

7. TUNED IN TO GOD'S FREQUENCY

1 Kings 18v41-46

Over recent weeks, in our study of Elijah we have seen how God brought drought upon the nation of Israel. The parched land echoed the spiritual state of the people who had deserted God. After more than three years the prophet gathered the King, his false prophets and the people on to Mount Carmel. There God demonstrated His power as fire fell from heaven. The people's response, at long last, was "The Lord, he is God!!" (vv39)

After the fire, it was time for the rain. But before it arrived we have this wonderful little cameo. It's easy to rush on and miss it. We are given an unusual glimpse of Elijah, a man utterly tuned in to God's frequency.

The contrast with King Ahab and the population could hardly have been greater. Elijah was radically different, a man living with a vivid awareness of the presence of God. This is what it means to be prophetic. We too are called to be a prophetic people in our parched nation, and called to stand out as radically different, a people tuned in to God.

1. Tuned in to hear.

v41:And Elijah said to Ahab, "Go, eat and drink, for there is the sound of a heavy rain." (AV: "a sound of an abundance of rain"; GNB: "I hear the roar of rain approaching.") Had the wind begun to blow from the east? Could the distant rumbling of thunder be heard? Or was this the hearing of faith? Because he was so spiritually tuned I suspect Elijah was the only one hearing this sound. *"It is the nature of this God-given grace to bring distant things close to us."* (A.W.Pink)

v42:So Ahab went off to eat and drink, but Elijah climbed to the top of Carmel, bent down to the ground and put his face between his knees. Ahab was ready to feast his face, but Elijah got down to some serious prayer. I've been trying this posture off and on this week! It is usually associated with feeling giddy! *"Sit down, and put your head between your legs.* Was Elijah feeling faint after the events of the day? I don't think so. What was Elijah doing then? The apostle James understood this as Elijah praying (James 5v17,18) He was bowing down before God in fervent prayer. This seems to be the key to being spiritually tuned. Elijah was a man who prayed. Not just here. It was woven into the fabric of his life.

No one was more in tune with the Father's frequency than Jesus, the Son; and personal prayer was one of the great hallmarks of His life. (Mark 1v35) *"Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went to a solitary place, where he prayed."* (Luke 5v16) *"Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed"*. This caused his disciples to ask Him to teach them to pray.

If we want to be tuned into God's frequency then prayer is going to be key.

Elijah climbed to the top of Carmel, bent down to the ground and put his face between his knees. Elijah's posture in prayer was one of humility and reverence and submission before God. But there is something else in this posture. When you put your face between your knees your ears are covered! Everything else is shut out. There are no distractions. Sometimes it is necessary to block our ears from other sounds in order to keep tuned in to God's voice. There is a time to put your head between your knees! You may need to block out words and sounds which sap your faith.

There is also a time for us, *corporately*, to put our heads between our knees! This is not just for a few elite Christians. We are the body of Christ. When we come together we can be tuned in to God's frequency as a body. That is how spiritual gifts can work. Joy Dawson records a letter she had from the YWAM Director in Herare, Zimbabwe, following a visit she had made to them.

"During February, at our School of Evangelism, some people in one of our intercession groups received detailed revelation after carefully applying the Principles for Effective Intercession that you taught. To one was given the impression that he was to intercede for a man called Emmanuel de Costa; to another, that this man was in trouble with the police over drugs. Another had a vision of a man with a brief case, standing on a dock in a port city. Understanding was then given to this group that this man was smuggling drugs and being arrested by the police.

They prayed earnestly that he would repent of sin and commit his life to the Lord. Then they took authority over the powers of darkness on his behalf, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Lastly, prayer was specifically made that someone would minister to him and lead him to the Lord. They believed God for his conversion.

