

Listen to God's Whisper

by Erlo Stegen

The sermon emphasizes the importance of listening to God's gentle and quiet guidance, known as the still small voice, to avoid the influence of peer pressure and negative influences.

Duration: 1:33:11

Scripture: Genesis 15:6, Exodus 32:9-10, 1 Kings 19:9, Matthew 5:29-30, Matthew 6:33, Luke 16:26, John 10:27

Topics: "Voice Of God"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker describes a vision of hell that they had. They saw people of all races suffering and burning in the fire of hell. They were shocked by the horrific sight and were told by a voice to go back and warn others about what they had seen. The speaker also mentions the importance of listening to the still small voice of God and not being influenced by peer pressure or worldly temptations.

Transcript

We find our text in 1 Kings, chapter 19, verse 9. Then he came to a cave and lodged in it, and behold, the word of the Lord came to him and he said to him, What are you doing here, Elijah? He said, I have been very jealous for the Lord, the God of hosts, for the people of Israel have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars and killed your prophets with the sword. And I, even I only am left, and they seek my life to take it away. And he said, Go out and stand on the mount before the Lord.

And behold, the Lord passed by in a great strong wind, tore the mountains and broke it in pieces. And broken pieces the rock 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.

And after the earthquake, a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire. And after the fire, the sound of a low whisper. And when Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his cloak and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave.

And behold, there came a voice to him and said, What are you doing here, Elijah? The whole story of Elijah is marvelous. If you read his history from the beginning right to the end, you'll notice that his life was wonderful and it was of great power, authority, even though he was a man just like us, but his life was just wonderful. If you would get alone with God, be completely by yourself, not disturbed by anything, and on the knees of your heart, seek the Lord and ask him to speak to you as you read this whole story.

It's wonderful to read the word in silence when there's no disturbance. I'm glad when I can wake up sometimes in the early hours of the morning and take hold of the word, it is so sweet. If you read the matter of this man, of this person, you would agree why it is that God could not let him die a normal death.

God couldn't let him die the death of other people. And you see that when you read properly his story, because Elijah didn't die. God sent flaming horses of fire, a chariot of fire, which he could ride to heaven.

He was riding on a chariot of fire. It shows us that there was something very special about this life. If you think of his prayers, when Israel was ruled by a wicked king, who had no fear of God, his wife was a treacherous woman, a murderer.

They destroyed all the altars, that is the altars of God, and they killed the prophets of God. They established Baal as the only acceptable religion that every person had to worship Baal. Anybody who contradicted that would be put to death.

Elijah prayed that the heavens would not rain as punishment upon this king. Upon him, his family, upon the nation of Israel, for they had all participated in Baal worship. And indeed the heavens were closed.

It did not rain for three and a half years. King Ahab searched him out and eventually when he found him, when he came across him, he said, you the troubler of Israel, he said, O king, I am not the troubler of Israel, it is you, O king, and your evil. Do you see his authority and courage? But I am not going to speak about that, I am just mentioning it.

He gathered the nation on the mount, the king, the prophets of Baal, the nation, and said two altars should be built. The cattle should be slaughtered for both altars. Then he said the prophets of Baal should call upon their God to call down fire upon the sacrifice.

And that he also should pray to God almighty to bring down fire. And he said the one who answers with fire is truly God. And so he said they should start first and the prophets prayed from early morning.

And they prayed and they prayed. No fire came down. Till their voices were lifted up they shouted, they were hysterical but there was no answer from Baal.

Some of the prophets slashed themselves with stones, shedding their own blood, but no answer. Elijah only provoked them even more and said look maybe Baal is asleep, you need to shout even louder so that you will really wake him up. He mocked their God.

He mocked them and though they called upon their God, they called and screamed, but by midday he answered. Then he said it's obvious your God doesn't respond. Baal gives no answer.

Now I will pray. But before I do, let there dig a trench right around the altar. Then he said bring water in great quantities to saturate the wood and the offering that the whole altar would be saturated with water.

And the trench. And then he bowed his head and he prayed and God responded with fire in such heat that the sacrifice, the water, everything, even the stones were burned. You see why we say that this prophet was a hero of heroes? He had the authority to resist the whole nation and even his king.

And then he bowed his head between his knees and he said God I pray that you would send rain now. And he then sent his assistant and said go and see in the distance what the weather is like and he came back and said I see a cloud like the fist of a hand. He said go quickly to the king, race to him and tell him

that rains are coming with great force and indeed it rained.

