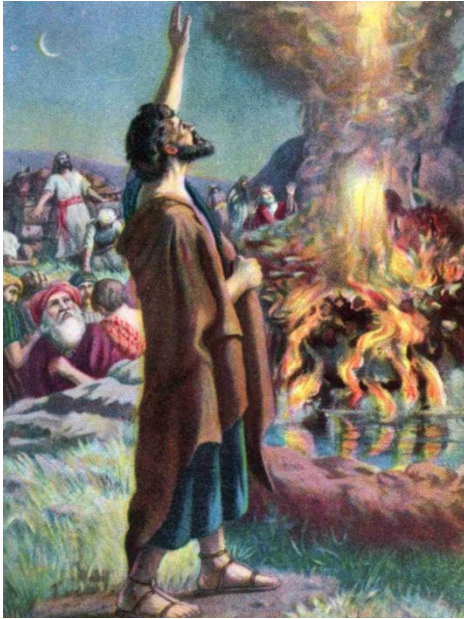


SUNDAY SCHOOL MATERIALS FOR ADULTS

LESSON 2



A SUPERNATURAL VOICE

Scripture Text: 1 Kings 18:1-39; 2 Corinthians 3:7-11

Looking at the lesson Scriptures, the readings and other recorded events, we find that the experience of men under the Law was glorious. God had contact with men and led them then. He answered prayers and worked miracles. However, this glory came by the Law written in stone. There was no power provided to obey. Sacrifice had to be made continually for disobedience. The rule was "You shall." Now, "If you love Me, you will."

That dispensation was supernatural, but this dispensation is more glorious and supernatural. The supernatural runs throughout the history of God's people. God talked to and worked with people in Old Testament times. He continued to do so in New Testament times. His dealing with men is more glorious in this Gospel dispensation than ever before. In the Law dispensation, He was with His people, now He is in them.

MEMORY VERSE: *For if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious.*

—2 Corinthians 3:11

DAILY READINGS:

- Mon.—**Genesis 18:16-33** The Lord talks to Abraham.
- Tue.—**Genesis 28:10-22** God speaks to Jacob.
- Wed.—**Exodus 11; 13:17-22** God led Moses and Israel.
- Thu.—**1 Samuel 30:1-19** David hears from God.
- Fri.—**Daniel 2** God reveals secrets to Daniel.

Devotional Reading: Acts 18:1-11 The Lord encourages Paul.

The Lord Speaks to Elijah

1 Kings 18:1-29 (For the whole story, read **Chapters 17 and 18.**) For the sins of Israel and of her king, Ahab, God withheld rain for three years and six months. During the drought He supernaturally provided for His prophet, Elijah. Then he instructed him to meet Ahab and arrange for a showdown on Mount Carmel before all Israel to test whether Baal—a heathen god—or the Lord was the true God. The proof was to depend upon which would send fire on a sacrifice. This was agreed, the prophets of Baal trying first. To their long and passionate prayers, **there was neither voice, nor any to answer, nor any that regarded.** This is found in natural religion. No positive results came from their efforts.

Elijah Simply Follows God's Plan

1 Kings 18:30-37 **Elijah said unto all the people, Come near.** Simply and plainly, he felt sure of success. God had spoken, and he believed God. Before the thousands of Israel, he built up the broken altar of the Lord and laid on it the wood and meat sacrifice. This was usual. Unusual was the trench dug around it and the twelve barrels of precious water poured over it and filling the trench. Why? (1) There must be no question of trickery or suspicion of fraud. (2) The event must be clearly seen to be a miracle—supernatural.

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God had spoken to Elijah, now Elijah speaks to God. He prayed simply and briefly. He acknowledged the Lord as He Who had worked with Israel from its beginning. He asked Him to show the people (1) His power and position and Lordship, (2) that Elijah was serving Him in doing this, (3) that God had directed in this, and (4) that God was calling them back to Him.

God Answers

1 Kings 18:38-39 God was waiting for this moment. **The fire of the Lord fell, and consumed the . . . sacrifice . . . wood . . . stones . . . dust . . . water.** Was this natural or supernatural? Could the people see that there was a living God Who answered prayer and worked through men? Yes. The people knew. All doubts were driven away. With a mighty shout, **The Lord, he is the God; the Lord, he is the God; they fell on their faces** before Him.

When Israel was cleansed of the prophets of Baal, God sent rain. God's power had been shown.

The Greater Glory

2 Corinthians 3:7-11 **If the ministration of death . . . was glorious . . . how shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious?** The ministration of death was the Law dispensation exemplified by the Ten Commandments **written . . . in stones.** It was **of death** because it had no power to take away the binding power and guilt of sin. That dispensation is also the **ministration of condemnation**, because it condemned to just punishment violators of rules, and **that which is done away**, because it lasted only until John the Baptist preached Jesus Christ (**Luke 16:16**). Yet this system of death and condemnation was **glorious** in its time in God's plan. Read of the marvelous manifestations of God at the giving of the Law (**Exodus 19**), the shining of His glory in the face of Moses (**Exodus 34:29-35**), and the filling of His glory in the tabernacle at its completion (**Exodus 40:34-38**). We find many other examples of the glorious character of the Law dispensation. But it **had no glory in this respect**, its glory was overshadowed **by reason of the glory that excelleth**, or is greater. What is this greater glory? **The ministration of the spirit**, the dispensation in which God moves into the heart of man, transforming him and enabling him by His Spirit to keep the Law of God. This is the dispensation in which we live, the age of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It is **the ministration of righteousness** because it has the Savior Who died to make men righteous. It is **that which remaineth** because it is permanent. This dispensation is to last until Jesus comes at the end of the world. This is more glorious than the Law dispensation. Then God talked to and worked with His people. Now He lives in them and works through them.

Can We Expect Supernatural Workings?

We can have prayer answers, miracles, guidance from God, hearts made new by divine power. Jesus Christ is our contact with God. The people in Old Testament times who experienced the things of God were those who surrendered to and obeyed Him. He works through human channels surrendered, free of sin, and filled with His Spirit. This state is reached by putting faith in the Son of God Who loved us and gave Himself for us.

We must be believing, repenting, and surrendering so that He may live in us. This supernatural presence and power must be active in us. We cannot live without it. We are **crucified with Christ** that He may live in us (**Galatians 2:20**). Read the Words of Jesus in **John 14:12, 14, 17, and 23**. Surely this is supernatural presence and power active in human lives.

JUST A THOUGHT

A man's conscience, and not his mattress, has most to do with his sleep.

This lesson is adapted from a lesson by Mary Lehmann.

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