

New St. James Presbyterian Church
Sunday, February 17, 2019
Rev. Dr. David Thompson

“Intuitive Wisdom”

Judaism:

“God was not in the earthquake wind or fire. After the fire there came the sound of a still small voice.”

So, do Mothers-in-law have intuition?

Jeremy had been single for a long time. One day, he excitedly told his mother that he'd fallen in love at last and was going to get married. She was obviously overjoyed. Jeremy then told his mother, "Just for fun, Mum, I'm going to bring over 3 women and you try and guess which one I'm going to marry." His mother agreed.

The next day, Jeremy brought 3 beautiful women into the house and sat them down on the couch and they all chatted for a while. Then Jeremy turned to his mother and said, "Okay, Mum. Guess which one is going to make you a Mother-in-law?" She immediately replied, "The red-head in the middle." "That's amazing, Mum. You're right. How did you know?" She said with a smile: "I don't think that I am going to get along with her!"

Practically speaking what is intuition? Oprah Winfrey is a great communicator and she says this about intuition: “It’s really more of a feeling than a voice, a whispery sensation that pulsates just beneath the surface of your being. I listen to proposals, ideas and advice. Then I go with my gut, what my heart feels most strongly. And I often tell my friends; **When you don’t know what to do, do nothing. Get quiet so you can hear the still small voice.**”

Sometimes God can draw very near to us: Here is Elijah’s experience. How did God draw near? Elijah, when we came across him this morning, was deeply discouraged and thinking about ending his life. Queen Jezebel was out to kill him. He was running for his life. In the wilderness he sat down under a tree and asked that he might die; “It is enough!” he said. “Take away my life.”

At first an angel ministered to him. He found a cake baked on hot stones and a jar of water. And then God spoke to him and asked him just what he thought he was doing there? Elijah said that he felt that he was alone. He was the last prophet alive. The rest were dead.

Then the word of the Lord came to him telling him to stand on the mountain before the Lord, for the Lord was about to pass by. There was a great wind strong enough to smash rocks. God was not in the wind. There was an earthquake, but God was not in the quake. And after that a fire and **then a still small voice.**

There is no doubt in the literature of the world, that great minds all respect this still small voice within, that we call **intuition.**

Aristotle believed that it was the source of scientific knowledge and Einstein agreed with him. Joyce Brothers with her PhD in psychology said, "Trust your hunches!" And ancient Lao Tzu said, "The power of intuitive understanding will protect you from harm until the end of your days." How many a woman has protected herself, in potentially dangerous situations, by listening to her intuition, and how many have regretted not listening!

Do men have intuition? You bet they do. Do they listen? Well that's another question altogether! Do men stop to ask for directions or keep on driving? One man was asked that, and he said that is why we invented GPS! But seriously, I want to know, is this still small voice **God**, within us?

Parts of the Jewish tradition thinks so and many Christians have wedded that part of the Jewish tradition into their thinking as well. St John said: "However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth." This was seen as a dialogue between God's Holy Spirit and one's own spirit which leads to the truth.

According to some experts in the field of personal Psychology, we can get good at accessing this inner voice and learn to trust it in difficult situations. Its purpose is guidance, not fortunetelling or advice as to how to win the lottery. There is a sacred quality to this faculty- one that unifies us with all creation.

There are many voices within us that demand our attention aren't there? - not all of them are wise or good!

Fear plays a huge role, some of it good and some of it immobilizing. Guilt has a voice, self justification has a voice, so does neediness and strong emotions. But the true inner still small voice **is recognizable**, because it moves us towards **love for ourselves and others**. There is this God-like quality in it. In the end it will bring us to PEACE. Often there is excitement with it or clarity or just plain relief!

There is some fabulous guidance as to how to go about hearing this still small voice within. For me the simplest and the best insight comes from the well-known Vedic thinker and medical doctor, Deepak Chopra. **He teaches that the physical heart beating in our chests, has a lot of circuitry in it, far more than it needs simply to go on beating.** He sees the heart as linked to feelings and the cosmic computer, or what has been called by Lynne McTaggart, the Field of Consciousness outside of us.

Chopra says: *There is a very interesting mechanism that the universe has to help you make spontaneously correct choices - the sensations in your body. Consciously put your attention on your heart and ask your heart what to do. Then wait for the response - it may be the faintest level of feeling - but it's there in the body. Only the heart knows the correct answer, the heart is intuitive; it's holistic, it's contextual, it's relational. It does not have a win/ lose orientation. It taps into the cosmic computer - the field of pure potentiality, pure knowledge, and infinite organizing power - and takes everything into account. At times it may not even seem rational, but the heart has a computing ability that is far more accurate than anything that is within the rational limits of thought."*

Conclusion? The intuition is centered in the heart - thus that is the best place to seek guidance. I think that our great faith recognizes that God, if invited, can come to dwell within the heart, and is there, amazingly enough, for us to consult for guidance, through our intuition- its that slight feeling, felt throughout the body, when something is not right, and something gloriously is right!