And he said go quickly to the king, race to him and tell him that rains are coming with great force and indeed it rained. And he said go quickly to the king, race to him and tell him that rains are coming with great force and indeed it rained. Elijah presumed that this would cause the repentance of the nation, the royal family and the king and the queen, that they would repent.

And he thought that the Lord had conquered and had won and defeated the people. When the king got home and told his wife about the day's events she was furious with rage and she said send people now and you make sure that Elijah is not alive by the next morning. Because when Elijah had that fire came down he then said let all the prophets of Baal be destroyed.

And they were each and every one of them killed. If you take the prophets of Baal that ate at the queen's table and those other prophets, they added up to about a thousand. They were many and he had said kill them all.

The queen swore revenge and said I will do to him as he has done to the prophets. Elijah was deeply disappointed. He said I thought all the people would repent but now the tables have turned and now I am to die.

But you see if a person has hardened their heart it doesn't matter what miracle might happen, it doesn't matter how clear the word of God might come to dispel all doubts but that person's hardness will continue and they will persevere in their wickedness. I'm reminded of the rich man in hell when he lifted up his eyes and he said Abraham send Lazarus to rise from the dead to warn my five brothers because if they see a man rise from the dead they will repent and not come here where I am. Because the five brothers had mocked Lazarus together with the rich man.

They said he is a public disturbance, just a nuisance, an embarrassment if we have our friends over and so the rich man realized that his brothers were coming to hell as well. He started by saying send Lazarus with just a drop of water on the tip of his finger to cool my lips. This fire, this heat, I'm thirsty.

This man, this Lazarus that had previously mocked now he wanted help from him. Abraham said no that won't happen. They've got Moses and the prophets, that is the law and the gospel.

The rich man insisted no they will hear if they see a fantastic miracle like a person rising from the dead. Abraham said no that won't happen. For if they do not heed the word of Moses and the prophets they won't listen even to a man who rises from the dead.

And the rich man found that difficult to accept. You see it is true that a person who has hardened their heart will not listen to anything even a person who rises from the dead. Abraham was correct in that and the Lord Jesus it's shown by how the Lord Jesus when he rose from the dead even that miracle of his resurrection did not cause the Pharisees and the scribes and other religious leaders to repent.

You see if you harden your heart, don't be stiff necked, don't harden your heart otherwise woe to you. For you too will wake up in the place where the rich man found himself. Don't take hell lightly.

Jesus who saw heaven and hell, he saw heaven and hell. Jesus who saw hell said rather that you pluck your eye out if it offends, if it sees wicked things, if you cannot but then remove it, chop your hand off rather than that you go to hell with

both hands, that you go to heaven with one. But before I get, I've said these things before I get to the main crux of the matter today which is the still small whisper.

We had a funeral yesterday. But before I mention that here's something else. In translation there's a lot that one says and then you forget some things.

Abraham had also said to the rich man, look he who's on the other side cannot come to this side because the gulf is so huge that no one can cross the gulf. If you die in faith you go to heaven, if you die in your wickedness you go to hell. You cannot cross the gap anymore because it's a gulf that cannot be transversed.

You hear that especially you Zulu people and whites who are involved with the occult. You hear that especially you Zulu people and whites who are involved with the occult. People who have died are on the other side.

There is a gulf which causes them to have no contact with us anymore. So it doesn't matter what effort you might make to bring back the spirits of the dead, it is impossible to do so. For persons in heaven, do you think you can take them out of the glory of the Lord? On to this earth of sin where there are killers, sorcerers, drunkards, prostitutes, those who have grudges, liars.

It will be a suffering that is forever and ever. It will be a suffering that is forever and ever. Think properly about it.

You who continue in your sin, do you think that you are going to go to your manager in a place like that? Yesterday at the funeral I spoke. Yesterday at the funeral I spoke. I told them the story about that girl from America and the preacher there.

I told them the story about that girl from America and the preacher there. There was a child evangelist. That preacher has since died.

That preacher has since died. It is said that Sunday after Sunday he would preach to 20,000 children. It is said that Sunday after Sunday he would preach to 20,000 children.

Have you ever heard such a thing? So many children. He had a co-worker who was with him in the ministry. He had a co-worker who was with him in the ministry.

He had such a passion, such fire to preach. He said, well brother, when I was young I had sisters. I had a sister.

We had a double story. My sister slept on the top floor. I was downstairs.

