

## The Still Small Voice

### Introduction

Of incredible value to the Christian is J.C. Ryle's<sup>1</sup> masterful work, "Holiness"<sup>2</sup>, and the abridged edition, "Aspects of Holiness"<sup>3</sup>. In the chapter "Want of the Times", Ryle makes the statement,

Oh, that people would remember that it was not the wind, or the fire, or the earthquake, which showed Elijah the presence of God, but 'the still small voice' (1 Kings 19:12).<sup>4</sup>

And though Ryle and others are right to emphasise the personal relationship of Christians with God, and use Elijah's encounter at Mount Horeb to home in on aspects of such a relationship, we must be aware of the background to Elijah's experience to fully understand the encounter. Furthermore, we must be aware of the modern abuse of referencing this Scripture to justify an experience. It was because of God's presence that the experience has meaning, and not because Elijah experienced a "still small voice" that God was present. May we look to God rather than an experience, for it is when we encounter God that the experience will be of value.

### The Mountain of God

After Israel left Egypt and made their way to Mount Sinai, Moses ascended the mountain unto God and God told Moses His intention to Covenant with Israel. On the day that this was to occur God descended upon the mountain,

So it came about on the third day, when it was morning, that there were **thunder and lightning flashes** and **a thick cloud upon the mountain** and a **very loud trumpet sound**, so that **all the people who were in the camp trembled**. And Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain. Now **Mount Sinai was all in smoke because the LORD descended upon it in fire**; and **its smoke ascended like the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain quaked violently**. When **the sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder**, Moses spoke and **God answered him with thunder**. The LORD came down on Mount Sinai, to the top of the mountain; and the LORD called Moses to the top of the mountain, and Moses went up.

**Exodus 19:16-20<sup>5</sup>**

Following (or during) the giving of the Law of God, Exodus records,

All **the people perceived the thunder and the lightning flashes and the sound of the trumpet and the mountain smoking**; and when the people saw *it*, **they trembled and stood at a distance**. Then they said to Moses, "Speak to us yourself and we will listen; but let not God speak to us, or we will die." Moses said to the people, "Do not be afraid; for God has come in order to test you, and in order that the fear of Him may remain with you, so that you may not sin." So the people stood at a distance, while Moses approached the thick cloud where God *was*.

**Exodus 20:18-21**

Both the Old and New Testaments<sup>6</sup>, records not just that God entered into covenant with Israel and the giving of the Law (the Ten Commandments and the ordinances that followed), but the

<sup>1</sup> 1816-1900. First Anglican Bishop of Liverpool (1880-1900).

<sup>2</sup> J.C. Ryle, *Holiness: its nature, hindrances, difficulties, and roots*, (Darlington, England: Evangelical Press, 1979).

<sup>3</sup> J.C. Ryle, *Aspects of Holiness* (London: Grace Publications Trust, 1999).

<sup>4</sup> J.C. Ryle, *Holiness: its nature, hindrances, difficulties, and roots*, (Darlington, England: Evangelical Press, 1979), 295.

<sup>5</sup> Unless otherwise stated, verses are from the New American Standard, Updated (1995).

<sup>6</sup> Hebrews 12:18-20. "For you have not come to a *mountain* that can be touched and to a blazing fire, and to darkness and gloom and whirlwind, and to the blast of a trumpet and the sound of words which *sound was such that* those who heard begged that no further word be spoken to them. For they could not bear the command, 'If even a beast touches the mountain, it will be stoned.'"

experience of it by the parties present. God's presence brought a thick cloud upon the mountain with lightning and thunder, but also the sound of a trumpet. But it was no ordinary trumpet. When a trumpet sounds the musician holds the note, or sound, as long as he can before the air in his lungs are fully exhaled and the volume of the trumpet dies away. In contrast, the trumpet on the mountain did not become softer, but "grew louder and louder". In the days prior to synthesised digital effects this indeed would be an uncommon, unusual and unnatural event in its own right; but this was but one of five<sup>7</sup> supernatural events at the giving of the law.

Horeb, the mountain of God at Sinai, was not just the location where God entered into covenant with Israel, it was The Mountain of God, where God revealed Himself.

