



2022 3Q In the Crucible with Christ—Lesson 11 Waiting in the Crucible

by Tim Jennings

SABBATH

Read memory text: “But the fruit of the Spirit is...longsuffering” (Galatians 5:22 NKJV).

Thoughts about this? Other versions say patience.

There is a song by a Christian group called Petra entitle *More Power to Ya* and the lyrics are:

*You say you've been feeling weaker, weaker by the day
You say you can't make the joy of your salvation stay
But good things come to them that wait
Not to those who hesitate
So hurry up and wait upon the Lord*

*More power to ya
When you're standing on His word
When you're trusting with your whole heart in the message you have heard
More power to ya
When we're all in one accord
They that wait upon the Lord, they shall renew, they shall renew their strength*

*Jesus promised His disciples He'd give strength to them
Jesus told them all to tarry in Jerusalem
When they were all in one accord
The power of His Spirit poured
And they began to turn the world around*

*So be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might
Put on all His armor and fight the good fight
In all of our weakness, He becomes so strong
When He gives us the power and the strength to carry on*

Read the first two paragraphs, “Scientists did...” The findings: some children waited and some children didn’t. Those who waited turned out to be better adjusted and more confident later in life than those who didn’t. This is what the scientists observed. But what does it mean?



The lesson concludes that patience was indicative of something greater and more important in human character.

Are there any other explanations for what was observed?

Could the differences be explained by:

- Difference in home life, a nurturing loving home versus chaotic and unstructured home?
Would such a childhood impact how well-adjusted someone was later in life?
- Differences in nutrition and brain development?
- Underlying and untreated ADHD?

I am not discounting in any way the value and importance of patience and the necessity of developing the fruits of the Spirit, nor am I discounting that whenever in life a person develops the fruits of the Spirit their life, from that point onward, will be better adjusted and they will have more confidence. I think the link between Christian maturity and healthiness is well established, so don't misunderstand what I am saying.

I am pointing out that this particular study does not prove the link as there are other underlying causes that could undermine adjustment that are not originating in spiritual immaturity, but biological dysfunction, trauma, or nutrition etc.

In fact, failing to recognize the biological causes and misdiagnosing an impulsive child as having a spiritual problem rather than a neurobiological one if in fact it is neurological, could result in parents failing to provide the proper nutrition or getting the proper medical treatment and instead they bring more authoritarian rules to bear in an attempt to discipline the child to teach them self-control, which would only work to instill in the child a distorted self-image, discouragement, and/or a sense of rebellion and could result in a child dropping out, going into more destructive pathways that would not have occurred if the child had been diagnosed early, given proper treatment, which would have resulted in their better impulse control, better performance in school, which would have resulted in them gaining more confidence in themselves, forming a healthier self-image, and the parents having less anxiety and worries and thereby treating the child with more objective and merited praise rather than criticism and discipline and the child would grow up better adjusted etc.

Now, if you are a parent and you look back and recognize you had a child with a biological problem that when they were small you didn't appreciate and you treated them as if they were merely rebellious or unruly, i.e. you didn't get them medical treatment you disciplined and it got worse...what do you do today?

Do you beat yourself up? Do you feel guilty? Do you judge yourself with new information that you didn't have at the time? In other words, do you look back on your life and punish yourself for not acting upon information you didn't even know? Or do you treat yourself based on your motives and recognize your heart was for the welfare of your child and you did the best you could at the time? And you continue to move forward in the truth eager to grow and add greater wisdom and insight to how you live today?



SUNDAY

The lesson points our attention to Psalm 27:14:

Wait for the LORD;
be strong and take heart
and wait for the LORD (Psalm 27:14 NIV84).

What does it mean to wait for the Lord?

The GNT renders the verse this way:

Trust in the LORD.
Have faith, do not despair.
Trust in the LORD (Psalm 27:14 GNT).

Do you hear wait for the Lord the same as trust in the Lord?

