



GLOBAL JOURNAL OF HUMAN-SOCIAL SCIENCE: A
ARTS & HUMANITIES - PSYCHOLOGY
Volume 14 Issue 8 Version 1.0 Year 2014
Type: Double Blind Peer Reviewed International Research Journal
Publisher: Global Journals Inc. (USA)
Online ISSN: 2249-460X & Print ISSN: 0975-587X

Awareness on the Ways God Speaks to Man: the Socio-Economic Significance

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GJHSS-A Classification : *FOR Code: 170199*



Strictly as per the compliance and regulations of:



Awareness on the Ways God Speaks to Man: the Socio-Economic Significance

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I. INTRODUCTION

From time immemorial, God has always spoken to man in different ways mainly to assist him discover, create, solve problems, improve on his life and environment, among others. Sometimes, man has failed to abide by the directives of God due to ignorance. A good grasp of the various ways the indescribable, formless source of and sustainer of all life communicates is imperative for a better living. Most teachers of truth and divine wisdom have encouraged the awakening of consciousness so as to be able to follow the regular guidance and directives of God for happy living. Those who understand have benefited tremendously and have been able to help humanity advance in various fields such as religion, medicine, science and arts, among others. Just as Klemp (1987) points out that the reason for spiritual enlightenment is not to escape life but to learn how to live it richly and enjoy it. One can be happy even when temporarily deficient of material requisite of well being if one takes and obeys God's words strictly. Man as a spark of God is beyond flesh and blood. Man as an immortal spark of divinity wearing bodies that have spiritual channels

through which God constantly speaks to him. As a spiritual entity, he is never left at any point in time without communication with his owner, God. Those who listen and abide by God's words with love in their hearts shall find love wherever they may be. This is because they have come to the level of understanding that you either obey God or suffer the consequences of egocentrism or self assertion. Twitchell (2004) points out that the voice of God speaks to all who listen. It speaks in various ways using animate or inanimate objects and any person who listens, obeys, and gives himself up to God shall be able to acquire whatever is the person's heart desire such as riches, wealth, healing, happiness, enlightenment or understanding of the divine wisdom. This indicates the various socio-economic benefits associated with knowing the ways God speaks and making good use of it in the advancement of one's life.

Most men that have helped in the advancement of humanity have in one way or the other listened and obeyed the voice of God. As the all knowing and lover of all life, God still communicates to man every day. There has never been a time when man does not have the opportunity to avail himself of the regular guidance and directives of the creator. In other words, God speaks regularly to man as we exist because of the love of God. But out of ignorance, many of us usually forget about our divine heritage and main purpose of existence in this world of duality- good and bad, positive negative, and so many enmesh themselves at the extreme negative pole of life and as such unable to see, hear or understand the language of God. Twitchell (2002) points out that God speaks to all, but how many hears His Voice? It comes from inside man informing him the beauty beyond the earth world; it also comes in the wind, the waters of the river, and through the voices of nature and man.

Hebrews 1: 1-2 points out that God spoke to our fathers in different ways through the prophets, has in this last day spoken to us through his great messenger who he has appointed heir of all things. This is interesting if we understand that apart from speaking to us through his prophets, has spoken through some of His messengers, Jesus, Muhammad, Buddha, Krishna, among others who were the matrix for the distribution of the divine spirit.

Economics as a science of choice implies minimization of waste of time and efforts by making good choices. When we stick to our personal choices in

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spite of the options from God, we make serious mistakes, waste precious time and resources, and complain bitterly as if we have been forsaken. This is often because of lack of listening or understanding of ways the owner of life usually speaks. The ignorance of the various ways God talks to us has adversely impacted on our responses at some crucial periods in our lives. It has been pointed out that knowledge is power and exposure to certain knowledge helps us to do it right. Actually, God has no form and being the source of everything and speaks in the most common ways that most times, it seems difficult to comprehend. It becomes imperative to highlight some of the known ways the owner of life communicates to man.

So, in this paper, it is our intention to expose some of the various ways in which the owner of life speaks to man so as to be in the know and reap the benefits associated with this knowledge. The paper is presented in this order: section two dwells on the different ways God speaks, section three focuses on the socio- economic significance, while section four deals with how to be in a position to easily understand God's words and conclusion.

