

# VOICES

Sunday, June 24, 2018  
10:30 AM

## **1 Kings 19:9-13 New International Version (NIV)**

**9** There he went into a cave and spent the night.

### **The Lord Appears to Elijah**

And the word of the Lord came to him: "What are you doing here, Elijah?"

**10** He replied, "I have been very zealous for the Lord God Almighty. The Israelites have rejected your covenant, torn down your altars, and put your prophets to death with the sword. I am the only one left, and now they are trying to kill me too."

**11** The Lord said, "Go out and stand on the mountain in the presence of the Lord, for the Lord is about to pass by."

Then a great and powerful wind tore the mountains apart and shattered the rocks before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind. After the wind there was an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake. **12** After the earthquake came a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire. And after the fire came a gentle whisper. **13** When Elijah heard it, he pulled his cloak over his face and went out and stood at the mouth of the cave.

Then a voice said to him, "What are you doing here, Elijah?"

I have been thinking about all the voices we hear and how they can have an impact on our lives.

Yes, I said we hear voices... Not in the crazy sense with which we typically associate that statement; but voices nonetheless that are very real. Voices that can lead us in good directions and bring blessings to our life and voices which aren't so kind and can even lead to our destruction

### **BACKGROUND**

Remember that at this point the Nation of Israel had been under the judgment of God for 3 years. Elijah had been supernaturally provided for during the drought by Ravens at the brook at the Kerith Ravine and then by an unending supply of a widow's last bit of flour and oil.

Elijah had a confrontation with the Prophets of Baal on Mt Carmel and the Lord displays His power and majesty by sending fire to consume the sacrifice plus all the water that Elijah had poured on top of it.

Elijah calls the people to acknowledge the one true God and forsake their idolatry by slaughtering the 450 false prophets. He then prays and God answers by sending rain to end the drought.

Jezebel, however, sent a messenger to tell Elijah that she would certainly have him killed for what he had done to her prophets. Elijah was filled with fear and ran for his life - all because he heard the voice of Jezebel's threat. He ran for about a day and then sat down under a tree and decided he might as well give up and prayed that he might die. God sent an angel to wake him up and prepare some food for him. He got up ate and drank and then fell back asleep. The angel woke him up a second time and told him to eat again so that he would have enough strength for the journey ahead. Strengthened by that food he traveled for forty days and nights until he reached mount Horeb, where he went into the cave and spent the night.

Now before we get into the details of the voices we hear, I want to go back to our passage for a minute. I have read these verses hundreds of times; but it wasn't until I was putting this message together about voices that I saw them in a different perspective

God begins with a question... What are you doing here? Elijah answers and it is apparent from his answer, and the rest of the preceding story, that Elijah has been hearing voices. Not just God's voice, but other voices that were impacting his life - those voices were shaping his perspective, his assessment of truth, his faith, his will to live. Are we any different? How many times have we heard voices that begin to shape our thinking, our decisions, our faith?

What happens next, I have always understood to represent the powerful presence of the Lord. But as I read it now I also hear the Holy Spirit speaking these truths.

- The voices that speak into our lives can be very powerful
- They can be so powerful that they can take the place of that which God wants to speak to us
- What if these elements represented the voices that we hear and their potential to impact our lives
  - A wind that tears the mountains apart and shatters the rocks. Voices have the power to tear us apart and shatter us to the core. They can move us and change our direction like a powerful wind, causing us to go where we don't want to go.
  - An Earthquake - Voices that shake us and cause us to be unstable
  - Fire - Voices that burn and disfigure us
- But God's voice here is different than all of these. It is quiet, still, calm, comforting, truthful, directing. Yet when we choose to give our ear to that voice it's impact can surpass all of the other voices in our lives.

So let's talk about some of the voices we hear and how they can impact us like the wind, the earthquake and the fire.

## 1. The Voices Within

- a. These voices come from our own thoughts and are often filled with fear, doubt and improper perspective
- b. They say things like...
  - i. I'm not good enough
  - ii. There's nothing special about me
  - iii. I am dirty and worthless
  - iv. I don't know what to do
  - v. How could God love me
  - vi. God couldn't possibly forgive me for what I've done
  - vii. I know I shouldn't but I can't resist
  - viii. It's only a small sin (Lot)

*"It does not matter how small the sins are provided that their cumulative effect is to edge the man away from the Light and out into the Nothing. Murder is no better than cards if cards can do the trick. Indeed the safest road to Hell is the gradual one--the gentle slope, soft underfoot, without sudden turnings, without milestones, without signposts."*

— [C.S. Lewis, The Screwtape Letters](#)

- ix. No one loves me
  - x. I am a failure
  - xi. I'm stupid
  - xii. I can't do anything right
  - xiii. I'm damaged goods
- c. These voices can sometimes take on a false sense of humility that sounds right, but keeps us from walking in the destiny and strength that God has for us

### **Judges 6:14-16 New International Version (NIV)**

**14** The Lord turned to him and said, "Go in the strength you have and save Israel out of Midian's hand. Am I not sending you?"

