

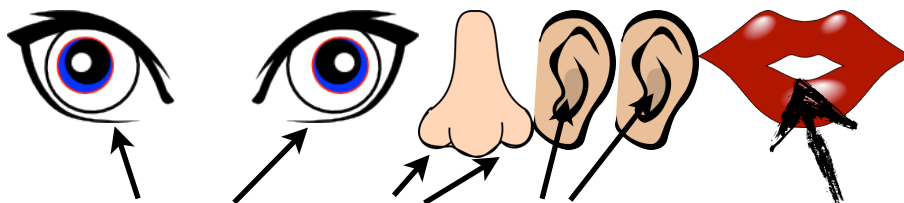
From the HEY! Series because God would like to get our attention!

HEY! When Are You Going to Learn to Keep Your Big Mouth Shut?

A Study by Marylynn G. Stults, Abraham Publishing, Spring 2014

Prayerfully you, the reader of this study, will examine the Scriptures referenced here in context in your Bible asking the Holy Spirit to speak to your heart and teach you to greatly increase your faith and empower, enhance, and improve your life. Amen in Jesus' name.

Preface



Okay, God gave us two eyes, two nostrils, and two ears, but only ONE MOUTH! And okay, so that wouldn't make the evening news, but could He be telling us something?

The two eyes have a singleness of purpose: TO SEE. It is through them we take in valuable information to learn and to grow.

Our two nostrils have a singleness of purpose: TO BREATHE, and through them we take in essential air. Our intellects don't (directly) increase from these, but their relevance to life is undeniable: It would be difficult to acquire any valuable information – to learn and to grow – without oxygen to the brain.

God placed two very important ears on our heads at strategic points and gave them a singleness of purpose: TO HEAR so we can acquire valuable information to learn and to grow. (Oh sure, we can hang things on them and clean wax out of them, but their intrinsic purpose is singular.)

What's left? Ah, the one and only **MOUTH** is the last orifice on the face. Unlike the eyes, nostrils, and ears though, the mouth **MULTITASKS!** Through it, we **EAT, DRINK, KISS, and BREATHE;** but, that's not all. Yup, we flap it and it...

F O R M S W O R D S !

What happens then? They escape the mouth, don't they? And, that's when they start a parade of things happening, some good, some bad. Interestingly, no good thing is getting in that mouth while it's engaged (unless someone puts a sock in it!).

Sometimes words fall on "deaf ears." Well, okay, *oftentimes*. Sometimes words start wars; in the home, one child says, "That's my toy," sister says, "No, it's mine!" and away we go! Abraham Lincoln claimed Harriet Beecher Stowe who wrote the anti-slavery novel, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, was "the little woman who wrote the book that started this great war." Those were some powerful words! Sometimes words bring cheer, joy, healing, and love; sometimes, they are like poison darts; and, sometime words are misconstrued, misunderstood, or mispronounced and result in dire consequences:

Judges 12:5-6

5 And the Gileadites took the fords of the Jordan before the Ephraimites; and when any of those Ephraimites who had escaped said, Let me go over, the men of Gilead said to him, Are you an Ephraimite? If he said, No,
6 They said to him, Then say Shibboleth; and he said, Sibboleth, for he could not pronounce it right. Then they seized him and slew him at the fords of the Jordan. And there fell at that time 42,000 of the Ephraimites.

Whoa! Sometimes, though, thankfully, words create great things. Take, for example, the most important word of all: *The Word*.

John 1:1-5

1 In the beginning [before all time] was the Word (Christ), and the Word was with God, and the Word was God Himself.
2 He was present originally with God.
3 All things were made and came into existence through Him; and without Him was not even one thing made that has come into being.
4 In Him was Life, and the Life was the Light of men.
5 And the Light shines on in the darkness, for the darkness has never overpowered it [put it out or absorbed it or appropriated it, and is unreceptive to it].

Yes, the world itself and everything in it was made by words.

Genesis 1 verses 3, 6, 9, 11, 14, 20, 24, 26, and 29 all begin

And God SAID.....

WHAT? WORDS. That's what He said.

