

What Are You Doing Here?

Scripture Reading — 1 Kings 19:1-18

The word of the Lord came to him: “What are you doing here, Elijah?” — 1 Kings 19:9

Exhausted from running for his life, Elijah was ready to give up. Serving as God’s prophet had worn Elijah out, and as he sat alone in the wilderness, he asked God to take his life.

But God had more for Elijah to do. And wherever he went, Elijah found, God was there first.

In a cave at the mountain of the Lord, God asked, “What are you doing here, Elijah?” Elijah responded with protests, wrapped in self-pity, and God told him to step outside to meet with him. Elijah witnessed some dramatic displays of power, but God was not in them. Then Elijah heard only a stillness—God’s presence.

God is often less dramatic with us, but he does show up to challenge our attitudes. Do we wrap ourselves in self-pity? Do we hear God calling us to step out and see what he’s up to? We need to hear God’s reassuring “gentle whisper”—literally, “the sound of silence.”

God also asks us, “What are you doing here?” We may wonder that too. This is the question the world asks the church.

God won’t abandon his children even if they want to abandon the call he has given them. “Go back and see what I have done!” As God showed Elijah, the future is not bleak. In fact, it’s brighter than ever now that Jesus has come!

“What are you doing here?”

Prayer

Almighty God, life can be overwhelming, and we may want to run away. But you always bring us back! How can we thank you? Help us to fulfill our calling, for Jesus’ sake and in his mighty strength. Amen.

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