

Teach Us Your Ways¹

וְיִרְנֵנוּ מִדַּרְכָּיו

And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. (Isaiah 2:3)

He made known his ways unto Moses, his acts unto the children of Israel. (Ps 103:7)

The Knowledge of His Ways

The Lord promised *Moshe* in Exodus 33:14: “*My presence shall go with you, and I will give you rest.*” We cannot say we truly know God if we remain ignorant of His ways. To know the ways of a person is to know his heart’s motivations, as well as how he would respond to the blessings and challenges of life. Moses knew the L-rd in the deepest intimacy possible; he knew God’s ways. That is why the Bible tells us that the Lord revealed His acts to the children of Israel, but *He made known his ways unto Moses*. To know the ways of God is to become knowledgeable of the motives of His heart and intimate with the secret of His passions. It is to be amazed at the resolve of His love and compelled to humility by His attraction to the lowly.

When God’s presence accompanies our actions, all the energy we once spent worrying and planning is reclaimed and offered back to God in praise and effective service. The outcome of being companioned through life with Yeshua is in His next promise, “*I will give you rest*” (Exodus 33:14). To enter His rest does not imply that we have become inactive but that God has become active. Thus, Yeshua tells us: “*Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest*” (Matt. 11:28). How the Believing Community today, weary and desperate, needs to return to Yeshua and re-enter God’s Shabbat! Yoked to Messiah, our burdens are transferred to the vastness of His strength and abilities. He becomes to us an untiring resource for our weakness; He is unfailing wisdom for our ignorance. At the place of rest, Messiah Yeshua becomes a continual life-spring of grace and virtue. We can cease from our anxious labors and, unfettered from **our** ideas and traditions, we can serve Him in the unlimited strength of His might.

God has always been more concerned with the condition of our hearts than the activity of our hands. What we become to Him is far more consequential than all we shall ever do for Him. He wants our love and companionship. Indeed, the Scriptures tell us that He “*jealously desires the Spirit which He has made to dwell in us*” (James 4:5). Thus, if our devotion to our task exceeds our devotion to Him, He will personally hinder our success. It is out of love that God delivers us from the un-anointed momentum of our zeal. He intentionally dries up our vigor. The Lord insists that our success not originate from our strength but from our union with Him. Our time of desolation, brokenness, and disappointment becomes a tool in His hand where He works within, us a deeper dependency upon His Strength.

Alone with God on Horeb, Moses prayed, “*Show me Thy glory!*” (Exod. 33:18). The Lord responded, “*I Myself will make all My goodness pass before you*” (v. 19). At the center of Yeshua’s resplendent glory is His incomparable goodness. Indeed, our Horeb experience becomes the very site where, in spite of our sense of failure, God reveals to us His goodness. To be personally restored to the knowledge of God’s goodness is what Elijah desperately needed. So it is for us.

Get Out of the Cave!

It can be a crushing experience to give your very best and still fall short. Elijah had been discouraged with his inability to effect revival in God's people. He fled Jezebel and traveled south nearly two hundred miles to Horeb where he lodged in a cave on the mountain side. Scripture tells us that *"hope deferred makes the heart sick"* (Prov. 13:12). Elijah had lost hope that revival would come to Israel. When we lose hope we simultaneously lose faith, for faith is the *substance of the thing hoped for*. Without hope or faith, all we have is empty religion. Withdrawal is a deep cave!

When we become sick with disappointment and discouragement, we also lose perspective. We feel that we are responsible for the results. We must remember, apart from the cooperating work of the Holy Spirit, no man can change another person's heart, much less the heart of a city or nation. Much of Elijah's discouragement came from the false expectations he had placed upon himself. Upon receiving an assignment from the Lord, it is not hard to begin immediately to imagine the results. We project ourselves prematurely into a place of success-and fulfillment-. Yet, we do not know what the result will be, only that we should obey the L-rd. We must leave the fulfillment into the hands of Him who *"does exceedingly abundantly beyond all that we ask or think"* (Eph. 3:20).

Elijah withdrew into a cave on Horeb. For us, self-pity can also become a spiritual cave. It can trap us in a dark hole of loneliness and pain. In this place of isolation we fail to hear the encouragement of God; all we really hear is the echo of our own voice magnifying and distorting our own problems.

Elijah was alone and despairing, yet the L-rd knew his heart. *"What are you doing here?"* He asked.