One night I heard her screaming with a terrible scream and I ran upstairs. I didn't even knock. I didn't knock at the door.

I just burst into the room. I saw her sitting on the bed screaming at the top of her voice. I tried to shake her.

I said, sister, what's wrong? Have you had a bad nightmare? She said, no. I have not. In the beginning she didn't respond.

But after a while she stopped screaming and she said, no, I haven't dreamt. I have seen something terrible. She said, I saw myself walking in a place.

I saw many young people. People who were worldly, full of their jewelry and everything. dressed in the latest fashionable clothing and high heels and laughing and chatting with with their boyfriends.

I walked just a small distance and then I saw hell. And then when I got there I heard a voice saying stop. Which I did.

I stopped. But I looked at hell right before me. It was like I was looking through a window at hell itself.

She said I saw people of every race of every kind in this terrible hell by burning. When I looked at them as they were burning in the fire, their eyes were bulging like saucers. Twisted faces.

Tongues like they've been cut. Hands. Like they had been cut and sliced with blood.

She said brother I've never seen such a thing. It's the final ultimate thing. She said then this voice said to me now go back and warn your people about what you've seen.

She said but as I turned I saw father among the crowd in the crowd. She said brother I saw dad in this great suffering in this fire. And I said how is it possible that dad is in hell.

Had been such a good behaving well-behaved man. Had bought us such nice clothing. Such nice food we were never hungry.

He educated us well at school. We lacked nothing. He treated us so well.

But he had never told us about Jesus. He had never brought us together with the Lord. As good as he seemed but he had never told us about the gospel of Jesus.

The boy said I'm repenting right now. And I'm going to do exactly what you were told to do sister. I'm going to go and warn people.

He gathered children together. He preached to children. He said I want to preach to these children so that they wouldn't one day have their children crying about them being in hell.

That's why I preach to these children. So that their children won't cry because of seeing their dad in hell. And so Sunday by Sunday he would gather together 20,000 children.

He's preached with a great fire in him. He said I cannot be silent. You tell me.

You. Have you got that fire that passion about children who are on the way to hell? Maybe not only other children. Your own children.

But Sunday by Sunday you go to church and you're all religious. Don't be surprised if one day you wake up in hell. They were your own children.

Hell is real. I wish you would have the passion of that young man who could preach to the children of the world. I wish with that you would have a glimpse of hell that you would be able to tell others and warn them otherwise were it to you.

When Elijah had seen his people going astray, apostatizing in such a way, he prayed a prayer that was so deep, so serious, and so powerful. Now let's go back to Elijah. When he heard the pronouncement of the death sentence upon him by the Queen, Elijah ran for his life until he was so tired he then hid under a tree and he slept a deep sleep.

Then an angel came and stirred him and said, Elijah wake up and eat. Then the angel said, Elijah wake up and eat. Then he saw at his head a cake baked on hot stones and a jar of water.

He got up, he ate, drank, slept again. He was extremely tired, exhausted after this extremely tense time of many days. He was deeply distressed, disappointed, depressed.

He had thought that the whole nation would repent, though they said it with their mouths, but there was no true national repentance. He was so distressed he said, Lord, wouldn't you just save me? Just take me, let me die. Then the angel touched him again.

In the Old Testament, if it refers to the angel of the Lord, it's referring to Jesus Christ. That's in the Old Testament, not in the New Testament. Jesus woke him again.

He said, wake up for the road you must take, the journey you must undertake is very long. Take and eat and drink, which he did. Or whether God just cooked it because nothing is too difficult for him.

Jesus said to him, He said, you have a long journey to undertake. And so after eating this, he could go for 40 days and 40 nights as he then arrived at the Mount of Horeb. To say that it's there at Sinai where Moses received the Ten Commandments.

And it is said that the Mount had two stones or pinnacles, one being Horeb, one being Sinai. That's what we are told. I don't know if it really is the case.

When he got to Horeb, he then found a cave where he slept. And while he was asleep, the word of the Lord came to him and said, Elijah, what are you doing here? He said, I have been very jealous for the Lord, which means the Lord of hosts, the Lord of battle. I was jealous for you, O God, for the people had forsaken you and turned to Baal, had destroyed your altars, had killed your prophets.

Put them to the sword. And I am the only one left. And now they seek even my soul.

But the Lord had said to Elijah, look, you aren't alone. There are 7,000 who have not bowed the knee to Baal, but Elijah felt totally isolated, completely alone because of what had happened. Now I'm getting closer to the main crux of the matter, the main point of the sermon.

