

# 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

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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

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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

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**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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כִּי	מִי	כָּל	בָּשָׂר	אֲשֶׁר	שָׁמַע	קוֹל
H3588	H4310	H3605	H1320	H834	H8085	H6963
For who is there of all			flesh that hath heard the voice			
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אֱלֹהֵי	חַיִּים	מְדַבֵּר	מִתּוֹךְ	הָאֵשׁ	כָּמֹנֹה	
H430	H2416	H1696	H8432	H784	H3644	
God of the living		speaking out of the midst		of the fire		
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וַחַיִּי:						
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.