

SIGN LANGUAGE

- **Mark 7:31-35 (KJV)** And again, departing from the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, he came unto the sea of Galilee, through the midst of the coasts of Decapolis. And they bring unto him one that was deaf, and had an impediment in his speech; and they beseech him to put his hand upon him. And he took him aside from the multitude, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spit, and touched his tongue; And looking up to heaven, he sighed, and saith unto him, Ephphatha, that is, Be opened. And straightway his ears were opened, and the string of his tongue was loosed, and he spake plain.
- Jesus spoke to the man in his own language: **sign language!**
- Can you imagine what went through this deaf man's mind? He must have thought, He's speaking my language. He's not asking me to understand him. He wants me to know he understands me!
- He's not questioning me or accusing me. He knows exactly what I've been going through. He knows I haven't rejected him. He knows I want to hear his voice and speak to him. He knows my heart wants to praise him. But I can't do any of these things unless I receive his miraculous touch. He must know I want this.
- What did Jesus see, both then and now? What was he hearing, both in this deaf man's heart and in the hearts of multitudes today? HE WAS HEARING A CRY WITHOUT A VOICE. It was a cry of the heart, bottled up, unable to be expressed. Now Christ himself groaned with a cry that couldn't be uttered. He was giving voice to the cries of all who can't.
- Think of the many nights this deaf man cried himself to sleep because nobody understood him. Not even his mother or father could tell what he spoke. How often he tried to explain how he felt, but all that came out were painful, awkward sounds. He must have thought, "If only I could speak, just once. If only my tongue were loosed for a minute. I could tell someone what's going on in my soul. I would scream, 'I'm no dummy. I'm not under a curse. And I'm not running from God. I'm just confused. I've got problems, but nobody can hear them.'"
- Yet Jesus heard the thoughts of this frustrated man's heart. He understands every inward groan that can't be uttered. The Bible says our Lord is touched with the feelings of our infirmities. And he felt the pain of this man's deafness and tongue-tied condition.

- God has also spoken to us in "sign language" to prove His love:

Isaiah 7:14 (KJV) Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a **sign**: Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

Acts 4:30 (KJV) By stretching forth thine hand to heal; and that **signs** and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus.

Mark 16:20 (KJV) And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with **signs** following. Amen.

Mark 16:17 (KJV) And these **signs** shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues;

Luke 21:25-28 (KJV) And there shall be **signs** in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.

Hebrews 2:3-4 (KJV) How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him; God also bearing them witness, both with **signs** and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?

- In Luke 18:13, we read of a man who went to church to pray. He stood in the back by himself, removed from the crowd. He was so desperate, all he could do was look down and pound his chest. **He was using sign language**, to say, "Lord, hear my heart's cry. I'm tired of my emptiness. I need an encounter with you. I want to know who you are for myself. You alone understand what's in my heart. And only you know what I'm going through. I can't pray, because I'm all bound up. I need your touch, Jesus. Have mercy on me!"
- **God still communicates in sign language!**