This is a favorite study. It is not long but it is an important one. There are not many places you can go to learn the benefits of silence!

Obviously, it is good to talk (particularly when it's God doing it or we wouldn't be here!); if people weren't talking, there wouldn't be anything for which to use our very important ears; and, if somebody hadn't communicated with the *written* word, the eyes wouldn't have anything to learn through reading. But, let's "hear" and consider the sound counsel of this awesome Scripture:

James 1:19

19 Understand [this], my beloved brethren. Let every man be quick to hear [a ready listener], slow to speak, slow to take offense and to get angry.

I hope, throughout the duration of this study, you will be slow to wrath because of my somewhat insulting terminology; however, I have been around here on Planet Earth for quite a while and I do not recall any communications' course I've studied (or written) that emphasized the importance of shutting your mouth and listening.

There are occasions when probably all of us invert the meaning of the James' Scripture and we are slow to hear, quick to flap our jaw, and speedy to get ticked off.

Today, in this study, we hope to provoke you to many good things including to:

- ◆ actively listen to others,
- ◆ actively *hear* what others are saying (be tuned in),
- ◆ consciously know when to keep your mouth shut,
- ◆ consciously know when to stop your mouth when it's engaged, and
- ◆ actively and consciously know when it is time to speak.

This is a study about wisdom and (key word) HEARING from God! After all, whoever first penned, “Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never hurt me!” must have been a cohort of Satan’s because NOTHING could be further from the truth. Both the good and the damage words do is immeasurable.

I just happened to think:

Since Jesus –the Christ– is the Word, is Satan –the antichrist– the Anti-Word?

I will answer that question: Yes. “Satan” in the Hebrew language (the word is actually pronounced “Satan”) means “opponent, the arch enemy of good: adversary.” In the Greek (pronounced “Satanas”) the word means “the accuser.” See here:

Revelation 12:10

10 Then I heard a strong (loud) voice in heaven, saying, Now it has come—the salvation and the power and the kingdom (the dominion, the reign) of our God, and the power (the sovereignty, the authority) of His Christ (the Messiah); for the accuser of our brethren, he who keeps bringing before our God charges against them day and night, has been cast out!

Whew. What does that tell you? And, about what is he accusing us?

The Call

Fifteen years ago as I was walking out of the intensive care room where my son, Greg, was recuperating from a grand mal seizure, the LORD spoke to me. Thank God Greg had improved tremendously and was on the mend after much prayer and treatment because the Word that I would receive was not one of encouragement for him but of **chastisement for me.**

“When are you going to learn to listen better?”

the LORD asked me bluntly.

I was flat out arrested by Him as I passed by the nurse's station. And I assure you it was the LORD Who spoke to me; the devil is not in the business of speaking effective words of betterment to us.

I still remember exactly where I was all these years later; could even take you there, His loving rebuke was so penetrating.

God is *a/ways* true to His Word. We know from Matthew 18:16 and 2 Corinthians 13:1 that every word will be confirmed. My husband, Mick, had gone ahead to get the car and was waiting for me in the parking lot. I opened the door, climbed in, sat down and, rather than hello, he said,

“When are you going to learn to listen better?”

WHAT?????

Word for word. Verbatim. I nearly fell back out of the car.

Astonished, I looked around. A left, then a right, and SMACK! God's got a TKO, only He wasn't knocking me out, but knocking some sense into me (so I guess it was a TKS). Pretty soon, I learned He wasn't just smacking *me* – hah! – but also sending a message for *general* edification. As a result, I started observing other people's communication skills under His guide, started realizing what a rare and unusual art this activity is:

Listening.

(By the way, I'm *still* learning.) Will be till I breathe my last.)

Anatomically, as we have seen above, the LORD has physiologically defined that, in order for people to acquire learning, it is more important to receive than give.

The Basics

As we saw in Genesis 1 and John 1, God spoke the world into existence. We are made in His image and likeness. We are to speak *our* world – those things which we need and our holy desires – into existence. I pose a question to you for your consideration throughout this study (maybe for the rest of your life):

If you listened and heard what YOU said, would you

I hate her... Her mama was so ugly... I wish I were dead... This new job is killing me...

really want those things spoken into existence?

