

# What doest thou here Elijah? (Quality: Very good)

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Preacher: Mercer, Seth (1930-2017)

- [ 0 : 00 ] As the Lord may enable me, I would direct your attention this evening to the first book of Kings, the 19th chapter, and the last clause in the 13th verse.
- The first book of Kings, chapter 19, and the last clause in verse 13. What doest thou hear, Elijah?
- What doest thou hear, Elijah? Elijah, who has been given that title, and I feel rightly so, a prophet of iron.
- He was that, as God helped him, especially upon Mount Carmel, as he stood alone before Israel and before King Ahab, and how the Lord appeared and vindicated his cause and granted that wondrous sign of the fire from heaven, which lit up, not only consumed the sacrifice, but lit up the water that was in the trench, making it very clear that God was in the matter.
- And it is indeed a wondrous account. One might say, in coming to this word this evening, oh, that God would in his mercy raise up, and those that he has raised up, that he might make them mighty in word and deed, and grant even in England today, a gracious reviving, a returning unto the Lord God of Israel, for he alone is worthy to be served, he alone has power to save, he alone has power, eternal, everlasting power, that the same God who stood by Elijah upon Mount Carmel still reigns and rules in the affairs of men in our day.
- [ 2 : 48 ] And if it could be his holy pleasure, we would desire to see a gracious reviving in England.
- And I do feel this, one wonders sometimes what is coming upon this nation. We have indeed forsaken the God of Israel as the children of Israel had done in Ahab's death.
- And yet, it is encouraging to think that even in Ahab's court, there was a godly Obadiah, one who feared the Lord greatly, one who had done all within his power as God had enabled him to preserve the Lord's prophet.
- God's love. And I feel this, that we perhaps often overlook this fact that I believe that the Lord still has those, even in England, who have not bowed the knee to Baal, those that still are seeking for that God would return in mercy desire.
- because I believe this, that this is where real revival begins. It begins in the church of God.
- [ 4 : 26 ] It begins as we read in Hezekiah's day, when Hezekiah was enabled to open the doors of the house of the Lord and set things in order.
- We find this, that God had prepared the hearts of the people. And I would ask you this question in passing this evening.
- Are we truly concerned the honour and glory of God? Are we truly concerned that His kingdom might come, that His will might be done in earth as it is in heaven?
- Have we any concern in our hearts that there might be a bringing forth of children? we read in the word of God that when Zion travelled, she brought forth her children.
- Oh, how one feels, if one may speak one's own feelings in this, oh, that God would grant that travelling in Zion.

[ 5 : 42 ] I believe it is going on, but we do need the Lord to revive it and grant this, that Elijah, though he had seen God's wondrous power upon Mount Carmel, and it was, and you know, God is still the same God today.

how he showed his approval and granted that fire from heaven. You will often find in the word of God that when God accepted the sacrifices that were offered, he granted fire from heaven.

This was the sign of his smile, his approval. But Elijah, I feel this, that the way into such blessings was granted at this time even the sound of abundance of rain.

That sacred forerunner of blessings, how did it begin? It began with Elijah upon the top of Carmel and he cast himself down from the earth and put his face between his knees.

Oh, that God would grant to us such an experience as this. It's something that I feel to need in my own soul's experience more and more.

[ 7 : 22 ] A humbling of oneself under the mighty hand of God. And Elijah, this was his posture, the prophet of the Lord.

This was his posture. In other words, he could not get lower. He could not get lower than this, with his face between his knees upon the earth.

This, I believe, is the way to God's blessing. It is when there is granted a humbling under the mighty hand of God.

Do you desire to know more of this? More of thy image let me bear. Erect thy throne within my heart and reign without arrival there.

The Lord Jesus Christ said whilst here upon earth, and I feel there's much in it, if thine eye be single, thy whole body, shall be full of light.

[ 8 : 31 ] Oh, to no more of that single eye to the glory of God. This was what Elijah had. He had a single eye. His desire was that God would in mercy come and so demonstrate his power that the people, as we find them, saying, the Lord, he is the God.

The Lord, he is the God. Elijah, in our text, and in this chapter, how soon we find him fleeing for his life, fleeing for his life.

And it is only by the help of God that we can continue. It's only by his help that the Lord's servants can continue in the solemn work of the ministry.

