

1Kings 19:1 ¶ And Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and withal how he had slain all the prophets with the sword.

1Kings 19:2 Then Jezebel sent a messenger unto Elijah, saying, So let the gods do *to me*, and more also, if I make not thy life as the life of one of them by to morrow about this time.

Continuing the narrative from the last chapter...

When Ahab returned home, he told Jezebel all that Elijah had done and how he had killed all the prophets of Baal. Jezebel immediately sent a messenger to Elijah swearing an oath in the name of her gods that she would kill Elijah by the same time the next day.

1Kings 19:3 And when he saw *that*, he arose, and went for his life, and came to Beersheba, which *belongeth* to Judah, and left his servant there.

1Kings 19:4 But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree: and he requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life; for I *am* not better than my fathers.

All of a sudden this great man of faith acted like a scared rabbit. Upon receiving the message, Elijah ran for his life to Beersheba at the southern end of Judah and left his servant there. He then went on for another day's journey into the wilderness. He finally sat down under a juniper tree and asked the LORD to let him die. He decided that he was finished; he was no better than his fathers before him.

Many commentators interpret the last statement of verse 4 to reference his inability to get the people to turn back to God.

Clarke adds an insightful note: "Probably Elijah had played into Jezebel's hands. Had she really wanted Elijah dead, she surely would have seized him without warning and would have killed him. What she desired was that Elijah and his God be discredited before the new converts who had aided Elijah by executing the prophets of Baal. Without a leader revolutionary movements usually stumble and fall away."

1Kings 19:5 And as he lay and slept under a juniper tree, behold, then an angel touched him, and said unto him, Arise *and* eat.

1Kings 19:6 And he looked, and, behold, *there was* a cake baken on the coals, and a cruse of water at his head. And he did eat and drink, and laid him down again.

1Kings 19:7 And the angel of the LORD came again the second time, and touched him, and said, Arise *and* eat; because the journey *is* too great for thee.

1Kings 19:8 And he arose, and did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights unto Horeb the mount of God.

Elijah fell asleep under the tree. Suddenly, an angel touched him and told him to get up and eat. When he looked, Elijah saw that a cake had been prepared on

coals of fire and there was a cruse of water at his head. So he ate and drank and lay back down.

I am reminded of a verse in Hebrews.

Hebrews 1:13–14 “But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool? Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?”

The angel of the LORD came a second time and again told him to get up and eat in preparation for the journey ahead of him. Once again Elijah did as the angel commanded and journeyed in the strength of that meal for 40 days and nights to Horeb, the mount of God, the place where the LORD had appeared to Moses in the burning bush and later received the ten commandments.

I think the LORD must have fed him with special bread from heaven for it to be able to sustain Elijah for so long.

1Kings 19:9 ¶ And he came thither unto a cave, and lodged there; and, behold, the word of the LORD came to him, and he said unto him, What doest thou here, Elijah?

1Kings 19:10 And he said, I have been very jealous for the LORD God of hosts: for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away.

Arriving at Mount Horeb, Elijah found a cave in which to dwell. The LORD spoke to him and asked him what he was doing here.

Elijah answered that he had been very jealous for the LORD God of hosts. He was provoked because the people of Israel had forsaken their covenant with God, torn down their altars to Him, and killed His prophets. He then lamented that he was the only one left and now they sought to kill him.

Actually, his threat was from Jezebel—not the people.

1Kings 19:11 And he said, Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the LORD. And, behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the LORD; but the LORD was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the LORD was not in the earthquake:

1Kings 19:12 And after the earthquake a fire; but the LORD was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice.

The LORD then told Elijah to present himself before Him upon the mount. When the LORD passed by, a powerful wind tore at the mountains; it was so powerful that it broke rocks into pieces; but the LORD did not reveal Himself in the wind. After the wind, there was an earthquake; but the LORD did not reveal Himself in the earthquake. After the earthquake, there was a fire; but the LORD

did not reveal Himself in the fire. After the fire, there was a still small voice.

