

**GENTLE VOICES SPEAK LOUDLY
PART I & II**

Text: I Kings 19:1-18; Psalm 30:5

Key Word: Gentle

Key Thought: God speaks Loudly Even with a Gentle Voice

We were blessed the other day to watch our newest granddaughter, Meira. She has this incredible little swing that soothes her and helps her sleep most of the time. I noticed that some of the songs it played were *“Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star; Brahms Lullaby (Lullaby and goodnight)*. There were no rock concert songs or drum solos. The songs were rather peaceful and gentle. I’m sure they could put me asleep. They accomplished our desire to offer an atmosphere so Meira could sleep.

Not everything in life is accomplished with grandeur, pomp and flair. I discovered years ago that lowering my voice most often causes others to do the same.

“A gentle answer turns away wrath.”

Proverbs 15:1

I’m sure King Solomon didn’t need God to teach him that important lesson. After all, he had 700 wives of royal birth, 300 concubines (I Kings 11:13 - they were secondary wives because of their slave status) and a thousand children. Three of his children are named in the Bible (one son and two daughters).

In our text this morning I read of the great prophet Elijah. His name means **“my God is Yahweh.”** He was not one who backed down from a fight (normally) even if it was King Ahab or Queen Jezebel. He met with Ahab and sniped with the king when he was called the **“troubler of Israel.”** He would not accept the hypocrisy.

The king and Jezebel had led the people into the worship of Baal (the storm God known for child sacrifice) and Ashtoreth (the Canaanite mother goddess of love and fertility). What a terrible combination. They would give birth in many cases to sacrifice them to Baal. The strong-willed prophet challenged the people of Israel along with the false prophets and evil national leadership. The odds were totally against Elijah. He faced all the people of Israel (the frozen chosen); 850 false prophets and a wicked king and queen who followed these false gods of the surrounding nations.

"How long will you go limping with two different opinions? If the Lord is God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him." [1 Kings 18:21] And the people were silent. The Hebrew for this word, "**go limping**" or "**waver**," is the same as that used for "**danced**" in 1 Kings 18, verse 26, where the prophets of Baal frantically dance. Elijah speaks with sharp irony about the religious ambivalence of Israel.

Wikipedia
"Challenge to Baal"

I. A LESSON IN ANTIQUITY

II. A MODERN LESSON

I. A LESSON IN ANTIQUITY

So what was God up to? Here was a man of integrity who stood against all the odds (and then some) that quickly ran for his life in a state of fear and depression. God had him travel for 40 days and 40 nights until he reached "**Horeb**" which means "**consecration**." This is the same mountain that God gave Moses the Ten Commandments. There was a lesson of consecration for this great prophet to learn. It would bring about a major shift in the way he had seen God move through in the past.

God has more than one way to measure greatness. Elijah learned a lesson that has been taught throughout the Scriptures. Even the great apostle Paul was given a thorn in his flesh to teach him the same lesson.

"Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me.

9. But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness."

Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me.

10. That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong."

1 Corinthians 12:8-10

These two great men had to learn a valuable lesson. It's a chapter in the book of life that we must all value and learn from. Application of this is the key not just simply understanding the lesson and passing on without change.

I. A LESSON IN ANTIQUITY (Contd.)

After travelling 40 days and 40 nights from Jezreel to Horeb there's no doubt Elijah needed a rest in the protection of a cave.

"What are you doing here, Elijah?"

I Kings 19:9

I can assure you that when God asks a question like this it's not because He needs to know something. It's rather WE who need to know something. Apparently Elijah believed that God's work that began with the Ten Commandments had reached a futile ending. The golden calf of idolatry had succeeded again. It was time to through in the towel. What was the use of trying anymore? Even the king and queen were going to succeed again and lead the nation into a disastrous ending.

So God chose to speak. We are told that a mighty windstorm much like a tornado began to tear the mountain apart and did not just toss rocks around but shattered them. I would suggest that Elijah began to get a bit of his vibrant spirit back. Come on God. Yes God. Tear the place apart. That'll teach them! Will it?

". . . but the LORD was not in the wind."

I Kings 19:11

If the Lord wasn't IN THE WIND, then who was? It had to be the devil - RIGHT - WRONG! Devils always misguide us. This was not meant to misguide. It was meant to expose the improper conclusion that Elijah was leading toward.

So if a powerful wind doesn't accomplish the need to transpose the mighty prophet, what would? Of course, everyone knows it takes something even more powerful like an earthquake. Knock these people off their feet. That will smarten them up. Won't it?

". . . but the LORD was not in the earthquake."

I Kings 19:11

Here we go again. Am I saying the prophet has not learned his lesson? Yes, I strongly believe he hasn't learned God's direction for the near future. God couldn't stop yet. So next came a fire. Think about it. Earth, wind and fire. What else can you throw into the equation?

". . . but the LORD was not in the fire."

