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Sunday Mass Study Notes for Lectionary 115: 08/09/2026



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Elijah mistakenly believed he was the only remaining follower of the Lord (v. 10: "I alone am left"). God later corrected his false belief in the chapter and told him that 7,000 believers remained (1 Kings 19:18; see below). It is important to note that Elijah had just returned from a significant spiritual victory. Sometimes after a victory, we can be the most vulnerable. So God, in His mercy, meets Elijah in his place of need in a cave at Mt. Horeb. This is the same mountain where God met Moses and gave him the Ten Commandments. Now, hundreds of years later, Elijah, another great leader, met God in an unexpected way. God caused the wind, earthquake, and fire, but these things weren't His voice. No, these fearful things brought about by the fall of Adam (Genesis 3) were not the Word of God for which Elijah was waiting; this came in the sound of a "gentle blowing," or as rendered in some versions, "a tiny whispering sound" (v. 12). When Elijah heard this, he knew that this was God's voice. This is what Elijah needed to continue on.

Some life lessons we can learn from Elijah's interaction with God are as follows: God may be seeking to get our attention in the same way. First, God may be asking us, "What are you doing here?" This is a question of purpose, personal meaning, and identity. Only God can give us the answer to this question. Second, God may be telling us where to find Him. In Elijah's case, it was geographical; however, in our case, it may be more a matter of our heart, seeking Him where He has chosen to reveal Himself – in His Word, the Bible. Finally, He may be showing us Who He is. Surprisingly enough, God chose to reveal Himself in a still, small voice. Our world shouts, but God whispers. What can we do to quiet ourselves and listen?

This is how the story ended with God giving Elijah specific instructions and information.

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Elijah thought that he was alone when, in fact, God revealed that there were at least 7,000 in Israel who had remained true to Him. Oftentimes, we may feel all alone as believers in Jesus Christ, especially when we find ourselves in circumstances around nonbelievers for extended periods of time.

Introduction to the Second Reading:

As we move to the second reading, Saint Paul likely felt that way as he poured out his heart to his fellow Jews who stubbornly resisted the Gospel message. This week's reading continues the previous week's study in Romans. Romans chapter 9 through 11 mark a section in which Saint Paul outlines Israel's past (chapter 9), present (chapter 11), and future (chapter 12).

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> *1 I am telling the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience testifies with me in the Holy Spirit, 2 that I have great sorrow and unceasing grief in my heart. 3 For I could wish that I myself were accursed, separated from Christ for the sake of my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh, 4 who are Israelites, to whom belongs the adoption as sons, and the glory and the covenants and the giving of the Law and the temple service and the promises, 5 whose are the fathers, and from whom is the Christ according to the flesh, who is over all, God*

> *blessed forever. Amen. (Romans 9:1-5)*

The big idea is that Paul was a Jew, "my kinsmen according to the flesh" (v. 3), born into the tribe of Benjamin (Philippians 3:5), and is greatly distressed that, as a Jew, his fellow Israelites haven't believed in the Messiah Jesus. We can learn several things from this passage. First, may we be grieved over those we care about who don't know Jesus Christ. Are we willing to make even minor sacrifices to reach the lost with the Good News of the Kingdom? Second, this section about the Jewish people reminds us that God chose this specific people group to be a blessing to the rest of the world. It was through the Jews that God established His covenants (relational commitments), gave the Law (moral, dietary, religious, and code of conduct), set up a place and a venue for worship (the responding to God's worth), and the promises (God's record of faithfulness). Their lineage includes the Patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob), King David, and ultimately Jesus. Finally, Paul emphasizes who the Person of Jesus Christ is: God over all, forever praised. This is clear evidence that the early church had a solid sense of who Christ is (Christology), which includes His deity. His followers worshiped Him as God, and we would be wise to do the same.

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The Gospel lesson is a continuation of the study from previous weeks, beginning in Matthew with Jesus' parables in Chapter 13. Here, Jesus once again proves by performing mighty miracles that He is God.

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> *22 Immediately He made the disciples get into the boat and go ahead of Him to the other side, while He sent the crowds away. 23 After He had sent the crowds away, He went up on the mountain by Himself to pray; and when it was evening, He was there alone. 24 But the boat was already a long distance from the land, battered by the waves; for the wind was contrary. 25 And in the fourth watch of the night He came to them, walking on the sea. 26 When the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were terrified, and said, "It is a ghost!" And they cried out in fear. 27 But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, "Take courage, it is I; do not be afraid." 28 Peter said to Him, "Lord, if it is You, command me to come to You on the water." 29 And He said, "Come!" And Peter got out of the boat, and walked on the water and came toward Jesus. 30 But seeing the wind, he became frightened, and beginning to sink, he cried out, "Lord, save me!" 31 Immediately Jesus stretched out His hand and took hold of him, and*

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There are actually three miracles in the story. First, Jesus Himself is walking on that water (v. 25). Second, Peter's walking on the water through Jesus' power (v. 29). Finally, the calming of both the wind and the waves (v. 32). Notice how Jesus sought solitude away from the crowds (v. 22). Jesus often did this right before he performed a mighty miracle. He did this just before He fed the crowd that we studied last week. He wanted to be by himself to pray to His Heavenly Father. This is a good reminder to us that if Jesus Himself needed to pray, how much more do we need this time with the Father?

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