**15** "Pardon me, my lord," Gideon replied, "but how can I save Israel? My clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my family."

**16** The Lord answered, "I will be with you, and you will strike down all the Midianites, leaving none alive."

- d. Moses heard these voices and said, "Send someone else, I can't even speak well"

- e. Mary heard these voices as she fought to believe the message that the angel brought her
- f. Peter heard these voices after he denied Jesus three times on the night he was betrayed. It took Jesus three times to get through to Peter that he still loved him and wanted to use him to fulfill his mission to the world.

## 2. The Voices Without

- a. These are the voices that originate from others that sometimes initiate or help reinforce the negative voices that are already coming from within us.
- b. The problem with these voices is that they don't see things from God's perspective
- c. For example - King David

*But I was not the only person with a low opinion of David. His brothers didn't think much of him (1 Samuel 17:28), nor did the giant Goliath (1 Samuel 17:43,44). His wife despised him in her heart (2 Samuel 6:16) and his own son tried to kill him and usurp his throne (2 Samuel 15). At the beginning even the prophet Samuel would have overlooked him for selection as king, but the Lord prepared Samuel for meeting David by saying: "The Lord does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart" (1 Samuel 16:7). And God, from start to finish, accorded David the highest of designations: "I have found David son of Jesse a man after my own heart" (Acts 13:22; 1 Samuel 13:14).*

- Wood, George O.. A Psalm in Your Heart

- d. These voices are filled with a lack of compassion and understanding, a worldly perspective, selfishness, self-serving criticism, misinformation, ignorance, bias and even hate

## 3. The Voices From Below

- a. These are the voices that come straight from the pit of hell. While I don't believe there is a demon around every corner; I know that our enemy is real and he has a voice. That's why he is called the father of lies.
- b. He and his minions deceive, they manipulate, they malign the truth to fit their purposes. They sow doubt and fear.
- c. Their goal is to steal, kill and destroy

- d. They say things like...
  - i. You're not good enough, You're going to fail
  - ii. God can't forgive you,
  - iii. God is finished with you
  - iv. God has forgotten you,
  - v. You'll never be free
  - vi. You've messed up so many times
  - vii. There is no hope
  - viii. People who led be better off if you were dead
  - ix. You're weak and insignificant
  - x. You're not smart enough
  - xi. It's o.k., everyone else is doing it
  - xii. How can it be wrong if It feels so right (The Serpent's Lie)

#### **4. The Voices From Above**

- a. Elijah has heard the voices from within, the voices from without, and the voices from below. It was time he hear the voices from above
- b. The voices from above are the truths spoken to us from God The Father, God The Son, and God The Holy Spirit
- c. They will always tell us the truth. They can not lie and would never deceive us

#### **Numbers 23:19 English Standard Version (ESV)**

**19** God is not man, that he should lie, or a son of man, that he should change his mind. Has he said, and will he not do it? Or has he spoken, and will he not fulfill it?

#### **1 Samuel 15:29 New International Version (NIV)**

**29** He who is the Glory of Israel does not lie or change his mind; for he is not a human being, that he should change his mind.”

#### **Hebrews 6:18 New International Version (NIV)**

**18** God did this so that, by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled to take hold of the hope set before us may be greatly encouraged.

#### **Titus 1:2 New International Version (NIV)**

**2** in the hope of eternal life, which God, who does not lie, promised before the beginning of time,

d. My Sheep know my voice

**John 10:4 New International Version (NIV)**

**4** When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice.

**John 10:27 New International Version (NIV)**

**27** My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me.

e. They say things like...

- i. I created you, I love you, I have a purpose for you
- ii. I will forgive you, I will restore you, I will heal your past and give you a future
- iii. You are my son, my daughter in whom I am well pleased
- iv. I will never leave you, I will never forsake you, I am with you always
- v. You are not alone, there are many others going through the same trials you are and some have it worse than you
- vi. I'm not done with you
- vii. My ways are right and good and bring blessing to your life
- viii. I am for you not against you
- ix. You are an overcomer
- x. Nothing can separate you from my love
- xi. You can do anything because I will give you strength
- xii. I will go with you and lead you in the way you should go
- xiii. With me all things are possible

## 2 more things...

Not every voice from within and without are negative, but they must be in line with the voice of God in order for us to accept them

Not every voice from above will be gentle. God may need to share hard truth with us but you can be assured that even the harshest truths will be shared in love and for our good and it will be absolute truth

## RESPONSE

Maybe you are hear today and you have heard some of these voices I have been talking about. Maybe your tired, discouraged, lonely, scared, defeated, confused

There is a voice you need to hear today. So step out and listen to what He has to say to you today