



## The Voice of God

What does the voice of God sound like? Have you heard it? How do you hear it? Under what circumstances? Did the voice seem familiar? Had you heard it before? Can you sort out God's voice from all the other voices that you hear? Was it a loud voice, or was it a small voice, even a whisper? Perhaps you thought it was just your conscience giving you trouble. Maybe, God used the voice of a loved one?

In 1 Kings 19:1-13 is the story of Elijah fleeing for his life because he was carrying out God's instructions, and Ahab wants him dead. Now he is hiding in a cave and the Lord spoke to him: "What are you doing here Elijah?" Elijah tells God that he has carried out God's instructions, but now he wants to die, it has been too much.

God tells him: "Go out and stand before the mountain." Elijah goes to the entrance to the cave and stands there, and after all the chaos had calmed, there was the sound of a gentle whisper: The voice of God, telling him to go back the way he came, something that Elijah did not want to do!

Yet, with fear and trembling, Elijah obeyed the voice of God. He had his marching orders, where he was to go and what he was to do.

How many of us have gone into this period of isolation and limited freedom willingly, even joyfully? I venture to say that not many could say that. How do you expect God to speak to you? What form does God's voice take? Does He indeed speak to you in those circumstances of your life? In the beauty of a remembered moment, the smile of a child, the comfort of a friend? Or that voice at the end of the phone line asking "How're ya doin'? Just checkin' on ya."

Another question might be: How many of us heard the Voice of God at the start of this virus? But, now, can you hear Him? Can you see His face there, in FaceTime, in Zoom, or through the window, or from a safe distance? Can you hear His voice saying “I love you,” sounding just like your kids, grandkids, friends, lover?

Make no mistake about it, God speaks to us and our part is not to limit Him. God speaks to us through difficult circumstances and blissful moments. He speaks to us through children, loved ones, the setting sun, the snow-covered mountains, the remembered moments of our lives.

In this isolation, His voice comes through loud and clear. Can you hear him? Listen. There. Did you hear that? You say that sounded like a laugh down the hall? Yes. That’s our Lord at work. The chatter of those happy birds outside or in the atrium, that’s Him, at work, talking to you, telling you of His love. Someone is singing, somewhere, hear that? Yep, again, that’s our Lord at work.

The Voice of God all around us. We need ears that hear. A heart that weeps for joy. Eyes that glisten with gladness. We need a special kind of listening. There is a Hebrew word that fits: Shema. Careful listening that stirs our hearts and moves, moves us to be the Voice of God to others. The phone is ringing. That will be God calling, or perhaps Jesus, just saying, “I love you.”

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This essay was the Meditation in Stan Escott's [Watchword](#) for April 23, 2020. These regular words of encouragement, reflection, scripture and devotional prayer, born from the Covid-induced isolation of a small Bible study group, are now available online. To explore Watchwords or sign up for the mailings, visit [bosworth30.com/watchwords/](http://bosworth30.com/watchwords/).