God does not always reveal Himself in dramatic miraculous ways. He often shows up quietly and without fanfare. I liked Guzik's observation: "...displays of power and preaching God's anger don't necessarily change hearts. Instead, the still small voice of God speaking to the human heart is actually more powerful than outward displays of power or displays of Gods judgment."

1Kings 19:13 And it was so, when Elijah heard *it*, that he wrapped his face in his mantle, and 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?

1Kings 19:14 And he said, I have been very jealous for the LORD God of hosts: because the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, *even* I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away.

When Elijah heard the small voice, he wrapped his face in his mantle (as a sign of respect) and went to stand in the entrance to the cave. He knew it was the LORD. He heard a voice that asked him once again what he was doing here.

Elijah gave the same answer that he had the first time.

1Kings 19:15 And the LORD said unto him, Go, return on thy way to the wilderness of Damascus: and when thou comest, anoint Hazael *to be* king over Syria:

1Kings 19:16 And Jehu the son of Nimshi shalt thou anoint *to be* king over Israel: and Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abelmeholah shalt thou anoint *to be* prophet in thy room.

1Kings 19:17 And it shall come to pass, *that* him that escapeth the sword of Hazael shall Jehu slay: and him that escapeth from the sword of Jehu shall Elisha slay.

1Kings 19:18 Yet I have left *me* seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him.

The LORD then told Elijah that there was more He wanted him to do. He commanded Elijah to go back by way of the wilderness of Damascus. He was to anoint Hazael to be king over Syria. He was also to go and anoint Jehu, the son of Nimshi, as king over Israel. Thirdly, he was to anoint Elisha, the son of Shaphat of Abelmeholah, as his successor. Those that escaped death at the sword of Hazael would find death at the hand of Jehu. Those that escaped Jehu would suffer death at the hand of Elisha. I think the significant point being made is that these three men would be the ones through whom God brought judgment against the idolatrous people of Israel.

This is the first time that I noticed that God anointed a Gentile king. We know from the Holy Spirit's words through the prophet Daniel that God is ever sovereign over the rulers of this world.

Daniel 2:20–21 "Daniel answered and said, Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever:

for wisdom and might are his: And he changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings...."

The LORD then told Elijah that he was not alone in his commitment to the LORD; there were yet 7000 men in Israel faithful to Him that had not bowed their knee to Baal or worshipped him.

1Kings 19:19 ¶ So he departed thence, and found Elisha the son of Shaphat, who *was* plowing *with* twelve yoke of oxen before him, and he with the twelfth: and Elijah passed by him, and cast his mantle upon him.

1Kings 19:20 And he left the oxen, and ran after Elijah, and said, Let me, I pray thee, kiss my father and my mother, and *then* I will follow thee. And he said unto him, Go back again: for what have I done to thee?

1Kings 19:21 And he returned back from him, and took a yoke of oxen, and slew them, and boiled their flesh with the instruments of the oxen, and gave unto the people, and they did eat. Then he arose, and went after Elijah, and ministered unto him.

Once again, we see the obedient prophet. When he got to Elisha (after anointing Hazael and Jehu?), he was plowing the field with a total of 12 teams of oxen. He was working with the 12th team. As Elijah passed by him, he threw his mantle upon him.

Elisha understood what this meant. He left the oxen and ran after Elijah asking permission to say goodbye to his parents. Elijah basically said OK.

Constable notes that *what have I done to thee* "is an idiom that means, 'Do as you please.'"

Elisha went back and killed a yoke of oxen (presumably his own) and boiled the flesh over a fire fueled by the wood of the yoke. He gave the food to the people (his family and close friends I presume) and then ran after Elijah to serve him and be his companion.

When we get to 2Kings 8-9, it would appear that Elijah delegated the responsibility of anointing Hazael and Jehu to Elisha.