II. THE DIFFERENT WAYS GOD SPEAKS

Prior to and after the inception of religions, philosophies, metaphysics and other esoteric teachings, God has spoken to man. This is because man is older than religion and a holy child of God, and there is always interaction between man and the immortal creator. Man really is a soul wearing bodies and the coarsest of which is the physical aspect. Klemp (2012) notes succinctly that soul is the true self, the inner, most sacred part of each person. Soul exists before birth and lives after the death of the physical body. As a spark of God, soul can see, know, and perceive all things. It is the creative centre of its own world. This implies that soul or man is beyond what some of us believe it is. The qualities of man as soul are such that an awareness of them puts one in a better position to apprehend and appreciate the flow of communication from the creator.

Klemp further points out that God speaks through the voice of conscience, Holy Scriptures, feelings, and even the positive urgings of other people. Yet there are other ways. God's voice also reaches us through human love, intuition, dreams, the spiritual exercises of ECK (Holy Spirit), or a direct experience with the light and sound of God. Undoubtedly, the owner of life speaks through the Holy Spirit, which is constantly pouring to all life.

Given the above stated, it is our intention to highlight some of the various ways God speaks to man, which includes, among others (i) Holy Spirit (light and sound); (ii) dreams (iii) nudges (iv) intuition (v) golden tongue wisdom (vi) animals and human beings.

From time immemorial, God has spoken to man through the twin aspects of the Holy Spirit. In the Holy

Bible, Act of Apostles 2:1-4 gives accounts of how God spoke through the Holy Spirit in the form of tongue of fire (light) and mighty rush of wind (sound) and the Apostles were inspired to do a lot of things. Besides, Saul on his way to Damascus to attack the Apostles of Jesus, had an encounter with the Holy Spirit, in form of light and voice, and because of his negative intention, he had to suffer sight problem for three days, but eventually recovered (Acts 9:1-18). In actual fact, God has spoken and still speaks to man through the twin aspects of Holy Spirit and this gives the greatest wisdom man needs to tackle life challenges. God spoke to Moses through the light and voice in form of the burning bush.

The word of God which is Holy Spirit is ever coming to us in form of light and sound for an impact beyond reason. Twitchell (2003) points out that knowledge of light alone will give knowledge of life, for light is the source of all knowledge, and sound is the spirit, or life itself. This presupposes that if you avail yourself of the opportunity to listen this way God speaks, you equip yourself with wisdom and the ability and capability to withstand life situations. Klemp (1992) posits that the purification by sound and light (Holy Spirit) is the only way for soul to enter the higher kingdom of God. And the sound is of special importance in that it brings spiritual liberation. Man is lifted above the human consciousness into the higher realms of being.

Recently, a friend was seriously searching for an important document required by his superior officer in his office, but could not locate it. He then relaxed and ask God for guidance. So, after a period of time, he decided to leave his office for an errand. On locking his office, God spoke through a flash of light which drew his attention to a point outside his office where he left the document he was searching inside his office. He was so happy and thanked God.

God speaks to man through dreams. In spite of what most people say of dreams, it remains an important way God speaks to man. Encarta Dictionary (2009) sees dream as a sequence of images that appear involuntarily to the mind of somebody who is sleeping, often mixture of real and imaginary characters, places, and events. Klemp (1999) states that our memory of dreams is a glimpse of the full spiritual life that each of us leads beyond the physical. Dreams are important as they are one of the ways God speaks to you (Klemp, 1997). Dream is an experience in the invisible world of God recalled clearly or with distortion. Accounts abound on how people have been guided through messages got from dreams. A typical example is the symbolic futuristic dream of Pharaoh which was properly interpreted by Joseph. This dream of famine compelled Pharaoh to store foods during the bountiful harvest against the periods of lean harvest and was able to save the people of the area from starvation (Genesis

41: 1-57). Dreams, whether symbolic, past life dreams or any form are ways God communicates to soul.

A woman who accepted marriage with a young man was discouraged and demoralized when she got to know the young man's religious belief. She was in a quandary and despondent situation, so she asked God for guidance and directive. Later, she had a dream of the positive effect of her marrying to the man. Eventually, she jumped into the marriage confidently and concluded that God spoke to her through her dream. Klemp said that dreams touch every level of our life. They may let us glimpse the future, or give suggestions for healing, or share insights into our relationships. Above all, they can and will steer us more directly toward God. From ages, dreams have helped man overcome ignorance of self, reform environment, come up with inventions and escape dangers. Those who have acquired the ability to understand and interpret their dreams can vouch for God's regular communication with man.