And he said, "I have been very zealous for the LORD, the God of hosts; for the sons of Israel have forsaken Thy covenant, torn down Thine altars and killed Thy prophets with the sword. And I alone am left; and they seek my life, to take it away." (1 Ki. 19:10)

Elijah wanted desperately to see the nation awakened, but he did not understand the role God would have him play. Perhaps Elijah's main mistake was that he was personally shouldering the burden of Israel's revival. Not knowing his own place, he assumed the place of God! Calling Elijah out of the cave, the Lord told him, *"Go forth, and stand on the mountain before יהוה"* (v. 11). As Elijah stepped out of the cave's darkness, an awesome event occurred.

And behold, יהוה was passing by! And a great and strong wind was rending the mountains and breaking in pieces the rocks before יהוה; but יהוה was not in the wind. And after the wind an earthquake, but יהוה was not in the earthquake. And after the earthquake a fire, but יהוה was not in the fire; and after the fire a sound of a gentle blowing. (1 Kings 19:11-12)

A New Vision (Revelation)

There are times when to lead us unto new authority and blessing God must liberate us from the container of our previous experiences. The Lord was passing by, but He was not in the wind, the earthquake, or the fire, all of which were familiar symbols to Elijah. The Lord who caused these mighty manifestations was not in them. He was not in the familiar! For Elijah, mighty manifestations had been signs of God's approval. But something new was at hand that required a fresh submission to the living God. A double portion of power was coming! The distinguishing characteristic of this new anointing would not only be seen in supernatural manifestations but in greater wisdom and compassion.

Earthquakes, fires, and storms—the signs that accompanied Elijah—are the signs of our times as well. But to enter the double portion we must learn to recognize God's nearness when there are no "earthquakes" or "storms" to capture our attention. He demands we enter a more refined relationship with Him, one that is based on His love and the whisper of His word, not merely upon spiritual phenomena or the issues of our times.

After the last sign, there came “*a gentle blowing*” (v. 12). Elijah recognized this holy silence: The presence of God was returning. Elijah “*wrapped his face in his mantle*” lest he look upon God (v. 13). Perhaps it was near this very site (the clef of the Rock) that Moses, five hundred years earlier, hid when the Lord passed by. Now it was Elijah's turn. Entering this eternal stillness was the person of God.

We too must learn to hear the voice of Him who rarely speaks audibly and observe the actions of Him who is otherwise invisible. Elijah would gain the courage to endure Jezebel's wrath the same way Moses faced the rage of Pharaoh: “*He endured, as seeing Him who is unseen*” (Heb. 11:27). We must learn to detect, without great signs, the still, small voice of God.

He will not fight for our attention; He must be sought. He will not startle us; He must be perceived. It took no special skill to "discern" the earthquake, the fire, or the great storm. But to sense the Holy quiet of God, our other activities must cease. In world of great pressures and continual distractions, the attention of our hearts must rise to the invisible world of God's Spirit. We must learn to see Him who is unseen.

A New Beginning

In the quieting of Elijah's heart the Lord in His goodness drew near, reassuring Elijah that he was not alone in his battle: There were still seven thousand Israelites who had not bowed to Baal. Next, a new commission came. The Lord told Elijah to anoint Hazael as king over Syria and Jehu as king over Israel. He also was to train Elisha, who would be his successor (1 Kings 19:15-16). At Horeb, God released a "double portion" of spiritual power. Although the Lord gave the new anointing to Elijah, it would be Elisha who would walk in it. Elisha would do twice as many miracles (2 Kings 2:9-14). More than any other prophet, Elisha's works would most resemble those of the Messiah Himself.

Elijah did not personally bring national restoration, but he prepared the way for Elisha, who brought the closest thing to revival the northern tribes ever experienced. Out of his Horeb encounter with God, Elijah received a greater understanding of his place in God. His call was not to establish, but to "go before" and prepare the way for greater things to come. In fact, Elijah was so successful at "preparing the way" that his spiritual anointing was dispensed to John the Baptist as a herald to Yeshua's first coming. Elijah is also destined to prepare the way for His 2nd coming as well! (Mal. 4:5-6; Matt. 17:11)

As this age ends, God's promise to us is that we too shall receive a “*double portion*” (Isa. 61:7; John 14:12). What can this mean but that the Lord is going to reveal Himself to us in glories we have never known before. Do not despair if you find yourself in a time of desolation. In truth, our desolation is but preparation for a new beginning of power and service. Our task is to be still and know that Yeshua, He is God. He shall indeed triumph over all His foes and His reign shall be established over all the earth, and in Him is the secret place of El Elyon.

ⁱ Adapted from chapter 2 of *Stronghold of God* by F. Frangipane, Creation House, Florida, ©1998 by F. Frangipane