

Hearing God's Voice

I Kings 19

We all find ourselves in situations in the earth where we seek to know God's will and direction so that we can proceed properly. Some of these circumstances are tiny problems bearing minimal pressure, while others are major crisis' driving us to our knees and causing us to pour out our complaint before God. We pray and cry out to God in the middle of our crisis and need. We want to hear from heaven. We need direction from above so that we can have clarity on how to proceed down here. And so we listen, hoping for the heavens to open and God's voice to be as powerful as thunder and clear as lightning declaring His sovereign will in our situation.

Elijah was an Old Testament prophet who was a true man of God. At one time his life on planet earth got so bad that Elijah despaired of life (I Kings 19:3-5). He had given up and just stopped in his tracks, overwhelmed by his desperate situation. During this time God came to him and ministered to him (I Kings 19:5-8). The Lord strengthened His dear prophet and got him back on his feet. But God wanted to give Elijah more than outward directions or a temporary jump start. Rather than instructing him what to do next, the Lord began to teach him how to hear beyond the external. The Lord began to share with him how to be led by an inward union that no outward circumstance could destroy. God began to teach him a lesson concerning hearing His voice. I believe the things the Lord shared with Elijah back then may be able to encourage us today.

And, behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind."

The first thing to pass before Elijah was a great and strong wind. Although the Lord passed by before the wind, the Lord was not in the wind. This movement caused even mountains and rocks to break in pieces, but it did not reach into the heart of Elijah. We might pray for a mighty wind or move of God to break us forth and out from our troublesome situation. We might think we need a wind that can carry us in its strength to make us do what we will not do, picking us up and moving us even against our will. "Lord, make me move and go where You want me. Be like a wind that pushes me into Your direction so that I do not miss Your will! Move in my surroundings and make what is supposed to happen, happen. Open the right door, close the wrong door. Guide me to do what I am not sure to do." But in that we still do not sense Him.

"And after the wind an earthquake;

but the Lord was not in the earthquake:”

The next presentation that came before Elijah was an earthquake, but once again, God was not in it. How convenient would it be for God to just shake our earth to move and change it according to what He wants to happen? We may think that we needed a powerful deliverance service, or radical blast from the Almighty to rock our world into shape. If our troubles reside in immovable circumstances, then we could find ourselves praying for God to reach down and make the earth move according to our needs. At times we may hope that the voice of God will come forth like the roar of a mighty lion, shaking the earth with His thundering authority, but remember that it was a Lamb, small and slain, who opened the seals in the book of Revelation. But even when the earthquake comes, our heart does not perceive the Lord that we love to be in it.

***“And after the earthquake a fire;
but the Lord was not in the fire.”***

Third to come before Elijah was a fire. When the fire comes to us, we may turn to find strength in the outward flames. We may listen to fiery preaching of the Cross trying to inspire our soul to do what it does not want to do. It may be the best message of the Cross that we have ever heard, but we are still unmoved for an external fire will not motivate us from deep within. We may look at and hear about the altar and the need for sacrifice, understanding the need for the sacrifice to be consumed, and yet all that head knowledge sits far away and removed from our inward turmoil.

“And after the fire a still small voice.”

Finally and quietly, the Lord came in a way so different from all the others. There in the quiet, in the unspoken-ness of deliverance and the stillness of external force or pressure, we perceive the Lord Himself. There is this small voice coming from within us. The Old Covenant command is replaced with an inward union. It is a little Lamb slain, going the way of the Cross, ever taking the path that His nature eternally dictates by life. The Father need not yell instructions to Him or push Him in the right direction. Deep within, from our innermost being, we know this voice, it is the very spirit of Christ written upon the tables of our heart. It is not His counsel, advise or instruction that we are hearing... it is the essence of His Person that we are perceiving, the presence of the indwelling Christ. It is this One that speaks without speaking. His image and nature always define God's will in all things - a Lamb, slain and given, poured out and obedient to Divine Love. He is one with the Father in His mind, spirit, and nature, and now He is our Life. As His temple, we can be lead and constrained by an inward voice that is much louder than all external commands or logical solutions.

The Answer Is Coming!

Hallelujah! The answer comes with just a little Lamb in the midst, overcoming our thoughts and reactions. He is becoming the fulfillment of all our needs. He is becoming our answer not just now in this crisis, but forever throughout all eternity! We are married to the Lamb and through His Cross we have been united with Him in a oneness that defines our path both now and forever. Our souls may have poured out their complaints before His face, but now we can exalt in the glorious union we will experience with Him! Our low places are being made high and the crooked paths are becoming straight. Precious things of His Life are being formed in us through these temporal situations and we can rejoice in the eternal weight of glory that is being revealed in us! Whom have we to fear or what situation should worry us, for they will all work together for His increase because we love Him.

Today, in our circumstance, in our desire for guidance and need to hear His voice; will we find Him? As our hearts separate unto Him alone, we will be more sensitive to the movements of His Life in and through us then to our need for an answer to an earth situation. He will lead us where we in and of ourselves would not go. God will gird us up in His Son, for we now walk in oneness with Christ in our daily situations. We can pick up our cross daily and remain united to His nature rather than casting it off due to outward signs that don't point to Jesus. This is the path that all who are being conformed to the image of the Son must take, the path of the Cross. May we follow the Lamb in union and oneness wherever His eternal spirit within leads, even unto death.***