It was through dream that the French Tailor, Barthelemy Thimonnier invented sewing machine through getting instruction and guidance. Several years went by and he was not able to conclude his dream project. Consequently, he toyed with the idea of abandoning the project. God spoke again to him through dream state. He was ordered to complete the project within a specified time frame or face untimely death. His obedience gave mankind the sewing machine in 1829 (Encarta, 2009) that revolutionised clothe production, thereby saving man from undue suffering from the vagaries of harsh weather condition.

In addition, when Europe was faced with the prospect of hunger and starvation, God spoke to Christopher Columbus and directed him to go on a voyage to the New World- America. Throughout the preparation for this journey into the "unknown," through the Atlantic and the Pacific oceans, God guided Columbus. Through the discovery of America, Europe and indeed the entire world gained a new lease of life in many respect and a new chapter of world history was opened.

A nudge is another way God speaks to man. It is a gentle divine touch to move somebody into action. Most times we receive this nudge, but ignore it, and later complain, 'if I had known I would have followed the inner nudge'. A young man shared this experience. He was addressing his community under a big tree as it was the custom of his people at the time, whenever someone passed out from the university. Little did he know that somebody was seriously jealous and planned to harm him mysteriously. In the course of his speech presentation, he had a strong nudge to step forward. He spontaneously stepped out. A big snake landed at the initial point he stood. The important point here is that he followed the gentle divine push by God, and escaped harm.

A man heading to a street in Ogbor hill, Aba in Abia State had a nudge to pass through a filling station instead of the normal street. He obeyed and moved along. When he rejoined the street, he was about 20 feet ahead of others walking along with him. On turning to a crash of a trailer, he saw a grievous and fatal accident that killed somebody, and which he would have been one of the victims if not that he followed his nudge.

Intuition is like a compelling force to take action. It is an insight or perception of what to do that is beyond reasoning or analysis. It is like a still small voice that always tells you what to do to make your life better. When you heed to it, it will be clear to you that the guide is beyond reasoning. A man who opted to write a book, requested for God's guidance and direction. While in a library searching for books, he got an insight beyond reasoning on what to do. He quickly understood that God has spoken. He responded to the insight and was happy in the long-run.

During the World War II must of the actions of Harold Wilson of Britain was guided by intuition and nudges. On one of such occasions, Harold Wilson got inner prompting to leave his back seat and go to the front. Having learnt not to play with his nudges, he immediately ordered his driver to stop. When he was seated in the front seat beside the driver, he ordered the journey to continue. Few minutes afterwards, an enemy plane dropped a bomb that exploded very close to the rear of the car. The impact would have upturned the car with devastating effects. However, his added weight in the front helped to stabilise the car and he remained alive to prosecute the World War II with the other members of the Allied Forces until victory was won against Hitler and his own allies, and to the glory of the whole world.

Golden tongue wisdom or day dream is another way God speaks to us. Klemp (1997) states that the golden tongue wisdom is a blending of inner truths with an outer experience of some kind; some everyday activity that you are doing. It is God giving us spiritual message. This reminds me of a young man's experience. He was in quandary whether to go on an errand to a place before attending evening religious programme. He knew going on that errand first may mean being late or absent from his valued programme. He casually said God help me take decision. Suddenly, a big lorry drove passed him, and he saw an inscription on the vehicle, "Do God things first". He quickly took decision and went to the religious activity. He was happy indeed for learning new things in the programme and eventually attended the errand.

In another occasion, a young lady prepared to check her Joint Admission and Matriculation Examination (JAMB) Result. At the front of the yard, her relation came out of one room wearing a T-shirt bearing, 'not available'. She thought of this information from God, but was anxious to go. On arrival at JAMB office, the

queue was so long, and after much struggle and time wasted she got in to check her result. She was told that her result was not available. She quickly recalled the message given to her earlier but she could not heed to it, and had to waste useful time. Divine spirit is always telling us how to run our lives better through the inner and outer communication channels, but because we rely so much on the mind and matter, we do analyse and agitate everything coming from divine spirit, and so we miss the guidance from God. Suffice it to mention that everything in life, animate or inanimate, visible or invisible are fabricated with divine spirit and as such the owner of life can use any medium considered apt to communicate to us.

