Abide in Me

John 15:4

Bible studies for disciples who make disciples



Volume 9 - Number 3

The Week of October 22, 2023

Unrivaled When God Whispers 1 Kings 19:9-21

Welcome to Week Six in our series on the life of the prophet Elijah. In our previous discussion, we watched Elijah flee from God's call upon his life because of the death threat issued by Jezebel. The mighty prophet was overwhelmed with despair and begged God to take his life. Out of the abundance of His compassion, God began to graciously restore Elijah with food and rest. Next, God leads Elijah to Mount Horeb where in a profound encounter with God Elijah is gently rebuked and ultimately renewed with a fresh vision for ministry.

OBSERVATION (What does the passage say?)

Before your GG gathers, read through the passage at least twice and perform the following prompts:

- Place a Δ over each time God's Name and all associated pronouns are used.
- Underline the first sentence of verse 9. Write in the right margin Exodus 33:19-23.
- Draw a square around the word *behold* in verses 2 and 13.
- Draw a circle around God's identical questions to Elijah in verses 9 and 13.
- Place brackets around Elijah's "rehearsed speech" in verses 10 and 14.
- In the left margin of verse 10 write *Half-Truths*.
- Double underline the command God gave to Elijah in verse 11.
- Double underline the command God gave to Elijah in verse 15.
- Circle all the occurrences of but in verse 11.
- Draw a frame around the phrase the sound of a low whisper (v. 12).
- Circle the word *cloak* in verses 13 and 19 and draw a line connecting them.

9 There he came to a cave and lodged in it. And behold, the word of the Lord came to him, and he said to him, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" 10 He said, "I have been very jealous for the Lord, the God of hosts. For the people of Israel have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword, and I, even I only, am left, and they seek my life, to take it away." 11 And he said, "Go out and stand on the mount before the Lord." And behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind tore the mountains and broke in pieces the rocks before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind. And after the wind an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake.

12 And after the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire. And after the fire the sound of a low whisper. 13 And when Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his cloak and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave. And behold, there came a voice to him and said, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" 14 He said, "I have been very jealous for the Lord, the God of hosts. For the people of Israel have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword, and I, even I only, am left, and they seek my life, to take it away."

15 And the Lord said to him, "Go, return on your way to the wilderness of Damascus. And when you arrive, you shall anoint Hazael to be king over Syria. 16 And Jehu the son of Nimshi you shall anoint to be king over Israel, and Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abel-meholah you shall anoint to be prophet in your place. 17 And the one who escapes from the sword of Hazael shall Jehu put to death, and the one who escapes from the sword of Jehu shall Elisha put to death. 18 Yet I will leave seven thousand in Israel, all the knees that have not bowed to Baal, and every mouth that has not kissed him."

19 So he departed from there and found Elisha the son of Shaphat, who was plowing with twelve yoke of oxen in front of him, and he was with the twelfth. Elijah passed by him and cast his cloak upon him. 20 And he left the oxen and ran after Elijah and said, "Let me kiss my father and my mother, and then I will follow you." And he said to him, "Go back again, for what have I done to you?" 21 And he returned from following him and took the yoke of oxen and sacrificed them and boiled their flesh with the yokes of the oxen and gave it to the people, and they ate. Then he arose and went after Elijah and assisted him.

INTERPRETATION (What does the passage mean?)

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Read 1 Kings 19:9-14
1. Why did God lead Elijah deep into the Sinai Peninsula to Mount Horeb?
2. On Mount Horeb, God met with Elijah and asked him: "What are you doing here?" Why does God ask him this question?
3. Filled with self-pity, Elijah is preoccupied with half-truths, self-righteousness, and self-importance. In Sunday's
message, Pastor Paul spoke of the toxin of self-pity. What is self-pity and why does it possess a subtle danger for a believer?
4. How does God help Elijah confront the story he is telling himself? Put another way, how did God turn Elijah's thinking around?
Why wasn't God's presence in the wind, earthquake and fire?

What did it mean for God to manifest Himself in a low whisper? Why did He whisper instead of shout?

Read 1 Kings 19:15-21

5. God provided Elijah with a fresh vision and ordered Him to go back the way he came and do what God said. How is a sense of purpose helpful in pulling us out of despair and self-pity?
6. God gave Elijah a clear assignment, including giving him an associate in Elisha. What difference would a friend make when he was tempted to despair?
APPLICATION (How does the passage apply to our lives?) 1. Has God ever asked you a similar question to the one He asked Elijah? (vss. 10, 14)
2. Have you ever had a moment when you realized that the story you were telling yourself was not true at all? How did you respond?
3. Have you ever experienced God speaking to you in a low whisper? What are the benefits of listening to His voice?
4. Have you ever experienced a time when God directed you back to where He wanted you to be? How did God make His way plain to you and what was that like?
Practical Steps this Week:
1. Set a timer for 15 minutes each day and practice being still before God. Try to get away from any distractions and just be silent in His presence.
2. This week, chart a plan for taking a Technology Timeout for your mental health.
3. Who is one person in your life with whom you can share your burdens?
4. How can you help a friend who is being misled by self-destructive thoughts?

Sermon Notes: When God Whispers
1 Kings 19:9-21