And how often one has been in this same place as Elijah, fleeing for our life. And to think of this, that he was fleeing from an ungodly woman, fleeing from an ungodly woman.

The day, almost the day previous to this, he had stood alone. And he had taken those 400 prophets of Baal and slain them.

[ 10 : 03 ] Take the prophets of Baal, let not one of them escape. And they took them, and Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon and slew them there.

Then he flees before the threats of one woman. How this shows us this, that without the help of God, we cannot stand, no, not for one day, one hour.

We cannot stand without the help of God. We cannot continue without his help. Elijah, the Lord had a purpose in this.

I feel this is wonderful. The Lord had a purpose in this. Even though Elijah was fleeing for his life, the Lord had a purpose in it. There may be someone in this chapel this evening, but in your soul's experience, you are fleeing for your life.

perhaps you are full of fear at this time. God only knows what is in your pathway. God only knows that that is laying with weight upon your heart even at this time.

[ 11 : 27 ] You may be full of fear. You may be fleeing for your life from the enemy. How many enemies there are, and God only knows in this assembly this evening what our enemies are.

I believe that every child of God has their own peculiar enemies, those things that often are with them, those things that follow them sometimes day in and day out.

How merciful God was with his servants, even though he was fleeing for his life. Yet, even in the wilderness, God provided food for him and strengthened him for his journey.

Now in our text, he is brought to Horeth, the mount of God. He comes to Horeth. His journey, I understand by the gracious records of godly men that Elijah could have made this journey in perhaps four or five days to Horeth.

But he arose and did eat and drink and went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights until Horeth, the mount of God.

[ 13 : 01 ] God had a purpose in this. God had a purpose in this with Elijah. You know sometimes the Lord brings his people in most mysterious ways that he may bless them in their souls.

He brings them into a wilderness experience. He brings them into a place where there is no sustenance. He brings them into a pathway where perhaps they feel to be alone, feel that no man stands by them, feel to be alone.

I believe that sometimes even with husbands and wives there are those times when they are brought off even their health and comfort of their loved ones.

They have to come into a solitary pathway into a place where God is going to speak to them. And Elijah, this was his condition.

God had a purpose in this. God had a purpose in it. And I believe this, that sometimes the Lord brings his people by a most mysterious root.

[ 14 : 30 ] That he brings them, he brings them to a place where they are going to hear his voice. Is this what some of you have been praying for?

Are there those in this congregation that have some peculiar burden, some peculiar trial, something that perhaps lays before you and looms up before you as a mountain for its size?

You wonder where the thing will end? Well, I would say this for your encouragement. I believe the Lord is bringing you in this way.

He is going to speak to you. And I believe this, that the farther you go on in this condition, the more you will cry for the Lord to appear.

And I believe this, that this is the way the Lord works. He works with his people in such a way that when he does speak, when he does speak, we shall know that it is his voice.

[ 15 : 41 ] It will be attended with power. Oh, that we might, if we are in such a pathway as this, and have feelingly been fleeing for our life, and one knows something of this pathway.

It was only the other morning, the morning that I had the phone message to come to Eastbourne that one was in this condition in one's own experience, fleeing for one's life, fearful of the future, wondering what the issue would be.

And that is why I have ventured with this word this evening, because I'd hardly been to work on Wednesday morning when this phone message came, and this word had been with me that morning.

what doest thou hear, Elijah? In the first place, he comes unto Horeb, the mountain of God, this mount of God, this holy mountain, Mount Sinai, where the children of Israel had seen the lightning and the thunder, the thundering, had seen the fire, and the effect of it upon them had seen that they shrank from this holy man, setting forth the holiness of God, this holy place, this place where God had appeared and shown his glory, this place where he had given to Moses the law, this same mountain where Moses had come to many years before,

Moses had come to this mountain where the Lord spake to him and gave him that divine command. He should go down into Egypt to bring up his people from Egypt.

[ 18 : 00 ] And Moses had seen the glory of God upon Mount Horeb. He had seen that bush that was burning with fire that was not consumed.

Setting forth, I believe, the mercy of God in Jesus Christ. This mountain had been a place where many had trembled.

people were and now Elijah comes to him. He came thither unto a cave and lodged there. And behold, the word of the Lord came to him.

This was the first time as he arrived here, the word of the Lord came to him. Father, those in this chapel this evening that have been asking the Lord for a word, a word of direction, a word of comfort, whatever that word may be.