During our Southern Africa field trip through Zimbabwe, Malawi, Mozambique, Swaziland, South Africa and Botswana, we spent three weeks in Mozambique (in June), of which ten days were spent in Lourenco Marques working with a drug rehabilitation centre. One of the Christian workers named Mike worked with us as an interpreter. During one of our times in group intercession, Mike was impressed by the Holy Spirit to tell us that his real name was not Mike but Emmanuel de Costa. To our wonderment and excitement, we found that every detail God had revealed to us in intercession matched this man's life in February. Can you imagine what that did to our faith? Two weeks ago he and three other Christians were arrested by the Frelimo Government – this time not for being involved with drugs, but for sharing their faith in Christ, which was in direct conflict with the policy of the new government." ('Intercession' by Joy Dawson. YWAM Publishing. 1997)

Corporate prayer keeps us spiritually tuned in and enables us to hear the future together;" *to bring distant things close to us*": It may enable us to hear the sound of hundreds of people giving glory to God in this place every Sunday; to hear the sound of many new people turning to Christ week by week; to hear the sound of people rejoicing over miracles of healing; to hear the sound of the Spirit of God being poured out on this nation and the nations.

2. Tuned in to see.

When your face is between your knees, your eyes *can't see anything* either. Elijah was not only intent on hearing by faith, but also seeing by faith. So he used someone else's eyes.

v43: "Go and look towards the sea," he told his servant. And he went up and looked. "There is nothing there," he said. Elijah had his head between his knees but he saw something in the sky before the servant did. He was so tuned in to God, his vision was perfect. Faith gave him the eyes of an eagle. This is a prominent characteristic of the prophetic gift. Prophets see things in the distance. On occasions in the Hebrew Scriptures they are called "seers".

Seven times Elijah said, "Go back." The seventh time the servant reported, "A cloud as small as a man's hand is rising from the sea." So Elijah said, "Go and tell Ahab, 'Hitch up your chariot and go down before the rain stops you.' "Meanwhile, the sky grew black with clouds, the wind rose, a heavy rain came on and Ahab rode off to Jezreel. The power of the LORD came upon Elijah and, tucking his cloak into his belt, he ran ahead of Ahab all the way to Jezreel.

Elijah was a man of the Spirit in the Old Covenant. We now live in the era of the new covenant. God's Spirit has been poured out freely on all of God's people. The prophet Joel's words have come to pass. *"In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy.* (Acts 2v17-18.) Now, by the Spirit we can see the unseen, we can experience the presence of the future. We can be tuned in to God's frequency.

In 1996 the *newfrontiers* church in Newcastle were seeking to move from Byker and were exploring the purchase of a URC building. Adrian Smith was one of the Trustees, and he used to go walking and praying around the building asking God to give it to them or give them something else. He recalls how he was really engaged in prayer over this. It was a serious burden in prayer. Around that time he attended a Conference in Edinburgh, and one evening Paul Cain, a prophetic figure from USA, prayed a general prayer over the delegates that God would reveal more to them in visions, dreams and pictures. The next morning Adrian had a dream just before waking. He says, *"Suddenly I saw a building, and I knew exactly what it was and where it was."* He is a town planner and knew the city of Newcastle well. He had been in the building some years previously; it was near the Quayside. With the image of this building came an overwhelming impression, "Check it out!" He woke up thinking: *"Wow" What was that all about?"*

He returned to work but couldn't think of anything else. So he decided to investigate. A call to a friend revealed who owned the building, so he rang the Managing Director. Having explained that the church was looking for a building he asked if this one was on the market. He replied *"No, but we are*

thinking of selling." Within days Adrian and Ian Galloway were being shown around the building. As Ian walked around the huge turbine hall he remembered a prophecy at a prayer meeting six months earlier. Someone had shared a picture in which they saw a building with a huge pointed roof like a cathedral nave; it also had a stained glass window at one end. As Ian looked around, he realised this was exactly what had been described! There was even a stained glass window with Victorian glass in the entrance to the office area.

The rest is history. The church bought the building (now the CastleGate) for a modest amount because at the time the area was somewhat shabby and derelict. Soon after purchasing the area began to be developed and now the building would cost millions to buy. All this was possible because of being tuned into God's frequency.

What a contrast between Elijah and Ahab. The king was out of touch with God. He couldn't hear or see anything of God even when fire fell from heaven! We live and work among people just like this. So, we need to be tuned in to God's frequency so that we can be His messengers today .

John Wilthew. March 2006.