My kids are driving me crazy... I'm going to kill my boss... She should lose her job...

Would you really want those things to happen?

.....You get the idea. Do we hear ourselves???.....

My cousin, Patty, was a great jazz singer. She sang in bars and night clubs in Manhattan and on cruise ships around the world, and twice she blew auditions for The Tonight Show way back in Johnny's time due to her Irish temper and New York drugs. She was her own worst enemy. She used to tell me that all the time she was singing to Jesus, looking for Him in every joint, bottle, and "trip" she took, possibly because her religious life got messed up early. She was about ten when she was to be water baptized. She had been looking forward to it with eager anticipation because she had thought that when she went down in the water and came up, she would see Jesus. Instead, when she went down in the water, she came up to roaring laughter because the minister's toupee had flipped off and was floating on the water – hilarious to everybody *except* Patty. Honestly, I think it ruined her life. The last time I saw her, she was on a slab in the mortuary waiting to be cremated, looking great because she'd finally found Him! I mean, she looked really good. But still, I wondered if her death were premature. Here's why.

Patty had received the diagnosis of cancer of the brain. It seemed to come and then go into remission. But she'd phone me and say, "I think MY cancer's back" or "My cancer's growing" or "They say MY cancer has spread to..." Every time, she was proprietary about it. I'd say, "It's not *your* cancer; it's the devil's. Give it back to him." But, she actually sort of seemed to embrace it.

Is it possible that she spoke her world into existence? Just asking.

Let's consider a similar situation with my husband.

In 2001, Mick and I had been redoing a large banquet floor in an old theatre when he was struck with a deadly virus in his heart. He had some previous heart trouble history, but apparently the chemicals with which we were working exacerbated his condition. I rushed him to the hospital with him protesting all the way because we needed to finish the job.

After several tests and examinations, a team of heart specialist interns and residents entered his room led by the hospital's leading cardiac surgeon who began to pronounce a litany of horrors: Mick was very ill. Frankly, he reported, he needed a heart transplant; furthermore, he really needed a new liver and kidneys, too, and his lungs were not particularly good, either; further furthermore, and on the other hand, he wasn't really a candidate for these transplants because his heart was unnaturally enlarged and diseased. For some reason, getting a new heart wouldn't work in him; might actually kill him. But then, still, he should talk to the transplant team. AAGH!!!!!!!!!! Mick was pretty much out of it; I was sitting on the foot of his bed and, after I listened respectfully and long enough, I spoke: "I appreciate your concerns and value your opinion, but the Bible says when the report of man does not line up with the report of God, do not receive it."

1 John 5:9-11

9 If we accept [as we do] the testimony of men [if we are willing to take human authority], the testimony of God is greater (of stronger authority), for this is the testimony of God, even the witness which He has borne regarding His Son.

10 He who believes in the Son of God [who adheres to, trusts in, and relies on Him] has the testimony [possesses this divine attestation] within himself. He who does not believe God [in this way] has made Him out to be and represented Him as a liar, because he has not believed (put his faith in, adhered to, and relied on) the evidence (the testimony) that God has borne regarding His Son.

11 And this is that testimony (that evidence): God gave us eternal life, and this life is in His Son.

As I spoke – in fact, in mid sentence – the head doctor turned and (actually, quite rudely) left the room; all of the remaining doctors and doctors-to-be followed suit, except one. He said, “You are doing the right thing. Keep it up.”

After considerable prayer and in a matter of days, we actually went back and finished the horrible job.



It's hard to extricate myself out of this story because this is only the beginning of my husband's long and arduous testimony. Again, this was just 2001; Mick went home to be with the LORD in 2010, so we had nine more years together after this terrible, gloomy prognosis, and without any transplants; however, I'm going to stop here because my point has been made. (Pictured here is a statue Mick made that represents God the Father [the bush as in the Book of Exodus], Jesus [the Cross], and the Holy Spirit [the wind behind].)

The physical conditions of both Patty and Mick were terminal, but our approaches to them differed dramatically. Mick stood on the Word of God; Patty didn't receive it.

