

Elijah – a sound of sheer silence

1 Kings 19: 4-15

4 Elijah went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a solitary broom tree. He asked that he might die: "It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life, for I am no better than my ancestors."

5 Then he lay down under the broom tree and fell asleep. Suddenly an angel touched him and said to him, "Get up and eat."

6 He looked, and there at his head was a cake baked on hot stones, and a jar of water. He ate and drank, and lay down again.

7 The angel of the Lord came a second time, touched him, and said, "Get up and eat, otherwise the journey will be too much for you."

8 He got up, and ate and drank; then he went in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights to Horeb the mount of God.

9 At that place he came to a cave, and spent the night there. Then the word of the Lord came to him, saying, "What are you doing here, Elijah?"

10 He answered, "I have been very zealous for the Lord, the God of hosts; for the Israelites have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword. I alone am left, and they are seeking my life, to take it away.

11 He said, "Go out and stand on the mountain before the Lord, for the Lord is about to pass by." Now there was a great wind, so strong that it was splitting mountains and breaking rocks in pieces 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;

12 and after the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire;

and after the fire a sound of sheer silence.

13 When Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his mantle and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave. Then there came a voice to him that said, "What are you doing here, Elijah?"

14 He answered, "I have been very zealous for the Lord, the God of hosts; for the Israelites have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword. I alone am left, and they are seeking my life, to take it away."

15 Then the Lord said to him, "Go, return on your way to the wilderness of Damascus.