This is how I paraphrased it in the *Remedy*:

Trust in the Lord,
be strong and confident.
Trust in the Lord (Psalm 27:14 REM).

What is the relationship between trusting God and waiting for God? When we trust the Lord with the outcome, with the future, with aspects of reality that are not ours to carry out, then we are able to wait for Him to bring about the result in His time.

The lesson asks us to read Psalm 37:7:

Be still before the LORD and wait patiently for him;
do not fret when men succeed in their ways,
when they carry out their wicked schemes (Psalm 37:7 NIV84).

Do we see wicked schemes being carried out by people in the world today? Does it cause you to fret, to worry? How can you not worry about what we see on the news every day?

Does turning our eyes upon Jesus help? Is it one of Satan's strategies to get us to focus upon the problem rather than the solution, to get us to focus on the disease rather than the cure?



THURSDAY

The lesson points us in detail to Psalm 37 so let's go through it from the *Remedy*:

1 Do not be distraught over the apparent gains of the selfish or envy those who persist in violating God's design of love; [Why not? It isn't fair is it? Why should those who do wrong prosper? Shouldn't they suffer? What law lens are you viewing the selfish and wicked through?]

2 for they will soon wither like grass,
like flowers of the field they will fade away.

3 Trust in the Lord and live to love others;
be active in your community as a shepherd of God's kingdom of love. [What happens in us if we do this?]

4 When you delight in the Lord,
he will give you what your heart desires. [What does this mean? Does it mean God will give us the numbers to the next winning lottery ticket? No, it means our hearts are in harmony with God's and we will desire what He desires for us, that's why He will give us what we desire.]

5 Commit yourself to following God's plan — living in harmony with his designs;
trust him with how life turns out and he will do what is best:

6 he will renew your character into righteous love that shines brighter every day;
your decisions will radiate goodness like the noonday sun. [What is the focus of the righteous? On God's kingdom of truth, love, liberty, which operates where? Within us!]

7 Rest in the Lord and be patient for his plan to unfold;
don't be distraught when the selfish seem to succeed —
when they carry out their wicked schemes. [This is the verse the lesson focused our attention upon. Do we see why we don't need to be distraught when the selfish seem to succeed? Because every act of sin damages them; they are hardening their hearts, searing their consciences, warping their characters and destroying their souls. We don't need to be jealous of them for they have nothing of eternal value. We need to, like Jesus, pray, "Father forgive them they don't know what they are doing."]

8 Don't let anger or resentment take root in your heart;
don't worry or ruminate — it only inflames selfishness. [Do you see how our modern media, politics, programming, messaging constantly seeks to divide society on issues that are designed to incite anger, instill resentment, cause fear and worry, and inflame selfishness. What is happening in the world is part of the roar of the lion, inflaming fear, driving selfishness and division. Don't listen to the messaging of the world, focus on Jesus, understand His character and methods of truth, love, freedom and then follow the truth on all subjects.]



9 And selfish people will sever themselves from life, but those who trust in the Lord will inherit the earth. [Why will the selfish die? What happens? Who decides for the selfish that they die eternally? From where does the inheritance for the righteous come? Is this inheritance a legal pronouncement, a ruling, or is it something literal, experiential, objective that we receive? When a branch is grafted into a vine does it receive something that is not its own by right, does it begin to inherit something from the vine? When we are grafted into Jesus do we inherit something actual from Him that lives and operates within us and brings forth new life? But doesn't the Bible say the meek inherit the earth? Isn't the land, the world, our inheritance? Then why am I suggesting we receive our inheritance through being grafted to Jesus? Romans 6:23 the wages of sin is death but the gift of God is eternal life—is an inheritance a right or a gift? But what kind of a gift is an inheritance? It is a gift given to once descendants. Meaning it goes to members of the family, the children of the patriarch. And what makes us children of God? Being reborn into the family of God, dying to sin and selfishness and having our hearts renewed to be like Jesus. And what causes us to experience this renewal, this regeneration, this recreation to be like Jesus? It is being grafted into the Vine, Jesus, being won back to trust and opening the heart to Him and receiving His indwelling presence so that He writes His law upon our hearts and minds. And we receive His law, character, methods written upon our hearts and ultimately inherit the earth made new as our home. But we don't get the earth made new as our home unless we first inherit from Jesus the gift of a new heart and right spirit.]

