

The Voice of God

The powerful voice of God the Father and the mighty voice of Jesus Christ. What do they sound like? The Bible gives us some ideas:

Like the sound of many waters:

And behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of the east. His voice was like the sound of many waters; and the earth shone with His glory. (Ezekiel 43:2)

His feet were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters. (Revelation 1:15)

And I heard a voice from heaven, like the voice of many waters. (Revelation 14:2)

Like the sound of very loud thunder:

Have you an arm like God? Or can you thunder with a voice like His? (Job 40:9)

The voice of the LORD is over the waters; the God of glory thunders; the LORD is over many waters. (Psalms 29:3)

The voice of Your thunder was in the whirlwind; the lightnings lit up the world; the earth trembled and shook. (Psalms 77:18)

At Your rebuke they fled; at the voice of Your thunder they hastened away. (Psalms 104:7)

And I heard a voice from heaven... like the voice of loud thunder. (Revelation 14:2)

Like the sound of harps:

For through the voice of the LORD Assyria will be beaten down, as He strikes with the rod. And in every place where the staff of punishment passes, which the LORD lays on him, it will be with tambourines and harps; and in battles of brandishing He will fight with it. (Isaiah 30:31-32)

And I heard a voice from heaven... and I heard the sound of harpists playing their harps. (Revelation 14:2)

Like the sound of trumpets:

Then it came to pass on the third day, in the morning, that there were thunderings and lightnings, and a thick cloud on the mountain; and the sound of the trumpet was very loud, so that all the people who were in the camp trembled... And when the blast of the trumpet sounded long and became louder and louder, Moses spoke, and God answered him by voice. (Exodus 19:16, 19)

And the sound of a trumpet and the voice of words, so that those who heard it begged that the word should not be spoken to them anymore. (Hebrews 12:19)

I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day, and I heard behind me a loud voice, as of a trumpet. (Revelation 1:10)

After these things I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven. And the first voice which I heard was like a trumpet speaking with me, saying, "Come up here, and I will show you things which must take place after this." (Revelation 4:1)

Down through man's history, a few people have even heard God's voice verbally. Here are just a few examples:

And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. (Genesis 3:8)

And said, "If you diligently heed the voice of the LORD your God and do what is right in His sight, give ear to His commandments and keep all His statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you which I have brought on the Egyptians. For I am the LORD who heals you." (Exodus 15:26)

And when the blast of the trumpet sounded long and became louder and louder, Moses spoke, and God answered him by voice. (Exodus 19:19)

Did any people ever hear the voice of God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as you have heard, and live?... Out of heaven He let you hear His voice, that He might instruct you; on earth He showed you His great fire, and you heard His words out of the midst of the fire. (Deuteronomy 4:33, 36)

And you said: ‘Surely the LORD our God has shown us His glory and His greatness, and we have heard His voice from the midst of the fire. We have seen this day that God speaks with man; yet he still lives. ‘Now therefore, why should we die? For this great fire will consume us; if we hear the voice of the LORD our God anymore, then we shall die. ‘For who is there of all flesh who has heard the voice of the living God speaking from the midst of the fire, as we have, and lived? (Deuteronomy 5:24-26)

According to all you desired of the LORD your God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, ‘Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, nor let me see this great fire anymore, lest I die.’ (Deuteronomy 18:16)

In almost every case, Old Testament and New, it was the voice of Jesus Christ that was heard: the Logos, the Spokesman, the Word of God.

Almost every case? Were there *any* instances when the voice of God the Father was heard by a human being? Did not Jesus say, "**The Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape.**"? (John 5:37)

Yes. He did. Well, that seems quite clear! Jesus said that no one has ever heard the voice of God the Father. I may as well close this article right here and you can go on and read the next one. No. Wait! Is that what this scripture *really* says? Is that what Jesus *really* said? Let us take a closer look at this subject of the voice of God – and specifically the voice of God the Father. Let us determine whether or not any human being has ever heard the sound of the Father's voice in the past and whether we have any promise of hearing His voice in the future.

A closer look at John 5:37

Let us read this scripture again:

And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape.

Who was Jesus talking to here? Who was He referring to as "ye"? Verses 16 and 18 give the answer:

And therefore did the Jews persecute Jesus, and sought to slay him, because he had done these things on the sabbath day... Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God.

