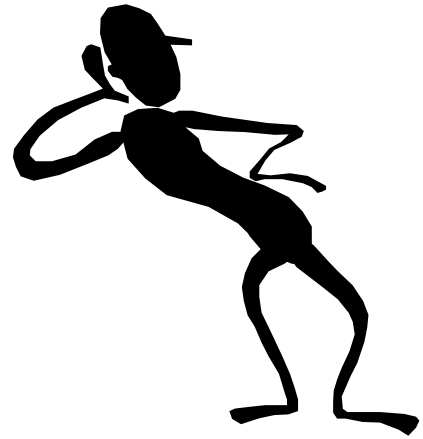


Is the Lord speaking to you?

Please read Job 33:14-25

The commencing verse of this portion of Holy Scripture reads: “God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not”. This statement surely indicates that God dislikes saying things twice, especially if He gets no response.



There may be occasions when we are in conversation with someone who has hearing difficulties that we may need to say things twice or more, and each time it can be more aggravating. There are often times when young children become unruly and perhaps need to be reprovved twice to call them to order. But what must it be like for God to speak to humanity again and again – but to no avail?

In this connection I want to ask first of all – How often do the best known verses in scripture occur e.g. John 3:16; Psalm 23? Only once – but I now wish to call your attention to an exhortation which the Holy Spirit by divine inspiration has caused to be written no less than 4 times: “Today if ye will hear His voice harden not your hearts” {Psalm 95:7-8, Hebrews 3:7-8 & 15 and Hebrews 4:7} and yet this still goes unheeded by many thousands of men and women today.

It is a dreadful thing, when the Lord is so lovingly calling you to Himself, for you to harden your heart.

Think of Moses pleading with Pharaoh of Egypt to let the Israelites go to their promised land – but he hardened his heart until God had to intervene by way of the plagues. Job also writes “who hath hardened himself against Him and hath prospered?” (Job 9:4) The answer – no one.

Having considered the seriousness of these matters I want us now to look at a few factors which we need to keep reminding ourselves about, and also to pass these to others.

First of all we have a PRECIOUS PRIVILEGE of hearing the Gospel. It is said that our little province has more outlets for the Gospel than anywhere else in God’s creation. It is tragic to note that statistically speaking 80,000 souls pass into eternity every hour without knowing the love of Jesus, without ever holding a copy of the Scriptures in their hand or attending a place of Christian worship. O yes! We have a precious privilege which we need to hold onto and treasure in our hearts.

There is also a PERILOUS POSSIBILITY and that is to do as many still continue to do today – reject the Word of God for the world and in consequence “reap what they sow” (Gal 6:7) and are alas heading for a lost eternity.

I wonder is God speaking to any of our unsaved loved ones or colleagues once or twice or even 4 times. O there is a perilous possibility facing all such as are so foolish e.g. the rich young ruler (Mark 10:17-22)

Now thirdly there is a PRESENT PROSPECT. Jesus said “He that believeth on Me hath everlasting life” (John 6:47) Notice He said HATH – here and now, although it is not realised in its completeness until hereafter. This is His promise to all who seek and find Him. For all redeemed sons and daughters of God this is in Heaven, a PREPARED PLACE. Jesus again said before leaving His earthly disciples “I go to prepare a place for you and ... will come again and receive you unto Myself “ (John14:2–3)

We know the little song “I’m satisfied with a cottage below”- but it goes on to say “I have a mansion just over the hill top in that bright land where we never grow old” – all individually prepared for each of us by our Lord Jesus Himself.

We have so far looked at God speaking and the central and basic content of what He says. But now we must look at how He speaks. I could give you quite a number of ways but for now I will confine myself to four.

We see from our text that He speaks at times through DREAMS. This was the case with Joseph and his brothers (Gen. 37:5-11) With Pharaoh and the butler and baker Joseph interpreted their dreams (Gen 40 & 41). Also Nebuchadnezzar had a dream which Daniel explained (Daniel 4).

God can also speak through DISEASE. Our reading portrays a very vivid picture of cancer which drove the sufferer almost to death until “he found a ransom” (Job 33:24). Think also of Paul’s thorn in the flesh. The Lord said to him “My grace is sufficient for thee” (2 Cor 12:9).

A third way in which God speaks is through DISTRESS. This may take the form of loss of property, redundancy, accident or even the loss of a loved one, especially a child. We think of David who fell in adultery with Bathsheba, and as a result God took the child born to them. Even we Christians are not immune from these distresses. Dare I say it because they fill me with fear but natural disasters also come under this heading. Thinking back to our AGM we learnt that last year’s earthquake in Japan apart from all the destructions resulted in many souls finding the Saviour.

Then fourthly He speaks through HIS DISCIPLES. There are several examples of this in scripture e.g. the Ethiopian eunuch was contacted by Philip (Acts 8:26–40), the Philippian jailer was reached by Paul and Silas whilst in prison (Acts 16:25ff) – but it is at this point that we return to our primary purpose as our Lord’s disciples. It is a great honour to know the precious truths of God’s Word, and I cannot understand why we are so slow to communicate them, instead leaving many of our colleagues and even our families on the broad way. Dare I suggest that probably the Lord has been reminding us – four times – that we are failing in our witness “Today if ye will hear His voice harden not your hearts.” That is the clarion call with the stress on TODAY – even if we must repeat it 4 or more times – we need to implant this urgent need to all outside of Christ.

O my dear friends and fellow Christians – spare no effort in proclaiming this vital message to a perishing world, the Lord working with us with signs following. AMEN