10 It won't be long, and the selfish will be no more; you will consider their place in the universe and realize they no longer exist. [Why won't the selfish be in the universe? How does that come about? Do we need to be jealous and envious of those who are destroying themselves by embracing and practicing the methods of God's enemy?]

11 But the humble who trust the Lord and love others will inherit the earth and enjoy everlasting peace. [Have you experienced more peace when you love others, trust the Lord, and are humble, and more stress when you fight with others who are arrogant and selfish?]

12 The selfish plot against the unselfish and viciously attack them; [Why? Why did the selfish plot against Jesus and attack Him? Was Jesus seeking to harm anyone? Do the true followers of Jesus seek to harm others? Do they seek to take from others? Or are the followers of Jesus seeking to uplift others, bless others, protect others, and advance the only principles and practices that bring health and life? Then why do the selfish attack the followers of Jesus?]

Because the natural result of sin, of selfishness, is guilt, fear, and shame. These emotions are painful and no one wants to experience them. There are only two ways to avoid *feeling* these feelings. The godly way, which is through repentance and renewal in which we receive new hearts and right spirits and we live new lives with new motives and we stop living selfishly.



This is almost always a painful experience, walking through the valley of the shadow of death in which we feel like we are dying, but we are only dying to the old selfish nature because our Shepherd is leading us in the paths of righteousness for the restoration of our soul.

But because this is a painful renewal process, because it requires giving up old ways, old ideas, old habits, old addictions, old pleasures, old beliefs, old power, many people reject this path and instead choose the other way to avoid these feelings—denial and distortion. Denying anything is wrong, distorting their minds and their understanding of what is happening, projecting their dysfunction and defects out of themselves onto others and blaming others as a means of making themselves feel better. “it wasn’t me, it was the woman you gave me” Adam cried.

Those who refuse repentance will use denial and distortion as a means of avoiding the inherit guilt, shame, fear, and sense of inadequacy that comes from being out of harmony with God and His designs for life. But when they come into the presence of the righteous, the rightness of the life of the godly condemns them even if the righteous say nothing. Their denial and distortions don’t work and they feel the pressure of guilt, shame, fear, inadequacy and will do several things to avoid this.

- They will seek to tempt the righteous to join them in their sinful and dysfunctional living.
- If the righteous graciously refuse, then they will try and force the righteous person tell them how good they are.
- They will try and justify their sin, making excuses and defending themselves.
- They will make themselves out to be victims, it isn’t their fault, and they will present their struggles into the face of the righteous and demand the righteous tell them that they are okay. If the righteous comply and agree that evil is good, that perversion is purity, that the wicked are righteous, then the denial of the guilty is maintained and their guilt, shame, fear suppressed and they move on.
- But if the righteous do not comply, but maintain a godly standard of living, then the wicked will become angry and accuse the righteous of being intolerant, judgmental, abusive, bigoted etc. and will use whatever means possible to try and punish and destroy the righteous. This is what the unrighteous did to Jesus and do you see this happening in the world today?]

13 but the Lord laughs at their foolishness,
for he sees their end approaching. [We don’t need to fear the lies, attacks, plots of the wicked because they are only destroying themselves.]

14 The selfish draw their knives
and load their guns
to kill the humble and those who refuse to defend themselves —
to destroy those who live in harmony with God’s designs.

15 But their knives cut through their own hearts,



and their guns will be broken. [What law lens do we see things through? Do we remember “Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell” (Matthew 10:28 NIV84)?]

16 It is better to be unselfish and poor than to be selfish and rich; [Why? Is this what the world teaches? Do we remember the wisdom of God is foolishness to the world.]