The still small voice of the Lord. The Lord passed by him. And a great wind came by him.

It must have been the greatest wind that there's ever been. And perhaps never again so strong. It was so strong that it broke the rocks.

The mountains. It split the mountains. Now wind has the power to break roofs of houses and destroy houses, but to tear the mountains, what wind that must have been.

And boulders were split before the Lord. Elijah stood and observed. He stood like a rock observing this amazing sight.

What? It is said the Lord was not in that wind. After which? After that there was a great earthquake. You know what an earthquake is like? Where? It's like sea waves on the earth.

Sea waves on the earth. So powerful. Elijah, what he saw, that earthquake must have been the first and the last earthquake so powerful.

Elijah stood observing this phenomenon. God was not in it. After that there was a great fire.

There is fire that can be so hot like that which comes from a volcano, red hot lava that streams down melting rocks. There have been fires from such volcanoes that have wiped out whole cities, but I don't think there's been a fire like the one Elijah witnessed. But God was not in that fire.

He just stood gazing. After that there was the sound of a still small whisper. But the English, is that whisper there? English Bible uses small voice.

It's whisper here, but voice. Whisper, that's right. A still small voice or whisper is so low that you aren't quite sure if you've heard really and you can't see.

It's so unnoticeable. Then he wrapped his head in his cloak and went to the opening for he had seen God. He bowed.

He worshipped. He didn't worship natural events like the wind and the fire and that, but when the still small voice, this whisper came, he bowed and worshipped. He bowed to nothing else but God alone.

Like the three young men. Like the three young men who were threatened with the fire, the furnace seven times hotter, they were told bow to the idol. They said never.

God was in this still small voice, this whisper. He bowed. He worshipped.

And God spoke to him. But we don't have time to go into that. We've run out of time.

You see, there are winds which blow around this world. You can meet with many sorts of influences, people who are suggesting that this is what you must do, that's what you must do, and some bow to that and fall. There may even be peer pressure.

And put you under pressure to take certain actions. But we don't have time. And so there are those who will fall because of that peer pressure.

We heard the testimony of the bridegroom last week when he said, when he got home after being converted, there were so many that said, but they are the girls, here's the booze, but he stood firm. Don't bow to that spirit, that influence which does not have God. Listen to the voice of the Lord.

For if you listen to something else, it will go badly with you. If people come and speak to you, if they say they're giving you advice, if they come and they say, the Lord has said to them that you must do this and that, be respectful, be kind, say thank you for telling me, but I cannot do that unless I've heard God for myself, that still small voice, his whisper speaking to you. Listen to his voice.

The Lord said, my sheep hear my voice. Do you know his voice? I try and tell the co-workers, look, if you're speaking to people and they want advice about something, tell them to listen to what the shepherd, their shepherd says to them. And if they say they don't know the voice of the Lord, then tell them to go and

repent and get right with God first.

When Peter and John had been arrested and thrown into jail, told by the authorities not to ever speak in the name of the Lord again, they said, men, you decide, should we obey you rather than God? For we cannot stop testifying to and speaking about that which we have personally seen and heard. You cannot speak with much authority about what somebody else has experienced. You need to experience it for yourself.

I remember when I was young, I was preaching the gospel. A certain widow got converted in the Kings Cliff area. She got saved, repented.

She had been very troubled, no food, no money. It was in a farming district and her cows went into a sugar cane area and ate the cane. And the headman there, the Induna, said, She said she has to pay a hundred pounds fine for each cow, and I think she had about ten.

It was worth a lot more a pound at that time. She phoned me and she said, I've come across a real problem, I don't know what to do. She said, I've told the Induna that I have no money to pay them.

That I'm just a widow, I don't have a husband, I'm poor. And he said, Since you do not have any money or cattle, then agree to sleep with me, then you don't have to pay the fine. Do you see the fire? Do you feel the fire? But God is not in that fire.

He said, if you just agree to sleep with me, I will release your cattle. Some meet with great difficulty. Some meet with an earthquake, an earth shattering event.

I said, Dear sister in the Lord, what does God say to you? What has the Holy Spirit shared with you that you should do? What's your response? For a great fire had come. If we read in the Bible, it speaks about the Antichrist coming. Who will come with great signs and wonders.

Even calling down fire from heaven. Will you have the strength to resist that, to say God is not in this fire? I've met with people who've been in Satan worship. They say, do you know many leaders of Satan worshippers? I said, not just politicians, but even ministers, preachers.