Here are some of the standard healing Scriptures Mick and I stood on:

Isaiah 53:4-5

4 Surely He has borne our griefs (sicknesses, weaknesses, and distresses) and carried our sorrows and pains [of punishment], yet we [ignorantly] considered Him stricken, smitten, and afflicted by God [as if with leprosy].

5 But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our guilt and iniquities; the chastisement [needful to obtain] peace and well-being for us was upon Him, and with the stripes [that wounded] Him we are healed and made whole.

and its companion New Testament verse, confirmation given in

1 Peter 2:24

24 He personally bore our sins in His [own] body on the tree [a][as on an altar and offered Himself on it], that we might die (cease to exist) to sin and live to righteousness. By His wounds you have been healed.

Note that the Peter Scripture speaks in the past tense, therefore the Scripture is fulfilled and we can call it done!

My personal favorite which I have prayed faithfully for four decades; I hope you will look it up in other versions and receive more Guide and power:

Psalms 91

1 He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High shall remain stable and fixed under the shadow of the Almighty [Whose power no foe can withstand].

2 I will say of the Lord, He is my Refuge and my Fortress, my God; on Him I lean and rely, and in Him I [confidently] trust!

3 For [then] He will deliver you from the snare of the fowler and from the deadly pestilence.

4 [Then] He will cover you with His pinions, and under His wings shall you trust and find refuge; His truth and His faithfulness are a shield and a buckler.

5 You shall not be afraid of the terror of the night, nor of the arrow (the evil plots and slanders of the wicked) that flies by day,
6 Nor of the pestilence that stalks in darkness, nor of the destruction and sudden death that surprise and lay waste at noonday.
7 A thousand may fall at your side, and ten thousand at your right hand, but it shall not come near you.
8 Only a spectator shall you be [yourself inaccessible in the secret place of the Most High] as you witness the reward of the wicked.
9 Because you have made the Lord your refuge, and the Most High your dwelling place,
10 There shall no evil befall you, nor any plague or calamity come near your tent.
11 For He will give His angels [especial] charge over you to accompany and defend and preserve you in all your ways [of obedience and service].
12 They shall bear you up on their hands, lest you dash your foot against a stone.
13 You shall tread upon the lion and adder; the young lion and the serpent shall you trample underfoot.
14 Because he has set his love upon Me, therefore will I deliver him; I will set him on high, because he knows and understands My name [has a personal knowledge of My mercy, love, and kindness—trusts and relies on Me, knowing I will never forsake him, no, never].
15 He shall call upon Me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble, I will deliver him and honor him.
16 With long life will I satisfy him and show him My salvation.

Luke 10:19-20

19 Behold! I have given you authority and power to trample upon serpents and scorpions, and [physical and mental strength and ability] over all the power that the enemy [possesses]; and nothing shall in any way harm you.
20 Nevertheless, do not rejoice at this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are enrolled in heaven.

More power: Note in verse 20, that Jesus sort of glosses over His statement that the spirits are subject to you, but the spirits *are* subject to you. Just don't get the big head; He's made it clear that your rejoicing should not be over who you are in Christ but what He has made possible for you.

There are so many which you should research, including every miracle recorded that Jesus performed. These are promises to you, for He is no respecter of persons (Acts 10:34).

Back to the saga of my relationship with Patty.

People can fix all kinds of things for other people – for instance their dinner, their cars, and their hair – but no man can fix another's broken heart. You can deliver a package or a pizza, but deliver another from evil? God's job only. And, people can change a multitude of things like tires, their clothes, planes, and their own minds. No matter how hard I tried with varying approaches ranging from pleading to prodding, soft sell to arm twisting, and simple prayerful statements to biblical dissertations, I could not fix Patty, deliver her from evil, or change *her* mindset about the cancer. Why? I honestly believe that she never genuinely heard what I said. She certainly never received it.

Sometimes I wonder why we ever talk at all. At least, we could say the things of life.

Patty might have heard me, prayed, and been healed... or not. Some people do receive healing through medicine; others do not. Some people – like my husband – do receive miraculous healing through speaking the Word of God; others do not. God knows the reason why for all circumstances.

