

There is a 'children's song by 'Ishmael' called; 'I am listening to God' which describes, from a childlike perspective, how God is always wanting to share things with us. It is, if you like, a musical expression of 'lectio divina', God's word being revealed in everyday things by practicing the 'How' of drawing close to God.

In our reading today we can clearly see that Elijah had a special relationship with God and that is demonstrated, in part, by the dialogue between the two of them which seems, to me, to be a perfect pattern for prayer, a conversation not a shopping list, a chat not a demand followed by a silence.

In the verses below, the story moves beyond Elijah and his personal needs to that deeper level that addresses the question of how God works in our world. God was still willing to work with Elijah. God's persistent questions gently pushed Elijah toward a faithful response. Before Elijah responded, though, he learned something crucial about God. Mount Horeb, where Elijah found himself after his long journey through the desert, was the very mountain where Moses had encountered God in the fire of a burning bush (Exodus 3:1f). It was at that mountain, also called Mount Sinai, that God had given the law to Moses amid fire, smoke, and thunder (Exodus 19:16f).

Read 1 Kings 19:1-13

1. For three years Elijah had not made a move without hearing from the Lord (1 Kings 17:2-3, 8-9, 18:1). But now Elijah fled from Jezebel (read 1 Kings 19:1-4). How do you go about your decision making? What role does the voice of the Lord play?
2. Has there been a time in your prayer life when you have been close with God and had a conversation with Him [see v. 9-11 e.g.]? There is a place for praying in a 'formal' way, what does that look like?
3. From watching the news, reading the paper, and scrolling social media we are inundated with information. Our bodies become over-stimulated. Elijah needed to rest his body and be restored (read 1 Kings 19:5-7). How are you being restored? (see Psalm 91:1, 118:6, and 127:2)
4. On Mount Sinai, God met with Elijah and asked him: "What are you doing here?" It seems that Elijah was there because of fear. Is there something you are running away from this week? (see Joshua 1:9 and 1 Peter 5:7)
5. Before God speaks, what are the various aspects that pass in front of Elijah? Do you think they have any significance in relation to God's character?
6. Do you think we are able to hear God's whisper, or was that just for prophets? See Acts 2:17-21
7. It is possible to be outwardly silent and still, and yet inwardly noisy and chaotic. How can we filter the noises within, so that we can hear God speaking?
8. Do you take 'little solitudes' in the day? What struggles do you face in being still, listening and seeking to recognise God's voice?
9. If you heard God's whisper more in your life, how do you think it would impact your Christian walk?

Prayer Points

Pray for communities in New Zealand that have been affected by the floods.

Pray for the continued stabilisation of the economy of Sri Lanka. Pray especially for an alliance of Christians, led by BMS partners, who are holding the government to account on human rights issues.

Sermon Notes



BIBLE STUDY

February 5th 2023

Hearing God:

Hearing God in the Whisper:
1 Kings 19

'God spoke to me.' 'The Spirit spoke to my heart.' 'God revealed the idea to me.' Being close to God means communicating with him, telling him what is on our hearts in prayer and hearing and understanding what he is saying to us. It is this second half of our conversation with God that is so important but that can also be so difficult. How do we hear his voice? How can we be sure that what we think we hear is not our own subconscious? What role does the Bible play? What does the Bible teach in how the Lord speaks to us? These are some of the areas we will be covering over this next series, as we seek to grow in our relationship with Jesus.

If you would like to join a Connect Group, please contact the church office 01424 730001