Jesus was not talking to or about mankind in general. Neither was He talking to His disciples, friends and followers. He was talking to a gathering of Jews, some of whom were seeking to kill Him because He had called God His Father. Jesus was actually introducing and revealing God the Father to them. They had not known God the Father previously. They and their forefathers had known Yahweh to some limited extent, but not God the Father. They did not know Him. They had never seen Him. They had never heard His voice. Notice that Jesus did *not* say, "No man has ever heard my Father's voice, nor ever will."

Examples of humans hearing the Father's voice

In the three gospel accounts of the transfiguration of Jesus, we read:

While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!" (Matthew 17:5)

And a cloud came and overshadowed them; and a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is My beloved Son. Hear Him!" (Mark 9:7)

And a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is My beloved Son. Hear Him!" (Luke 9:35)

Simple logic tells us that this was the voice the one whose Son is Jesus Christ. This was the voice of God the Father.

Although we can accept these gospel accounts as accurate records of what happened, Matthew, Mark and Luke were not present during the transfiguration. For a first hand account we must look to Peter who, along with James and John, *was* actually there:

For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him in the holy mount. (II Peter 1:16-18)

Although Peter wrote these words around 66 or 67 AD – forty years after the transfiguration took place – his excitement about the experience was not diminished at all. But what did he, James and John see? Did they see a glorified Jesus conversing with the ghosts of Moses and Elijah? No. What they saw was a vision of the future. They saw a vision of Jesus Christ in His glorified state in His Kingdom along with two of His resurrected servants, Moses and Elijah. And what did the three amazed disciples hear? They heard the voice "from the excellent glory" (some translations render this phrase, "the voice of majestic glory" or better, "the voice of supreme glory." This was not the voice of an angel, but that of God the Father! Was it really the Father's voice? Yes. This was the voice of supreme glory. If the voice referred to Jesus as "My Son," then it must have been Jesus' heavenly Father speaking.

In Christ's final days on earth

The apostle John writes of another time when human beings heard the voice of God the Father:

Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again. The people therefore, that stood by, and heard it, said that it thundered: others said, An angel spake to him. Jesus answered and said, This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes. (John 12:27-30)

In this example, which took place shortly before Jesus' suffering and death, a gathering of Greek visitors and probably some of His disciples were present (see verses 20-22). They all heard the voice. Jesus said that the thunderous voice was made audible for the sake of His visitors. At such a troubled time, it was, no doubt, encouraging for Him too.

Jesus spoke to His Father with the Greek visitors present and His Father answered Him. Some compared the voice to the sound of thunder. Others thought that it was an angel that had spoken to Jesus. Was it an angel? No. The voice said that the Speaker had glorified His own name. Only God has the power and authority to glorify anything. Surely, God would not delegate the duty of glorifying His name even to one of His angels – especially at such a pivotal time in history.

Father's voice to be heard in the future

In the book of Revelation we find many instances of voices of spirit beings during the end-time. These examples include the voices of angels, of resurrected saints, of Jesus Christ, and of God the Father. Here is one example:

And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps. (Revelation 14:1-2)

Although it does not specifically say so, there is a strong indication that this was the voice of God the Father – speaking on another pivotal day in the history of the world: the day when His Firstborn stands upon Mount Zion with His new-born brothers and sisters. To Revelation 14:1-2, compare Ezekiel 43:2 and Revelation 1:15, which state that God's voice is like the sound of many waters, Job 40:9, Psalm 29:3, 77:18, and 104:7, which state that God's voice is like the sound of thunder, and Isaiah 30:31-32, which states that God's voice is like the sound of harps, as we have seen.

What can we conclude from these examples? First, that, although infrequently, God the Father *has* spoken audibly and allowed humans to hear His voice. Second, when God the Father does allow human beings to hear His voice, a very important event is taking place. Third, although, His humanly audible words are very few, they have great and very significant meaning.

The great voice of God! Let us look forward to the time when He moves His throne and headquarters to this earth. At that time we will probably hear His voice more frequently. Also, let us look forward to the time when we will be with Jesus Christ on Mount Zion and we will hear for the very first time the mighty voice of God the Father!

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