I am a proponent for believing God because the Word and His promises have worked exceptionally well for me. Unlike man's ways which include side effects and invasive surgeries and drugs, God's Word has no such side effects. Isn't it worth a try?

People

Why didn't Patty receive what I said? Or at least consider it? Was the fault mine? Is it because I talked too much and she just closed me out; or, not enough? Was my counsel not worthy of thoughtful consideration, of hearing, of receiving? OR was the fault hers? an inability on her part to listen and receive counsel worthy of, at least, thoughtful consideration? of hearing and, perhaps, receiving? OR was it a little of this, a little of that? Probably.

I did notice that she loved to hear the sound of her own voice.

PEOPLE LOVE TO HEAR THE SOUND OF THEIR OWN VOICES. It is music to their ears.

People hate dead air. They love to fill it up. Have you ever sat back and observed others' conversations underway? Have you witnessed people making personal remarks about themselves only to have others relate the story to *themselves* and change the whole subject to make it about them? They have just effectively (if not politely) usurped the conversation. Sometimes the characteristics of one-upsmanship is the motive. Let's examine some examples. We'll name the participants P1 and P2:

Example #1

P1: I think I'm going to get a Ford Mustang.

P2: You don't want to do that. My sister just got a new Honda.

P1: I don't want a –

P2: Honda has the best warranty, their safety record is blah, and blah blah

P1: But, I want a –

P2: And you can save blah blah, and I will introduce you to blah blah, and the Honda van is the best on the road – you do want a van, right? – blah blah.

Example #2

P1: (near tears) I just lost my job!

P2: Years ago, I had to quit selling insurance, and I started selling those mini barns, but my cousin's boyfriend – or was it her boss – anyway, I started trying to get on at the plant...

Example #3

P1: I have to have gall bladder surgery!

P2: I had mine out and it was just awful! I'm sure yours isn't as bad.

P1: I've got so many stones, they've spilled into my cystic duct!

P2: That's what happened to me, only peritonitis set in, too, and I was in the hospital weeks before they could even stabilize me to operate. I almost died!

P1: Well, I probably *will* die...

At least P1 in Example #3 is probably dying only of exasperation! He might just like a little sympathy, encouragement, and prayer, maybe because he HURTS or he's AFRAID because he doesn't know the promises of God and power of prayer. And P2 is too busy personally relating P1's experiences to his own. In fact, P2 seems to always be anticipating what he's going to say next to usurp the conversation rather than listen to P1 at all.

Examples like these represent commonplace conversations; of course, though, they're in varying degrees. Certainly it is human nature to apply what you have learned to your own experience, but Godly wisdom and common courtesy suggest when and how much to speak about it. There is a time for everything, including, "a time to keep silence, and a time to speak" (Ecclesiastes 3:7b), and there is a time to listen so that you can hear. Quantity of words has nothing to do with quality conversation: "A fool's voice is known by a multitude of words," (Ecclesiastes 5:3b).

Proverbs 10:8 KJV

8 The wise in heart will receive commandments, but a prating fool (a chatterbox) shall fall.

I cannot tell you how many conversations I have been in comparable to these, but worst of all, I regret to say I have been examples of all P1s and P2s at one time or another!

People in all walks of life fall into these categories, whether highly or minimally educated, young or old, male or female, and regardless of race or cultural background. Ah, I know the problem!

IT'S A HUMAN THING! It's that flesh.

Galatians 5:19-21

19 Now the doings (practices) of the flesh are clear (obvious): they are immorality, impurity, indecency,

20 Idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, anger (ill temper), selfishness, divisions (dissensions), party spirit (factions, sects with peculiar opinions, heresies),

21 Envy, drunkenness, carousing, and the like. I warn you beforehand, just as I did previously, that those who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

So what can be done? The Holy Spirit's guide is your answer:

Galatians 5:16

16 But I say, walk and live [habitually] in the [Holy] Spirit [responsive to and controlled and guided by the Spirit]; then you will certainly not gratify the cravings and desires of the flesh (of human nature without God).

