

OKOTOKS EVANGELICAL FREE CHURCH

HEARING GOD (1 KINGS 19:1-18)
MAY 19, 2019



SERMON OUTLINE

No outline this week.

What do I need to do with what I have heard today?

MAIN POINT

To walk with God is to hear and obey God's voice.

THINKING THINGS THROUGH

Connect the sermon to the study.

- 1. What comes to mind when you think of hearing the voice of God?**
- 2. What do you personally do that helps you hear the voice of God in your life?**

Leader: We are bombarded daily with advice, tips, and "life hacks," but we probably don't act on most of them. And oftentimes one piece of advice contradicts the next one. We are constantly learning to listen to the right voices. But just because we hear the right voice doesn't mean their words make a difference; we must act on what we hear. We will hear no greater word than what God says to us, but we must learn to act on what He says. In 1 Kings 19, Elijah did just that. We see in his life that, in order to walk with God, we must obey His voice.

DIGGING DEEPER

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

> [HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ 1 KINGS 19:1-14.](#)

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3. After the great victory over the prophets of Baal (see 1 Kings 18), why do you think Elijah was discouraged? What makes you most vulnerable to discouragement?

Leader: Although 1 Kings 18 is one of the best examples of a powerful encounter in the Bible, chapter 19 demonstrates that God's miraculous works did not bring about repentance, at least not on a scale broad enough to be mentioned. Understandably, Elijah collapsed into an almost hysterical pessimism about what he took to be the failure of God's purposes. Elijah had hoped the victory at Mount Carmel would end Baal worship in Israel. The clear lesson is that, despite miracles, sinful people can still reject the greatest of God's signs (Lk 16:31). So too, faithful disciples are wrong to suppose that they are all alone or that God's purposes have truly failed.

4. How does the angel's ministry to Elijah in verses 5-7 highlight God's role in our hearing His voice and also His care for His people? How have you been made aware of God's guidance and care in your life?

Leader: Note that the very tree that a depressed and disheartened Elijah sat under was the same tree that God used to provide shelter and provision. The broom tree provided shade, and its roots could be used for heat and food. In verses 5-8, after Elijah ate and rested, he returned to the place where the covenant had been given, Mount Horeb, or Sinai. There, Elijah would have his personal faith renewed by God's presence.

5. Look at verses 10-14. God asked Elijah essentially the same question twice, but what do you think might have been different about Elijah's responses?

6. What is significant about the fact that the Lord could not be found in the earthquake or in the fire, but in a "soft whisper" (v. 12)? What does the Lord's response to Elijah reveal about His nature?

Leader: In verses 11-13, God first revealed His presence to Elijah in His greatness and power, but note that God did not speak from that position. The Lord instead spoke to

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Elijah in a soft whisper, showing Himself to be a God who communicates via a still, small voice as well as powerful displays.

7. How does God's whisper in chapter 19 contrast with His powerful display against the Baals in chapter 18? Why do you think, in this circumstance, Elijah needed to hear through a whisper rather than signs and wonders?

> HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ 1 KINGS 19:15-18.

8. How do you think Elijah felt as he heard God's voice assigning him a task? How would that experience have reassured Elijah?

9. What important lesson do you think Elijah learned about how God speaks to people? What have you learned?

***Leader:** God's words to Elijah reminded Elijah of his call to serve as God's prophet, and they also reminded him of God's sovereign control over the events of Elijah's life. The second part of God's response gave hope. God still had 7,000 people through whom He could work in the future.*

10. In today's passage, God confronted Elijah and reminded him of the truth of God's sovereign control over His world. How has God spoken in your life and confronted you with that truth in a difficult season?

DOING LIFE TOGETHER

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

11. What habit could you cultivate to make yourself more attune to hearing God's voice?

12. How can we as a group seek to not only cultivate the habit of listening for God's voice but also for showing obedience to what He says?

PRAYER

Ask God to give you discernment in hearing His voice over all the other voices clamoring for your attention. Ask God for boldness and willing ears to listen and follow Him wholeheartedly.

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MEMORIZE

¹²After the earthquake came a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire. And after the fire came a gentle whisper. 1 Kings 19:12

SPOTLIGHT ON THE PASSAGE

1 KINGS 19:1-18

19:1-21 This chapter presents facts that argue for the truth of both chapters 18 and 19. The preceding chapter was one of the best examples of a power encounter in the Bible, but chapter 19 demonstrates that God's miraculous works did not bring about repentance, at least not on a scale broad enough to be mentioned. Understandably, Elijah collapsed into an almost hysterical pessimism about what he took to be the failure of God's purposes. The clear lesson is that while power witness is both biblical and effective, sinful people can still reject the greatest of God's signs (Lk 16:31). So too, faithful disciples are wrong to suppose that they are all alone or that God's purposes have truly failed.

19:1-2 Jezebel's rejection of God's signs and the determined, defiant way in which she later faced death (2Ki 9:30-31) demonstrate her character as a person who did what she wanted, no matter the consequences. Sin breeds this self-destructive heedlessness.

19:3 Elijah's faith may have crumbled due to physical and emotional exhaustion. Although his future still included several tasks, it may be significant that his next task was to choose his successor. Beer-sheba, about 100 miles south of Mount Carmel, served as a traditional southern boundary for Israelite territory (Jdg 20:1; 2Sam 24:2).

19:4 A day's journey would have taken Elijah out of Judean territory and into deeper desert. The broom tree under which the prophet sat provided shade, and its roots could be used for heat and food. Elijah was in deep depression.

19:5-8 God's miraculous provision was resumed, this time purely for the prophet. After Elijah ate and rested, he returned to the place where the covenant had been given, Mount Horeb, or Sinai. There, Elijah would have his personal faith renewed by God's presence.

19:9-10 Elijah explained his presence at Sinai by referring to his discouragement. Israel's immediate future, as hindsight shows, gave good reason for despair. Judah was to have one more period of God-given prosperity under the four good kings from Joash to Jotham, but during that time, Israel was to be deported to Assyria.

19:11-13 God first reveals His presence to Elijah in His greatness and power, but He did not speak from that position. The Lord instead spoke to Elijah in a soft whisper, showing Himself to be a God who communicates via a still, small voice as well as powerful displays.

19:15-16 God's commands first pointed to judgment. Elijah was to anoint Hazael as king over Aram, Jehu as king of Israel, and Elisha as his own successor. God was still controlling events.

19:17 This command indicated the extent of God's judgment—death at the hands of Hazael, death at the hands of Jehu, and death even at the hands of Elisha through His pronouncements of judgment.

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19:18 The second part of God's response gave hope. God still had 7,000 people through whom He could work in the future.