### **Enter Elijah**

Approximately 800 years after entering into Covenant with God, Israel, in her usual example of the sinfulness of man<sup>8</sup>, was still rebellious against God. And just as Israel whined against God and Moses in the wilderness; so too did they whine and rebel in Elijah's day. In 1 Kings 18 Elijah confronted Ahab, king of the northern kingdom of Israel<sup>9</sup>.

Elijah said, "As the LORD of hosts lives, before whom I stand, I will surely show myself to him today." So Obadiah went to meet Ahab and told him; and Ahab went to meet Elijah. When Ahab saw Elijah, Ahab said to him, "Is this you, you troubler of Israel?" He said, "I have not troubled Israel, but you and your father's house *have*, because you have forsaken the commandments of the LORD and you have followed the Baals. Now then send *and* gather to me all Israel at Mount Carmel, *together* with 450 prophets of Baal and 400 prophets of the Asherah, who eat at Jezebel's table." So Ahab sent a *message* among all the sons of Israel and brought the prophets together at Mount Carmel.

**1 Kings 18:15-20**

In confronting the people Elijah asked, "'How long *will* you hesitate between two opinions? If the LORD (Yahweh) is God (Elohim), follow Him; but if Baal, follow him.' But the people did not answer him a word." (1 Kings 18:21). As 'fence-sitters' the people would not advocate one point of view or the other, but rather went with the status quo. Only after God's sovereign display of His power would the people acknowledge, in an urgent double imperative, that "Yahweh is God (Elohim), Yahweh is God (Elohim)" (v39).

Despite the obvious success on Mount Carmel, of which all of Israel and King Ahab were eyewitnesses, Elijah, following Queen Jezebel's threat to have him executed, ran for his life. It is here, after having prayerfully sought God to answer by fire on Mount Carmel, that we encounter Elijah, the 'prophet of fire'<sup>10</sup>.

Having escaped from Jezebel and having made his way past Beersheba, in the southern kingdom of Judah, Elijah beseeched God to end his life (1 Kings 19:4). God, however, sent to Elijah the *Angel of*

<sup>7</sup> Thunder, lightning, cloud, trumpet and earthquake.

<sup>8</sup> In reading the Old and New Testaments one may question God's choice of Israel as a chosen people. But God in His wisdom chose wisely; for Israel truly represents the flawed character in all of us: sinful, corrupt, unfaithful and prideful. That Israel, the keepers of the Old Testament oracles of God, rejected the Messiah, Jesus, at His first coming is one thing; but that the "Christian" West (i.e. nations of Christian heritage, though it would more true to say they are secular these days, that these nations), in general, reject Jesus Christ – having available to her both Old and New Testaments – shows that we, indeed, are no better, and if anything, worse.

<sup>9</sup> Following the death of King Solomon the Kingdom of Israel was divided into the Southern Kingdom of Judah (compromised of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin) and the Northern Kingdom of Israel (compromised of the other tribes). The Northern Kingdom survived until the invasion of the Assyrians, and the Southern Kingdom until invasion of the Babylonians. For seventy years the Southern Kingdom was in exile, until the decree went forth for Israel to return. Upon their return, Judah, as the Southern Kingdom was called, became the name for Israel's inhabitants in "Judea".

<sup>10</sup> See also, 2 Kings 1:9-15.

*the LORD* to provide food and water. Twice the Angel visited and twice Elijah ate. On the strength of these two meals did Elijah travel to Horeb, the Mountain of God.<sup>11</sup>

At Horeb, whilst lodging in a cave<sup>12</sup>, the Word of the Lord came to Elijah. Elijah's conversation with God, at Horeb, is reminiscent of Moses'. Not only were these two men prophets of the LORD, they were both concerned with God's covenant with Israel, and the unfaithfulness of the people.

Then Moses returned to the LORD, and said, "Alas, this people has committed a great sin, and they have made a god of gold for themselves. "But now, if You will, forgive their sin-- and if not, please blot me out from Your book which You have written!" The LORD said to Moses, "Whoever has sinned against Me, I will blot him out of My book. But go now, lead the people where I told you. Behold, My angel shall go before you; nevertheless in the day when I punish, I will punish them for their sin." Then the LORD smote the people, because of what they did with the calf which Aaron had made.

