

John 12:28-30 (NKJV)

“28 Father, glorify Your name.” Then a voice came from heaven, saying, “I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again.”

29 Therefore the people who stood by and heard it said that it had thundered. Others said, “An angel has spoken to Him.”

30 Jesus answered and said, “This voice did not come because of Me, but for your sake.”

In this passage, we see a heavenly voice speaking to Jesus, and yet the people around Him misunderstand it. Some think it's just thunder, while others believe an angel spoke. This is a powerful example of how the voice of God can be perceived differently depending on the spiritual condition of the listener.

The Bible as God's Voice

The Bible is described as the voice of God in written form. It is the

revealed Word of God, not merely a collection of ancient stories or ethical guidelines. Before it was written, the Word was spoken by God's Spirit. This is clear from the way the Bible speaks of itself in 2 Timothy 3:16:

2 Timothy 3:16 (NIV)

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness.

The inspiration of Scripture means that God Himself is the ultimate author. The Apostle Peter also emphasizes this in his second epistle:

2 Peter 1:21 (NKJV)

For prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.

So, when we read the Bible, it is the voice of God we are hearing, yet we need the Holy Spirit to help us understand it properly.

The Voice Behind the Thunder

The Bible often speaks with a thunderous tone, especially in parts of Scripture that are hard to understand or that contain difficult truths. To the untrained ear, it can seem like “thunder,” as the people in John 12 mistook the divine voice for mere noise. This points to the necessity of divine revelation to understand the Scriptures.

In 1 Corinthians 2:14, Paul highlights this reality:

1 Corinthians 2:14 (NIV)

The person without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God but considers them foolishness and cannot understand them because they are discerned only through the Spirit.

Without the Holy Spirit, the Word of God is just a foreign language, a “thunder” to our ears. But when the Spirit opens our hearts and minds, we begin to hear the very voice of God speaking directly to us.

The Bible as a Sealed Book

The Bible itself is described as a “sealed book” that can only be opened by the Spirit of God. This is consistent with what we read in Daniel 12:4 and Revelation 10:4, where both Daniel and John are told to seal up certain things in their visions until the proper time, indicating that understanding these prophecies requires divine intervention.

Daniel 12:4 (NKJV)

But you, Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book until the time of the end; many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall increase.

Revelation 10:4 (NKJV)

Now when the seven thunders uttered their voices, I was about to write; but I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, 'Seal up the things which the seven thunders uttered, and do not write them.

These passages highlight that some things in God's Word are hidden from plain sight and require the Spirit of God to reveal. It is through the Holy Spirit that we are able to understand the mysteries of God.

Understanding Parables and Mysteries of the Kingdom

Jesus frequently spoke in parables to convey profound spiritual truths, but only those with ears to hear could understand their meaning. After telling the parable of the sower, Jesus' disciples asked Him why He spoke in parables. His response points directly to the need for divine revelation and understanding:

Matthew 13:10-16 (NKJV)

“10 And the disciples came and said to Him, ‘Why do You speak to them in parables?’

11 He answered and said to them, ‘Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it has not been given.

12 For whoever has, to him more will be given, and he will have abundance; but whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him.

13 Therefore I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand.

14 And in them the prophecy of Isaiah is fulfilled, which says: ‘Hearing you will hear and shall not understand, and seeing you will see and not perceive;

15 For the hearts of this people have grown dull. Their ears are hard of hearing, and their eyes they have closed, lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, lest they should understand with their hearts and turn, so that I

should heal them.'

16 But blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear.

Jesus explains that spiritual understanding is not something that comes naturally—it is a gift from God. The disciples were given the ability to understand because they were open to the Spirit's leading. The crowds, however, were blinded because they were not seeking to understand, and their hearts had become hardened.

In Mark 4:11-12, Jesus makes this even clearer:

Mark 4:11-12 (NIV)

He told them, 'The secret of the kingdom of God has been given to you. But to those on the outside, everything is said in parables so that, 'they may be ever seeing but never perceiving, and ever hearing but never understanding; otherwise they might turn and be forgiven.'

This is a direct quote from Isaiah 6:9-10, and it shows that God's Word can either illuminate or blind, depending on the receptivity of the listener.

The Need for Spiritual Discernment

As we read the Scriptures, we must approach them with a heart that is open to the Holy Spirit. The Bible is more than just a book; it is the living Word of God, as described in Hebrews 4:12:

Hebrews 4:12 (NIV)

For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.

Without the Spirit of God, the Bible remains just words on a page, but when we allow the Holy Spirit to guide us, it becomes the voice of God speaking into our lives, convicting, teaching, and transforming us.

Seek to Hear God's Voice

If you read the Bible and your life doesn't change, it may be because you're only hearing the thunder, not the voice of God. True understanding comes from a heart that is willing to listen to God and be transformed by His Word. James 1:22 urges us to be doers of the Word, not just hearers:

James 1:22 (NIV)

Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves.
Do what it says.

When you hear the Word of God, let it penetrate your heart, and let the Spirit give you understanding. That's when you'll hear the voice of God clearly, and it will change your life.

Conclusion: Open Your Heart

Brothers and sisters, don't treat God's Word lightly. The Bible is more than a storybook—it is the living, breathing voice of God.

Ask the Holy Spirit to open your heart and mind to understand it deeply. When you do, you'll begin to hear God speaking directly to you, not as thunder, but as a clear, life-changing voice.

Revelation 3:20 (NKJV)

Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.

May you open your heart today to hear God's voice, and may it transform your life to reflect His glory.

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