17 for the selfish are terminal and will lose all they have, but the unselfish receive life from the Lord. [“For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul?” (Matthew 16:26 NKJV).

18 The Lord cares for the unselfish, and they inherit eternal life. [The Lord “cares” in this verse refers to actively providing for and intervening in the lives of the unselfish, the “cares” here is not referring to compassion or concern for people. God cannot provide for the welfare of the wicked when they refuse the truth, love, and grace that is the basis of their healing and restoration. Thus God cannot actively care for those who reject His care.]

19 In the time of trouble they will not be ashamed; in the days of spiritual famine, they will be filled. [Daniel was not ashamed when he was accused of being a traitor to the king and condemned to the lion’s den. Peter, Silas, and Paul were not ashamed when they were labeled as heretics by the church and arrested and imprisoned. We will not be ashamed to call Jesus Lord and to stand for the principles of God. And our hearts and minds will be filled with the Spirit of God and the love of God.]

20 But the selfish will perish: those that oppose the Lord and his design will be like the fat of rams; consumed in the fires of love, they will go up in smoke. [Why do the wicked perish? Does God want them to die? Who insists on the wicked being cut off from life, from God, from not being part of God’s kingdom? The wicked do. It is their choice; they beg for the mountains to fall on them (Revelation 6:16). They do not want to live in a kingdom of infinite truth and love where their lies, denial, and distortion do not work, where they experience the pain and suffering unremedied sin causes. And why are they likened to the “fat of rams”? The fat of the sacrificial animals was burned on the altar and is symbolic of sin. And what happens to lies and selfishness when it is exposed to infinite truth and love? It is consumed. The lies the wicked tell themselves that allow warp their minds in order to avoid their own guilt and shame don’t work in the flames of infinite truth and love and thus they suffer the pain that unremedied sin causes and they ultimately choose to let go their lives and voluntarily surrender their existence rather than live in the presence of God being bathed in infinite truth and love.]

21 The selfish take from others and do not return,



but the unselfish give generously. [The two antagonistic principles of the two antagonistic systems of governing. We all choose one or the other as the law we settle into in how we treat others.]

22 Those blessed by the Lord will inherit the earth, but those who reject the blessing will be cut off. [Why? Is it an arbitrary reward or a natural result? Who does God want to inherit the earth? Or another way to say it, how many humans does God want to be saved and inherit the earth? So if God wants all humans to be saved (1Timothy 2:4) and inherit the earth, then who decides, determines, chooses for those who are not saved to not be saved?]

23 The Lord heals and restores those who follow his prescription for life;

24 even if they sleep in the grave, they will not be eternally lost, because the Lord holds on to them. [Do we remember this when a loved one dies from any cause, sickness, accidents, murder, injustice?]

25 Once I was young, but I've lived long and am now old, yet I have never seen the unselfish abandoned by God or their children seeking to feed only themselves.

26 They always give generously and lend freely, and their children live to bless others.

27 Turn from selfishness and love other people; then you will live forever.

28 For the Lord loves the unselfish — those who live right — and will not abandon those who faithfully follow him; he watches over them forever, but the children of selfishness will be cut off.

29 The unselfish will inherit the earth and live upon it forever.

30 Those who live in harmony with God's designs speak wisdom, they tell how reality works — what is right and true.

31 God's design protocol (law) is in their heart and they don't sidestep it.

32 The selfish spy on the unselfish, seeking to destroy them;



33 but the Lord will not abandon them to the power of the selfish or let their condemnation stand. [The wicked will condemn the righteous but they have no true power over them.]

