

# Deuteronomy 5:26

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For who is there of all flesh, that hath heard the voice of the living God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as we have, and lived?

## Analysis

The rhetorical question 'For who is there of all flesh, that hath heard the voice of the living God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as we have, and lived?' emphasizes Israel's unique privilege and the danger of divine encounter. The phrase 'living God' contrasts Yahweh with lifeless pagan idols—He is dynamic, active, and speaking. That Israel survived hearing God's voice demonstrates divine grace and restraint. This verse acknowledges that unmediated exposure to God's holiness would destroy sinners. The marvel is not only that God spoke but that the people lived, validating God's covenant mercy.

## Historical Context

No other ancient nation claimed to have heard their deity speak audibly to the entire populace. Pagan religions relied on priests interpreting omens, dreams, or ecstatic utterances. Israel's experience was categorically unique—direct verbal revelation from the living God to the whole covenant community. This established Israel's Scripture as uniquely authoritative, grounded in public, historical revelation rather than private mystical experiences or human speculation.

## Related Passages

**James 2:17** — Faith and works

## Study Questions

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1. How does this verse emphasize the uniqueness of biblical revelation compared to pagan religions' claims?
2. What does survival after hearing God's voice teach about divine mercy restraining His just wrath against sin?

## Interlinear Text

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לֹא לֹא שָׁמַע רַבָּשׂ אֲשֶׁר בְּשֶׁר כָּל מֵכֶן  
H3588 H4310 H3605 For who is there of all flesh H1320 H834 that hath heard H8085 the voice H6963

מִתְּוֹךְ שָׁאשׁוֹן מִתְּוֹךְ מִתְּוֹךְ מִתְּוֹךְ אֱלֹהִים  
God of the living speaking out of the midst of the fire H3644 H784 H1696 H8432 H2416 H430

לְבָנִים

as we have and lived

H2421

## Additional Cross-References

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**Deuteronomy 4:33** (Kingdom): Did ever people hear the voice of God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as thou hast heard, and live?

**Romans 3:20** (Parallel theme): Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.