God gave him further information to go to Nazareth.

This is the way God often leads His people, i.e., step-by-step. For instance, the Bible says in Hebrews 11:8, “By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went.” God was saying to Moses, “Just go for now. I’ll give you the map once you get there.” Then in Genesis 22:2 we find these words, “And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.” In other words, God was saying, “Go to this mountain range Abraham; I’ll tell you the specific mountain when you arrive, but not until you arrive.”

V. GOD SPEAKS THROUGH A MESSENGER.

LUKE 1:19, 26, 27

The Greek word “aggello,” which we translate as “angel” can also be translated “messenger.” Sometimes the messenger is an angel; sometimes it is another person speaking on the behalf of God. When we are seeking God we need to take heed to the people He brings into our lives.

VI. WHEN GOD SPEAKS THE LORD IS ALWAYS EXALTED.

LUKE 1:31, 32, 33-38

CONCLUSION: WHEN WE RECEIVE A MESSAGE FROM GOD, A MESSAGE IS BIRTHED IN US.

Luke 1:46-55. You will be hard pressed to find a more glorious exaltation of the Lord than Mary’s magnificat.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Johnny Pope". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal line extending to the right.