34 Wait expectantly for the Lord and live in harmony with his way. He will regenerate you to inherit the earth; you will see: the selfish will be no more. [We must keep our eyes fixed on Jesus, on the eternal realities, not on the earthly problems. We must not fall into the trap of pursuing human justice, seeking to make justice by implementing artificial rules enforced upon others, such as equity agendas we see so much of. All such actions make things worse and cause harm. We are to live God's principles of equality of all people. Equality is treating everyone with the love, dignity, respect, and autonomy that we each have as beings created in the image of God. Equity is about forcing outcomes based on some identity measure and always causes inequity, injustice, and interferes with individual development and autonomy. Equity sows division in society, incites conflict by creating opposing groups fighting for limited outcome slots, but all under the lie of seeking to improve society. It is a fraud, a lie, a manipulation, a violation of God's methods, recognize it and refuse to support it.]

35 I once saw a selfish and cruel person who appeared to grow in influence and power like a tree growing in good soil,

36 but when I looked again, they died and were no more: though I looked for them, they were nowhere to be found. [This will be the result of all the wicked in the end, not an infliction, but the unavoidable result of cutting themselves off from the source of life.]

37 Take note of the person with mature godly character, observe those who live right, for such living results in peace.

38 But all who rebel against God's design will cease to exist; the future of the persistently selfish is destruction. [Why? Because they sever their connection with God, the source of life, their end is unavoidable.]

39 The remedy that heals the godly comes from the Lord; he is their sanctuary in troubled times.

40 The Lord helps them and rescues them; he delivers them from the wicked and cures them from their own selfishness because they trust in him. [This is the key to health, happiness, victory, and eternal life—the saved trust God; they trust Him with their lives, fortunes, families, futures and are sealed to God. They are so settled into their loyalty, love, devotion, and trust that no lie, persecution,



trial, tribulation, or mistreatment can shake them from their trust. These are the perfected of God!]

MONDAY

Read Romans 5:6 and Galatians 4:4-5:

“You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly” (Romans 5:6 NIV84).

“But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons” (Galatians 4:4-5 NIV84).

Then read first paragraph, “In these verses...” What do you think made it the right time for Jesus’ incarnation? Why do you think God waited in human history until He did?

What ideas have you heard?

Was the plan of salvation only for human beings or was the work that Jesus was to accomplish to encompass more than just humans?

“For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, and through him to **reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven**, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross” (Colossians 1:19-20 NIV84).

So God was working to save humans from sin, but also to stop the rebellion in heavenly realms, to secure the unfallen sinless beings in their loyalty.

Remember, angelic perfection had already failed in heaven, while 2/3’s of the angels stayed loyal to Jesus, the issues that Lucifer raised that led 1/3 to rebel had not been fully dealt with and resolved. God, through Jesus, not only had to provide what was necessary to save human beings from sin, but also had to do it in such a way that His actions would resolve the issues raised by Lucifer and secure the loyal angels into their loyalty.

We read about this in various places like Colossians one that we just read, but Jesus references it when He said:

“Now is the time for judgment on this world; now the prince of this world will be driven out. But I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all *men* to myself” (John 12:31-32 NIV84).

If your version has “men” in it, that word is supplied by the translators, it is not in the Greek. Jesus wasn’t drawing only humans to Himself at the cross, but heavenly beings as well.



Jesus' crucifixion would pronounce judgment upon this world and the prince of this world—what kind of judgment is this? Was the crucifixion of Jesus a legal court setting? No! It is the judgment that Paul wrote about in Romans 3:4:

“let God be true but every man a liar. As it is written: ‘That You may be justified in Your words, and may overcome when You are judged’” (Romans 3:4 NKJV).

The war began in heaven when Lucifer lied about God and deceived 1/3 of the angels into judging God falsely and rebelling against Him. While 2/3's stayed loyal, they had questions that needed answering lest they also eventually lose trust in God and rebel.

Jesus is saying that at the cross He will be lifted up and reveal the truth about God, His character and methods of truth, love, and liberty and expose Satan as the liar and fraud that he is and Satan's methods as the source of all pain, suffering, and death. When this truth is fully revealed then Satan's power to deceive will be broken in the hearts and minds of all who see and embrace the truth, thus Satan will be drive out. He will be driven out of the shadows, out into the open for all to see him for who and what he really is and when that happens his power is broken and Jesus by being lifted up will draw all beings who value truth to Himself, including the angels in heaven.

