

And whispered in the sound of silence.

-Simon & Garfunkel

You can't have a relationship with God - if you can't hear God.

*<sup>11</sup> The Lord said, "Go out and stand on the mountain in the presence of the Lord, for the Lord is about to pass by." Then a great and powerful wind tore the mountains apart and shattered the rocks before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind. After the wind there was an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake.*

*<sup>12</sup> After the earthquake came a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire. And after the fire came a gentle whisper.<sup>13</sup> 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?" (1 Kings 19-NIV)*

More than a half century ago, an ear, nose and throat specialist, Dr Alfred Tomatis, was stumped by a diagnosis he could not figure out. A world-famous opera singer lost his ability to hit certain notes in his vocal range, even though it had once been easy and normal. The opera singer searched for answers from those who specialized in ear, nose and throat medical treatments and care.

Every one of the ear, nose and throat specialists who did a medical examination were convinced it was a vocal problem. Dr. Tomatis, thought otherwise. Using a sonometer, Dr Tomatis discovered that even an average opera singer produces a range of volume that often peaks at 140 decibels. The sonometer registered the opera singers' sound waves. That is slightly louder than a military jet taking off an aircraft carrier.

If I were to tell you the sound is even louder, inside one's skull, probably people would know that fact. The discovery by the doctor and the sonometer produced the following diagnosis:

The opera singer had been deafened by the sound of their own voice. Certain ranges of notes, which had gone mute, was caused by ranges of volume, which exceeded healthy levels. Apply this idea to pleasing God. When you are trying to hear God's voice but are exposed to sounds (behaviors) outside the range God permits, desires or is pleased with, you are left with selective deafness to God's voice.

The voice can only produce what the ear can hear, as Mark Batterson reminds us.

The French world of medicine, called this the Tomatis effect. So back to an earlier proposition, suggestion, and insight I proposed:

Is it possible that what we perceive as relational, marital, emotional, financial, and spiritual problems are really hearing problems? Perhaps the moral of the story is: Is it possible that finding your voice, starts by hearing God's voice?

So, let me suggest you raise your voice, in prayer using the following outline, and see if God does not honor that prayer, by raising his voice to you.

### **Act 1 - Elijah calls down fire. (*1 Kings 18*)**

Let's dive into one of the most colorful stories in the bible. Ahab has been king over Israel for 22 years. His middle-aged queen wife is ruthless and evil to the bone.

The prophet called onto the scene to confront the evil is none other than Elijah. He is driving in the same lane as Moses. Now, Ahab and Jezebel were so wicked they considered sin against God a trivial matter. Sin was like a sport to the queen couple. Whenever they found someone living for God, they put a bounty on their head and sent out assassins. Jezebel brought her foreign God worship to Israel and was bent on converting the Israelites from serving Jehovah to her pagan, plastic, and paper mache fake gods.

This foreign God worship became the national religion in all of Israel. It doesn't make any sense. These religious terrorists who sat on Israel's throne forbid everyone from worshipping the one true God.

One day Elijah arrives on the scene and sees how the whole nation has turned away from God. People everywhere are bowing down to false gods. Elijah declares, **“this has gone far enough. If it costs me my life, I am prepared to do whatever it takes.”**

So, Elijah calls for a smackdown of the gods. He stages a kind of smack-down of the god’s event. This event takes place on Mt Carmel.

Elijah invites 850 prophets and priests of the foreign god to build an altar and Elijah will do the same. They will both call on their gods and the god who sends fire from heaven to ignite the sacrifice, from that day forward **He is God**. Everyone will bow down and serve the God who sends fire. Let’s read it directly from God’s Word.

*<sup>24</sup> Then you call on the name of your god, and I will call on the name of the Lord. The god who answers by fire—he is God.” Then all the people said, “What you say is good.” (1 Kings 18:24-NIV)*

Everyone in Israel is going to bow down and worship the god that sends fire. Do you see how this plays out? In the end Elijah defeats the prophets of Baal and the nation returns to the true God. The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

*<sup>38</sup> Then the fire of the Lord fell and burned up the sacrifice, the wood, the stones and the soil, and also licked up the water in the trench. <sup>39</sup> When all the people saw this, they fell prostrate and cried, “The Lord—he is God! The Lord—he is God!” (1 Kings 18-NIV)*

**And the curtain closes on Act 1**, as Elijah chases the false prophets down the mountain and slaughters them.

**Act 2** - Elijah flees because of fear. (1 Kings 19:1-5)

We continue our story back at the palace of the wicked couple as Ahab has some explaining to do. As hope and spiritual revival fill the land, a frightened and paranoid Ahab runs home to “momma” and tattles on Elijah.

