

A Whisper in the Storm

1 Kings 19:9-12 “And he came there to a cave and stayed there. And behold, the word of the LORD *came* to him, and He said to him, “What *are* you *doing* here, Elijah? And he said, “I have been very zealous for the LORD, the God of Hosts, for the children of Israel have forsaken Your covenant, thrown down Your altars, and have slain Your prophets with the sword. And I, I alone, am left. And they seek to take my life away. And He said, “Go forth and stand upon the mountain before the LORD.” And, behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind tore the mountains, and broke the rocks in pieces before the LORD, *but* the LORD *was* not in the wind. And after the wind was an earthquake, *but* the LORD *was* not in the earthquake. And after the earthquake was a fire, *but* the LORD *was* not in the fire. And after the fire *was* a still, small voice.”

I Kings 19:12 recounts that Elijah heard a still, small voice that followed the Divine demonstration of God’s power. Contrary to His absence from the wind, earthquake, and fire, God was *in* the voice. God usually does not speak in a loud voice; those with real authority do not have to. God is the Ultimate Authority. And what did Elijah do? He boasted on himself and had a brief pity-party (**1 Kings**

19:14). But God took care of that rather quickly in verses 15-19. Basically, in the Greek it's; "parte to apophase", which in English is, "suck it up."

Along these lines, in the New Testament, Jesus describes John the Baptist as "the Elijah to come" (**Matthew 11:14**). John was basically a voice—a voice crying in the wilderness; a voice that God used to prepare the way for the coming Messiah. John the Baptist didn't have any miracles to back up his proclamations, "And many came to Him and said, "John did not do even one miracle, but everything that John said concerning this Man is true."- **John 10:41**.

As the apostle Paul wrote in **Romans 10:17**, faith comes by *hearing*, not by viewing enormous demonstrations of power. Talk about no demonstration of power, look at what Jesus accomplished with His Sermon on the Mount without a P.A. system, comfortable seating or air conditioning!

However, God *has* occasionally displayed His destructive power. We all remember what happened to Sodom and Gomorrah. When the time was right, He also devastated the Egyptian Empire with shocking plagues. Yet He taught Elijah that He is not *in* extreme exhibitions of power or eye-catching miracles when a *voice* will suffice.

In the extremely powerful wind, earthquake and fire, God showed that though He *causes* or *allows* great works that destroy, punish or expose the ungodly, His greatest work is elsewhere. He was *in* the "still small voice" (verse 12). He does His most astounding and effective work in the background, working His salvation in (**Psalm 74:12**) and giving His gifts and His grace to His people (**Ephesians 4:7**). In a sense, He told Elijah, "The Lord is not delaying the promise *of His coming*, as some in their own minds reckon delay; rather, He is longsuffering toward us, not desiring that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."- **2 Peter 3:9**.

We've all experienced trials of some form or another and will continue to do so. Some of us have had our fair share for sure. All too often, when tragedy strikes, we assume the lesson is for the person to whom it befalls. Was it a mistake on their part or just "bad luck?" Were there some other circumstances for the misfortune? Or was God truly involved? Is God really that attentive in speaking to His children? Is He whispering amidst the storm? You know He is! Does He permit trials and tragedies to occur to His children? Absolutely! Everything in life matters. Consequently, our wisest investment in life is to fear God and keep His commandments, for it is God who orders life. Everything in Scripture is precisely timed and ordered for a specific purpose. Consequently, we should never miss any

opportunity to submit ourselves to the perfect absolute will of God. Remember, none of us have been issued a black judge's robe just yet. Examine yourself first. Storms and trials are for everyone's benefit.

An issue that often besets us when we face difficulties is how do we know if it is Divine correction or not? Is it our own poor judgment or simply being at the wrong place at the wrong time? For me, it's usually my own poor judgment. At the very least, our trials provide an opportunity to examine our attitudes, conduct and actions, enabling us to make changes to them where needed. Recognizing an issue and making the appropriate improvements may avoid further even harsher correction from God.

If our trials do come from God, we need to realize that they are blessings in disguise. "But He knows the way that I take; *when* He has tried me, I shall come forth as gold."- **Job 23:10**. Sometimes God uses trials to put us back on the right path or wake us up to something we may not even be aware of. "Before I was afflicted, I went astray, but now I have kept Your word."- **Psalms 119:67**. When we go off course, God does us a great favor by redirecting our paths, so instead of griping about circumstances, we should take notice and look for the hidden blessing. Yea, I know, always easier said than done. "Behold, happy *is* the man

whom God corrects. Therefore do not despise the chastening of the Almighty.”-

Job 5:17.

Proverbs 3:11-12, “My son, do not despise the chastening of the LORD, nor be weary of His correction; For whom the LORD loves He corrects, even as a father *corrects* the son *in whom* he delights.” (**Hebrews 12:5-6, Rev. 3:19**). If we do go through a trial and we are being chastened by God, hopefully we can acquire wisdom from the test. With every test comes a testimony! When the divine discipline has run its course, and the desired effect has been achieved, then He restores us, improved by the experience. “Then you shall understand righteousness and judgment and equity, every good path. Wisdom shall enter into your heart, and knowledge will be pleasing to your soul; Discretion shall preserve you and, understanding shall keep you”- Proverbs 2:9-11.

Sometimes, when the trial seems endless, we assume that God has forgotten us.

Some of us may feel like we’ve had enough trials and storms over the years to last two lifetimes. But if God *was* speaking to us during the storm, *were we listening?*

Have you ever had the same storm twice? Always remember, if He sends

correction, He will never leave us or abandon us (**Heb. 13:5**). Trials and storms

occur to every human being and are God-given for the purpose of testing His children and calling those He has chosen.

“For all things *are* for your sakes, so that the abounding grace may cause the thanksgiving of many to overflow unto the glory of God. For this reason, we do not lose heart; but if our outward man is being brought to decay, yet the inward *man* is being renewed day by day. For the momentary lightness of our tribulation is working out for us an immeasurably greater *and* everlasting fullness of glory; While we consider not the things *that are* seen, but the things *that are* not seen. For the things *that are* seen *are* temporary; but the things *that are* not seen *are* eternal.”- **2 Cor. 4:15-18.**

As God worked in the days of Elijah, we know He is just as busy today. He’s working in our lives as members of His family called according to His purpose. Working on each and every one of us. He will bring about the circumstances necessary to reproduce Himself and allow us to grow into the image of His Son Jesus Christ. We are His future sons and daughters (**Romans 8:14-17, 2 Cor. 6:18**). God’s lesson to Elijah was even using a tremendous display of power witnessed by many, complete with signs, wonders and miracles, is far less important than the salvation of His people.

Understanding this, we can keep pressing forward with confidence, faith and hope in God that He always has our best interests at heart. Our loving Creator is actively involved in all aspects of His children and His Church, even when the trials and storms are upon us. We don't have to look at the storm, He won't be shouting, just listen for His still small voice.

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