

Twelve Ways God Speaks: #1) Creation

Twelve Ways God Speaks: #2) Wisdom

Twelve Ways God Speaks: #3) Your Conscience

Twelve Ways God Speaks: #4) Other People

Twelve Ways God Speaks: #5) The Word of God

Twelve Ways God Speaks: #6) The Inner Voice of the Holy Spirit

Twelve Ways God Speaks: #7) The Gifts of the Holy Spirit

Twelve Ways God Speaks: #8) Dreams

Twelve Ways God Speaks: #9) Visions

Twelve Ways God Speaks: #10) Angels

Twelve Ways God Speaks: #11) God's Audible Voice

- Acts 9 – Paul on the Road to Damascus
 - Vs. 3-4 – 3 As he neared Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. 4 He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, “Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?”
 - Vs. 7 – The men traveling with Saul stood there speechless; they heard the sound but did not see anyone.
- This Does Not Happen Often... But More Often than We May Think
 - Adam and Eve
 - After Adam and Eve sinned, it says they both “heard the sound of the Lord God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the Lord God among the trees of the garden. But the Lord God called to the man, ‘Where are you?’” (Gen 3:8-9)
 - Moses
 - God spoke audibly to Moses at the Burning Bush... “When the Lord saw that he had gone over to look, God called to him from within the bush, “Moses! Moses!” And Moses said, “Here I am.”” (Exodus 3:4)
 - Exodus 33:11 – The Lord would speak to Moses face to face, as one speaks to a friend.
 - Numbers 12:6-8 – ... 6 When there is a prophet among you, I, the Lord, reveal myself to them in visions, I speak to them in dreams. 7 But this is not true of my servant Moses; he is faithful in all my house. 8 With him I speak face to face, clearly and not in riddles; he sees the form of the Lord.
 - Exodus 19:16-20 – 16 On the morning of the third day there was thunder and lightning, with a thick cloud over the mountain, and a very loud trumpet blast. Everyone in the camp trembled. 17 Then Moses led the people out of the camp to meet with God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain. 18 Mount Sinai was covered with smoke, because the Lord descended on it in fire. The smoke billowed up from it like smoke from a furnace, and the whole mountain trembled violently. 19 As the sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder, Moses spoke and the voice of God answered him. 20 The Lord descended to the top of Mount Sinai and called Moses to the top of the mountain. So Moses went up...
 - Deuteronomy 4:33-36 – 33 Has any other people heard the voice of God speaking out of fire, as you have, and lived? 34 Has any god ever tried to take for himself one nation out of another nation, by testings, by signs and wonders, by war, by a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, or by great and awesome deeds, like all the things the Lord your God did for you in Egypt before your very eyes? 35 You were shown these things so that you might know that the Lord is God; besides

him there is no other. 36 From heaven he made you hear his voice to discipline you. On earth he showed you his great fire, and you heard his words from out of the fire.

○ Samuel

- 1 Samuel 3:1-6 – 1 The boy Samuel ministered before the Lord under Eli. In those days the word of the Lord was rare; there were not many visions. 2 One night Eli, whose eyes were becoming so weak that he could barely see, was lying down in his usual place. 3 The lamp of God had not yet gone out, and Samuel was lying down in the house of the Lord, where the ark of God was. 4 Then the Lord called Samuel. Samuel answered, “Here I am.” 5 And he ran to Eli and said, “Here I am; you called me.” But Eli said, “I did not call; go back and lie down.” So he went and lay down. 6 Again the Lord called, “Samuel!” And Samuel got up and went to Eli and said, “Here I am; you called me.” “My son,” Eli said, “I did not call; go back and lie down.”

- Eventually, they figure out that this is God speaking to Samuel, in an audible voice

○ Elijah

- 1 Kings 19:11-13 – 11 The Lord said, “Go out and stand on the mountain in the presence of the Lord, for the Lord is about to pass by.”

- Vs. 12-13 – ...And after the fire came a gentle whisper. 13 When Elijah heard it, he pulled his cloak over his face and went out and stood at the mouth of the cave. Then a voice said to him, “What are you doing here, Elijah?”

- “gentle whisper” = The words used in this phrase usually mean an actual voice heard audibly, just a very quiet, whispered one

- And since it follows some very real, very physical events (wind, earthquake, fire), it would be reasonable to assume this was very real, very physical whispering

○ Nebuchadnezzar

- Daniel 4:29-32 – 29 Twelve months later, as the king was walking on the roof of the royal palace of Babylon, 30 he said, “Is not this the great Babylon I have built as the royal residence, by my mighty power and for the glory of my majesty?” 31 Even as the words were on his lips, a voice came from heaven, “This is what is decreed for you, King Nebuchadnezzar: Your royal authority has been taken from you. 32 You will be driven away from people and will live with the wild animals...”