They go to the witch doctor, sorcerers seeking concoctions for great strength. They have those preachers have the authority to work up an immense crowd and to get them so worked up that the people are in an emotional state. And are dancing, but not recognizing God is not in it.

You do not listen. To the voice of the Lord, there's still small whisper, you will be susceptible. You'll be vulnerable to other influences.

You might see what seems like the fire of the Lord at work. But I've often told the story about the preacher in Durban, who had been a very shy man, very nervous about speaking in front of people. And he spoke with a stutter.

Then somebody said, look, preacher, I just want to give you a tip. Have a tot of gin or vodka or brandy before you get up to preach and you'll find such freedom. But this preacher wasn't used to alcohol.

When he got up into the pulpit, he spoke with such power and with such emotion. When they were leaving, somebody remarked, the Holy Spirit has been at work today. He's spoken to us.

But it wasn't the Holy Spirit. It was spirits. It was the power of alcohol at work.

And people really thought it was the Spirit of God. You see, if you don't know what it is to listen to the still small whisper of God, you're vulnerable. To hear his still small voice, you need to part from all sin, all evil, otherwise it will cause you to be blunt.

You won't be sharp enough to listen properly. Now in closing, let me mention the dream of a certain person who had been in the meeting, a great meeting of Nicholas Bengu, of a great preacher. And he had wanted to see the Lord at work, the Lord doing his work.

And then he saw himself in rooms which seemed to be separated with veils. And he heard what sounded to him like the voice of Pastor Nicholas Bengu. But he couldn't hear what exactly this voice said.

But then he didn't want to respond and said, let me just hide away behind this curtain. But then it doesn't know how, but went into the next room, the next one, and then saw this person. Turned around and went.

Disappointed. He had what seemed to be Pastor Nicholas Bengu looked and looked and didn't find anybody because he was hiding. And then he saw, as he was leaving, disappointed.

Disappointed that this person hadn't owned up to being there, but instead was hiding, wasn't honest. Wondering how can this person do such a thing. And then said, just hold on a moment.

And then tried to explain, to excuse, to defend himself. But Nicholas Bengu just turned around and left him. Then the person said, I'll apologize even before the whole congregation, but Bengu didn't even concern himself with that matter.

Then he met with people and said, I saw this person, he was hiding, he wasn't being honest. And then said, well that person needs to then leave. It was at a convention.

A person who excuses themselves and defends themselves should not be here. And said, well, Mr. so and so, we don't identify ourselves with that at all. We can't go along with that.

And then that person was upset and said, they don't show any pity, they have no compassion. He was very upset with them. And said to himself, don't these people realize that I too am a pastor, I was a preacher and there's been revival where I've been, that God works through me too.

Had a grudge against them. As he was walking away, God spoke to him. Said all you've done, defend yourself, excuse yourself.

And said, don't you remember that I spoke to you when you were trying to hide in a still small voice and I said, be open, be upfront and honest. Be honest but you continue to hide. Then the person said, oh God forgive me.

I defended myself, I took my own side. I should have just admitted and said, I have sinned. Do you know what it is to confess sin? Do you know what it is to confess sin? Is your confession, your repentance just a yeah but, yeah I did it but, this is the reason and you explain and you beat about the bush.

Or are you able to repent and be totally upfront and honest and say you've sinned. You're a preacher. You're a preacher perhaps and you're flirting around with another woman or a girl and you don't hear the still small voice of God warning you.

You're a preacher perhaps and you don't hear the still small voice of God warning you. And then when you're excommunicated, you complain about your church and you say but they are cruel. They've got no feeling, no Christ-like compassion.

Instead of you just being honest and confessing and saying, Heavenly Father I have sinned. If you don't confess your sin as it really is, that shows that there's dirt in your ears, you can't hear. Go to the doctor, get rid of the dirt in you.

But if you're one who's always defending himself and always fighting your own battles trying to show that you're right, don't be astonished then when the wind comes and it takes you away. The fire comes, the earthquake and it just takes you away. Shall we pray? Lord Jesus.

Lord we've heard about this amazing Elijah who didn't die in normal human death but was taken with chariots of fire. Who didn't bow to the murderous wrath of the king but only bowed to you. But instead Lord there are those who listen to the influences of others to peer pressure and they don't recognize with Elijah that you are not in that great wind.

Help us Lord to be your true sheep to listen to your voice that we won't be those who fall into the bottomless pit. Amen.

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