**Exodus 32:31-35**

Then he came there to a cave and lodged there; and behold, the word of the LORD *came* to him, and He said to him, "What are you doing here, Elijah?"<sup>13</sup> He said, "I have been very zealous for the LORD, the God of hosts; for the sons of Israel have forsaken Your covenant, torn down Your altars and killed Your prophets with the sword. And I alone am left; and they seek my life, to take it away."

**1 Kings 19:9-10**

Furthermore, concerning their encounters with God, they both had similar, and yet distinctly different, experiences.

Then Moses said, "I pray You, show me Your glory!" And He said, "I Myself will make all My goodness pass before you, and will proclaim the name of the LORD before you; and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show compassion on whom I will show compassion." But He said, "You cannot see My face, for no man can see Me and live!" Then the LORD said, "Behold, there is a place by Me, and you shall stand *there* on the rock; and it will come about, while My glory is passing by, that I will put you in the cleft of the rock and cover you with My hand until I have passed by. Then I will take My hand away and you shall see My back, but My face shall not be seen."

**Exodus 33:18-23**

Likewise, at the giving of the Law (as stated earlier) in Exodus 19, accompanying God's presence was thunder, lightning, a thick cloud, a very loud trumpet sound and an earthquake. Like Moses, Elijah too was called to stand on the Mountain as God passed by.

So He said, "Go forth and stand on the mountain before the LORD." And behold, the LORD was passing by! And a great and strong wind was rending the mountains and breaking 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. After the earthquake a fire, *but* the LORD *was* not in the fire...

**1 Kings 19:11-12a**

Elijah experienced the same events that Moses and the people did! However, 1 Kings 19 notes that Yahweh (the LORD) was not "in" these things. It was not, and is not, these "things" that are to be

<sup>11</sup> Rick Warren, in the introduction to his book, *The Purpose Driven Life*, ridiculously claims that "Elijah was transformed when God gave him 40 days of strength from a single meal." It was not the meal that transformed Elijah, but Elijah's encounter with God at Mount Horeb; let alone that it was two meals and not one as Rick Warren asserts.

<sup>12</sup> The actual Hebrew says "the cave" which some suggest refers to the cleft of rock where Moses was positioned when God revealed Himself to him (Exo 33:22).

<sup>13</sup> It is worth noting that God's question is not asked for the sake of informing God, but, seemingly, as a means of questioning Elijah's actions; that is, he was doing what he had not been asked to do. The question, "What are you doing?" or "Where are you" was like asked of Adam after he was disobedient, and asked of Cain after he had slain his brother. Elijah is asked, it would seem, to justify his course of action of fleeing from Jezebel, when God had been with him throughout his ministry.

chased or experienced for the presence of God. Elijah, having read the Torah (the first five books of the Bible) knew of all these events and experiences, and would have expected them; (not to mention that he had already experienced God's revelation by fire and thunder [storm] at Mount Carmel). In contrast to Moses' experience whereby,

When the sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder, Moses spoke and **God answered him with thunder.**

**Exodus 19:19**

God did something completely different for Elijah. The Updated New American Standard renders it,

And after the earthquake a fire, *but* the LORD *was* not in the fire; and after the fire a **sound of a gentle blowing.** When Elijah heard *it*, he wrapped his face in his mantle and went out and stood in the entrance of the cave. And behold, a voice *came* to him and said, "What are you doing here, Elijah?"

**1 Kings 19:12-13 (NAU)<sup>14</sup>**

The King James, New King James and Revised Standard versions renders the "sound of a gentle blowing" as a "still small voice" – the most oft remembered rendering.

And after the earthquake a fire; *but* the LORD *was* not in the fire: and after the fire **a still small voice.**

**1 Kings 19:12 (KJV)<sup>15</sup>**

and after the earthquake a fire, *but* the LORD *was* not in the fire; and after the fire **a still small voice.**

**1 Kings 19:12 (NKV)<sup>16</sup>**

and after the earthquake a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire; and after the fire **a still small voice.**

**1 Kings 19:12 (RSV)<sup>17</sup>**

Likewise, the Jewish Publication Society's 1917 translation of the Tanach (Old Testament) utilises the same rendering,

and after the earthquake a fire; but the LORD was not in the fire; and after the fire **a still small voice.**

**1 Kings 19:12 (JPS)<sup>18</sup>**

Other translations, though, render this verse as,

and after the shaking a fire: -- not in the fire *is* Jehovah; and after the fire **a voice still small;**

**1 Kings 19:12 (YLT)<sup>19</sup>**

After the earthquake came a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire. And after the fire came **a gentle whisper.**

**1 Kings 19:12 (NIV)<sup>20</sup>**

<sup>14</sup> NAU - New American Standard, Updated 1995.

