

Respond (Pray) - *oratio*

After reading the passage one last time, talk to God about what you think the Spirit might have said to you or what came to you. Pray in whatever way you are led. You might thank God for something or ask God for something.

Rest (Contemplation) - *contemplatio*

Do as you are led. You may wish to wait on God - to simply be with God. You may wish to pay attention to God, pondering especially, How did God seem in the passage? What about God makes you want to worship him, or at least be with him? Sit in the companionship of God - the one who invites you to come away and be with him.

Adapted from: Dallas Willard, *Hearing God: Developing a Conversational Relationship with God*, InterVarsity Press 2012.

HEARING THE MASTER'S VOICE



PEEBLES BAPTIST CHURCH

Hearing God in Scripture: 1 Kings 19:2-18

Lectio Divina (Latin for "Divine Reading") is a traditional Benedictine practice of scriptural reading, meditation and prayer intended to promote communion with God and to increase the knowledge of God's Word. It does not treat Scripture as texts to be studied, but as the Living Word.



Before doing this *lectio divina* exercise, spend a moment considering that the characters we read about in the Bible were not super-human, super-spiritual mega-beings. They were men and women just like us, with the same needs and fears and doubts and desires as us. James 5:17 makes that point specifically about Elijah: "he was a human being like us." Unless we recognise the humanity of Moses, David and Elijah, of Paul, Peter, and even of Jesus Christ himself - of all that wonderful company of riotously human women and men whose experience is recorded in the Bible and in the history of the church - we risk missing out on knowing and interacting with God just as they did.

This will help you enter into Elijah's experience in an informed, picturesque way. To prepare to read this passage in order to receive from God, please set this paper down for a minute. Close your eyes and breathe out slowly. Ask God to give you an openness to hear whatever the Spirit wishes to bring to you today.

Read - *lectio*

Read the passage slowly, considering the invitation that reading Scripture is "encountering God himself or hearing his voice."

1 Kings 19:2-18

Jezebel sent this message to Elijah: “May the gods strike me and even kill me if by this time tomorrow I have not killed you just as you killed them.”

Elijah was afraid and fled for his life. He went... alone into the wilderness, traveling all day. He sat down under a solitary broom tree and prayed that he might die. “I have had enough, LORD,” he said. “Take my life, for I am no better than my ancestors who have already died.”

Then he lay down and slept under the broom tree. But as he was sleeping, an angel touched him and told him, “Get up and eat!” He looked around and there beside his head was some bread baked on hot stones and a jar of water! So he ate and drank and lay down again.

Then the angel of the LORD came again and touched him and said, “Get up and eat some more, or the journey ahead will be too much for you.”

So he got up and ate and drank, and the food gave him enough strength to travel forty days and forty nights to Mount Sinai, the mountain of God. There he came to a cave, where he spent the night.

But the LORD said to him, “What are you doing here, Elijah?”

Elijah replied, “I have zealously served the LORD God Almighty. But the people of Israel have broken their covenant with you, torn down your altars, and killed every one of your prophets. I am the only one left, and now they are trying to kill me, too.”

“Go out and stand before me on the mountain,” the LORD told him. And as Elijah stood there, the LORD passed by, and a mighty windstorm hit the mountain. It was such a terrible blast that the rocks were torn loose, but the LORD was not in the wind. After the wind there was an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake. And after the earthquake there was a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire. And after the fire there was the sound of a gentle whisper. When Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his cloak and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave.

And a voice said, “What are you doing here, Elijah?”

He replied again, “I have zealously served the LORD God Almighty. But the people of Israel have broken their covenant with you, torn down your altars, and killed every

one of your prophets. I am the only one left, and now they are trying to kill me, too.”

Then the LORD told him, “Go back the same way you came, and travel to the wilderness of Damascus. When you arrive there, anoint Hazael to be king of Aram. Then anoint Jehu grandson of Nimshi to be king of Israel, and anoint Elisha son of Shaphat from the town of Abel-meholah to replace you as my prophet. Anyone who escapes from Hazael will be killed by Jehu, and those who escape Jehu will be killed by Elisha! Yet I will preserve 7,000 others in Israel who have never bowed down to Baal or kissed him!”

(New Living Translation)

Now that the words are familiar to you, please read it again, remembering that those who lived through those experiences felt very much as *we* would have, if we had been in their place! Also, listen with the ear of your heart for one of the following:

- A word or phrase, a detail or a special moment of the story that shimmers or stands out to you.
- Where you find yourself in the passage: in the person of Elijah or Jezebel or the angel; perhaps you identify with the cave or the baked goods, or even the earthquake, wind and fire. That's not silly or unusual. Just go with it. In any case, do not choose this yourself. Let the Spirit bring it to you. Even if you don't like it, try to welcome it with meekness and see what happens (James 1:21).

Reflect (Think) - *meditatio*

Read the passage again slowly. As you do so and for a few minutes afterward, reflect on one of the following:

- The word or phrase that stood out to you. Why do you think these words resonated with you?
- Who or what you found yourself to be in the passage. How does it feel to be this person or object? What draws you? What are you thinking or feeling about God?

Give yourself a few minutes to do this. Then ask God, How does this connect with my life today? What do I need to know or be or do?