**BIBLE TALK Radio Broadcast**

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**Reactions to the Voice of God (Part 1)**

Thank you and good morning!

When God speaks what should be man’s reaction? How should we respond to the voice of God? Moses said to the children of Israel of old before they crossed the Jordan River into the promised land*, "Now it shall come to pass, if you diligently obey the voice of the LORD your God, to observe carefully all His commandments which I command you today, that the LORD your God will set you high above all nations of the earth. And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you, because you obey the voice of the LORD your God.”* (Deut. 28:1,2) I am very much concerned that most people in our society today, and even most among those who claim to be Christians do not react properly to the voice of God.

Today, and next week on our program I want to talk about what it means to obey the voice of the Lord by looking at three different men mentioned in the Bible who heard the voice of God but reacted in different ways.

The first one is Pharaoh, king of Egypt: The people of God, the children of Israel were in bondage in Egypt. God sent Moses and Aaron to bring them out of Egypt. It says in Exodus 5:1-2, *“Afterward Moses and Aaron went in and told Pharaoh, ‘Thus says the LORD God of Israel: 'Let My people go, that they may hold a feast to Me in the wilderness.’’ And Pharaoh said, ‘Who is the LORD, that I should obey His voice to let Israel go? I do not know the LORD, nor will I let Israel go.’”*

“Who is the LORD, that I should obey His voice…” – I would call that reaction “rebellion,” -- wouldn’t you? Now Pharaoh asked an interesting question, “Who is the LORD, that I should obey His voice…”

To answer that question look with me Psalm 29 and lets read verses 3-9. As we read this passage consider how many things are said to be done as a result of the voice of the Lord. *“3 The voice of the LORD is over the waters; The God of glory thunders; The LORD is over many waters. 4 The voice of the LORD is powerful; The voice of the LORD is full of majesty. 5 The voice of the LORD breaks the cedars, Yes, the LORD splinters the cedars of Lebanon. 6 He makes them also skip like a calf, Lebanon and Sirion like a young wild ox. 7 The voice of the LORD divides the flames of fire. 8 The voice of the LORD shakes the wilderness; The LORD shakes the Wilderness of Kadesh. 9 The voice of the LORD makes the deer give birth, And strips the forests bare; And in His temple everyone says, ‘Glory!’”* Consider the power of the voice of the Lord.

You remember also in Genesis 1:3 it says, “Then God said, ‘Let there be light’; and there was light.” And over and over again in this chapter it says, “Then God said… Then God said…” and it happened as He said. Heb. 11:3 says, *“By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God…”* That is who God is. He spoke the world into existence. And that is the power of His voice.

When you think about the power of the voice of the LORD, there is only one reasonable reaction. Go back to verse 1 of Psalm 29 – *“Give unto the LORD, O you mighty ones, Give unto the LORD glory and strength. 2 Give unto the LORD the glory due to His name; Worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.”* This is the only reasonable reaction to the voice of the LORD. Now here is Pharaoh and he says, “Who is the LORD, that I should obey His voice…”

The sad thing is this is the reaction of most of the people of our country today. Why would I say that? First of all consider the disrespect that we constantly hear in regards to God’s name. The name of the God of heaven who speaks with power and majesty has probably become the most common slang word of our society. You’ve heard it. “Oh, my God!” OMG If someone wants to express excitement, or if someone wants to vent their hurt or grief, or whatever, this is the expression that has become so common. It is taking the name of the majestic, powerful, glorious God and using it in a frivolous way. It is a show of disrespect for the One who deserves our honor and praise. The Psalmist said as we read earlier, *“Give unto the LORD the glory due to His name; Worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.”*

We also in our society see disrespect for His word. I can remember a time, in my lifetime, that when the Bible was quoted people would listen. People had a respect for the word of God. With many people a “thus saith the Lord” would end all controversy. But now you can quote the Bible on almost any subject, homosexuality, fornication, divorce and remarriage, and people will just shrug their shoulders and say, “Well, that is an interesting point of view.” They are basically saying, “Who is the LORD, that I should obey His voice…?”

But the Lord tells us there are some terrible consequences for those who disregard and disrespect Him and His word. Pharaoh learned that the hard way, didn’t he, when plague after plague after plague came upon him and his people. God sent ten plagues on them. After the tenth plague, it says in Exodus 12:31-32, *“Then he* [that is Pharaoh] *called for Moses and Aaron by night, and said, ‘Rise, go out from among my people, both you and the children of Israel. And go, serve the LORD as you have said. Also take your flocks and your herds, as you have said, and be gone; and bless me also.’”* Pharaoh is saying, Go, serve the LORD, and bless me also. What’s happened to Pharaoh? He has learned who the LORD is, that he should obey His voice.

