

Elijah - the still small voice (Quality: good)

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Preacher: Mercer, Seth (1930-2017)

- [0 : 00] You'll be held this day in this evening, directing your thoughts to the first book of Kings, the 19th chapter, reading verses 11 and 12.
- The first book of Kings, the 19th chapter, reading verses 11 and 12. And he said, Go forth and stand upon the mount before the Lord, and be told, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and break increases the rock before the Lord.
- But the Lord was not in the wind. And after the wind and earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake.
- And after the earthquake, a fire. But the Lord was not in the fire. And after the fire, a still small water.
- I fell before my God. There is so much.
- [1 : 41] This is sacred truth. I'm playing yes in this chapter. And it can only be with the Lord's divine help that we shall be able to find it, and to be able to bring it before you.
- But there are very real lessons to be learned in this account of the prophet Elijah.
- First of all, we will just briefly think again of how God had commanded him to gather all Israel together.
- And as we are enabled to really think of what this means, we shall know that nothing but divine power could have brought that to pass.
- Yet, there's nothing that this great or mighty Jehovah cannot do. It is still the same to God.
- [3 : 11] Our God is in the heavens. And he still does whatsoever is pleasing to him. God is omnipotent.
- Omnipotent. Yet, what God was so gracious and caused there to be a demonstration of his power in such a way that Ahab and the children of Israel, the children of Israel, that were their actual own, that this great, almighty God was the God, the only God.
- It was proved on that occasion that Baal was indeed no God. It was proved to them that he was powerless.
- It was also proved that this great God rules and reigns. Now, if we are favored to consider Elijah in all this, I'm sure that we cannot really begin to concede how he would have felt.
- He must have felt, he did feel humbled in the dark. And yet, it was demonstrated on that occasion that he was God's servant and that I have done all these things at thy work.
- [5 : 08] Now, the Lord having brought this wonder, and the rain having descended, the time of dreadful famine commencing to be over, for those of us here tonight who have been taught at least something of the evils of our own power, I believe we should have this discernment within us to know how quickly Elijah the prophet, man of God though he was, yes, as the prophet James speaks of them, Elijah, a man subject to life passions of will.
- As we said on Sunday evening, Elijah was only a man in his life. And this is so evident in what follows. But what I'm coming to is that Elijah needed the balancing of the man.

God knew it. And our God still knows this in our lives. If we have been favoured from time to time to know to have demonstrations of God's power in our lives, if we have been favoured at times with very clear and marked answers to prayer, which at the time, which at the time, I'm sure, will have humbled us and will have brought us into the dark.

And yet we are in ourselves that poor sin, and how soon our hearts can be lifted up with pride, even in what the Lord has done for us.

Now again, I mention this. I feel rightly that Elijah needed better. And so do we many better.

[7 : 47] As I stand before you from time to time, the Lord has made me at times very aware of it. how much I need that.

How much we need that. As a people worshipping together here in the hands of God. Why do we need that?

Why do we need for there to be a balancing of the trials? Well, it's to this end that we shall be humbled that we shall know where the blessings which God has given to us have come from.

We shall trace it back to the mighty hand of God. We shall trace it back to his loving kindness, which is so bright. We shall trace it back to his divine sovereignty and his divine love.

Those two blessed rivers are that still close in the fulfilment of God's purposes in life and to every child of God.

[9 : 09] Now, when the pharaoh was needed, and the way or the means, the method that God is pleased to give to bring about the balancing of the clouds in our life is sovereignly raw.

Dear friends, I've said this on another occasion, but we're all different in our nations. We're all different. those of us that have been favoured with children, and those of you that have laboured in the Sabbath school, and those of you that have had to do with children, and young people, and others, you will have learnt this in measure, how different every child is, how different every person is.

And in the closest relationships in our lives, we shall find this that we're different. Our God knows this.

This great God knows this. One hymn writer has said, he knows how good and faint we are.

He knows as it is recorded in one of the psalms, like as a father pitied his children, so the Lord pitied them to fear him, for he knew it our pride.

[10 : 45] He remembers that we are dying. Now in our own personal experiences, we shall find this, that God will give the balance.

He will give it to us each, as he fear, it made it. He knows what to get. He knows what to bring.

I feel disappointed of this, that God brought his servant Elijah into this time of great fear. We mentioned Sunday evening, he was found here fleeing weary from an ungodly woman, who threatened to take his life.

But God was in me. Because I feel this, that if we are helped to really understand a little at least of what is recorded in this 19th chapter, you will find this, that God brought the battle, his sovereign purposes, in, and through this time of testing, this time of trembling, in Elijah's mind, the Lord yet fulfills his will in him too.

And in a word, there was still something to be done. So then the Lord uses whatsoever he will do this for us, to bring us, where did he bring him on him?