God also speaks to man through man and animals. One unique thing about the owner of life is that IT can use any form of life to give information to man. IT has no barrier in reaching whoever and wherever, IT wishes to reach. Those who keep pets can tell remarkable stories on how messages have been received through the pets. Everything is connected with the divine force called Holy Spirit or God, and as such can be the avenue for remittance of message to man.

A dog's bark is a signal to the owner, a bird's twitter or song could be giving information and a cat's abnormal behaviour can be a way of giving message. So, this means that to really listen to the voice of God, it is necessary, we be on the alert on these various ways divine spirit talks to us. The voice of God speaks to all who listen; it speaks in the whisper of the wind, the roar of the seas, and the voices birds and animals, in all things (Twitchell, 2004).

It is often said that the voice of man is the voice of God. God sometimes talks to us through our loved ones or even a strange person. Many often we reject valuable advice from man due to ignorance. For instance, one day, a father who is a professional driver visited home in the evening. The daughter who was less than four years old was so happy and welcomed him. She told him to take a bath and sleep. The man knew God was speaking through her daughter, but he thought it necessary to go out and do more work. On entering town, he had a problem he least expected. He now recalled what transpired with his daughter, and accepted that he did not take God's directive serious. He learnt his lesson on obeying God or suffer.

From the aforementioned, it is needful that we train ourselves, and be open to get messages from God in any way possible. This means frequent prayer or spiritual exercises to put us in a state to be able to know when God speaks. In other words, there is the need to maintain constant relationship with the divine spirit. We need to have open heart, be flexible, develop inner trust and confidence in the divine teachers of truth who are the matrix by which Holy Spirit reaches us at our various levels of consciousness.

III. THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC SIGNIFICANCE

God's communication to man has been for a good number of reasons. Its proper, strictly and judiciously appropriation have played unquantifiable role over the years in changing, improving, reforming, transforming and repositioning a lot of things to the benefits of man. Actually, there has never been a time when God left man without counseling, guidance and directive. This is mostly done by the awakened individuals who are instruments and servants of God. This is because as the heirs, holy children, princes, princesses of God, God wants all of us to be useful in the long-run after series of education in the lower worlds were souls exist in various forms. Hence, God devices different approaches to speak with all ITS creatures. Most time, man is unable to catch the message, nevertheless, God usually find a way to make his intentions known to man.

The primitive men were able to face most of their environmental threats and insecurity by implementing the word of God given to them at their own level of understanding. So, they were able to fashion weapons to attack the wild animals, construct bridges, homes and practiced agriculture. The evolution of man's awareness has been a function of his application of messages given through some members of the society who have the ability and capability to grasp the language of God. Emerson, American essayist and poet asserted that each person has the power to transcend the material world and to see and grasp the infinite (Microsoft Encarta, 2009). Those who realise and have this ability easily understand the message and language of God and have been mostly used to reach man.

Undoubtedly, those who have been able to understand the language of God have helped tremendously to improve humanity. Most inventors and reformers were fulfilling the directives of God. Advancement in science and technology, discovery of medication for treatment of certain ailments were because those individuals catch the message given by God. The society is regularly changing because of regular application of messages from God.

Most artists, musicians, poets and writers, among others have listened and tapped from God in different ways. People like Ludwig Van Beethoven, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, George Frideric Handel, Michelangelo, Sir Christopher Wren, Pablo Picasso, Leonard da Vinci and poets and writers like William Shakespeare, Emily Dickson, Charles Dickens, Ralph Waldo Emerson, among others have given humanity uplifting presentations from God.

Proper societal resources management and allocation efficiency has been achieved through individuals' efforts that were able to gain insights,

nudges, dreams and intuitions from God. Eradication of ignorance and mental advancement has been under the directives of individuals that obey the guidance of God. Consequently, societal resources have been judiciously applied which have repositioned man from pauper to prince; from living in caves to mansions.

Philosophers like Thales, Plato, Socrates, Pythagoras, Heraclitus, Aristotle among others gave great enlightenment to man. These individuals search for knowledge and divine wisdom in so many ways and then attained a height in terms of mental and spiritual development, and so helped greatly in awakening the consciousness of man. Mental and attitudinal changes of many people come from these great thinkers. Obviously, one of the greatest diseases of man has been ignorance. To assist man, God has used different classes of people to bring better ideas that eventually impacted knowledge and divine wisdom. Decent methods of doing things are acquired from people who are conversant and familiar with the language of God.

