

How to Know When G-D Is Speaking to You

Recently, I had one of the most amazing experiences I have ever had in the nearly 40 years I have been serving in ministry. I had been asked to moderate a series of one-hour discussion classes at a conference. On the second day of the class, a young man who was only 11 years old entered the room at the start of the class, and as he did, he gave me a look as if to ask if it was OK for him to join the class. I welcomed him in, but told him if he was going to attend the class he would be required to actively participate. He agreed and sat down in the second row from the front, and conversation began.

The topic assigned to the class was the events that took place in the narrative of Balaam and his donkey. We were having a lively discussion about G-D talking directly to Balaam and indirectly to Balaam through his donkey. Around 57 minutes into the class, it felt like a good time to close the discussion for the morning, so I told everyone we would continue the discussion the next morning, and then said we had about three minutes left. I then asked if anyone had a three-minute question. I looked around the room; the young man mentioned above raised his hand and when I called on him, he said the following: "I am 11 years old. I love G-D deeply, but I don't think He has ever talked to me. Why doesn't He talk to me?"

My first thought was, "What an amazingly honest and vulnerable question." My second thought was, "Didn't he hear me when I said we only had three minutes left in the class?" My third thought was, "I wonder how many of the adults in the class had the same or a similar question but were too adult to allow themselves to be that vulnerable?"

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I took a moment to gather my thoughts and to listen for the voice of G-D, and then I replied. As I began to speak, I could see tears well up in the young man's eyes. They weren't tears of fear or pain; they were tears of hope. It was easy for everyone in the room to see that he was listening intently, not only from his mind but also from his heart.

I started by saying that I knew for certain that G-D has spoken to him. I then asked him if he had ever seen someone who was hurting and took the time to comfort them. I asked him if he had ever given something to someone to be a blessing. I asked him if he had ever prayed for someone just because he knew that the person needed prayer. I asked him if he had ever given money to a charity because his heart was touched when he saw the need.

"Yes, I have," he said. So I told him, "Each time that you acted in response to a desire to do good or to be a blessing, that desire to do good was a response to hearing the voice of G-D. That small voice in your heart that caused you to act kindly and lovingly was, in fact, G-D's voice speaking to your spirit and soul."

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I then told him that as he matured in his faith, he would be able to recognize G-D's voice as He spoke and be able to distinguish between G-D's voice and his own voice, or the voice of the adversary, Satan. I also told him that I believe G-D speaks to us 24 hours a day, but unfortunately, most of us don't listen to His voice because we are too busy listening to our own voice or the voices of others whom we have allowed to have greater influence in our lives, hearts and minds.

I opened this blog today by saying that I recently had one of

the most amazing experiences in my life. and I wrote the rest of the above to get to this point where I could share what that amazing experience was. As I spoke those words to that young man, I could see the tears in his eyes disappear and be replaced by joy. That young man no longer believed G-D had never spoken to him. Not only did he not believe that anymore, now he was thinking about all of the times that G-D *had* spoken to him.

But that wasn't the fullness of the amazing experience because as I looked beyond the young man to the other people in the room, I saw tears in many of the adults' eyes, some because they had been touched by what was happening to that young man, others because they too were counting the many times that G-D had spoken to them. They also now know how to know when G-D is speaking to them.

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