

THE VOICES OF HEAVEN

INTRODUCTION

We begin our lesson at this time by reading the event of the transfiguration of our Lord before His disciples. [Read Matt. 17:1-7]. Men today often desire that God speak directly to them out of heaven, as He did to these apostles on this occasion, when Jesus was exalted in splendor. Some televangelists blatantly state that God **does** talk with them regularly, giving special instructions and promises to them. If God **did** speak this way today, we would be afraid, as were the 3 disciples of Jesus. Such a miracle would not produce living faith unless it was produced over and over again, just as Israel lived on miracles in the wilderness, yet fell into every form of evil between the occurrences of miracles.

The text shows that what **we** need today is **not** God speaking directly to us, but to heed the voice of His beloved Son, who speaks through His word. (John 20:30-31). From the account of the transfiguration, we note especially the voice of God from the cloud, and the voice of the Son, as together, they are "The Voices of Heaven."

DISCUSSION

I. 1st, let's consider the VOICE FROM THE CLOUD.

A. The setting for this voice is an interesting one.

1. The *cloud* obviously stood as a veil to protect the disciples from the full glory of God. Cf Exo. 33:20
2. The *brightness* of the cloud illustrates God's glory and His good pleasure toward those present at this occasion.
3. There were *three* disciples to witness this glory, which was sufficient to bear witness to it later. John 8:12-18; 2 Pet. 1:16-18

B. The 3 utterances from the cloud are made up of words from **scripture**, which gives emphasis and honor TO Scripture (for God who made the tongue did not **need** to quote from words He had previously stated, but He did so on this occasion).

- 1, 1st, the voice from the cloud said, *"This is my beloved Son."* cf Ps. 2:7
 - a. The word "this" exalts Jesus above Moses and Elijah who were present.
 - b. The word "is" signified Jesus was **then** functioning as His Son.
 - c. The word "my" suggested that Jesus belonged to the Father, and represented Him in His work on earth. Matt. 1:23; John 12:48-50; 1 Cor. 5:19
 - d. The word "beloved" suggests the tender relationship between the Father and the Son, that is far superior to the way **we** are children of God today.
 - e. The word "Son" shows the favored position of Jesus over Moses and Elijah, who were only "servants" in times past. Heb. 3:1-6
- 2, 2nd, the voice from the cloud said, *"In whom I am well pleased."* Cf Isa. 42:1
 - a. The words "in whom" suggest that God's pleasure today can **only** be enjoyed by those **in** Christ. Eph. 1:3
 - b. The words "I am well pleased" is a contrast of God's feeling about sinful and rebellious mankind. Cf Gen. 6:5-6; Heb. 10:38; John 8:29
- 3, 3rd, the voice from the cloud said, *"Hear ye Him."* cf Deut. 18:15
 - a. The word "hear" means to listen, with a firm purpose to obey His words.
 - b. The word "ye" suggests individual responsibility on the part of everyone.
 - c. The word "him" is also significant.

- 1) 1st, Jesus is to be heard instead of the law and the prophets, as represented by Moses and Elijah. Cf Matt. 5:17; Luke 16:16; Col. 2:14
- 2) 2nd, Jesus is necessary as a mediator, since man would be afraid of the immediate presence of God. Cf Exo. 20:(1-17) 18-20; 1 Tim. 2:5

II. Finally, let's consider the VOICE OF JESUS, GOD'S BELOVED SON.

A. The **need** for hearing a comforting voice is shown in the disciples' "fear", which represents mankind today apart from the Savior. Matt. 17:6

B. The sympathy of Jesus involves 3 actions. v. 7

- 1.1st, Jesus "**came**" to them—not waiting till man comes to Him. John 1:11-12; 10:10; Luke 19:10
2. 2nd, Jesus "**touched**" the disciples.
 - a. Jesus often healed with the "touch" of His hand. Cf Matt. 8:1-3
 - b. Jesus "touched" our nature by becoming human with us so as to understand our weaknesses and our needs. Heb. 2:14-15; 4:15
3. 3rd, Jesus "**spoke**" to the disciples, giving His word which made His sympathy complete; and his word offers salvation today, making His sympathetic mission into the world meaningful and complete. John 6:63

CONCLUSION

I. Since we are to "hear" God's beloved Son, what does He say through His **word**?

A. 1st, His word tells how to BE saved. John 8:24; Luke 13:3; Mark 16:16

B. 2nd, His word tells us how to KEEP saved. 1 John 1:7-9

II. If **we** hear and obey God's Son, **we** shall someday appear with Him in glory, and behold God and Christ in their glorified state forever and ever.

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