And this will be true of all today who rebel against the voice of the Lord. God gives us warning. Look with me in 2 Thess. 1: 7-9, *“7 and to give you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, 8 in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power.”* I hope there is no person who can hear me today who will rebel against God and say, “Who is the LORD, that I should obey His voice…” Such a reaction to the voice of God is indeed very serious.

The second man we want to talk about is King Saul. In 1 Samuel chapter 15 we read where God tells king Saul to *“go and attack Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and do not spare them. But kill both man and woman, infant and nursing child, ox and sheep, camel and donkey.’”* (v. 3)  It was time for God’s judgment on Amalek. Saul and his men go and utterly destroy all the people with the edge of the sword, *“But,”* verse 9 says, *“Saul and the people spared Agag and the best of the sheep, the oxen, the fatlings, the lambs, and all that was good, and were unwilling to utterly destroy them. But everything despised and worthless, that they utterly destroyed.”* Now, the Lord comes to Samuel and says, *“I greatly regret that I have set up Saul as king, for he has turned back from following Me, and has not performed My commandments.”* (v. 11) Samuel comes to Saul. And Saul said to Samuel, *“ I have performed the commandment of the LORD. But Samuel said, ‘What then is this bleating of the sheep in my ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?’”*  If you have utterly destroyed them, then why are these sheep and oxen here? Saul said that the people spared the best of the sheep and oxen to sacrifice to the LORD. Later Samuel said to Saul, *“Why then did you not obey the voice of the LORD? Why did you swoop down on the spoil, and do evil in the sight of the LORD? And Saul said to Samuel, ‘But I have obeyed the voice of the LORD, and gone on the mission on which the LORD sent me, and brought back Agag king of Amalek; I have utterly destroyed the Amalekites. 21 But the people took of the plunder, sheep and oxen, the best of the things which should have been utterly destroyed, to sacrifice to the LORD your God in Gilgal.’”* (verses 19-21) How did Saul react to the voice of the Lord? We might call it partial obedience. Saul may have thought since he did part of what God said that he was obedient to the voice of the Lord. But he had not obeyed the voice of the Lord, Samuel says. Partial obedience is not obedience.

How many today respond to God’s commands with partial obedience, thinking they have obeyed the voice of the Lord, when they have not? For example some people contend that they have been baptized as the Lord commanded. “I’ve been baptized,” they say. “I have obeyed the voice of the Lord.” But have they? As I read God’s word I learn that baptism is for people who have been taught the word, who believe it and who repent of sin. Jesus said to the apostles, *“Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.”* (Mark 16:15-16) Baptism is for those who hear the gospel and believe it. And you remember in Acts 2:37 it says, *“Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, ‘Men and brethren, what shall we do?’ Then Peter said to them, ‘Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.’”* Baptism is for those who have heard the word, believed it, and repented. Some people will say, “But I have obeyed the voice of the Lord,” but they were sprinkled as an infant. Is infant baptism obeying the voice of the Lord? As an infant did they hear believe and repent? And also I read where God says in His word that baptism is an immersion in water, not sprinkling or pouring. In Acts 8:38 we read of where *“both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him.”* It would have been unnecessary for both Philip and the eunuch to go down into the water if all Philip was going to do is to sprinkle some water on his head. When it says, “and he baptized him,” that means he immersed him, because that is the meaning of the word baptize. It means to dip, to submerge, immerse. Paul said in Romans 6:4, *“Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism…”* Baptism is a burial in water. But many people will tells us “but I have obeyed the voice of the Lord,” but they have never been buried with Christ in baptism.

Also as I read God’s word I learn that baptism is in order to be saved. Again Peter told the Jews on the day of Pentecost to “*Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins…”* (Acts 2:38) Ananias told Saul of Tarsus, *“And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord.”* (Acts 22:16) But many people today believe they were saved the moment they believed in Jesus and before they were baptized. If they were baptized it was some time later in order to testify of the salvation they had already obtained some days or weeks earlier. They may say “I have obeyed the voice of the Lord” when the purpose for which they were baptized is not the purpose for baptism given in God’s word. I would not want to stand before the Lord in the judgment having been baptized for one purpose when the Lord says to be baptized for another.

The point we are making is that it is possible for people to say “I’ve obeyed the voice of the Lord,” when in actuality they have not, just like king Saul. Obeying the voice of the Lord is not just doing something that is similar to what God has commanded, but it is doing exactly what He has commanded.

I want to talk more about this next week. What does it mean to truly obey the voice of the Lord?

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