<sup>15</sup> KJV - King James Version.

<sup>16</sup> NKJ - New King James Version.

<sup>17</sup> RSV - Revised Standard Version.

<sup>18</sup> JPS - Tanakh (1917), Jewish Publication Society.

<sup>19</sup> YLT - Young's Literal Translation (1862/1898).

<sup>20</sup> NIV - New International Version (1984).

And after the earthquake a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire. And after the fire **the sound of a low whisper**.

**1 Kings 19:12 (ESV)<sup>21</sup>**

After the earthquake there was fire-- but the LORD was not in the fire. After the fire there was **a tiny whispering sound**.

**1 Kings 19:12 (NAB)<sup>22</sup>**

After the earthquake -- fire; but the LORD was not in the fire. And after the fire -- **a soft murmuring sound**.

**1 Kings 19:12 (TNK)<sup>23</sup>**

Whilst Brenton's English translation of the Septuagint<sup>24</sup>, renders it,

and after the earthquake a fire; *but* the Lord was not in the fire: and after the fire **the voice of a gentle breeze**.

**1 Kings 19:12 (LXE)<sup>25</sup>**

In striking contrast to the other translations, the New Revised Standard renders this verse as,

and after the earthquake a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire; and after the fire **a sound of sheer silence**.

**1 Kings 19:12 (NRS)<sup>26</sup>**

Similar to Young's Literal Translation and others, a modern literal rendering of the Hebrew is, "a barely audible whisper"<sup>27</sup>. But the New Revised Standard's rendering is an attempt to convey more deeply what the Hebrew is trying to say. Following the extraordinary displays of God's presence and power – though God was not IN these things, but the source of these things – was the tangible, palpable, whisper, or silence, in which God revealed Himself. It is here, when we compare Elijah's encounter with Moses', that we appreciate what happened.

Where God revealed Himself to Moses with the sound of a trumpet, the revelation to Elijah is in a barely audible whisper. It was not the events occurring around him that caused Elijah to cover his face. God's awesome displays of power are not mandatory signs of God's presence and revelation. It is foolishness to stereotype God into a set course of action, response or display. God acted in a way which was foreign to Elijah's expectation. God is still God, no matter how dramatic and no matter how innocuous. Elijah covered his face at the AUDIBLE voice of God, softly spoken, or silent, as it was. Where Israel trembled at the thundering, booming, trump of God, Elijah trembles at God's silence.

### **Comparisons and Contrasts**

Furthermore, Elijah is contrasted to Moses by way of attitude. The people sinned before God and Moses interceded on their behalf, seeking their forgiveness. Elijah, however, had virtually given up, and sought God's judgment against their sin. Both men encounter God on the Mountain, but both are very different characters. Another point is that though we may see God in action at times, a lack of visible outworking, by God, does not mean inaction on God's part.

<sup>21</sup> ESV - English Standard Version (2001).

<sup>22</sup> NAB - The New American Bible.

<sup>23</sup> TNK - Tanakh (1985), Jewish Publication Society.

<sup>24</sup> Septuagint – A 3<sup>rd</sup> to 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC translation of the Old Testament Hebrew Scriptures into Greek.

<sup>25</sup> LXE - The English Translation of The Septuagint Version of the Old Testament (LXE) by Sir Lancelot C. L. Brenton, 1844, 1851, published by Samuel Bagster and Sons, London.

<sup>26</sup> NRS – New Revised Standard.

<sup>27</sup> Michael Coogan, ed., *The New Oxford Annotated Bible* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 525.

And like Moses, Elijah anointed his successor,

Now Joshua, son of Nun, was filled with the spirit of wisdom, since Moses had laid his hands upon him; and so the Israelites gave him their obedience, thus carrying out the LORD'S command to Moses.

**Deuteronomy 34:9**

Elijah set out, and came upon Elisha, son of Shaphat, as he was plowing with twelve yoke of oxen; he was following the twelfth. Elijah went over to him and threw his cloak over him.