The Lord knows how many there are here or if there is one soul that feels to need a word from the Lord. Behold, the word of the Lord came to him and he said unto him, what doest thou hear, Elijah?

[ 19 : 25 ] Oh, how Elijah must have trembled as he heard the voice of God. What was the effect of it upon him? And he said, I have been very jealous for the Lord God of Israel.

The children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars and slain thy prophets with the sword. And I, even I only, and left, and they seek my life to take it away.

How often when the Lord's people are brought into a deep pathway, brought into a place where they cannot see any way out, how soon, how soon we begin to tremble, how soon we begin to think, sometimes almost as if we're the only one, how full of fear we are.

My mind goes to Joshua. After Jericho had been delivered and God had said that the children of Israel should not take of that accursed thing, and there is found one who has coveted that that he had seen and taken the gold and the silver and that Babylonish garment and hid it in his tent, Achan.

But you know when the children of Israel went to go forth to besiege Ai, and the children of Israel, how soon they fled before their enemies, and Joshua, how he trembled, and how he began to say would that we had remained on the other side of Jordan, how full of fear we are when left to ourselves, how full of fear we are sometimes, as the future looms up before us, how full of fear sometimes we are as to our future pathway in life.

[ 21 : 47 ] But all the answer that Elijah had was this, and he said, go forth and stand upon the mount before the Lord.

This was a divine command, Elijah, the Lord said, it would seem as if he took no notice of Elijah's complaint, but he says to him, go forth and stand upon the mount before the Lord.

What a position, what a position he was in. Here was Elijah, he had come to the mount of God, God had spoken to him, God commanded him to go forth and stand upon the mount of the Lord.

Then the Lord sends his messenger, the Lord sends his messenger to Elijah, behold the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountain, wind, and break in pieces the rocks before the Lord.

This mighty wind, the same effect as had been known in previous days when Moses had gone up, the children of Israel had stood, that same power had been put forth then, the holiness of God made known, and break in pieces the rocks before the Lord, that the Lord was not in the wind, that the Lord was not in the wind.

[ 23 : 35 ] You know sometimes the Lord in his dealings with his people, they have to experience this, the strong winds of temptation, strong winds of temptation, and they are tempted all hope to resign, they are tempted that the good that they seek, they neer shall obtain, they are tempted, that it's no use praying anymore, the Lord has forsaken them, and Satan comes in like a flood and tells them that their religion is false.

How solemn a wind this is, the wind of temptation, what a solemn power has, the temptations that assail the Lord's people, and sometimes when brought into a pathway of affliction, and they become low in their, in hell, and then the enemy comes in like a flood, the power of temptation, but what is most solemn is that sometimes the Lord is silent in this, the Lord is silent, how solemn it is, when under the power of temptation, solemn temptation, what is more solemn when the Lord seems to be silent, have you known this experience, the Lord's silence, who can bear it, who can bear the

Lord's silence, time, the Lord was not in the wind, and after the wind an earthquake, you know, an earthquake, although I have never experienced it myself, but even only during this past week there has been an earthquake, and many have lost their lives, but Elijah experienced this, at this time, an earthquake, you know, an earthquake is a very solemn thing, the earth trembles, everything seems to shake, the earth opens, you know, sometimes the Lord's people come into a pathway, where everything seems shaken, shaken about their ears, everything that they had hoped in seems to have come to nothing, very solemn experience, especially when that word is fulfilled,

Simon, Simon, Satan hath desired to have you, that he might sift yours wheat, perhaps there is someone here this evening, that is in this experience, it seems with you as if your religion, everything has gone through the sea, it seems nothing left, very solemn experience, especially as this word is fulfilled, but the Lord was not in the earth quite.

Oh, what a trembling there is then, what a trembling when everything seems shaken about our ears, when there is perhaps, would seem almost as if the earth opened, is ready to swallow us up, and we fear that we shall come and sink at last.

[ 27 : 22 ] How solemn it is to feel that we are sinking, to rise no more, feeling our experience as if we shall soon be in our grave, and most solemn of all the Lord is not, seems to be silent even in the earthquake.

But the Lord was not in the earthquake. How Elijah must have trembling. Perhaps there are those here tonight that are trembling. and after the earthquake of fire, that the Lord was not in the fire.

