

What Does God's Voice Sound Like? Part 2

Ricardo Campos, Pastor Grace Chapel, Orange, CA March 10, 2019

I. Introduction

How can you tell what God sounds like? Have you ever said to yourself, "How am I ever going to get out of this mess?" and then resigned yourself to the facts in front of you? And then it happens exactly as you thought it would, it all falls apart? What if the facts on the ground were actually conquerable, even though they looked invincible? What if God interpreted those facts for you instead of Satan or you?

II. The Voice You're Listening to, Is It Leading You Towards God or Away from Him?

What voices do we hear? Satan's (Genesis 3:1-7, 10-11; John 10:10; 2 Corinthians 4:3-4; Ephesians 2:2), the world's (which is guided by Satan, Colossians 2:8; 1John 2:15-16; 5:19), our flesh's (Mark 7:21-23; Romans 8:5-6; Galatians 5:19-21), our conscience's (which was given to us by God, Romans 2:14-15), but we also hear Jesus' voice (John 10:27; 16:12-15).

Satan will use bad and good news to deceive you, Satan uses bad news to deceive us all the time (Gideon in Judges 6). But he also uses good news (the Mosaic Law and the apostle Paul/Saul: Satan uses something godly (Romans 7:12) to turn Paul into a murderous zealot (Acts 22:1-5). Finally, Satan turns good news into bad news (Numbers 13-14). Thus, he doesn't care if you're a sinner or saint; he'll use both to destroy you.

How to discern if it's God's voice, first, does it align with who Jesus is and what He said (1 John 4:1-3, cf. 1 Corinthians 12:3)? When Satan spoke and quoted Scripture, how did Jesus know it wasn't God? It didn't match God's voice/Word (Matthew 4). Second, in order to tell if it's God's voice, you have to know Him, you have to know what He's like and how He thinks, which requires spending time with Him the way Jesus did (John 5:19-20). If you get to know Jesus, you'll recognize His voice and follow it, John 10:27. Third, what Satan says takes no faith to believe but what Jesus says takes faith to believe (Judges 6:12, 14, 16—what Jesus tells Gideon appears impossible). Finally, what Jesus says will always draw you closer to God and His purpose for your life; what Satan says always draws you away from God and His purpose (Exodus 3-4). So, are you walking towards God or away from Him?

Two key questions to ask, the first is "Is that Jesus' voice or Satan's?" You want to constantly ask, "Who wants me to think, say, or do that, Jesus or Satan?" The second is, "Is that true or a lie?" If what you heard is a lie, that's Satan; he's the father of lies (John 8:44). What the ten spies heard when they spied out the Promise Land for 40 days was, "The people of Canaan are too great for you; they will slaughter you," but it was a GIANT lie (Numbers 13-14).

The widow of Zarephath, 1 Kings 17, Ahab was king of Israel. He was more wicked than all the kings before him. He married Jezebel, a Sidonian who worshipped the god Baal, god of rain (1 Kings 16:29-33). Elijah does as the Lord says and tells Ahab that there will be no rain until he says so. The Lord then tells Elijah to hide by the Brook Cherith, since He's commanded ravens (unclean birds, Leviticus 11:13-15) to feed him there twice a day. Eventually the Brook dries (since there's no rain), so God tells him to go to Zarephath, in Sidon because He's commanded a poor widow there (who worships Baal) to provide for Elijah (Sidon is the center of Baal worship. God is invading Baal's territory; before it's over, some will worship the God of Israel instead of Baal).

Poor widows are usually the first to suffer in a drought and this widow was very poor (she's gathering sticks). Elijah tests to see if this is the widow God provided; he asks her for a small cup of water and a bit of bread. Will she do it? Her reply shows that she knows Elijah is a Jew and that the God of Israel is **his** God. She informs him that she has no bread, only a handful of flour and a little oil which she's preparing for her and her son, that they may eat it and die! What does she believe and why? Who told her this, Jesus or Satan? Is it true that she and her son will die? It sure looks like it, but is it true? Why did God send Elijah to the widow, to help Elijah or the widow and her son?

Elijah makes a selfish request, he says, "Don't fear; make me a small cake first, then for you and your son." How can she, it's only a handful of flour?! Because the God of Israel said, "I'm going to make your handful of flour and bit of oil last until I send rain on the earth." The drought lasted 3 ½ years! (James 5:17). She trusted God's voice and the flour and oil lasted exactly as the Lord said.

Then the worst happens, the widow's son becomes deathly ill and dies. How does she interpret this? Elijah's God, if He exists, sent Elijah with the curse of death to kill her son for her past sin. Who told her this and is it true? It looks that way, but is it true? What does she believe about her sin and God? She's right that sin merits God's discipline, but she's wrong that sin separates you from God like this. Is she walking towards God or away from Him? Elijah took her son into his private room and laid him on his bed then in agony cried out to the Lord, wondering why He killed her son, as he stretches out over the boy three times (physically saying, "Let his dead body be alive like mine"). He pleads with God to bring him back to life. God answers Elijah's prayer and returns the boy's soul. When Elijah returns the live boy to his mother, she acknowledges Elijah as a true man of God and the voice of God spoken through Elijah as true: Elijah's God has become her God and she hears His voice.

When God or Satan speaks, how does the internal dialog go? When something good or bad happens, how do we respond? What goes through your mind? If what we hear drives us away from God, that's not God, it's Satan. Don't let the facts on the ground convince you that everything is hopeless, that you suck, and that God is not coming to help you. God doesn't speak like that. Get to know God and how He speaks. What He tells you often takes faith to believe and it always draws you closer to Him and His purpose for your life.....a man is deceived by Satan about love and sex, but God opens his eyes.

III. Conclusion

Then the woman said to Elijah, "Now by this I know that you are a man of God, and that the word of the LORD in your mouth is the truth."