[12 : 33] He brought him to his feet. It would seem almost as though the dear man had forgotten what had happened. Perhaps to use a better explanation of it, he had lost sight of what had happened.

There might be those here tonight, and you have lost sight of the moment of what God has done for you. You've lost sight of those blessed times that you've enjoyed.

You've lost sight of the time that the Lord has demonstrated his power in your life. And when you've been able to say, hear what the Lord has done for me, because he has done great things for you.

there have been those blessed things that have been accomplished. Now, as soon as dear Elijah was found here, praying for his life, filled with things, and he lost sight of what the Lord has done for you, on mankind, he returns to his own sad place.

As the hymn writer says, and then with Aaron fear, so that the Lord used this time of tremble, this time of fear, to further his purposes in Elijah's life, and prove him in the lives of us.

[14 : 06] I then should say this, I can withdraw about adventure, if you are in a fearing condition now, if your poor heart is filled with fear.

When I speak of this, I do not mean that fear that has torn me. I mean that what it is to be brought merely to a time of gracious tremble.

Tremble. I must say this to you, that this time in your present time is as much in the Lord's hands as when the thing was perhaps very different.

And then we would further notice this, yet in the midst of Elijah's fear, and as he arose and fled for his life, and came and sat down under a judefature, if we really think of it, the Lord had intended that he should sit down under his judefature.

Oh, friends, the Lord appoints the places in our life where he will again come to us. And the Lord knows that we're in your city, at the present time, in your time.

[15 : 49] And although you may not be able to realise it this evening, I hope you will before you go home, you may not be able to understand your present time.

You may have been saying, Lord, why is this? Your trembling crime will thou pursue thy word to death? And yet we can go on and say that in this way the Lord replied, I ask the of grace and change.

You may well have been praying to God for grace and change. You may well have been praying but the Lord will go on to be gracious to you that he would yet serve and bless your soul and perhaps you may have been bleeding but he would yet bless the soul than others and yet you're in this bad condition feeling as it were clean for your life trembling under it all and that now you've come perhaps like an idea you sat down before God and you may have said with him Lord I cannot go on I've come to the end but it wasn't the end and that this juniper tree was the place we mentioned again on Sunday evening and I understand it as naturalists speak of it I do not think a person would choose to sit down under a juniper and it drives out of our eyes the time we're brought into places that we wouldn't choose to do we wouldn't be there you might say that this evening

I wouldn't be here if I could help you I wouldn't be in all this love I never thought I should be in such a place as this I never thought things like this would happen in my life but what have we been singing together in our second thing I can tell you really there is an answer in that thing in love I correct you in love I correct you in a way the Lord was correcting his servant his answer he was going to show again that despite his feelings despite the fact that he thought that he was the only one left that this wasn't true but it was under this dream that the Lord met with him and fed him and this brings me to another point tonight the care that God has over his truth the care that he has over he does care for he does care for you poor trembling child of God he cares for you because he is your shepherd you're one of his sheep you may not be able to see the mark on your own back and that is the case it's often been spoken of like that the sheep cannot see the mark upon their own back but it's there it's been put there by their master it's been put there by the shepherd in love and the correctly and you know why that the

Lord sees that that there's the need of correction but it's all to this end that your prayers will be answered you will be brought into the dust to make us at length his own time that is in his beauty to shine it's so that presently you'll be found within in heaven although we might have heaven our journey's ending view more often we're earthbound creatures we cling we cling to this world and to this month that all will be found among those that are seeking a better country to be found among those that are made willing to leave all and follow him now the Lord then cares it so he fed him in the wilderness we read in Psalm 78 can

[20 : 37] God the children of Israel said this can God furnish a table in the wilderness they didn't believe he could but he did furnish a table in the wilderness what did he feed them with he fed them with man and he fed them every time and you know well that on the sixth day they gathered sufficient for two days God brought a miracle for them every other day if they gathered too much it read worms and stained God so ruled because they were to keep the Sabbath day that what they gathered on Saturday it kept until the Lord died until our God knows how to furnish a table in the wilderness the psalmist in that beautiful psalm that speaks of the good shepherd that gave his life to the sheep what did he say in

Psalm 23 thou prepare a table before me where in the presence of my name what sort it is now God he could tear the table for us in the presence of our name and as the eastern shepherd would anoint the head of his sheep to keep away the insects and to bring relief to the poor sheep so the Lord still anoint his dear people thou anointest my head with oil and my cup run his age and that we shall be able to say then surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life and

I will dwell in the house of the Lord will end and if we are made honest to see wouldn't you have to own with the disciples when our Lord asks them let ye anything let ye anything have we really let anything in our life you know there are to say Lord we let not now in God dealing with his servants it was all to this end to bring him to the man of God that he might speak to him and that he might communicate to him what he was yet to do what does this really speak of to I understand that a manager could have taken this journey to

