

SILENCE

¹⁰ But Joshua had commanded the army, “Do not give a war cry, do not raise your voices, do not say a word until the day I tell you to shout. Then shout!”

Joshua 6:10

⁷ a time to tear and a time to mend, a time to be silent and a time to speak,

Ecclesiastes 3:7

¹⁰ He says, “Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth.”

Psalms 46:10

⁵ For God alone my soul waits in silence and quietly submits to Him, For my hope is from Him.

Psalms 62:5

I. Silence is golden.

- A. In silence we practice a forgotten discipline.
- B. In silence we let go of our need to control others with our words.
- C. Silence teaches us to let God deal with other people.
- D. Something happens in silence that happens nowhere else.
- E. God is a friend of silence. Are we?
- F. Silence strips us like nothing else. It removes all external scaffolding of pretense and leaves the true self naked before God.

II. God's strange tactics

- A. Silence is more than a lack of activity.
- B. Silence is an entering into our deepest self.
- C. Stillness and silence always characterize thin places--holy ground.
- D. Moses, Elijah, David, John the Baptist, and our Lord, Jesus, all became comfortable with silence.
- E. Moses and the Red Sea / Abraham offering Isaac / Elisha and Naaman the Syrian. God's tactics rarely make sense to us, especially silence.
- F. When God spoke to Job, the wind was involved. (Job 38:1)
¹ Then the LORD spoke to Job out of the storm. ...
- G. When God dealt with Moses and Israel, fire, earthquakes, and lightning were involved.
(Exodus 19:16; Numbers 16:32,33,35)

[Exo 19:16 NIV] ¹⁶ *On the morning of the third day there was thunder and lightning, with a thick cloud over the mountain, and a very loud trumpet blast. Everyone in the camp trembled.*

[Num 16:32-33, 35 NIV] ³² *and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them and their households, and all those associated with Korah, together with their possessions.* ³³ *They went down alive into the realm of the dead, with everything they owned; the earth closed over them, and they perished and were gone from the community. ...* ³⁵ *And fire came out from the LORD and consumed the 250 men who were offering the incense.*

H. When God does a new thing, it is always preceded by unusual and extraordinary silence. (I Kings 19:11-13)

¹¹ 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. ¹² After the earthquake came a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire. And after the fire came a gentle whisper. ¹³ 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?"

III. A biblical theology of silence / Three instances when silence is appropriate

A. Before an impending judgment of God (Revelation 8:1,2)

¹ When he opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour. ² And I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and seven trumpets were given to them.

1. Suddenly number one! I believe God with his right hand is demanding all his Sabbaths at once.
2. This principle means that the Lord is bringing swift judgment against long term sins that have gone unaddressed. (Leviticus 25:4; II Chronicles 36:21; Jeremiah 25:11; Matthew 25:28)

[Lev 25:4 NIV] ⁴ But in the seventh year the land is to have a year of sabbath rest, a sabbath to the LORD. Do

not sow your fields or prune your vineyards.

[2Ch 36:21 NIV] ²¹ *The land enjoyed its sabbath rests; all the time of its desolation it rested, until the seventy years were completed in fulfillment of the word of the LORD spoken by Jeremiah.*

[Jer 25:11 NIV] ¹¹ *This whole country will become a desolate wasteland, and these nations will serve the king of Babylon seventy years.*

[Mat 25:28 NIV] ²⁸ *“So take the bag of gold from him and give it to the one who has ten bags.”*

3. This is always shocking, but it shouldn't be.
(Galatians 6:7,8)

⁷ *Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. ⁸ Whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction; whoever sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.*

- B. Before God intervenes with a great salvation
(Exodus 14:14)

¹⁴ *“The LORD will fight for you; you need only to be still.”*

1. Suddenly number two! I believe God is currently with his left hand restoring all the harvests of our lost years at once! (Joel 2:25)

²⁵ *“I will repay you for the years the locusts have eaten--the great locust and the young locust, the other locusts and the locust swarm--my great army that I sent among you.”*

C. Before an immediate and remarkable presence of God.
(Joshua 6:9)

⁹ The armed guard marched ahead of the priests who blew the trumpets, and the rear guard followed the ark. All this time the trumpets were sounding.

1. Silence precedes all revival. The ark is the symbol of every move of God.
2. We are on the cusp of the greatest outpouring of God in human history. The Lord is calling us from our culture of noise into a season of divine silence.