

UNIT 1.A: HEARING GOD'S VOICE

Objective: This lesson is designed to help church members be more attuned to God's voice and walk in close communion with him on a daily basis. It is our hope that believers will be better able to abide in Him, through prayer, study, fasting and thus, hearkening to God's voice. Harkening means to listen and obey.

John 10:27:

My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.

Revelation 3:20:

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.

Mosiah 11:128 & 136:

And **he that will hear my voice, shall be my sheep**; and him shall ye receive into the church; and him will I also receive . . . Therefore I say unto you, that he that will not hear my voice, the same shall ye not receive into my church, for him I will not receive at the last day.

Habakkuk 2:1-2:

I will:

- stand upon my **watch** [alert & listening] and
- set me **upon the tower** [find a quiet spot], and will
- **watch to see what he will say unto me** [come in faith expecting God to speak], and
- **what I will answer** when I am reproved [receptive to the truth].

Joel 2:12-13 & 28-30:

. . . **turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning. And rend your heart**, and not your garments, and **repent**, and turn unto the Lord your God; for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and he will turn away the evil from you . . . **I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh**; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions. And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my Spirit. And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth . . .

Jeremiah 33:3:

Call unto me, and **I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things**, which thou knowest not.

Numbers 11:29:

. . . **would God that all the Lord's people were prophets**, and that the Lord would put his Spirit upon them.

OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

The Prayer That Changes Everything: The Hidden Power of Praising God by Stormie Omartian, p. 7:

If you're like me, you don't want to live a lukewarm, mediocre, "barely making it," sad, lonely, hopeless, miserable, frightened, frustrated, unfulfilled, meaningless, ineffective, or fruitless existence. You don't want to be imprisoned by your circumstances or chained to your limitations. You want to live an extraordinary life. A life of peace, joy, fulfillment, hope, and purpose. A life where all things are possible. The kind of life I just described can only happen when we enter into **a close relationship with God**. I mean really close. There are many people who believe in God . . . Yet not many are really close to Him . . . close enough to know him intimately. Close enough to communicate your whole heart to Him on an ongoing basis. Close enough to be able to direct your attention away from yourself completely and place it on him entirely . . . loving him with all your heart and letting him love you . . . What an awesome gift! **When we praise and worship God, his presence comes to dwell with us.**

WHAT ARE WAYS THAT GOD SPEAKS TO US?

1. **CREATION**

God provides evidence that there is an intelligence that formed the creation we see around us.

Psalm 19:1:

The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handiwork.

Romans 2:1:20:

For **God hath revealed unto them the invisible things of him, from the creation of the world**, which are clearly seen; things which are not seen being understood by the things that are made, through his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse.

2. **CONSCIENCE**

God gives every person who is born on this earth a moral sense, an intuitive understanding about right and wrong.

John 1:5 & 9:

And the light shineth in the world, and the world perceiveth it not . . . Which was **the true light, which lighteth every man who cometh into the world.**

Romans 2:14-16:

. . . **the Gentiles, which have not the law**, do by nature the things contained in the law . . . which **show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience** also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another, in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to the gospel.

D & C 83:7c:

And **the spirit giveth light to every man that cometh into the world;** and the Spirit enlighteneth every man through the world, that hearkeneth to the voice of the Spirit.

3. **SCRIPTURE**

God has preserved divinely-inspired writing that reveals his will to us.

Alma 16:52-55 (Alma 2 to Korihor):

- 52 And now **Korihor said unto Alma, If thou wilt shew me a sign**, that I may be convinced that there is a God, yea, shew unto me that he hath power, and then will I be convinced of the truth of thy words.
- 53 But Alma said unto him, **Thou hast had signs enough**; will ye tempt your God? Will ye say, Shew unto me a sign, when ye have **the testimony of all these thy brethren**, and also all the holy prophets?
- 54 The **scriptures** are laid before thee, yea, and all things denote there is a God; yea, even the **earth**, and **all things that are upon the face of it**, yea, and its **motion**;
- 55 Yea, and also all the **planets which move in their regular form**, doth witness that there is a Supreme Creator: and yet do ye go about, leading away the hearts of this people, testifying unto them there is no God? And yet **will ye deny against all these witnesses?**

4. CIRCUMSTANCES

We sometimes receive direction from God as **he opens and closes doors of opportunity in our lives**. In situations where we are attempting to be of service to God, there may be times that the enemy of our souls places obstacles in our way. We have to exercise discernment in this regard. Perhaps our prayer to the Lord should be, "If it is your will Lord, open this door of opportunity to me."

5. PROPHETIC UTTERANCE

There may be times that **God speaks to us through his earthly servants**. It is not unusual for a fellow believer to deliver a "Thus saith the Lord . . ." unto any member of Christ's church.

6. VISIONS & DREAMS

It is possible for **the Lord to project images and pictures on the screen of our imagination** that perhaps tell a narrative. There are times when we have the strong impression that such a narrative is a message from God. We then have to pray for discernment to correctly interpret their meaning.

Joel 2:28-30:

. . . **I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh**; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions. And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my Spirit. And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth . . .

7. ANGELS

Angels are "ministering spirits" (Hebrews 1:7 & 13-14) who can **deliver God's word to his children**. We see examples of this throughout scripture.

Moroni 7:29-33:

And because he hath done this, my beloved brethren, hath miracles ceased? Behold, I say unto you, Nay; neither have **angels** ceased to minister unto the children of men. For behold, they are subject unto him, to minister according to the word of his command, shewing themselves unto them of strong faith and a firm mind in every form of godliness. And the office of their ministry is, to call men unto repentance, and to fulfill and to do the work of the covenants of the Father which he hath made unto the children of men, to prepare the way among

the children of men, by declaring the word of Christ unto the chosen vessels of the Lord, that they may bear testimony of him.

8. GOD'S STILL SMALL VOICE

Probably the most frequent way God conveys his will to us is through direct communication when we are focused on him in a moment of silence. Most scriptures were probably conveyed to the prophets through that **milder, quieter inner voice that speaks to our souls** on a regular basis. Elijah experienced this on Mt. Sinai in 1 Kings 19:12.

1 Kings 19:11-13 (Elijah on Mt. Sinai or Horeb):

And he [God] said, Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the Lord. And, behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks . . . and after the wind an earthquake . . . And after the earthquake a fire . . . and after the fire **a still small voice**. And it was so, when Elijah heard it, that he wrapped his face in his mantle, and went out, and stood in the entering in of the cave. And, behold, there came **a voice** unto him . . .

3 Nephi 5:4-5:

. . . they heard **a voice**, as if it came out of heaven . . . And **it was not a harsh voice, neither was it a loud voice**, nevertheless, and notwithstanding it being a small voice, it did pierce them that did hear, to the center, insomuch that there was no part of their frame that it did not cause to quake; **yea, it did pierce them to the very soul, and did cause their hearts to burn.**

After 40 days of fasting and walking across the desert toward Mt. Horeb (Sinai), Elijah the prophet was shown God's power and then God spoke to him in "a still small voice." God is not limited in how he can speak to us. God can speak in a whisper in the solitude of our minds, or he can speak in a dramatic way through a strong wind, an earthquake or a fire (1 Kings 19:11-12). But most of the time, God seems to use a quiet, inner voice, and that can sometimes make it difficult to discern between God's thoughts and our own thoughts.