Horez in three or four days but what are we told he went in the strength of that means forty days and forty nights until Horez and Antastar we're not told what took that you see God is a sovereign in the length of time that he uses to bring his people to an appointed place I hope that there might be those here tonight that will feel you've been brought to an appointed place once and that the Lord will speak to yourself that you might feel that God has brought you into this chapel tonight and those of you who have had the witness that God has brought you into this house of God and those of you who have been slung this year yet we need this really every time we need to have that blessed witness that it's

God's hand and that God is here so we come now to this spot where Elijah must come to and he said go forth and stand upon the hand before the Lord oh what a blessed thing it is to stand before the Lord to be found even tonight in the house of God listening for what the Lord will say to us and then we have this and behold the Lord passed on and a great and strong wind rent the mountain and breaking pieces the rocks before the Lord that the Lord was not in the wind and after the wind and earthquake that the Lord was not in the earthquake and after the earthquake of fire fire but the

[26 : 07] Lord was not in the fire but still more going with no desire to sense they receive troops again this evening to you may the Lord help me to speak once more of this we have in this word here I would feel it right to say three of the most powerful elements that are under the control of God and it down now see that these powerful elements are under the control of God the wind the earth and the fire now watch the most powerful elements they are and God has used them throughout the history of this world to fulfill his own will how many people have been brought to their end to the power of the wind the tornado and so on that are known in some parts of the world that bring devastation there are parts of the world still today that never know when there's going to be an earthquake what tremendous power there is in the earth

I can only speak like that to you because I've never had any experience of an earthquake I do not know if any of you have but what a most awful experience it must be to be where does earth like even if our life is spared when the ground just trembles and opened up and walls houses and whatever there is in this time oh what power there is in the earth and what power there is in fire you might not have seen something of this I remember once in my own earlier life then there was a fire in the wood and it had no tribes the way it happened in awful terrifying we might say why is this report that if the

Holy Spirit has given me some right and gracious understanding of this truth I can only put it to you like this God demonstrated to himself his almighty power he gave them a demonstration that his almighty power is God and how I'm sure of this that as Elijah stood on the mountain and as we read how a great and strong wind rent the mountain and breaking pieces the rock before the earth but the Lord did not enter in and then the earth breaking the fire and the Lord did not enter yet how Elijah must have changed he must have stood in all his time I'm sure if we knew more of what it is to stand in all the side it would humber the more thy glory strikes my eye the humber

I shall have we need praise to right the arts of all to instruct us and to teach us in a way that we should go so dear friends to begin just a glimpse of his majesty and power and glory as God is the most humbling thing that while he demonstrated his path and while he could have destroyed himself to those powerful elements I believe it was to bring home of the wonder of religion and love and so we read and after the time a still small time now this brings me to another thought or two as we proceed in our life the night of space there will

I believe be time when we may desire what we might think of some wonderful blessing or wonderful demonstration of God's power in our souls you may have read of others who have been given a sight of Christ upon the cross you may have read of others who have been favoured with a most sacred vision of their faith you may have read of others who have been granted what we might speak of as most wondrous blessings and you might well think sometimes why is it that I am not favoured like others why is it that I have not had these great and sacred and blessed revelations of Christ as others have had said let me tell you once that our

[32 : 27] God is sovereign in the way he disposes that it has been rightly said that he will only give to us what we can be trusted with have you ever thought of that the Lord will only give to us what we can be trusted with I know anything at all of my own whole single heart I know this how soon my heart has sometimes been lifted up with Christ the heart uplifted God's own gift and made sin gracious next and just to try and illustrate a point for a moment you'll remember that the Apostle Paul we are told was taken up into the third heaven and he saw things that it was not lawful for a man to act and so saved but what happened he soon had some bad and he says unless

I should be assaulted above measure and that is repeated to emphasize it lest I should be assaulted above measure that was given unto me a thorn in the flesh of messenger of Satan to suffer lest I should be exhausted above me and that brings me again to what we mentioned earlier the more dear friends we are faced the more balanced we should have what we need then I feel rather to speak for us next but the hymn writer speaks that really it puts it in a nutshell make me willing to receive what I couldn't wait to rather that we may pray with the psalmist lead me in my truth and teach and to trust the

Lord he will lead you and teach you and bless you as he says it is now what a wonderful thing it is to hear the still small voice of the gospel what a mercy it is you see the Lord is so merciful to his servant he liked this was why he spoke to him with this still small voice and a dear man as soon as he heard it it humbled him he rubbed his face in his mantle believer he goes his still small voice when God says word when his doctrine has dropped of the rain and his speech as his ears into your heart you might ask the question how do I know when God speaks with his still small voice I can tell you, it will humble you immediately.