**1 Kings 19:19**

But unlike Moses, it seems that Elijah missed something in God's revelation in silence. When questioned a second time about his reason for coming to Horeb Elijah replied exactly as he did before the experience. What was Elijah supposed to learn, what did he fail – at this point in time – to learn?

There he came to a cave, where he took shelter. But the word of the LORD came to him, "Why are you here, Elijah?" He answered: "I have been most zealous for the LORD, the God of hosts, but the Israelites have forsaken your covenant, torn down your altars, and put your prophets to the sword. I alone am left, and they seek to take my life." ... When he heard this, Elijah hid his face in his cloak and went and stood at the entrance of the cave. A voice said to him, "Elijah, why are you here?" He replied, "I have been most zealous for the LORD, the God of hosts. But the Israelites have forsaken your covenant, torn down your altars, and put your prophets to the sword. I alone am left, and they seek to take my life."

**1 Kings 19:9-10,13-14**

Apparent success or failure in Elijah's ministry was not for Elijah to decide, Elijah was required only to be obedient to God. In "failure" Elijah sought for God to end his life (v4); but in a surprising twist God revealed Himself, not in an awesome display of His might and power, but in the silence of supposed inactivity. Obedience and not the show of outward success is what Elijah was called for, just as with Moses.

**The Mount of Transfiguration**

Another similarity worth mentioning is that both Moses and Elijah appeared at Jesus' transfiguration on the mount, c.f. Matthew 17, Mark 9 and Luke 9. In a vision, the disciples present with Jesus saw these two men, figures and representative of the Law and the Prophets. How apt, that these two men, whom the "Lord pass by", again were present, when a cloud covered and surrounded the mountain and God spoke from the cloud. At hearing the audible voice of God, Jesus' disciples, "fell face down to the ground and were terrified" (Mt 17:6). Certainly not the response of today's Still-Small-Voicers.

**Today's Still Small Voice**

Much can be said and illustrated by the "Still Small Voice", and certainly many a good man has referenced Elijah's encounter with God in regards to relationship and prayer in the Christian life. But let us remember the context and setting of Elijah's day to understand the intent of the inclusion of this incident in 1 Kings.

Unfortunately, many a Biblically illiterate "hireling", today, calls upon 1 Kings 19:12 as merely a proof-text for hearing the supposed "voice" of God (i.e., the Holy Spirit). Infatuated by their own perceptions, and grandiose claims, they repeat the presumption of Elijah and yet claim illumination and spiritual maturity. Elijah thought he knew God's presence – having known the Word of God and read the experience of Israel at the giving of the Law. But God revealed Himself to Elijah differently than what He did to Moses. Today's "ministers", especially the Word-Faith variety and those

influenced by them, talk of the "Still Small Voice" in the same way: this is how God reveals Himself! Is it? We can NOT pigeon-hole God to a set formula or action: HE is GOD and will reveal Himself as He chooses to, not necessarily in the manner "ministers" expect Him to. But amazingly, the very verse, concerning Elijah's encounter, which "ministers" use to justify their ideas, is actually the text which demolishes their own arguments. It is the voice of correction and fear of the LORD.

Is today's "Still Small Voice" valid? Is hearing the "Still Small Voice" the voice of the Holy Spirit? Are the advocates of this teaching, teaching Biblical doctrine?

The Word-Faith ilk talks of hearing the 'still small voice'. To some a literal whisper, to others a voice in their head (to put it plainly). So-called ministers stand upon the platform/pulpit and show off their supposed spirituality (and "relationship" with God) by introducing statements with, "Yes Lord, I'll say that," or, "Thank you Lord," when they sought a way to word a thought. Then there's the "ministers" who profess obedience to the voice of God by saying, "God just told me to act the fool before you. I'm a fool for God. God said to stand on my head." And obediently, they follow the directive. Fools, indeed, they are.