Man at present, enjoys easy means of transportation, communication with people all over the world any time and healing from killer illnesses mainly due to advancement brought about by listening to the words of God in any of the ways God speaks. Really, this situation has helped to reshape the destiny of man. It also means that God has made available everything that man needs at any time, but man has to avail himself of the opportunity to appropriate it for a better living.

From the aforementioned, it is unequivocal that man has benefited tremendously from God's communication, and with more awareness on these various ways God speaks, it presupposes that more advancement in science, arts, technology and medicine, among others is guaranteed.

IV. HOW TO BE IN A POSITION TO UNDERSTAND GOD'S WORDS

Actually, many people have not learned thoroughly on how to grasp the language of God. It requires awakening in understanding. It also involves spiritual consciousness, because the way of spirit is beyond mental analysis. In other words, it involves training by a spiritual giant who knows how to bypass the mind. One divine teacher says that the mind is a good servant but a bad master. Relying on the mind for certain information would be contradicted by the ways of spirit because the ways of spirit is not easily comprehended by the approach of the mind.

However, some of the necessary ways we can be able to get God's messages are as follows: (i) Spiritual exercises, which involves singing a sacred word for a period of time and listen. This exercise requires being relaxed and happy before commencement. Klemp (2000) states "Go somewhere quiet. Sit or lie down in comfortable place. Put your attention on your

spiritual eye, a point just above and behind your eyebrows. With eyes lightly shut, begin to sing a holy word or phrase, such as HU, God, Holy Spirit, or show me thy way, O Lord." It also needs filling the heart with love.

Maintain constant relationship with the angel of light and sound of God. Daily contact with the divine spirit opens the spiritual faculties for easy reception of God's messages. Sitting quiet and imagining a divine teacher of your choice helps to polarize you with the Holy Spirit. This keeps one at alert and open, and it is easy to see and understand the language of God. It should also be pointed that God can use any avenue considered apt to communicate with people. Openness of heart and flexibility helps greatly to succeed. This is one of the reasons why great teachers have encouraged absolute relaxation even when situation is tough and critical. It is not easy to understand God's directive under tension, obsessive anxiety, anger and other vices.

A follow up to this is self discipline. It is difficult to maintain discipline, but with effort and guidance of divine spirit we develop greater awareness needed to be disciplined. We need to do all we have agreed to do and not to encroach on other peoples' property. Discipline also includes doing spiritual exercises regularly, and engaging in spiritual activities. It also necessitates practicing higher virtues such as love, contentment, forgiveness, humility, detachment and chastity. It is pertinent to recall a divine teacher's statement that spiritual consciousness is attained through the activities of truth in consciousness. Interacting with spiritual teachers helps to reform one's consciousness. Reading uplifting and spiritual books have a role in reforming and refining the individual man.

Finally, being grateful and serving others, which are among the greatest ways to express love and keep oneself open play a significant role. It has been pointed that abundance flourishes in a grateful heart. Serving others means giving of oneself, and when you give without expectation of reward, you are directly or indirectly repositioning yourself for divine spirit to always show you ways to live your life better all the time. One divine teacher says that society advances by peoples' selfless act. Those who have contributed to the uplifting of humanity made great sacrifices and were rewarded with the love of God. Twitchell (2002) notes that all things will gravitate to you if you will let love enter your own hearts without compromise.

V. CONCLUSION

The paper has shown that a good grasp of the various ways God speaks is a prerequisite to improve individual life and the society. It is obvious that the pattern of engagement by man has eluded him from knowing the way of spirit. But knowledge is never hidden to any man if in his heart he searches for it. The

individual will be exposed to the position where he can learn better and see clearer. Truly, many people have helped man live a better life owing to good understanding of the language of God. It implies making frantic efforts to grow in awareness since nobody does it for another. This reminds me of a saying that mediocrity is self inflicted and greatness is self bestowed. Aspiration to grasp the language of God places one on the position to have a wider view about life, and be able to distinguish between the way of the mind and the way of the spirit. But spirit is in-charge of everything, and so it is pertinent to rely on it for life sustenance. Twitchell (2004) points out that the true reality in any universe of God is spirit, and whosoever depends on it as the source of his existence and sustenance is indeed a wise man. So, drawing closer to the source of life, Holy Spirit is basically an individual aspiration and not a mass movement.

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