This also is a very real experience, and the Lord has said that the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

You know, often times, when the Lord has granted perhaps a season of sacred, his sacred smile, when perhaps there has been that blessing known in the heart, and there has been that walking in the light of his candle.

Job knew this. Job knew it. He knew what it was to have the candle of the Lord shining round about him, and when through his light he walked through darkness.

[ 28 : 47 ] You know, Job, everything that Job had, went into the fire. What a solemn time it was. What a solemn time. First of all, the Lord saw fit to allow Satan to take away his flocks and his herds.

Yes, Satan has a terrible power. He goeth about as a roaring lion. and he's seeking to devour the Lord's people.

He's seeking to devour them. You know, Job, not only did he lose his cattle and his flocks and his herds, but he lost his children.

Then he was afflicted in his body, and even his wife said, curse God and die. Job, you know what grace was given to him at that time.

He was wonderfully sustained because no living man could ever say the Lord gave and the Lord has taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord without divine hands, without the health of God.

[ 30 : 02 ] Then he had to go deeper into the fire than this. He had to know what it was that even his friends didn't understand him. No, his friends didn't understand him.

They misjudged him. As the Lord Jesus Christ, he knew this pathway, his own disciples forsook him and fled.

You know, I believe that it is decreed that most must walk the darkest paths alone, the fire. How solemn when sometimes we have been in this experience, to be in our feelings, either in circumstance or in our improvidence or in soul trouble, to be in the fire, the fire, the furnace.

But how solemn when the Lord is not in the fire. You know, those three Hebrew children, as they were cast into that burning, fiery furnace, you know, all they lost was their hosen, their hats, their clothes, that they were unscathed.

And why was he? Because Jesus Christ was in the fire with them. And when Jesus Christ is with us in the fire, when there is this still, small voice known and found, the sweet voice of the gospel, the voice of Jesus Christ, the voice of the Holy Spirit, the voice of God in his mercy, what a difference this makes.

[ 31 : 52 ] But the Lord was not in the fire and after the fire a still, small voice. You see, though Elijah was favoured with these things, and it was so when Elijah heard that, oh, when he heard this still, small voice, when he heard this still, small voice, what an effect it had on him.

We read this, and it was so. When Elijah heard that, when Elijah heard that, when he heard that still, small voice of mercy and love, how he must have trembled and yet rejoiced.

And it was so when he heard that, oh, this, this still, small voice, this voice of the gospel, this voice of the word of God, when that is heard, oh, this begins to raise again in our hearts experience that courage to hold on our way.

That courage is given to continue in the race that is set before us and then there is a looking unto Jesus. And when it was so, when Elijah heard that, he wrapped his face in his mantle and went out.

Oh, how humbling it is to hear the still, small voice. How humbling when the Lord condescends to whisper a word. I shall never forget my own dear father saying to me on one occasion when very tried, very tried concerning the ministry, he said, well, my son, I do hope you will hear that still, small voice, that whisper.

[ 33 : 53 ] Oh, to have our hearts tuned, our ears, attuned to hear this still, small voice. What a difference it makes. What a sacred difference it makes to the whole scene when the Lord in his mercy appears and grants us a word in season, a word from himself, a word that we may continue.

But the effect of it upon Elijah, sacred effect, he wrapped his face in his mantle. Yes, what deep humility it brought forth for a sacred humbling in his heart, to think that God had condescended to come, to come, even in that place where he was, though he'd been fleeing for his life, yet God should return in his mercy and speak a word to him, give him further direction as to what he was to do.

And he went out and stood in the entering in of the cave, and behold there came a voice unto him and said, what doest thou here, Elijah?

The time has gone. And I would ask this question in conclusion, what are we doing in this house of prayer tonight?

The motive that has brought us the Lord only sees. What doest thou here, Elijah?

[ 35 : 37 ] Are you concerned to hear God's voice? Or are you unconcerned? Are you concerned as to know how it will be with you when you come to die?

Are you concerned as to know whether the Lord is with you? Are you concerned to know whether God, that same God, is with you?

God in Christ. Are we concerned to know this? Or are we unconcerned? What doest thou here, Elijah?

What are we doing in this chapel this evening? Have we come seeking a portion for our soul? Or are we unconcerned? Now eternity lies before each one of us, a never ending eternity.

And our life will soon come to a close. What doest thou here in the loiter? Amen.