- “from heaven” = equally valid to translate the words as “from the sky”

○ Jesus

▪ Baptism

- The Holy Spirit descended on Him like a dove, and then a voice came “from heaven [the sky]” saying “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.” (Matthew 3:17)

▪ Transfiguration

- Matthew 17:5-6 – 5 While he was still speaking, a bright cloud covered them, and a voice from the cloud said, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!” 6 When the disciples heard this, they fell facedown to the ground, terrified.
 - 2 Peter 1:18 – We ourselves heard this voice that came from heaven when we were with him on the sacred mountain.

▪ Before the Crucifixion

- John 12:27-30 – 27 “Now my soul is troubled, and what shall I say? ‘Father, save me from this hour’? No, it was for this very reason I came to this hour. 28 Father, glorify your name!” Then a voice came from heaven [the sky], “I have glorified it, and will glorify it again.” 29 The crowd that was there and heard it said it had

thundered; others said an angel had spoken to him. 30 Jesus said, “This voice was for your benefit, not mine...”

- Paul
 - Acts 9 – on the way to Damascus
- God spoke audibly to all sorts of people, from all sorts of nations, in all sorts of places, under all sorts of circumstances. He’s done it in both OT and NT
 - But it doesn’t happen that often (less than a dozen clear examples in the entire Bible, 4000 years of recorded history)
- Death of Pan – Plutarch (AD 46-120) wrote about an interesting occurrence in “The Obsolescence of Oracles,” in which, around the time of Jesus’ death and resurrection, a sailor named Thamus began preaching that the Greek god Pan was dead after he heard a voice from the sky call out, “Thamus, are you there? When you reach Palodes, take care to proclaim that the great god Pan is dead.”
- God’s Mighty Voice
 - Psalm 29:3-9 – 3 The voice of the Lord is over the waters; the God of glory thunders, the Lord thunders over the mighty waters. 4 The voice of the Lord is powerful; the voice of the Lord is majestic. 5 The voice of the Lord breaks the cedars; the Lord breaks in pieces the cedars of Lebanon. 6 He makes Lebanon leap like a calf, Sirion like a young wild ox. 7 The voice of the Lord strikes with flashes of lightning. 8 The voice of the Lord shakes the desert; the Lord shakes the Desert of Kadesh. 9 The voice of the Lord twists the oaks and strips the forests bare. And in his temple all cry, “Glory!”
 - Psalm 18:13-19 – 13 The Lord thundered from heaven; the voice of the Most High resounded. 14 He shot his arrows and scattered the enemy, with great bolts of lightning he routed them. 15 The valleys of the sea were exposed and the foundations of the earth laid bare at your rebuke, Lord, at the blast of breath from your nostrils.
- Why Doesn’t God Speak Audibly More Often?
 - 1) Faith Pleases God
 - Hebrews 11:6 – Without faith it is impossible to please God...
 - Throughout the Bible, God promised that if we seek Him, we will find Him (Deut 4:29, Prov 8:17, Jer 29:13, Matt 7:7, etc.)
 - He spoke in parables so that the hungry would find truth, but those who don’t care won’t see (Matthew 13:13)
 - Solomon said that it’s the glory of God to hide things, but the glory of kings to search them out (Proverbs 25:2)
 - There is something in God that He seems to enjoy us pursuing Him
 - 2) People Would Still Disbelieve
 - Even if God spoke audibly on a regular basis, people who don’t want to believe still won’t believe, people who want to ignore Him still will choose to ignore Him
 - Luke 16:31 – If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.
 - Just like when God spoke audibly to Jesus, “I have glorified my name, and will glorify it,” yet people thought it was thunder or an angel (John 12)
 - 3) God’s Audible Voice is not Foolproof
 - Even if God speaks audibly, you still have to verify that it was His voice by checking with the Scriptures and the inner witness of the Holy Spirit, which are more secure witnesses than an audible voice
- Exodus 20:18-21 – 18 When the people saw the thunder and lightning and heard the trumpet and saw the mountain in smoke, they trembled with fear. They stayed at a distance 19 and said to Moses, “Speak to us yourself and we will listen. But do not have God speak to us or we will die.” 20 Moses said to the people, “Do not be afraid. God has come to test you, so that the fear of God will be with you to keep you from sinning.”
 - This is Israel’s Third Test in the Wilderness

- 1) Exodus 15:22-27 – No Water
 - Vs. 25 describes this whole endeavor as a “test” to see if they will trust God to provide
- 2) Exodus 16:4 – Manna
 - God says the manna will be a “test” to see if they will, again, trust and obey Him
- 3) Here at Mt Sinai
 - What is the test?
 - To see if they will fear Him and yet still come close in trust
- 21 The people remained at a distance, while Moses approached the thick darkness where God was.
- Hebrews 4:16 – Let us then approach God’s throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.