The angels who witnessed this had their questions about God answered and Satan was revealed as the liar and murderer that he is and thus the angelic host in heaven pronounced judgment that God and Jesus are holy, holy, holy (we read about this in Revelation after Jesus' ascension), and Satan was cast out of the affections of all the angels in heaven. From that point forward Satan's work was restricted to earth not by physical force, but by the reality that no angel in heaven would listen to anything Satan had to say. Only on earth are intelligent beings still listening to Satan and believing his lies.

Okay, so with all that in mind, why wait until that time in human history for Jesus to come in order to provide salvation for humans but also reveal truth to angels?

What is the central issue in the war—God's trustworthiness—and what is Satan's angle to undermine trust in God? That God abuses power by imposing law that requires God to punish lawbreakers. In other words, Satan's lies are rooted in lies about God's law and methods, specifically that God's laws function like human laws, made up rules requiring God to use power to punish. This makes God out to be the source of death and the one whom we need to be protected from, and thus theologies develop about appeasing God, or propitiating His wrath, or paying Him legal penalties, or ransoms, or mediation to plead human blood to God to calm God down. In other words, the false law view that Satan originated undermines trust and incites rebellion against God.

How does this connect with when Jesus came in history?

Prior to this point in human history, where do we find a people who appear to be keeping the blueprint, the laws that God gave them? Nowhere! This is the first time in human history that a group of people appear to be keeping the law God gave through Moses.



- Sabbath keeping
- Sacrificed the right animals in the right way at the right times in the right place
- Ate the right foods
- Paid the right tithe
- Dressed the right way
- Obeyed the right commandments
- They no longer sacrificed to Baal, Molech, or any other pagan god

From the outside, they appeared to be keeping all the rules that God gave them. And when Jesus came and lived among them, what happened? They hated Him and killed Him.

Understand the significance, angels cannot read hearts and minds, and it is possible to behaviorally appear similar. The person who loves others more than self will not cheat, or murder, but the person who keeps the rules out of fear of punishment may never cheat or commit murder. It can appear quite similar from the outside. When Jesus came we finally have a group of people who are rule-keeping, who are following the script God gave through Moses. But rule-keeping of the RIGHT rules for the wrong reasons turns one into a rebel who will kill Jesus. In other words, the timing of Jesus' appearance, to a group of law-keeping followers of Yahweh, revealed that God's kingdom and government is not legal, is not imposed law, is not rule keeping, but is spiritual, is design law, is based upon truth, love, and freedom and operates in the deepest recesses of the intelligent being.

God cannot get what He wants through imposed rules and inflicted punishments. And angels finally saw, not just Satan exposed as a liar and fraud, not just God revealed in Jesus to be completely trustworthy to have all power, but that God's laws are not imposed, that rule-keeping, a legal religion that keeps the right rules, still turns people into rebels against God.

We need this lesson today as we approach the second coming of Christ. We need to return to worship the Creator who made the heavens, earth, sea and fountains of water and whose laws are design laws and reject the imposed law dictator view of a legal god in which salvation is a legal process. For those who worship the legal imposed law punishing god will become like him and just like the Jews 2000 years ago will be among the worst enemies of God.

So why does God wait for certain times to act? What is God waiting for? Could it be that God is waiting for us?

Peter suggests in 2 Peter 3:12 that we can hasten the day of the Lord's appearing, what do you think of this idea?

When the Bible talks about delay, if there is a delay is it truly ever on God's part, or is it on our part, humanity's part, God waiting for us to respond to His saving grace?



TUESDAY

The lesson focuses on king David and the patience he revealed from the time he was anointed to be the next king by Samuel until he actually became king.

What enabled king David to exercise such patience?

Where did David place his trust?

David's attitude was that if God wanted him to be king then God would bring it about in God's timing and David didn't have to do anything to make it happen other than stay faithful to God.

