

Not Every Time, Noise!

Hello Storehouse Fam!

Over the last couple of weeks, we have talked about Elijah. A lot. The prophet had such a great reputation that some people even thought Jesus was Elijah 2.0. That is how much importance he holds in Israel's history. Yet, just after one of the biggest victories in his ministry, we read that "...he went on alone into the wilderness, travelling all day. He sat down under a solitary broom tree and prayed that he might die. "I have had enough, Lord," he said. "Take my life, for I am no better than my ancestors who have already died." 1 Kings 19:4.

If you just did a double-take, then we're on the same page. The first question that comes to mind is "Why?" What would make this man of God suicidal? The answer is no less surprising: "...Jezebel sent this message to Elijah: "May the gods strike me and even kill me if by this time tomorrow I have not killed you just as you killed them." Elijah was afraid and fled for his life. He went to Beersheba, a town in Judah, and he left his servant there." 1 Kings 19:2-3.

One has to ask which gods exactly Jezebel was referring to. The very same ones that refused to (read "couldn't") respond to the prophets of Baal, despite the long prayer meetings and cutting of flesh? The ones that stood idly by and "let" Yahweh send down fire to consume the sacrifice? The same gods that quietly watched on while Elijah slaughtered their prophets? This would be a bit funny if it weren't so tragic. It is very perplexing to see how Elijah could convince himself that this was a credible threat. Apparently, seeing fire fall from the sky may not be as strong evidence as we sometimes believe.

Not Every Time, Noise!

Anyway, somehow we had Israel's firebrand prophet having a full-blown pity party, and God eventually showed up to intervene. Apart from his repeated responses like a broken record, what was more interesting was how Elijah approached this interaction, and what it says about him (and us). After God babysat him, serving him lunch and enforcing much-needed nap time (See verses 5-9). He eventually came to Mt. Sinai, and God set up a meeting.

“Go out and stand before me on the mountain,” the Lord told him. And as Elijah stood there, the Lord passed by, and a mighty windstorm hit the mountain. It was such a terrible blast that the rocks were torn loose, but the Lord was not in the wind. After the wind there was an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake. And after the earthquake there was a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire. And after the fire there was the sound of a gentle whisper. When Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his cloak and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave. And a voice said, “What are you doing here, Elijah?”

1 Kings 19:11-13.

God didn't show up in the fire, despite the fact that he had just done so in the previous chapter (**1 Kings 18**). Neither was he in the wind nor the earthquake. Right after an awesome display of God's power, to reset Elijah's attention, God showed up in the still small voice. Perhaps a timely reminder to the prophet that he shouldn't put his maker in a box. A reminder that God's power doesn't always have to conform to our checklist to be at work in our world.

Not Every Time, Noise!

Supernatural doesn't always mean spectacular. The revelation of God's presence, power, and purpose is never intended for our entertainment. In his sovereign will, He chooses how to show up, how to make Himself known and how to advance his kingdom. Sometimes he asks to strike the rock; at other times he says speak to the rock! He says to one blind man, "Receive your sight," and to another, he makes mud from saliva and asks him to go wash his eyes. (**Exodus 17:6; Numbers 20:7-12; Luke 18:35-42; John 9:1-12**).

We should be comforted by the fact that Elijah recognised his God immediately, though. That, despite all that he was going through, self-inflicted or not, there was still a residual sensitivity in his spirit to know when he was in the very presence of El-Elohim. As mysterious as our God is, he desires to be known by us and to lead us. If only we learn to walk with him in obedient faith. We have this promise: "So be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid and do not panic before them. For the Lord your God will personally go ahead of you. He will neither fail you nor abandon you." **Deuteronomy 31:6**.

May our hearts remain in tune with God. May we not keep looking for him in ways and places through which he has decided not to reveal himself, in his infinite wisdom. Amen

With love,
The Storehouse