Let's read this one again:

Proverbs 10:8 KJV

8 The wise in heart will receive commandments, but a prating fool (a chatterbox) shall fall.

Let's consider this heart of ours and how it can receive.

The Heart

Your recognition of a problem, a shortcoming, and a challenge in your heart is the beginning of resolution.

Take a look at this I think you'll find quite interesting:



Matthew 12:34 KJV

34 O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things?
for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.

A connection between the heart and the mouth seems only fitting when you perceive man's artist renderings of them (here to the right). They truly do resemble one another, don't they?

Those were Jesus' words in Matthew 12:34; let's continue the next few verses:

Matthew 12:35-37 KJV

35 The good man from his inner good treasure flings forth good things, and the evil man out of his inner evil storehouse flings forth evil things.
36 But I tell you, on the day of judgment men will have to give account for every idle (inoperative, nonworking) word they speak.
37 For by your words you will be justified and acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned and sentenced.

Did you ever see *Scared Straight*, the documentary about the horrors of prison life? These words of wisdom should scare us *silent!*

Now, remember earlier my admonishment from the LORD? It was not about talking too much or even unnecessarily or ignorantly speaking, but about ***not listening well enough***. I've tied the two together in this study because they are generally interconnected, however because some people are quiet doesn't necessarily mean they are able listeners; and, likewise, just because some are chatty doesn't mean that they don't listen well when they *are* silent.

IT IS SIMPLY THAT **EVERY SINGLE SOLITARY LAST ONE OF US** COULD BE MORE EFFECTIVE LISTENERS AT LEAST ONE TIME OR ANOTHER.

James was big on bad mouths.

James 3:1-13

3 Not many [of you] should become teachers (self-constituted censors and reprovers of others), my brethren, for you know that we [teachers] will be judged by a higher standard and with greater severity [than other people; thus we assume the greater accountability and the more condemnation].
2 For we all often stumble and fall and offend in many things. And if anyone does not offend in speech [never says the wrong things], he is a fully developed character and a perfect man, able to control his whole body and to curb his entire nature.
3 If we set bits in the horses' mouths to make them obey us, we can turn their whole bodies about.
4 Likewise, look at the ships: though they are so great and are driven by rough winds, they are steered by a very small rudder wherever the impulse of the helmsman determines.
5 Even so the tongue is a little member, and it can boast of great things. See how much wood or how great a forest a tiny spark can set ablaze!

6 And the tongue is a fire. [The tongue is a] world of wickedness set among our members, contaminating and depraving the whole body and setting on fire the wheel of birth (the cycle of man's nature), being itself ignited by hell (Gehenna).

7 For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and sea animal, can be tamed and has been tamed by human genius (nature).

8 But the human tongue can be tamed by no man. It is a restless (undisciplined, irreconcilable) evil, full of deadly poison.

9 With it we bless the Lord and Father, and with it we curse men who were made in God's likeness!

10 Out of the same mouth come forth blessing and cursing. These things, my brethren, ought not to be so.

11 Does a fountain send forth [simultaneously] from the same opening fresh water and bitter?

12 Can a fig tree, my brethren, bear olives, or a grapevine figs? Neither can a salt spring furnish fresh water.

13 Who is there among you who is wise and intelligent? Then let him by his noble living show forth his [good] works with the [unobtrusive] humility [which is the proper attribute] of true wisdom.

Has your heart been pricked at all in these pages like mine has? Would we – could we – quit doing business and be quiet long enough to hear God's Wisdom singing to us and experience His love? Could we go to the throne instead of the phone? Could we quit surfing the Internet or shut off the tube or silence our own mouths and thoughts long enough to see what God has to say?

He speaks to us often in His still small voice.

Elijah the Prophet had just about had it with Ahab and Jezebel. He told the LORD just to take him out but soon an angel came and touched him and told him to arise and eat. Now, please look at this Scripture:

1 Kings 19:9

9 There he came to a cave and lodged in it; and behold, **the word of the Lord came to him**, and He said to him, What are you doing here, Elijah?

