

John 12:29

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

The people therefore, that stood by, and heard it, said that it thundered: others said, An angel spake to him.

Analysis

The crowd hears the sound but interprets it diversely: some say thunder, others angels. This demonstrates spiritual perception's variation—identical phenomenon, different interpretations. Their natural explanations miss supernatural reality. This parallels Paul's Damascus road companions who heard sound but didn't understand (Acts 9:7). Spiritual truth requires spiritual discernment (1 Cor 2:14). The divergent interpretations show that divine revelation doesn't automatically produce understanding. Hearts must be prepared to receive God's word.

Historical Context

Thunder was sometimes interpreted as divine voice in ancient Judaism (Ps 29). The crowd's varied responses reflect different spiritual sensitivity levels, providing realistic historical detail validating the account.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. What does the crowd's varied interpretation teach about spiritual perception's necessity for understanding divine revelation?
2. How can we develop greater spiritual sensitivity to recognize God's voice?
3. What divine communications might we be misinterpreting as 'thunder'—natural rather than supernatural?

Interlinear Text

ὁ οὖν ὄχλος ὁ ἐστὼς καὶ ἀκούσας ἔλεγον
G3588 therefore The people G3588 that stood by and heard it said
G3767 G3793 G2476 G2532 G191 G3004

βροντῇ γεγονέναι ἄλλοι ἔλεγον Ἄγγελος αὐτῷ
G1027 that it thundered others it said An angel to him
G1096 G243 G3004 G32 G846

λελάληκεν
spake
G2980

Additional Cross-References

Revelation 14:2 (Parallel theme): And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps: