
Wednesday, July 13, 2022 • Read 1Kings 19:1–18

Questions from the Scripture text: Whom does Ahab tell what in v1? Especially what action? To whom does Jezebel respond in v2? By whom does she swear? What does she swear to do? How does Elijah respond (v3)? Where does he go? Whom does he leave there? But where does he go in v4? What does he do there? What does he pray? What does he conclude about his own goodness or effectiveness? What is he doing now in v5? What happens to him? What does the angel say? What does Elijah see in v6? What does he do? What happens now in v7? For what is the Angel preparing him with these meals and naps? What does Elijah do in v8? In the strength of that food, how long does he go and to where? Into what does he enter (v9)? What does he do there? What comes to him? What does the Word ask? What does he say that he has done (v10)? What does he say that the children of Israel have done? What does he say about himself (cf. 18:4, 13)? Now what does the Word tell him to do (v11)? And what does Yahweh do? What tore into the mountains? But Who was not in the wind? Then what came? But Who was not in the earthquake? Then what came (v12)? But Who as not in the fire? Then what came? Who recognizes that this is how Yahweh communicates Himself (v13)? What does the voice ask him? What does Elijah say that he has done (v14)? What does he say the children of Israel have done? What does he say about himself? Now to where does Yahweh tell him to go (v15)? And what is he to do there? And what other two anointings is he to perform in Israel (v16)? What are these three being anointed to do (v17)? How many are there in Israel who have not done what (v18)? How did this happen?

What is the ultimate power in this world? 1Kings 19:1–18 looks forward to the first serial reading in morning public worship on the coming Lord's Day. In these eighteen verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **though the world, and the weak church, see persecuting rulers as powerful, the ultimate power in the world is the Word of God.**

Seeing our lives in context. Just reading 1Kings, we might wonder what Elijah is so afraid of. We're tempted to laugh when Jezebel says, "the gods do so to me and more." Sure, if they're not on the potty! But, it's difficult to see our lives in context. Living it out is different than sitting down and reading 1Kings 17, 18, and 19 in the space of five minutes. So the Lord gives Elijah more context.

First, God reminds him of past personal mercies. He gives him supernatural food like he had in the drought. He makes him run by supernatural strength like he had before Ahab's chariot in the storm. Second, God reminds him of God's great dealings with His people. Elijah was going to stop one day south of Judah's southernmost town. But God takes him instead to Sinai, the Spirit giving us the older name, Horeb, to take us back to the time of Moses.

Third, God reminds him of His chosen means of exercising the greatest power. The point of the voice is not its stillness or smallness, but that it is a voice. The voice of God, the Word of God, is the ultimate power in this world. Nations rage and the earth quakes; but God merely utters His voice, and the earth melts (cf. Ps 46:6).

God's voice is the ultimate power in the world. It is easy to misread this passage as commending mystic quietness. But what it is really announcing is the comparatively infinite power of the Word of God in the mouth of His prophet. Elijah already knew this. He recognized the power, and as soon as he heard the voice, he presented himself in v13. But he needed the reminder, so that he would again operate out of fear of God and not man.

This is what makes the difference in his answer in v10 and his answer in v14. The circumstances are still the same (although he is forgetting the 100 spared by way of Obadiah). But what are the combined powers of Israel, Tyre and Sidon, and Syria, up against one prophet in the entrance of a cave, if that prophet speaks with the voice of God?!

God has put Elijah's situation into context. And in that context, we can see that it's not a fair fight. Jezebel may have brought the throne of Sidon into union with the throne in Samaria of Israel and alliance with the throne of Syria in Damascus. But what are the power of a great wind, an earthquake, and a fire against the power of the Word of God?

So, Elijah is to anoint/ordain a triumvirate of power of his own: new king Hazael of Syria; and, stronger than he, new king Jehu of Israel; and, strongest of all, new prophet Elisha. Not only does Elisha get the fullest introduction of the three, but his ministry is the one that will clean up those who were able to evade even the other two. The combined forces of the evil have fallen seven thousand (!) short of their goal, but the Word-ordained servants of God will leave zero of His enemies alive. God's voice is the ultimate power in the world.

God's voice is personal! One thing remains, and that is for us to read our passage in the context of the Bible as a whole. The Angel (messenger) of Yahweh (v5, 7), the Word of Yahweh (v9), and the voice of Yahweh (v13) in this passage are three representations/names of the same thing. And we should really say of the same One. They are not thoughts that form in Elijah's head, but a Person Who comes and addresses him.

The Word is personal because, as we will find out when He becomes flesh, the Word is a Person. He is the ultimate power, and He would have been within His rights and completely unchallenged to destroy us all. But when the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory as of the only-begotten of the Father, what we beheld is that He is full of covenant love and faithfulness (grace and truth, in the koine words).

What circumstances seem frightening or unbearable to you? What prior experience of God helps you put it into context? What prior dealings of God with His people? What ultimate power of God?

Sample prayer: Lord, even after all that You have done in our lives and in the history of Your dealings with Your people, we too can be forgetful like Elijah. We too can slip into seeing our trouble as great and our help as small. Forgive us for this unbelief. And grant that Your Spirit would bring to our hearts how Your Word is the ultimate power in the world, and that He became flesh in order to save us. In His very own Name, Jesus, we ask for this faith, AMEN!

Suggested songs: ARP46 "God Is Our Refuge and Our Strength" or TPH244 "A Mighty Fortress"

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(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

First Kings chapter 19, verses 1 through 18. These are God's words and they have told Jessabelle all that. Elijah had done also how he had executed, all the profits with the sword Invisible sentiment messenger to Elijah saying. So let the gods do to me in more also if I do not make your life as a life of one of them by tomorrow about this time and when he saw he arose and ran for his life and went to bearseva which belongs to Judah and left his servant there but he himself went to today's journey into the wilderness and came and said down under a broom tree and he prayed that he might die and said it is enough.

Now, Yahweh, take away my life from no better than my father's, and as he lay and slept under a broom tree, suddenly an angel touched him and said to him, arise and eat. And he looked and thereby his head was a cake baked on coals and a jar water.

So he ate and drank and lay down again and the angel if you always came back the second time and touched him and said a rise and eat is the journey is too great for you. So, he rose and eight drink and he went in the strength of that food, 40 days and 40 nights as far as Horeb the mountain of God and there.

He went into a cave and spent the night in that place and behold the Word of Yahweh came to him. And he said to him. What are you doing here? Elijah. So he said I've been very zealous for you. Always God of hosts for the children of Israel have forsaken, your covenant torn down your altars, and killed your profits with the sword.

I alone him left and they seek to take my life. He said, go out and stand on the mountain before you always, and hold you all way, past by and a great and strong wind tore into the mountains and broke the rocks into pieces before y'all. But you always not in the wind and after the wind and earthquake but Yahweh was not in the earthquake.

Then after the earthquake, a fire. But you all here was not in the fire and after the fire are still small voice. So it was when Elijah heard that he wrapped his face in his mantle and went out and stood there in the entrance of gave Suddenly a voice came to him and said, what are you doing here?

Elijah and he said, I've been very zealous for you. Always God of hosts because the children of Israel have forsaken, your covenant torn down your altars and killed your prophets of the sword. I learned him left and they seek to take my life and you always said to him, go return on your way to the wilderness of Damascus.

And when you arrive anoint hearts, I always king ever Syria. Also, you saw anoint J. Hughes son of Nimshi is king over Israel and Alicia son of Shafhat of Abel Mahola. You sell, anoint his prophet in your place, natural, be that whoever escapes the sort of hats, I LG who will kill whoever escapes.

The sort of Jehu Alicia will kill yet. I have reserved 7,000 in Israel. All whose knees have not bowed to bail and every mouth. That is not kissed him So far the reading of God's inspired and inherent worked. Well, we're not very good at seeing. The big picture or seeing our lives with proper perspective or in proper context.

Part of the reason for that is that we live our lives one moment at a time, one day at a time and when difficult things happen on a particular day, we suddenly forget all that. We have known of God and experienced of God, leading up to that time

Often, when we are having a difficult day, we forget all that. We have known of God, all that we have experienced of God, all that God has done and said and we fail to see our lives and proper perspective. That of course happens to Elijah here because he's not reading his life in the text to first Kings.

He's living it a day at a time and a moment at a time. So he doesn't laugh like we do. When Jezebel sends a messenger to Elijah and says, So, let the gods do to me and more also, and we're thinking, Yeah, if they can take a break from going potty long enough, isn't he?

The one who's just mocked these gods for their utter non-existence and complete incompetence. And so, he ought not to have been afraid and even in his response to the Lord aisle on him left. Not only are there the 7,000 that the Lord had reserved for himself. But Obadiah had just told him twice that there are a hundred, not just believers but prophets who are still alive.

That's very difficult for us to see our lives in context. And so we see the great mercy of God here, who doesn't strike down his profit for his unbelief and his fear. We remember that the Lord Jesus of whom. The scripture says the bruised reed. He will not break and the smoldering wick.

You will not snuff out. That Jesus is the perfect revelation of us, of God to us. And so we we have something sweet here and how gentle God is with his servant. So, Elijah runs, he believes the northern kingdom and he enters Judah and he goes to Bersiba. Bersiba is on the southern border of the southern kingdom.

When he leaves his servant there and then he goes a day into the wilderness and under the wilderness. He prays that he would die, he always take my life right? No better than my father's. Now, reading this with the, with, as much charity as we can. It's not so much that that Elijah is suicidal.

As it is that he believes that his work is done, like if the Mount Carmel thing doesn't get through to Ahab and if running before him in the storm, all the way to Jezreel, doesn't get through to Ahab. Nothing will get through to Ahab. What Elijah has is something that I am fairly familiar with.

It's ministry, depression. That's all right, I've done all that. I can do, My father has tried to these. People are just hard-headed and wicked and no ministry will ever reach them, except for ministers by virtue even of the name or servants. And it is the living God who exercises as Almighty power through His Word that he proclaims through those servants.

So I just done when God says he's done and Elijah's actually going to ordain, three people Patsy. All king of Syria is going to wipe out a bunch of bad guys from the north Jehu, King of Israel who there's already a king of Israel and he's gonna anoint another one.

So you have something similar to this Saul and David situation, right? Where God anoints the successor And Jehu is going to wipe out a whole bunch of more people from the north and those who seem to be strong enough for or clever enough to escape those two and nobody going to escape Elisha.

And so Elijah does have more to do and the Lord is going to use him to destroy all of his enemies. And so the Lord is going to bless Elijah's ministry with fruit not necessarily in his own lifetime, but in the lifetime of those who come after him, and this is good for us to remember as the people of God, good for me to remember, as a minister of the gospel and a servant of God and his church, that our ministry has just part of the work of God.

Your ministry with your children, your part in whatever congregations. You're going to be whether or not my dear boys, the Lord ever makes you officers in his church the rearing of children. If the Lord so blesses, you my daughters. But the the part that we have as members in his church, however, long he keeps us in this life until our work really is done.

It's just a component in the overall work of God. And so the Lord reminds Elijah of what he has done already in Elijah's life and Heroines. Elijah of what he has done. Already in Israel's life in the church's life and here reminds Elijah of what he Of what he uses to exercise his power.

So first, you'll reminds Elijah of what he has done in his life. Elijah has been fed in the wilderness before. You remember the beginning of the drought? When there was a Ravens that would bring him meat and bread in the morning and meat and bread at night. And you remember when he was at the widow's house and there was a miraculous jar, Well it kind of mashes, those two things together.

Elijah wakes up a day's journey into the wilderness from Beershiba and there's a cake of bread, just finishing baking on the coals. God doesn't even bother to use ravens this time and a jar of water. Where did the jar come from? It's another miracle jar So you see the Lord bringing back to Elijah's memory because we're not good.

We are often very forgetful, aren't we? We get into a little bit of difficulty and we're so depressed and discouraged maybe even grumbling in our hearts and we forget how good God has been to us. And so God takes a components from all these miraculous provisions for before he matches them together.

He does it again twice. So he reminds Elijah of what he's already done before and Elijah's life and then he takes him in the strength of two meals of bread, 40 days and 40 nights which I think is a miracle must be, fantastic bread. Good thing we don't have the recipe so that yeah, Christian con artists can't, you know, sell, you know, that kind of bread and Kroger or whatever, take some 40 days and 40 nights where to Mount Horeb and he puts him in a cave.

And he passes by him that sound like it. Well if you don't know that Mount Horeb is not is also called Mount Sinai, maybe gonna miss it. He's reminding him of a

point at which God had another servant who actually was kind of the only one left. I mean it was him and Joshua.

And then yeah. Six million idolaters being glad by the one who is about to be ordained. The first high priest of Israel in a bull worship, feast unto Yahweh and God spared the people. And when God spared the people Moses asked if he could see him and God hid him in a cleft of rock and passed before.

So God is reminding him of his covenant with Israel and His mercy, even to turn them from and his patients with them after a great sin and he he also passes by Elijah in the mouth of the cave. The way he had passed by Moses. So he reminds, he reminds Elijah of his past personal experiences, he reminds him of the great deliverances and patience, and mercy that he's shown to Israel in the past.

And you also reminds Elijah of what the great power in the world is is interesting. The three things, the in, which he passes in front of the cave, that that don't have Yahweh in them. Quote, unquote, are three things that actually corresponded to the giving of the law on Mount Sinai.

Great wind. Great tempest and earthquake the shaking of the mountain and fire. And yet it was in his voice that y'all had made himself known the great power in this world by God's appointing. By God's. The decision desire will is his worked. So when God makes displays of power allows people to see or seem to have power.

It's just something that's on learn from God but the great power is as word. There's a picture here. Isn't there of the the things or the features that the manifestations phenomena, that's what we're going for. The phenomena that attended the giving of the law at Sinai are not the things in which the, the Lord was present.

Where is the Lord present in his voice in his word? And so we have you know the law came through Moses grace and truth came through. Jesus Christ, John chapter 1. In the beginning was the word You see the word of God isn't just powerful. It's personal. And by that we don't just mean that the word of God is personal to each one of us.

It is Reading the scriptures. The inscriptions on the pages of the Bible is just as personal to us as if God was breathing out words to us. But the Word of God is also personal because the second person of the Trinity is called the word and he is, of course, the king of kings whether King Ahab, and Queen Jezebel, recognize it or not.

And so God reminds Elijah that his word on Elijah's mouth. There's more powerful than all that Ahab and Jezebel and Syria and Sidon. Remember Jezebel was Jezebel was descended from the king of Sidon God's Word and all I just mouth is more powerful than all of them put together.

So you see the great mercy of God here with Elijah, but of course, it's great mercy to us because God didn't just do this for Elijah, He recorded it by his spirit, because he would have other servants who got discouraged about how effective they were being and who even if they weren't suicidal would pray.

Okay. Lord. You go ahead and take me. I'm done. This is all the this is all the good that I think my ministry could ever amount to but it's not really up to us. This is all the good that my life could ever amount to. No. That's not up to you.

You just keep walking with the Lord who has dealt so generously and so faithfully. And so powerfully with you before, and who is so patient with his people and has brought them great deliverances before and especially A tend upon his word and do not despise. Do not think little of what God may do with his word.

There are times even in the ministry here where we have been discouraged about what effect is being had and yet is not the Word of God being proclaimed and is that not the Almighty power in the universe and does it not Jesus himself? Who is the Word and personally employs his word for the accomplishing of his purposes.

So what does not fear? Let us not be discouraged but let us see God. The Holy Spirit here using this passage to remind us of how good God has been to us how powerfully and patiently and mercifully. He's worked in his church and how his word is the ultimate power in the world.

Let's pray, Florida. Thank you for this portion of Scripture. Thank you. Lord, for bringing it into our life at a moment. When we so specifically needed this specific word. We bless your name for how good you are and wise, and how often you do that. And we pray that you would make the lessons of this portion of Scripture to root deeply in our hearts.

We long O Lord to be effective in ministry, to be effective in the church to be effective in our lives. But we thank you that that effectiveness belongs to you, and the part that you appoint to us belongs to you. And that even after we are gone, you are going to continue the work in which you gave us the privilege of having a part.

So we bless your name for and we ask that you would stir up and strengthen our faith and our gladness in. You free, ask all these things in the name of Jesus. Amen.