

When God Speaks

Part one of the series, "Great Faith: When God Speaks"

Saturday, January 5 & Sunday, January 6, 2019 • Pastor Norman Nakanishi

"Answer me, Lord, answer me, so these people will know that you, Lord, are God, and that you are turning their hearts back again."³⁸Then the fire of the Lord fell and burned up the sacrifice, the wood, the stones and the soil, and also licked up the water in the trench. ³⁹When all the people saw this, they fell prostrate and cried, 'The Lord—he is God! The Lord—he is God!' ⁴⁰Then Elijah commanded them, 'Seize the prophets of Baal. Don't let anyone get away!' They seized them, and Elijah had them brought down to the Kishon Valley and slaughtered there." (1 Kings 18:37-40 NIV)

He first rests and replenishes us.

"Elijah was afraid and ran for his life. When he came to Beersheba in Judah, he left his servant there, ⁴while he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness. He came to a broom bush, sat down under it and prayed that he might die. 'I have had enough, Lord,' he said. 'Take my life; I am no better than my ancestors.'⁵Then he lay down under the bush and fell asleep. All at once an angel touched him and said, 'Get up and eat.'⁶He looked around, and there by his head was some bread baked over hot coals, and a jar of water. He ate and drank and then lay down again. ⁷The angel of the Lord came back a second time and touched him and said, 'Get up and eat, for the journey is too much for you.'⁸So he got up and ate and drank. Strengthened by that food, he traveled forty days and forty nights until he reached Horeb, the mountain of God. ⁹There he went into a cave and spent the night." (1 Kings 19:3-9 NIV)

"The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. ²He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. ³He restores my soul. He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake." (Psalm 23:1-3 ESV)

He then whispers to us.

"The Lord said, 'Go out and stand on the mountain in the presence of the Lord, for the Lord is about to pass by.' Then a great and powerful wind tore the mountains apart and shattered the rocks before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind. After the wind there was an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake. ¹²After the earthquake came a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire. And after the fire came a gentle whisper. ¹³When Elijah heard it, he pulled his cloak over his face and went out and stood at the mouth of the cave..." (1 Kings 19:11-13 NIV)

1. God whispers through the quickening of scripture.
"Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path." (Psalm 119:105 NIV)
2. God whispers to our intuition and through our thoughts.
"How precious to me are your thoughts, God! How vast is the sum of them! Were I to count them, they would outnumber the grains of sand— when I awake, I am still with you." (Psalm 139:17-18 NIV)
3. God whispers through a sense of inner peace.
"Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful." (Colossians 3:15 NIV)
4. God whispers as he did through Elijah and other prophets through other people.
5. When we slow, still, and quiet our soul, we better discern God's whisper.

He next directs us.

"The Lord said to him, 'Go back the way you came, and go to the Desert of Damascus. When you get there, anoint Hazael king over Aram. ¹⁶Also, anoint Jehu son of Nimshi king over Israel, and anoint Elisha son of Shaphat from Abel Meholah to succeed you as prophet. ¹⁷Jehu will put to death any who escape the sword of Hazael, and Elisha will put to death any who escape the sword of Jehu. ¹⁸Yet I reserve seven thousand in Israel—all whose knees have not bowed down to Baal and whose mouths have not kissed him.'" (1 Kings 19:15-18 NIV)

He ultimately rewards our obedience.

"So Elijah went from there and found Elisha son of Shaphat. He was plowing with twelve yoke of oxen, and he himself was driving the twelfth pair. Elijah went up to him and threw his cloak around him. ²⁰Elisha then left his oxen and ran after Elijah... ²¹and became his servant." (1 Kings 19:19-21 NIV)

"Elijah took his cloak, rolled it up and struck the water with it. The water divided to the right and to the left, and the two of them crossed over on dry ground. ⁹When they had crossed, Elijah said to Elisha, 'Tell me, what can I do for you before I am taken from you?' 'Let me inherit a double portion of your spirit,' Elisha replied. ¹⁰'You have asked a difficult thing,' Elijah said, 'yet if you see me when I am taken from you, it will be yours—otherwise, it will not.'¹¹As they were walking along and talking together, suddenly a chariot of fire and horses of fire appeared and separated the two of them, and Elijah went up to heaven in a whirlwind." (2 Kings 2:8-11 NIV)