The big meanie, he hurt my feelings as he spills the beans by destroying our way of worship and embarrassing me right out on the mountain. How are we going to finance our religious machinery if we can't keep people buying fakes gods. There goes our way of life down the drain.

Ahab was totally at the mercy of his wife.

He groveled.

He was a coward.

Jezebel has usurped the rightful authority of her husband.

She has stifled the spiritual life of God's people. She corrupted the nation with a cesspool of moral perversion.

She was a cancer on the land, and that cancer had to be excised out, one way or another.

In verses 3-4, we see Elijah fleeing because of fear. Elijah was afraid and fled for his life. <sup>3</sup> *Elijah was afraid and ran for his life. When he came to Beersheba in Judah, he left his servant there,* <sup>4</sup> *while he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness. He came to a broom bush, sat down under it and prayed that he might die. (1 Kings 19-NIV)*

How do you go from Carmel to crumble? Elijah flees and slides into a dark depressive period of his life instead of giving Ahab and Jezebel the knockout punch.

Elijah should have marched right up to the King's palace and put leprosy on them both.

He should have turned her into a pillar of salt.

He should have called down fire from heaven once again and turned her into a pile of ash and then blown away the ash.

His next move should have been Act 2, on Carmel. He should have finished the job he started for God. Don't you think?

Just another day, another demon. Just another round of righteous activity bent on ridding the land of evil. Another day, another devil. That was the next move.

**Some of you are wanting to hear from God.** You love God. You want to do his will. But, there is an evil power standing in the way of learning to hear from God.

The moral of the story: It is almost impossible to hear from God when you are given to fear.

Elijah should have handled the situation with faith instead of fear. With courage instead of cowardice. Reduce the RPMs of fear, and fill your life with faith, and you will hear a whisper from God.

**So, we close Act 2,** with Elijah announcing suicide as his best future. He came to a broom bush, sat down under it and prayed that he might die.

**Act 3** - Elijah rises out of depression. (*1 Kings 19:6-9*)

When there is not a whisper from the Lord, there will always be a whisper from the evil one. And the whisper often takes the form of self-pity. The beast of self-pity arises when the voice of the Almighty is silenced.

“I have had enough, Lord,” he said. “Take my life; I am no better than my ancestors.”

The first part of that prayer is right, “I have had enough.” Enough of my way. Enough doing it in my own strength. Look closely at Elijah distorted thinking...I am no better than my ancestors.

Whoever said he had to be better than his ancestors? Elijah had the wrong standard. God sets the standards, not our ancestors. Not our parents. And certainly not an evil king and queen.

If Elijah had let God set the standard and give the direction he would have discovered once again a God who mercifully, long-suffering and always faithful.

Instead of rebuking Elijah, putting guilt on him, or shaming him with statements of failure, God goes to work on rebuilding his soul.

God picks Elijah up and goes to work. It is a process that God works in our lives, and it is way that God gets us ready to hear a whisper. Listen to the final verses for today.

All at once an angel touched him and said, "Get up and eat."<sup>6</sup> He looked around, and there by his head was some bread baked over hot coals, and a jar of water. He ate and drank and then lay down again.

*<sup>7</sup> The angel of the LORD came back a second time and touched him and said, "Get up and eat, for the journey is too much for you."<sup>8</sup> So he got up and ate and drank. Strengthened by that food, he traveled forty days and forty nights until he reached Horeb, the mountain of God.<sup>9</sup> There he went into a cave and spent the night.*

The God who never slumbers or sleeps, the God who is always at work on our behalf knows exactly what Elijah needs to open his soul to the coming whisper. Elijah needs to rebuild his strength with rest, refreshment and God designed travel. In the end he receives what he has lacked for so long.

**And Act 3 closes** with Elijah arriving at a cave where God is going to reveal himself and speak to Elijah.

**Acts 4** - Elijah hears a whisper from God. (1 Kings 19:10-13)

*<sup>12</sup> After the earthquake came a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire. And after the fire came a gentle whisper.<sup>13</sup> 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?" (1 Kings 19-NIV)*

Let me summarize and remind us what silences the whisper of God. First, Elijah was not thinking realistically or clearly. When threatened by Jezebel, Elijah failed to realize the source.