Kenneth Copeland, talking about "character", says,

Character does what is right when there is no one around to see you do it. For instance, let's say you're in a public restroom—maybe at church, at a restaurant or at work—and after you wash your hands, you take the paper towel you used to dry your hands and throw it in the trash can...but you miss and it lands on the floor. Do you stop and take the time to pick up the paper towel and drop it in the trash can? Or, do you just keep on heading out the door, leaving the paper towel on the floor for someone else to pick up thinking: *Well, I was in a hurry... Besides, they pay people to clean up the bathrooms.* Never mind the fact that you heard that "still, small voice" in your spirit say, *Go back and pick it up—and wipe off the sink where you splashed water all over, while you're at it.*<sup>28</sup>

So it was the "still, small voice" and not our conscience? And what of the non-Christian who "hears" the voice in his head, that is, his conscience, and does the same? What, the Christian needs to be prompted by God, but the non-Christian doesn't?

Copeland is intent on teaching that the "still, small voice" is what Christians must seek to hear,

*If we, as believers, are ever going to receive God's specific instructions for our lives, we must first obey the general instructions He has given us.*

We must hear and obey the first and second commands God has given us in His written Word before we will be able to **hear His still, small voice giving us more detailed instructions about our daily lives.**<sup>29</sup>

The Still-Small-Voicers of today seem to neglect Scripture which says that, "your young men shall see visions, your old men shall dream dreams" (Acts 2:17). In dreams and visions did God speak to the first century Christians. In a vision, whilst in a trance (Acts 10:10) did Peter talk with God; in a vision did Paul believe that he was to preach the Gospel in Macedonia (Acts 16:9-10), and was encouraged by God (Acts 18:9). It wasn't a "Still Small Voice" which guided them.

And in considering the Lord's appearance to Paul (Saul of Tarsus) note the experience,

Now Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest, and asked for letters from him to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if

<sup>28</sup> Kenneth Copeland, *Building Character Builds Protection*, [http://www.kcm.org/studycenter/articles/protection/build\\_protection.php](http://www.kcm.org/studycenter/articles/protection/build_protection.php), cited 16 Dec 2006.

<sup>29</sup> Kenneth Copeland, *Orders from Headquarters*, [http://www.kcm.org/studycenter/articles/holyspirit/orders\\_headqtrters.php](http://www.kcm.org/studycenter/articles/holyspirit/orders_headqtrters.php), cited 16 Dec 2006.

he found any belonging to the Way, both men and women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. As he was traveling, it happened that he was approaching Damascus, and suddenly **a light from heaven flashed around him**; and **he fell to the ground** and **heard a voice** saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?" And he said, "Who are You, Lord?" And He *said*, "I am Jesus whom you are persecuting, but get up and enter the city, and it will be told you what you must do." The men who traveled with him stood speechless, **hearing the voice but seeing no one**. Saul got up from the ground, and though his eyes were open, he could see nothing; and leading him by the hand, they brought him into Damascus. And he was three days without sight, and neither ate nor drank. Now there was a disciple at Damascus named Ananias; and the Lord said to him in a **vision**, "Ananias." And he said, "Here I am, Lord." And the Lord *said* to him, "Get up and go to the street called Straight, and inquire at the house of Judas for a man from Tarsus named Saul, for he is praying, and he has seen in a vision a man named Ananias come in and lay his hands on him, so that he might regain his sight." But Ananias answered, "Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much harm he did to Your saints at Jerusalem; and here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call on Your name." But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen instrument of Mine, to bear My name before the Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel; for I will show him how much he must suffer for My name's sake." So Ananias departed and entered the house, and after laying his hands on him said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road by which you were coming, has sent me so that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit." And immediately there fell from his eyes something like scales, and he regained his sight, and he got up and was baptized;

#### Acts 9:1-18

The theophany experienced by Saul of Tarsus shows that the voice of God was certainly not small or still, but rather audible enough for all present to hear.

And so, though it is written that, "your young men shall see visions, your old men shall dream dreams" (Acts 2:17), we can not be so rigid as to say that God can not, or will not, reveal himself in other ways. Nevertheless, the "Still Small Voice" of popular conception is not necessarily that way.

*To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice; and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. And when he brings out his own sheep, he goes before them; and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. Yet they will by no means follow a stranger, but will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers.*

John 10:3-5

*My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.*

John 10:27

It is a shame that some are so eager to chase the "voice" of "God" that they fail to hear the Word of God. To such, the experience is more real, more meaningful, more exciting and more fulfilling than reading the Holy Scriptures and meditating (studying, considering and reflecting) upon them.