What might have happened if David, after the anointing started campaigning to overthrow Saul?

What would have happened to David's character? What would have likely happened to the nation?

WEDNESDAY

The lesson points to Elijah's running away after Carmel when he was threatened, let's read the account from 1Kings 19:

Now Ahab told Jezebel everything Elijah had done and how he had killed all the prophets with the sword. So Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah to say, "May the gods deal with me, be it ever so severely, if by this time tomorrow I do not make your life like that of one of them."

Elijah was afraid and ran for his life. When he came to Beersheba in Judah, he left his servant there, while he himself went a day's journey into the desert. He came to a broom tree, sat down under it and prayed that he might die. "I have had enough, LORD," he said. "Take my life; I am no better than my ancestors." Then he lay down under the tree and fell asleep.

All at once an angel touched him and said, "Get up and eat." He looked around, and there by his head was a cake of bread baked over hot coals, and a jar of water. He ate and drank and then lay down again.

The angel of the LORD came back a second time and touched him and said, "Get up and eat, for the journey is too much for you." So he got up and ate and drank. Strengthened by that food, he traveled forty days and forty nights until he reached Horeb, the mountain of God. There he went into a cave and spent the night.

And the word of the LORD came to him: "What are you doing here, Elijah?"



He replied, “I have been very zealous for the LORD God Almighty. The Israelites have rejected your covenant, broken down your altars, and put your prophets to death with the sword. I am the only one left, and now they are trying to kill me too.”

The LORD said, “Go out and stand on the mountain in the presence of the LORD, for the LORD is about to pass by.”

Then a great and powerful wind tore the mountains apart and shattered the rocks before the LORD, but the LORD was not in the wind. After the wind there was an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake. After the earthquake came a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire. And after the fire came a gentle whisper. When Elijah heard it, he pulled his cloak over his face and went out and stood at the mouth of the cave.

Then a voice said to him, “What are you doing here, Elijah?”

He replied, “I have been very zealous for the LORD God Almighty. The Israelites have rejected your covenant, broken down your altars, and put your prophets to death with the sword. I am the only one left, and now they are trying to kill me too.”

The LORD said to him... “Yet I reserve seven thousand in Israel—all whose knees have not bowed down to Baal and all whose mouths have not kissed him” (1Kings 19:1-15 & 18 NIV84).

What lessons do we learn from this?

- Mighty people of faith, like Elijah, still struggle with human emotions
- People of faith do not know all things and can make false assumptions, and the assumptions can impact the choices we make—being alone when 7000 were still faithful
- God uses power, but God is not found in power, nor does God describe Himself as power, God describes Himself as love and truth
- What impact does might and power have upon the heart? Does love and truth advance most effectively during great displays of might and power, or do might and power incite fear and this can make it more difficult to grow in love and truth?
- Thus the still small voice, the gentle voice of the Holy Spirit. God advances His kingdom by truth and love working gently upon hearts and minds without intimidation and threats why?
- Because what God wants cannot be achieved by threat, force, or external power. It is the internal power of truth and love that achieves what God wants.
- But didn't God just use might and power at Carmel? Why if He can't advance His kingdom by might and power? Might and power can cause people to stop and listen, but it cannot cause people to love and trust.

Did Elijah learn this lesson? Evidently yes, because later Elijah is transported to heaven without seeing death.



Have you ever considered this? Have you ever sung the song, swing low sweet chariot?

Have you ever wondered why aren't more people taken to heaven like Elijah was?

Would you want to go if it were offered to you?

Would you leave behind, right now today, your spouse, children, grandchildren to go to heaven where you would be able to watch the behind the scenes struggles of your family, the temptations, the secret sins, the exploitations, the sufferings and heartaches, and you wouldn't be here to support them, comfort them and encourage them?

Would you go? It would be a very difficult decision. Maybe this is why Elijah was taken because as far as we know he didn't have any immediate family, no wife, no children, thoughts?