For instance, Chopra tells the story of Sheila and Simon her child. Simon was born out of wedlock. Her family, who were Catholics, could not accept this out of wedlock pregnancy. Sheila realized that she could not raise this child alone, and although distraught that she could not keep it, gave it up for adoption. When the child was born, they both started to cry, and she held him close to her heart. She felt her heart beating with his in unison. She received no counseling and for 6 days she bottle-fed the little boy. She called him 'Simon' as the sole condition for the adoption. When Simon reached the age of 21, Sheila returned home to England, hoping for a meeting with him. She hired a detective to help her find 'Simon'.

Meantime she moved into Oxford. She often took walks among the dreaming spires of Oxford, captivated by the Medieval air of the city. One afternoon she walked through the meadows down to the river bank. An Oxford eight rowing crew was practicing nearby. She says; "All at once an eerie feeling crept up my spine. For no reason my adrenaline started pumping, my palms grew sweaty and my mouth dry. My mind became very alert, and I heard the word 'Simon' ringing in my ears. I rushed back to my friend's house, stunned. I lay on the sofa in front of the fire, feeling very cold, shaken and confused. **Somehow, I knew that my son was a student at Oxford and that I had seen him rowing on the river that afternoon.**

Then a second wave of insight swept over her and she said 'I know something I shouldn't know. He is studying medicine. I had no idea where this state of mind came from,' she reported.

Her friends found a college roster and sure enough it contained a listing for her son. Sheila, not knowing what to do next, did nothing. Her detective called and gave her a report of the details that she had discovered through her intuition. The detectives were amazed at what she already knew. At first these uncanny insights did not lead to a reunion. Simon's adoptive family urged him to reject these efforts as those of an unwanted woman in their lives. It took another 9 years before mother and son found the courage to meet each other.

Nine years later Simon by then a practicing physician in Oxford asked her to come into his home and be welcomed as a member of his family. She came and he suggested one day that they go for a walk along the banks of the river. By chance he picked the exact spot where she had first seen him on the rowing team nine years before.

She told him of her intuition, and he was mesmerized. "It's true," he said in a halting voice, "I was rowing that day and I remember looking up to see a woman standing alone on the riverbank. I felt the hair rise on the back of my neck. My spine tingled, and I became very agitated. She seemed to be watching me. Then the thought flashed into my head, She is your mother!" They walked on in silence It was impossible to comprehend how they had been brought together, but they felt that something **supernatural** had occurred.

Sometimes God can draw very near to us.

They walked into the Chapel at Merton College. Simon took off her gloves and gently held her hands while they prayed together in gratitude. Her tears seemed to wash away the pain in her heart that had been there for so long, leaving only love and forgiveness. She was suddenly free from her old anger and loneliness.

Deepak says something very interesting next: “The world ‘in here’ is meant to flow into and merge with the one ‘out there’ and if we oppose this flow, we only postpone the day when the mind reaches out to restore the natural scheme of things.”

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After I came back from the States I was living in Stratford. I had made several attempts to reconnect with a couple who were our friends, without success. Our last address for them was in St. Thomas. We had gone to what we supposed was their house and had left a note. They were not in a phone book and the internet did not turn up anything and so we gave up looking for them.

One evening I had **a very heavy feeling on my chest**. It was a feeling of foreboding. I told my wife that I thought I needed to go for a walk to sort myself out. So, I put on my coat and started to walk asking myself what this feeling was about? As I walked, listening to my heart, it became very clear to me that **we had a good friend who was dying**.

I returned home to tell my wife. Because she knows me well, she did not immediately discount what I was saying, but asked: “Is it someone in Stratford?” “I said I didn’t think so.” Is it someone in the States? “No, I said I don’t think so.” “Is it someone in Ingersoll?” I said, “No I don’t think so.” Well she said; “Why don’t you try Facebook?” I did so and saw on the right-hand side a friend request from the very friends we had looked for in St. Thomas.

I clicked on it and saw in the first post on their site a notice that my dying friend was in Sakura House, a hospice in Woodstock. I knew immediately what that heavy feeling of foreboding had all been about.

I contacted them. I found out from his wife that she too had been searching for us with no result for a long time. But she had, **on that very day** that I went for a walk had made one last attempt to get in touch. Immediately the first name that came up in her search was mine. So about two hours before I went for that walk, she had made a friend request to me. We were able to spend the last three weeks of his life together. We talked of many things and it was an amazing reunion.

What is it for you? What might happen if you really listened to the voice in your heart? As Oprah Winfrey says: “I often tell my friends; When you don’t know what to do, do nothing. Get quiet so you can hear the still small voice.” For me, intuitive wisdom, the still small voice, comes from God.

Are we listening?