I Kings 19:12

The next portion of Scripture is a major clue of what God was about to reveal.

I. A LESSON IN ANTIQUITY (Contd.)

After these three mighty acts often associated with God (remember in home insurances it is referred to as an act of God) that there was gentle whisper.

*“When Elijah **heard it**, he pulled his cloak (mantel) over his face and went out and stood at the mouth of the cave, then the voice said to him, **‘What are you doing here, Elijah.’**”*

I Kings 19:13

Why would he pull his cloak over his face in response to a gentle whisper? Was that voice speaking louder than the catastrophic events? Why would God ask the same question? Why would Elijah give the same answer? **Could it be that the prophet would need time to reflect upon what just happened?** I suggest it was.

The LORD wasn't about to let him continue in his state of mind. **It was time to backtrack and learn the true lesson instead of convincing himself with a lie.**

“The LORD said to him, ‘Go back the way you came, and go to the desert of Damacus. When you get there, anoint Hazael king over Aram.’”

I Kings 19:15

He was told to retrace his steps. What was he missing? Who would think God going to raise up an idolatrous king to fulfill His purpose? Elijah had somehow forgotten about the school of the prophets that he was involved with raising up. He had influenced and given a voice to the 7,000 others not to bow to Baal and kiss his feet or any other idol.

Elijah had to learn that **God's faithful ones are often God's hidden ones. The wheat is often lost in the chaff and the gold in the dross UNTIL the day of sifting, refining and separating takes place.**

II. A MODERN LESSON

So now is there a modern lesson to take from this? I believe there is.

I was watching the inauguration of Robert F. Biden Jr. It was breathtaking at some times. I loved the presentation of the military flags. Did any of you miss Lady Gaga dressed in a beautiful blue and red Shiaparellia confection with a beautiful golden dove and an olive branch in its beak? She did her own version of the National Anthem. What a demonstration of unity and peace!!

II. A MODERN LESSON (Contd.)

I also am always moved by the Pledge of Allegiance. Who can't appreciate a nation that is known for being "*one nation Under God, indivisible with Liberty & Justice for all.*" Then we witnessed the Associate Justice of the Supreme court Sonia Sotomayor (the first Hispanic and Latino member) as she Administered the Oath of Office to Kamala Harris the new vice-president. I love when they swear to support the constitution and end with the phrase "**So Help Me God.**"

Once again the crowd greatly supported Jennifer Lopez as she sang such a song of unity as "**This Land is Your Land, This Land is My Land**" and "**God Bless America.**" That's such a vital phrase to keep before the nation.

The time was 11:47 Am when 8 ½ month old Beau Biden Jr. was carried down the West stairs of the US Capital facing the National Mall. This was the same moment that the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court John Roberts walked forward and stood on the exact taped position on the platform.

This was the time the nations of the world fastened their attention as Robert F. Biden Jr. along with his wife Dr. Jill Biden, his son Hunter Biden and Melissa Cohen gathered with their family Bible of 1893. At 11:48 A.m. Hunter handed the Bible to His Stepmother Dr. Jill. The moment her both hands had a firm hold under the 5-inch thick Bible **a baby cried twice.** It must have been their grandchild because little Beau was taken out a minute later up the same stairs. The new president placed his left hand on the Bible (with no wedding ring) and swore in the sacred oath office that was first said by President George Washington.

After the kisses from the family members that incredible voice said, "**Ladies and Gentlemen please be seated.**" I wondered if that alienated a few people. And then came an awkward moment. Actually two minutes of silence took place as the camera's spanned upon the dignitaries seated in places of honour. They appeared to be a little confused. "*What was the reason for the quietness?*"

Previous president Barack Obama looked up and around. Sonia Sotomayor looked at her notes. Previous president Clinton tried his best to stay awake. The First Lady, Jill Biden spoke to someone that was probably Senator Amy Klobuchar who was also nodding her head and saying something. I've been told "*Silence is Golden.*" That didn't seem to fit in those moments from 11:49 to 11:51 A.m.. **Then it happened - AGAIN. A baby cried twice.**

Senator Amy Klobuchar then immediately made her way to the podium and began to rejoice that the will of the people had been heard. Democracy had prevailed. Since 1937 the Oath of Office had taken place at noon EST on January 20th on the first day of the first term. They were early by 10 minutes even with the two minute delay of silence. In other words, the United States had two presidents for 10 minutes. The 20th Amendment states that the "*terms of the President and Vice President shall end at noon on the 20th day of January.*"

II. A MODERN LESSON (Contd.)

The Washington Post declares under its title that **“Democracy Dies in Darkness.”** It stated,

“In 2009, President Barack Obama was sworn in for a second time Jan. 21 after he and Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr. both seemingly stumbled over the 35-word oath whose exact language is specified by the Constitution.”

