

3. It's God's gentle whisper that moves the heart.

¹¹ "Go out and stand before me on the mountain," the Lord told him. And as Elijah stood there, the Lord passed by, and a mighty windstorm hit the mountain. It was such a terrible blast that the rocks were torn loose, but the Lord was not in the wind. After the wind there was an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake. ¹² And after the earthquake there was a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire. And after the fire there was the sound of a gentle whisper. ¹³ When Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his cloak and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave.

1 Kings 19:11-13

Mount Carmel is not the way to go. The dramatic events don't change people's lives, but My Voice does. You don't need the miraculous, you need Me.

...and after the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire; and after the fire a sound of sheer silence.

1 Kings 19:12

It's a tender moment in the middle of all the displays of power and violence of the last few days. It's a moment for Elijah to experience God's presence and peace.

And then God speaks again – "What are you doing here?" And Elijah says "I've done your work but now everyone's turned against you and I'm the only one left who still worships you." It's the same conversation.

What's changed? It's still a nightmare situation. Jezebel is still trying to kill Elijah. On the mountain where God effectively married Israel, Elijah is reminded that God cares for individuals, and speaks to them in a still small voice. He is intimately with Elijah.

"Don't let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God, and trust also in me." John 14:1

"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid." John 14:27

In John 14:16 Jesus promises the disciples "the Advocate" – in Greek that particular name for the Holy Spirit is 'paraclete', which means "One who comes alongside to help."

A God who loves us, cares for us, and is alongside us when we're scared and when life's falling apart.



How expectations defeat us and how God's grace reinvigorates us.

1 Kings 19:9-18

Historical timeline of today's scriptural reading: It's approximately fifty years after King Solomon has passed. Israel is divided into a northern and southern kingdom, called Israel and Judah.

Elijah was God's prophet to the Northern Kingdom of Israel during the great apostasy of King Ahab and Queen Jezebel about 874bc to 853bc. King Ahab did evil in the Lord's sight by marrying the daughter of a Phoenician king and adopting her religion of Ba'al worship. (Fertility god of the Canaanites)

So God sends Elijah, and he also sends a drought. At the height of this drought Elijah goes and meets Ahab, and he essentially challenges the Ba'al priests and Asherah priests to the spiritual equivalent of the shootout at the O.K. Corral.

So not only did 850 prophets show up on Mount Carmel, (450 Ba'al and 400 Asherah) but also Elijah, all by himself on the other side.

The outcome is a dramatic victory by God over Ba'al worship on Mt. Carmel

⁴⁰ Then Elijah commanded, "Seize all the prophets of Baal. Don't let a single one escape!" So the people seized them all, and Elijah took them down to the Kishon Valley and killed them there. 1 Kings 18:40

When Ahab got home, he told Jezebel everything Elijah had done, including the way he had killed all the prophets of Baal. ² So Jezebel sent this message to Elijah: "May the gods strike me and even kill me if by this time tomorrow I have not killed you just as you killed them." ³ Elijah was afraid and fled for his life. He went to Beersheba, a town in Judah, and he left his servant there. 1Kings 19:1-3

1 Kings 19:9-18

There (Elijah) came to a cave, where he spent the night. But the Lord said to him, "What are you doing here, Elijah?"¹⁰ Elijah replied, "I have zealously served the Lord God Almighty. But the people of Israel have broken their covenant with you, torn down your altars, and killed every one of your prophets. I am the only one left, and now they are trying to kill me, too."

¹¹ "Go out and stand before me on the mountain," the Lord told him. And as Elijah stood there, the Lord passed by, and a mighty windstorm hit the mountain. It was such a terrible blast that the rocks were torn loose, but the Lord was not in the wind.

After the wind there was an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake.¹² And after the earthquake there was a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire. And after the fire there was the sound of a gentle whisper.¹³ When Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his cloak and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave.

And a voice said, "What are you doing here, Elijah?"¹⁴ He replied again, "I have zealously served the Lord God Almighty. But the people of Israel have broken their covenant with you, torn down your altars, and killed every one of your prophets. I am the only one left, and now they are trying to kill me, too."

¹⁵ Then the Lord told him, "Go back the same way you came, and travel to the wilderness of Damascus. When you arrive there, anoint Hazael to be king of Aram.¹⁶ Then anoint Jehu grandson of Nimshi to be king of Israel, and anoint Elisha son of Shaphat from the town of Abel-meholah to replace you as my prophet.¹⁷ Anyone who escapes from Hazael will be killed by Jehu, and those who escape Jehu will be killed by Elisha!¹⁸ Yet I will preserve 7,000 others in Israel who have never bowed down to Baal or kissed him!"

1. Unfulfilled expectations with God lead to despair.

Elijah thought if God won, everything would be put right.

Answer me so these people will know that you, O Lord, are God and that you have brought them back to yourself." 1 Kings 18:37

"May the gods strike me (Jezebel) and even kill me if by this time tomorrow I have not killed you just as you killed them." 1 Kings 19:2

Remember what Elijah says, I am the only one left, and now they are trying to kill me, too." 1 Kings 19:10

What does God say?¹⁸ Yet I will preserve 7,000 others in Israel who have never bowed down to Baal or kissed him 1 Kings 19:18

God says to Elijah, When you arrive there, anoint Hazael to be king of Aram. 1 Kings 19:15

God is saying "I'm going to do some things through Hazael you can't even imagine.

Apostle Paul writes in the N.T. For who can know the Lord's thoughts? Who knows enough to give him advice? Romans 11:34

- **Don't quit on God because life isn't going your way.**

Isaiah 40:21-31

2. In the midst of great trials God graciously meets you.

He sat down under a solitary broom tree and prayed that he might die. "I have had enough, Lord," he said. 1 Kings 19:4

And look what the LORD does for him. ...as he was sleeping, an angel touched him and told him, "Get up and eat!"⁶ He looked around and there beside his head was some bread baked on hot stones and a jar of water! So he ate and drank and lay down again.⁷ Then the angel of the Lord came again and touched him and said, "Get up and eat some more, 1 Kings 19:5-7