Jezebel was God's enemy. She was an idol worshipper. She had no authority over Elijah's life. This was just a bluff. She was blowhard. She had no real power.

Nowhere in the story do we see Elijah pray to the Lord, as on Carmel. Many of us when we face the enemy forget to pray and begin to get anxious. Fearful. The word for whisper means, stillness, silence, or calmness.

If Elijah had listened for a whisper, he wouldn't have started to run.

<sup>3</sup> ***Elijah was afraid and ran for his life.*** Stop running and listen for a whisper. *He stilled the storm to a whisper; the waves of the sea were hushed. (Psalm 107:29-NIV)*

If Elijah had listened for a whisper, he would not have separated from his servant. When he came to Beersheba in Judah, he **left his servant there**. Elijah had separated himself from relationships that protect and strengthen. Elijah kept his servant for only part of the journey to Beersheba. When we get discouraged, we often separate ourselves from our most trusted ally. If Elijah had listened for a whisper, he would not have traveled alone. <sup>4</sup> ***while he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness.***

Fear, discouragement, and anxiety all feed off isolation. Elijah's big mistake was going it alone. Traveling alone is a sure-fire way to silence the whisper of God. If Elijah had listened for a whisper, he wouldn't have ended up in the wrong place, praying the wrong prayer.

### Why Does God Use A Whisper?

When you listen to a whisper, you have to focus.

When you listen to a whisper, you have to get close.

When you listen to a whisper, you have to lower all surrounding noise.

So how do I know if a word from heaven is from God? How do you know that? Is it found in Scripture? Although the exact wording or even precise topic may not be in Scripture, it will always line up with The Word and not contradict it.

Every word of God will be put to the test and proven true;

He is a defense for those who trust in Him.

Take care. Add nothing to what He has said;

for if you do, He will correct you and expose you as a liar. (Prov 30:5-6)

So, we are going to look at seven ways to test a word from God. **The first is, does it align with God's Word?** These 7 tests form a filter. If you get an idea, premonition, nudging, from God and you want to know, was that God or did I just make that up?

Or is that from the evil one? Is this a belief system that my parents pounded into me? Is this really from the Holy Spirit? You test it from these 7 filters.

And if it passes all 7, you can know it is from God. Now, it is not from God if it passes 4 out of 7. Or if it passes, 1,3,6 and 7. You can't pick and choose. The word from God must pass all 7 tests. It must align with all 7 filters.

**If an idea, whisper, voice, word from God passes all 7, then you can be absolutely certain it is from him.** God does not want you to stand on shaky ground. You have heard from God. And it was God who put that thought, into your mind. And it sits in your heart waiting for action. Obedience. Surrender. repentance. Agreement.

Now, remember, whatever you hear, it often has to do with something God wants you to do. Got that?

7 tests from the bible. Or I am calling these 7 filters. Number 1. Filter 1- Does this possible word from God, align and agree with God's Word?

Does this idea or thought agree with the Bible?

God's will cannot contradict God's Word.

God's wishes cannot contradict God's Word.

God wants cannot contradict God's Word.

God's ways cannot contradict God's Word.

God's Words cannot contradict God's Word.

God does not reveal one truth, and then change his mind about that truth. If God has said something is true, it will always be true. God is consistent. God does not waver between opinions.

*<sup>21</sup> Elijah went before the people and said, "How long will you waver between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow him; but if Baal is God, follow him." (1 Kings 18:21-NIV)*



God does not speak in word for word, bible text, so how do I know it is from God? Make sure it does not contradict his Word. God will never tell you to violate a principle he has given in the Bible. God will never tell you to disobey, ignore or dishonor scripture. In fact, scripture is so important to God, he wants you to align your life with it.

<sup>32</sup> *“Now I commit you to God and to the word of his grace, which can build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified. (Acts 20:32-NIV)*

<sup>17</sup> *Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. (John 17:17-NIV)*

So, the first test, first filter, is does this line up with what God has already said? And if what I have in my thinking, mind and heart does not line up with God’s Word, **then I am wrong.**

It did not come from God. The reason you can know is because God’s Word is supernatural. God’s Word is eternal. God’s Word is without error. The Word is inerrant.

*Luke 21:33, “Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away.”* Never pass away. The earth will pass away. This nation will pass away. If God said it 5000 years ago and it was true, then that same truth 1000 years go is true, and it is true today. And it will be true in 1000 years, and 5000 years from today. Because God’s truth does not change.

Opinions change. Political parties change. Hair styles change. Coaches change. Science changes. Science textbooks change. The minute you get a new science book, it is already outdated in so many ways. Who wants to buy last year’s computer book-out of date!

God’s Word never changes. If it is new, it is not true. Come on pastor, give me a little more explanation. If it is new, it is not true. If it is true, it has been around forever.

<sup>9</sup> *What has been will be again,  
what has been done will be done again;  
**there is nothing new under the sun.** (Eccl 1:9-NIV)*

Many years ago, science discovered the world was round. Prior to that many believed the world was flat. The world has never been flat, it has always been round, even when we did not believe it was round.

*He sits enthroned above the **circle of the earth**,  
and its people are like grasshoppers.  
He stretches out the heavens like a canopy,  
and spreads them out like a tent to live in. (Is 40:22-NIV)*

God said it, and whether you believe it or not, it is already settled for all of eternity. *The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever. (Is 40:8-ESV)*

God's Word and God is truth. I lie. You lie. God cannot lie. You can authentic truth by what God does with his word. Truth is self-authenticating. In other words, what **God's Word does in deed, proves its integrity in creed.**

...generates life	creates faith	produces change
...frightens the devil	causes miracles	heals hurts
...builds character	transforms circumstances	
...imparts joy	overcomes adversity	defeats temptation
...infuses hope	releases power	cleanses our mind
...brings things into being	guarantees our future forever	

If God tells you to do something in the bible, he will never contradict it. Question: Is this idea, thought, voice, word from heaven in alignment with God's Word?

Let me give you some examples.

**1. Pay your taxes.** The book of Romans tells you to pay your taxes.

*<sup>6</sup>This is also why you pay taxes, for the authorities are God's servants, who give their full time to governing.<sup>7</sup>Give to everyone what you owe them: If you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue; if respect, then respect; if honor, then honor. (Romans 13-6-8-NIV)*

It is a part of our testimony to honor our government by paying our taxes. Jesus said, render to Caesar what is Caesars. If you get an idea that God told me to not pay my taxes, that was not God.

**2. God blesses business with integrity.** In Proverbs there is many verses about how to have a successful business.

*The Lord detests the use of dishonest scales,  
but he delights in accurate weights.*

<sup>2</sup> *Pride leads to disgrace,  
but with humility comes wisdom.*

<sup>3</sup> *Honesty guides good people;  
dishonesty destroys treacherous people. (Prov 11-NLT)*

God blesses business's that are fair. Honest. If you think you hear from God to be dishonest at work - to not have integrity - that is not God. To think, I can make more profit if I cut the corner on codes and customers - that was not God.

**3. Sex is holy and healthy.** But it is to be enjoyed only in a marital union. Sex was God's idea. And when to enjoy it, God has made this blindingly clear. After God created marriage.

It is only to be experienced between a husband a wife. If you think it is to be experienced between 2 people of the same sex, that is not God talking to you, that was not God. If you hear from God, it is ok, to have sex outside of marriage, well, we are married in the eyes of God, that was not God.

Now, you may not like to pay taxes, be honest in business or reserve having sex until after marriage, it does not make it any less true. To be honest my opinion and your opinion does not matter to God.

And anything you hear, that goes against God's Word, is not from God. In fact, it is sin. And this is the first filter.

Does this word from heaven; this thought, insight, or suggestion, premonition, unction, or tingle; goosebumps, hair-that-stands up on your arms; or even a perceived heavenly authored voice - come from God?

**It is not from God if it does not align and agree with God's Word.** (It could be another god.) Because if it does not, it is not God, but some other voice.

**If what I hear in my heart, contradicts God's Word, I am wrong!** So, why not join Christ followers around the world, who have decided to use God's Word as a litmus test and filter for determining if a voice is from God. I have a prayer for you to do just that. And the prayer begins with my final insight.

**God always-only-ever tells you the truth.**

Father,

God always-only-ever tells the truth. God there is nothing you love more than to keep your word. You are watching and waiting for me to take you at your word. You do not withhold your whisper from those who walk in integrity. The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever.

As in ancient times, and today times, you want to speak to me. Your Word tells me you will hunt me down, to insure I have that blessing. You are a voice I can trust. Surely goodness and mercy will follow me all of the days of my life.

In Jesus Name. Amen.