

AND GOD SAID . . .

In the opening verses of the Bible we are informed that God “said” something before he “did” it! Twelve times in the creation story God “said” what He was about to do. (See Gen. 1:3, 6, 9, 11, 14, 20, 22, 24, 26, 28, 29; 2:18). The purpose of “words”, of course, is to communicate. In the beginning, when God spoke, Jesus and the Holy Spirit were listening. After God created angels, then the whole host of heaven could “hear” what God was about to do. (Gen. 2:1). This seems to be a pattern. God “speaks” first, then “acts”. (By comparison, Jesus “did” first and then “taught” - Acts 1:1). Later, when God spoke through His prophets, the pattern continued. Amos observed: **“Surely the Sovereign Lord does nothing without revealing his plan to his servants the prophets.” (Amos 3:7)** God spoke to Noah then destroyed the earth. God spoke to Abraham then destroyed Sodom. God spoke to Amos then destroyed Israel. When God speaks it is wise to listen. The greatest prophet ever born of woman never performed a miracle (Jn. 10:41), but was privileged to be the “voice” of God (Jn. 1:23). Nothing should take priority over listening to God.

Every word spoken by God is important and accomplishes precisely what He intends (Is. 55:11). The fact that God temporarily permits man to disregard His words is not an accident. It demonstrates His love and longsuffering. Animals and nature, don’t have a choice, but man does. That’s why Jonah could say no to God, but the fish that swallowed him couldn’t.

There are at least two times when Jesus was “amazed” by the actions of men. One involved the unbelief of the Jews (Mk. 6:6) and the other involved the faith of a Gentile (Matt. 8:10). Both instances involved “words”. The Jews didn’t believe the “words” of Jesus, but a Gentile did. While Jesus could not do many miracles at Nazareth, the Gentile’s servant was healed from a distance. The dramatic difference in these stories involved belief and unbelief in words.

Not only are God’s words important, our words are important too. **“For by your words you will be acquitted, and by your words you will be condemned.” (Matt 12:37) “the tongue has the power of life and death (Prov. 18:21).** There is an undeniable connection between our heart and our mouth, for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks (Matt. 12:34). When Isaiah confessed to be a man of “unclean lips” (Is. 6:5) he was thereby confessing the unclean condition of his heart. Fortunately, if any man is in Christ he is a new creation (2 Cor. 5:17).

Please remember that both condemnation and salvation involve words. With the “heart” man believes, but with the “mouth” confession is made unto salvation (Rom. 10:10). Just as an earthly bride says “I do” in order to be married, the Bride of Christ also says “I do” in order to be saved.. The marriage covenant, like all other covenants, is not casual. Covenants are made by deliberately accepting words. So also with our covenant with Christ. Either we believe His words or we don’t. If we “confess” Him on earth, He will “confess” us before the Father in heaven (Matt. 10:32). There is rejoicing in heaven when one sinner repents (Lk. 15:10). Words are important!

Just as the universe was created by God’s command (Heb. 11:3) sinners are also declared righteous by His command. Believers are “born again”, not of corruptible seed, but of the incorruptible, even the Word of God that live and abides forever (1 Pet. 1:23) When God speaks even dry bones can come to life (Ex. 37:4 ff.) When Peter preached at Pentecost 3,000 dying souls were “born again” (Acts 2:41).

As we have said, God’s longsuffering will someday come to an end and everyone will bow their knees and confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father (Phil. 2:10, 11). Remember! **“ . . . the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.” (Heb 4:12)**