

Introduction:

1. Have you noticed how many people are hard of hearing? They just can't hear very well. And don't think you have to be old to have hearing problems. It can happen to anyone at any time.
2. Pharaoh was a man with a serious hearing problem. When Moses came to him with a message from God, he evidently did not hear very well, Exodus 5:1-2.
 - a. Pharaoh's hearing problem only got worse. Moses worked some miracles before Pharaoh—with the possibility that the miracles might improve his hearing (Exodus 7:1-14).
 - b. When the miracles didn't help Pharaoh's hearing, the Lord sent a series of plagues upon Egypt (Exodus 7-11). The first was to turn the waters of Egypt to blood. God asked Pharaoh, "Can you hear me now?" Poor Pharaoh still couldn't hear.
 - c. More and more plagues came, each one getting a little closer to Pharaoh. With each one, God asked, "Can you hear me now?" Finally, with the death of his firstborn son, at last Pharaoh could hear and he let the people go.
 - d. It is significant to note that the Lord never personally spoke to Pharaoh. That doesn't mean that the Lord never spoke to him at all. It just means that God used Moses to speak to Pharaoh. When Moses came with a message to Pharaoh, that was God speaking through Moses, Exodus 7:1-2. The order was like this: God spoke to Moses, Moses spoke to Aaron, and Aaron spoke to Pharaoh. The plagues were just there to serve as a hearing aid to Pharaoh. When Pharaoh heard the words of Moses and Aaron, then he heard the voice of God.
3. What if God had something He wanted you to hear today? How would He get the message to you? Since Moses and Aaron are not here, how would God get that message to you? Indeed, God does have something He wants you to hear. He does have a message. God is going to ask you, "Can you hear me now?" But how is God going to get the message across to you?

The Lesson:

- I. **God has the right to speak to you.**
 - A. Remember, that was part of Pharaoh's problem (Exodus 5:1). He acted like God had no right to speak to him. How wrong he was! And how wrong is any man today who thinks like that!
 - B. God has the right to speak because He is God, the Creator and Maker of man, Isaiah 44:1-2a. God is the Creator of all men and has the right to do whatever He wills. He has the right to command our ears to hear, because He is the Maker of the ear, Proverbs 20:12.
 - C. While all of this is true, this does not tell us how God speaks to us today. Just like in the case of God's message to Pharaoh, God speaks today through a medium. Moses and Aaron were his mouthpieces in Pharaoh's day. If God says to us "Can you hear me now?" we are not going to hear, because we haven't yet learned who He speaks through. We must look further for our answer.
- II. **God speaks through Jesus.**
 - A. God's message today is through His Son, Matthew 17:5. God's message is not through Moses and the prophets, Hebrews 1:1-2. Pharaoh had to listen to Moses in order to hear God. We have to listen to Jesus in order to hear God.
 - B. God does not have a message or will for mankind apart from His Son, Jesus. All claims that God speaks through a source different from the Son are false claims, John 14:6.
 - C. While it is true that God speaks to us through Jesus, this does not tell us how Jesus speaks to us. Jesus is not personally here on earth to speak to us, so we must look further because we still can't hear.
- III. **Jesus speaks through apostles and prophets.**
 - A. Jesus said that just as the Father had sent Him, He was sending the apostles, John 20:21.
 1. To receive the teaching of the apostles is the same as receiving the teaching of Christ, Matthew 10:1, 5, 40; 1 John 4:6.
 2. What if we decide to be like Pharaoh and reject the message of God's spokesmen? To reject the teaching of the apostles is to reject the teaching of Christ, John 17:8, 14.
 3. The apostles were men specially selected by Christ to be His chosen ambassadors and witnesses (just as Moses and Aaron were ambassadors to Pharaoh), Acts 10:39-41.

- B. During His earthly ministry, the Lord taught the apostles for 3 1/2 years, John 17:8. This prepared them to speak for Him. But what happened after Jesus completed His ministry on earth? Did the Lord have a way to teach the apostles further?

IV. Jesus guided the apostles by the Holy Spirit.

- A. Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit would teach them all things and bring to their remembrance what He had spoken to them, John 14:26.
1. The words spoken by the Holy Spirit to the apostles would be the words given to Jesus by the Father, John 16:13-15. Note also that Jesus had many things to say to the apostles that they were not prepared to receive during His earthly ministry, John 16:12. The Holy Spirit would teach these things to the apostles.
 2. The words spoken by the apostles and prophets are the words that were inspired by the Holy Spirit, 1 Corinthians 2:9-13. If God had not revealed these things unto men, then these things would be forever unknown to men—we would have never heard from God. This proves that God does not have another way that He uses to make these things known to men.
 3. Since the Holy Spirit guided the apostles in what they spoke, we must hear the apostles in order to hear the voice of God. All other claims that men make about hearing from God are false claims.
- B. While it is true that Jesus speaks through the apostles, these men are not personally present on earth today to tell us God's will. Put your hand carefully behind your ear, and listen carefully, you will not hear them. If God says "Can you hear me now?" we are not going to hear because the apostles aren't here on earth today. So how can God make us hear?

V. The apostles speak through the written word.

- A. Paul said that the things that he wrote were the commandments of God, 1 Corinthians 14:37.
- B. The inspired scriptures are the final product of the apostles and prophets as they were guided by the Holy Spirit, Ephesians 3:1-5. Note the following truths that are taught in this text about revelation. The process by which God's will is made known to men is called "revelation." God has "uncovered" or "made known" His will unto men. We are dependent on revelation in order that we may know the will of God. The facts:
1. Truth was made known by **God**.
 2. It is the truth about the mystery of **Christ**.
 3. The mystery of Christ was revealed by the **Holy Spirit**.
 4. It was revealed to the **apostles and prophets**.
 5. The truth was recorded in a **written** form. This written form is what we call the New Testament scriptures.
 6. When we (the sons of men) **read**, we can understand.
 7. Later, in the same book of Ephesians, Paul said that the men who received these writings were "taught by Jesus," Ephesians 4:20-21. How were the people at Ephesus taught by Jesus, when Jesus was never in that city? They were taught by the word Jesus gave to the apostles and prophets! In that same sense, we today have been taught by Jesus.
- C. John shows us that when we have received the written record, it is then that we have heard from God, 1 John 1:1-4; 4:6. Yes, Lord, now we can hear you!
- D. The word that is given is both all-sufficient and final, 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:3. The gospel anticipates no more revelation, Jude 3. The faith was "once for all" delivered. When man receives what was delivered, he has heard the voice of God!

Conclusion:

1. Thank you, Lord! We can hear You now just fine! Since we have heard the voice of God, let us not be like Pharaoh who rejected what he heard. To do so is to bring judgment, Hebrews 12:25.
2. When we hear what the written word says, we have heard from God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, and the apostles and prophets. We have heard heaven's final message to mankind. We must give heed to it and respect it as though the Lord personally spoke it to us!