(I digress: "The word of the LORD came to him"!!! Isn't that a great phrase, so appropriate for this study. It is used 92 times in the King James Version and I suddenly realized the phrase had a double meaning: Jesus *is* "the Word" – the Word made flesh – so when it says the word came, did Jesus deliver it in person? Wow.)

Let's continue.

1 Kings 19:10-12

10 He replied, I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts; for the Israelites have forsaken Your covenant, thrown down Your altars, and killed Your prophets with the sword. And I, I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away.

11 And He said, Go out and stand on the mount before the Lord. And behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains and broke in pieces the rocks before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake;

12 And after the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire; and after the fire [a sound of gentle stillness and] a still, small voice.

It would appear that the Word of the LORD – Jesus – did *indeed* come to Elijah and **in the blessed quiet**.

The Word of the LORD – Jesus – has indeed come to us in the New Testament and told us of the victory we have in His name, and of our health, wealth, abundant joy, and peace that He has brought us. As you are still – in the blessed quiet – reading His word, contemplating on His word, and waiting upon the Holy Spirit to open up your mind to the understanding of His word, He will speak to you. You will know that it is Him when you experience love as you’ve never before; when what He says lines up perfectly with the Word of God and when it is without condemnation (although perhaps with conviction); when it gives you peace and edification; and when your faith increases. You will know it is Him when you are made a new person and you do not desire to go back.

Thank You, Jesus.

May God bless you abundantly, His will being perfected in your life. Amen in Jesus’ name.

PS:

Just saw the powerful scene from The Bible on the History Channel depicting Lot and his family fleeing the fire and brimstone and was struck with the importance of our being tuned in to hear *and* receive. Lot’s wife was told “Don’t look back,” but...! Most of us know the story whether we are students of the Bible or not, that she, in fact, *did* look back and was immediately turned into a pillar of salt. We may never know – was she willfully and ignorantly disobedient or was she simply not paying attention? While prayerfully not so dramatic as this true story, we probably can all recall an incident in our own lives when, by simply being aware, we could have avoided a serious problem.

Important Notes:

While we greatly use the King James Version of the Bible, for the purposes of this Study, Scripture references are from the Amplified Bible unless other noted. It often gives us a greater understanding of the words used; other versions, such as the NIV (New International Version), New King James Version (NKJV), and New Living Bible (NLB) can help us to have greater understanding by simplifying the English; and the Strong's Concordance has assigned a number that provides the definition of the original Hebrew (Old Testament) and Greek (New Testament) words.

Receiving Christ as your Savior and becoming a Christian – one born of God – doesn't lessen life's trials; it opens your eyes to realize what Jesus has done to help you overcome them even while you are a mortal being, as your faith grows through prayer, reading the Bible, and fellowship. As you mature in Christ, you begin to love as He loves and to see beyond the material realm; you commune with the Holy Spirit, God present both in and with you, Who teaches you, and even empowers you, when you are willing and desirous; hungry for God and the Love only He represents.

There are allegedly as many as 41,000 Christian denominations – mind boggling, huh? – so there are at least that many ways man has found to present God's word. Many are, by their sheer volume, alone, in great conflict with others, yet each believes theirs is the correct interpretation. My point is that you may or may not agree with my studies which most certainly is your prerogative, but they are predicated entirely upon the Written Word of God and, prayerfully, without man's doctrines interjected. I offer these studies to you free, without obligation, and in love and prayerful hope that they are beneficial to you in your Salvation walk. Should you have any problem or disagreement with them, I am even further excited for you should take it to the throne of God and ask Him to clarify what He meant. Proverbs 25:2 says, "2 It is the glory of God to conceal a thing, but the glory of kings is to search out a thing." Be the king God has called you to be!

If, through this website, only one person comes to know Jesus as their LORD and Savior, my life and this effort will have been worthwhile.

I believe The Apostle's Creed which states: I believe in God, the Father Almighty, the Maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord and only Savior, Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; He descended into hell. The third day He arose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven, and sits on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy universal church that Jesus Christ established through the Apostles and Disciples; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting.

Love in Christ and Amen in the name of Jesus,
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