


Intro.

- A. It is marvelous that our Creator communicated with us after making all the universe for us!
 - 1. In fact, thru his creation, He speaks, **Ps. 19:1-3**
 - 2. We find ourselves singing, *How Great Thou Art!*
 - 3. God spoke to the early fathers, & He has spoken to us in these last days thru His son, **Heb. 1:1-2**
- B. While God is the Gt. Communicator, there are times that we are baffled by His silence.
 - 1. Because of His silence, there are some who conclude – “God has turned His back!”
 - 2. Today, we listen to God’s silence to learn valuable lessons.

Discuss.**I. WE ARE NOT THE FIRST TO QUESTIONS GOD’S SILENCE.**

- A. Many have asked for God to manifest Himself.
 - 1. At Calvary, the *soldiers* & the *chief priests* called for Christ to *come down & save thyself*, **Mt.27:40, 42**
 - 2. Satan challenged Jesus to demonstrate His diety, **Mt. 4:6**
 - 3. It was a wicked & adulterous generation that asked for a *sign f/ heaven*, **Mt. 16:4**
- B. Isa. asked God to intervene, rending the heavens & melt the mts. to cause the adversies to tremble in
God’s Presence, **Isa. 64:1**
 - 1. Man is temporarily impressed w/ such, but that kind of fear is short lived. (like driving slow after wreck)
 - 2. Israelites impressed by shaking of Mt. Sinai, but demanded an idol while Moses => receiving Law **Ex32**

II. GOD SEEMS TO BE SILENT IN OUR SEARCH FOR KNOWLEDGE.

- A. Secrets of earth & of nature = not hid f/ God.
 - 1. Yet, 1000’s died while waiting for polio prevention.
 - 2. Although, research on AIDS & cancer continue, & oil.
 - 3. For centuries man shivered in the cold while underneath the earth’s surface were vast deposits of coal\\
- B. Why all the secrecy? Why all the silence?
 - 1. Would we really want to like in world where everything was known? *discoveries to make.*
 - a. How many of us would say, *Don’t tell us...no more hills to climb, symphonies to compose,* 
 - b. We have a zest for discovery. Accomplishment gives gt. satisfaction. Invention is exhilarating.
 - 2. From infancy, the fascination of discovery is stimulating.
 - a. The zeal for discovery helps us to appreciate value! (c. **Mt. 13:44-46**)
 - b. Ponder the curiosity of the angels (**1 Pet. 1:12**) & man (c. **Mt. 7:7**)
 - c. God knows how healthy curiosity can be for us, **Mt. 6:33.**

III. GOD SEEMS TO BE SILENT IN OUR STRUGGLE WITH ADVERSITY.

- A. We ask, “*God, why do I have to enduring this pain? Why this suffering?*”
 - 1. Job wished to present his case before God, **Job 23:3-4**
 - 2. There are some who no longer serve God because they believe He did not answer their prayer.
- B. Need to remember that our vantage point is *very* limited, shallow & incomplete.
 - 1. We usually reason: *all pleasure is good; all pain is bad.*
 - 2. We want every story to end – “...*and they lived happily ever after!*”
 - a. James teaches us that some valuable lessons are learned thru suffering, **Jas. 1:2-4**
 - b. Paul learned to appreciate the benefit of suffering for himself (**2 Cor. 12:10**), & for others **Rom. 9:3**
- C. Like the Heb. language, life often needs to be read backwards. *Your statutes.*
 - 1. Suffering can be beneficial, **Psa. 119:71** – *It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I may learn*\\
 - 2. The college of hard knocks builds character!

IV. GOD SEEMS TO BE SILENT IN OUR STRUGGLE AGAINST MORAL EVILS.

- A. How many times have you wondered, “*Why doesn’t God step in & do something?*”
1. In every age with its atrocities, people question God’s silence.
 2. Why are there drugs which cause so much destruction, disease, divorce & death?
 3. Why doesn’t God respond to wickedness as He did in Sodom? *Has God gotten soft?
- B. Man was created as a ***free moral agent***.
1. God’s side of that equation is that God has imposed limitations upon Himself.
 2. If you will study the parable of the tares (**Matt. 13:24-29**)
 3. Good, strong Christian influence is a deterrent to sin (c. **Matt. 5:13, 16**).
 4. Governments are ordained of God to curb lawlessness, **Rom. 13:3-4**.

Concl.

- A. God has not promised that we will be immune to all suffering.
1. His silence does not prove His absence.
 2. There is a rule in education, personal work, salesmanship, etc. –
As long as they’re quite, they’re thinking right!
 3. It is best to assume that God’s silence is a reflection of His longsuffering w/ mankind, & His wisdom.
- B. Remember that promise that is full of assurance in **Rom. 8:28** -- *we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose.*
1. ***“Behind the dim unknown standeth God
Amid the shadows, keeping watch above His own.”***
 2. If I am going to have the proper respect for what God has said, then I must also respect what He hasn’t said (i.e., His silence).
 3. When we walk with the Lord, in the light of His word, What a glory He shed on our way.
While we do His good will, He abides with us still; And with all who will trust & obey.

Not a burden we bear, not a sorrow we share, But our toil He doth richly repay;
Nor a grief, nor a loss; not a frown, nor a cross, But is blest if we trust & obey.

Trust & obey, for there’s not other way To be happy in Jesus, but to trust & obey!!!