It will soften your heart immediately. It will bring you into the dark, and you will know that the Lord is speaking to you. Why, whenever the Lord speaks just a word to his dear people, it's accompanied with that mental power that the Lord knows in me.

But if you heard that still a small voice, you would know the voice of Jesus. We shall know when Jesus speaks, that the sheep here is lost.

[36 : 15] I know my sheep, and have known of mine. My sheep hear my voice. I know them, and they follow me. And Jesus speaks so often through his words.

He sometimes comes to his people without speaking a word, but have you ever known what it is to feel your heart's heart? You couldn't explain why.

It's because the Savior has joined. Because the Holy Spirit has touched your heart. But to hear this still, small voice, in through his words, Jesus speaking in his words, he may give us his servant.

To convey it to you. Huh? If you have been saved, as we mentioned on Sunday morning, that dear river, she could say this, Now by this I know, that thou art a man of God, and that the word of the Lord in my mouth is true.

Why is this? Because it was conveyed into our heart. How is it that you know whether a man is sent of God to preach or not? The Lord favoured you with that discernment.

[37 : 33] You will know because you will feel the Lord speak through the man. And you will look sorry to the man. And you will know that it's God's voice. It's the voice of your Lord.

That is how we know whether men are sent of God to preach or not. Why? And the word flows through them with a measure of divine power. We know the Lord is sent of him.

So, the Lord is sent of him. And after the time of still, small voice, what I, the Soho, to be able to convey to you this evening is, do not forget, that you will not always have what we might speak of as special times.

It wouldn't be good for us if we did. But let me ask this question.

Do you know what it is even to feel the Lord's presence in a servant? That's something that will soften our heart. We shall know when the Lord is in a servant.

[38 : 49] We may not have a particular blessing, but we shall feel that the Lord is there. And we shall hope then in our heart that perhaps someone else has received a blessing.

And then, surely we know what it is when there are a few trunks that fall from the north of the sea. A crown of mercy. A crown of divine savour.

When perhaps there's a whole sermon that speaks of just a sentence that touches your heart. It's often been. And you can't, you don't lose it.

You go home with that one sentence, perhaps, a sentence of divine truth, and you lose all of that. But you don't lose what the Lord gives you. That's how good it's been made now.

And hasn't it been, are there not the times when there's a handful of servants? That falls to you? Why is Jesus speaking in his word that still small voice of Jesus?

[39 : 56] I feel I can say this. I believe I know when the daughter speaks to me. He's humble. He does something in time.

It's something that's so real. And we shall often know that it was real when we know his answer. The Lord will teach us the reality of hearing his voice.

But then he will teach us how real it is. And he withdraws his presence and his shining and his blessing. And we are right for things that are left alone.

And we walk in darkness and have no one. So the Lord help us to value his still small voice. Seekest thou great things for thy face?

Seek them now. Oh, I would not discourage you. We are told you covet earnestly in the back of you. Now, my desire is being once more tonight to be able to convey to you the value of this still small voice.

[41 : 10] Whenever you hear it, it will bring life to you. It will bring life. And then just briefly in closing, the Lord had a word for him I just built it.

His word of sin. He thought it was. He wanted to die to be out of it because of his fear that his work was not for him.

And what did the Lord say? The Lord took no notice of Elijah when he said that he was the only one there. He took no notice of Elijah when he said that the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant thrown down thine altars and slain thy prophets with a sword and I eat and I own the antelope and I seek my life to take it away.

The Lord never gave him a direct answer. But he gave him this answer. He said to him, go, go, return on thy way to the wilderness of the night.

He was to anoint two kings and he was to anoint his vices to be proper in his work. His work wasn't finished.

[42 : 33] And the Lord said, I hope that he will, I believe he will if he did his sovereign will. If there's someone here tonight in a similar condition to Elijah, I hope the Lord will say to you, go, return.

There's something to be done. You can't run away from your responsibility. You can't get out of it. Jesus Christ, your master's son, if you undismayed, go on.

The Ephraim, you must go on. You can't turn back. You must go on. But there's something to be done. There's something very precious in this account to my own soul, particularly in this, that here in Elijah was favored to anoint his vices.

And we need such a spirit as this in the Church of Christ, which will not be here all day. Our little life will soon be done. Our ministry will soon be done in comparison to eternity.

In comparison to the years of our life, our little work will soon be done. And what a wonderful thing it is in the Church of Christ where we're concerned that the Lord will raise up.

[44 : 02] every country is as I'm found in the history of this chapel. Lord, that's very coordination I fear like, I feel that's something about and Hang on.

I know that's what I know hear of this, and what I know of today is what I know of this but what I am to support this as I know to the I know