The main things we should consecrate upon are the incredible words that continued to be spoken. The speech writers did an admirable job. The USA now has a president for all Americans. The people have been told to take a measure of him and his words. Go with truth not lies. Power and profit bring about an uncial war. An open soul brings unity instead of a hardened heart. This new administration will do their best to remove resentment, lawlessness and disease. It’s no longer going to be *“the example of our power but our power from our example.”* Facts will no longer be manipulated and manufactured.

“Weeping may endure for the night but joy comes in the morning.”

Psalm 30:5

End the day with Garth Brooks singing in acapello *“Amazing Grace.”*

What an incredible benediction poem written and spoke by Amanda Gorman. May that poem become necessary reading in every school worldwide. After all *“the pen is mightier than the sword.”*

Rev. Dr. Sylvester Beaman of the Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Wilmington, Delaware ended with an powerful benediction prayer. It called upon everyone to have a collective faith. Live the American ideal that we are all created equal under God. Stand strong with a great history, faith and reason. *He once emphasized that unity is the path forward.*

There were more than enough great words shared on Jan 20, 2021 at the US Capital to contemplate upon for years to come. Hearing is one thing, believing is another and doing is what is most needed. **So what was “the Gentle Voice?”** I will never forget the two times a baby cried just a short time at very focalized moments.

President Biden moved swiftly on Wednesday to dismantle Trump administration policies his aides said have caused the “greatest damage” to the nation. Despite an inaugural address that called for unity and compromise he reversed many policies including one that blocked U.S. funding for programs overseas linked to abortion. **The baby’s gentle voices cry loudly.** Can you hear them? They’ve been recorded and transmitted for our world to hear.

C:\My Documents\WPWin(2020)\Sermons.2021\Hearing God's Voice\I Kings 19_1.18.wpd

Date: Jan 31/21

Place: FCA

Time: 10:30 Am

Song: The Potter's Hand - F

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PART I

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Key Thought: God speaks Loudly Even with a Gentle Voice

“A gentle answer turns away wrath.”

Proverbs 15:1

I Kings 11:13; Elijah means “my God is Yahweh.” Ahab called him the “troubler of Israel;” I Kings 18:21, 26

I. A LESSON IN ANTIQUITY

“Horeb” which means **“consecration.”** This is the same mountain that God gave Moses the Ten Commandments.

I Corinthians 12:8-10

“What are you doing here, Elijah?”

I Kings 19:9

“. . . but the LORD was not in the wind.”

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“. . . but the LORD was not in the earthquake.”

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“. . . but the LORD was not in the fire.”

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“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.’”

I Kings 19:15

GENTLE VOICES SPEAK LOUDLY
PART II
Text: I Kings 19:1-18

II. A MODERN LESSON

So now is there a modern lesson to take from this? I believe there is.

1. The presentation of the flags.
2. Lady Gaga sings The National Anthem
3. The Pledge of Allegiance - *“one nation Under God, indivisible with Liberty & Justice for all.”*
4. The Oath of Office to Kamala Harris the new vice-president - **“So Help Me God.”**
5. Jennifer Lopez **“This Land is Your Land, This Land is My Land”** and **“God Bless America.”**
6. The time was 11:47 A.m. while 8 ½ month old Beau Biden Jr. was carried down the West stairs of the US Capital facing the National Mall.
7. Chief Justice of the Supreme Court John Roberts walked forward.
8. Robert F. Biden Jr.; Dr. Jill Biden; Hunter Biden; Melissa Cohen gathered with their family Bible of 1893.
9. At 11:48 A.m. Hunter hands the Bible to His Stepmother Dr. Jill. The moment her both hands had a firm hold on the 5-inch thick Bible **a baby cried twice**. The new president place his left hand on the Bible (with no wedding ring) and swore in the sacred oath office that was first said by President George Washington.
10. **“Ladies and Gentlemen please be seated”** followed by two minutes of silence
11. Then at 11:51 A.m.. **Then it happened - AGAIN. A baby cried twice.**
12. Senator Amy Klobachur then immediately made her way to the podium and began to rejoice that the will of the people had been heard. Since 1937 the Oath of Office had taken place at noon EST on January 20th on the first day of the first term. They were early by 10 minutes even with the two minute delay of silence. In other words, the United States had two presidents for 10 minutes. The 20th Amendment states that the *“terms of the President and Vice President shall end at noon on the 20th day of January.”*
13. The Speech writers did an admirable job.
14. *Joe Biden quotes “Weeping may endure for the night but joy comes in the morning.”*
Psalm 30:5
15. Garth Brooks sang in acapello *“Amazing Grace.”*
16. The benediction poem written and spoke by Amanda Gorman.
17. Rev. Dr. Sylvester Beaman of the Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Wilmington, Delaware ended with an powerful benediction prayer. *He emphasized that unity is the path forward.*
18. President Biden moved swiftly on Wednesday to dismantle Trump administration policies his aides said have caused the “greatest damage” to the nation. Despite an inaugural address that called for unity and compromise he reversed many policies