

Scripture Reading

A Reading from the Book of Kings (*1 Kings 19:11-13*)

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. The Word of the Lord. R. Thanks be to God.

Reflection ~ Presence of God in Quiet and Stillness

Be still before the LORD and wait patiently for Him (Psalm 37:7). Elijah was in a cave on Mount Horeb seeking the Lord when the voice of God came instructing him to stand on the mountain to encounter the Lord who was to pass by. As Elijah waited a great and powerful wind came, then there was the earthquake after which came a fire. The Lord was not in any of these awesome manifestations of the power of nature. Instead, He was in the gentle whisper that came after all these. The Lord came in quiet and stillness. The Lord is not found in noise and busyness of activities. I need quiet and stillness to encounter Him. Then can God be given a chance to speak to my heart and reveal deeper His mysteries to me through His Holy Spirit. I can then gain a deeper insight into Christ's love for me. Having a deeper insight into Christ's love for me, I am on my way to having a solid personal relationship with Christ. Once I have a real personal relationship with Christ, I can be passionate about my faith. Then I can yield to the Holy Spirit and become a pliable instrument in God's hands.

Exterior noise. The world I live in is a very busy one. Everyday I am bombarded with many images and voices that vie for my attention. Modern technology has thrown up ever newer and slicker personal communication and entertainment electronic gadgets that enslave the attention of many. Our lives are filled with all kinds of activities. As a follower of Christ I need to be vigilant and to exercise moderation and sobriety in activities that take away my time with Christ. *Seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well (Matthew 6:33).* I need to have quiet personal time everyday for prayer and meditation. My spiritual strength comes from the Lord through prayer and I need to resist the temptation of involvement in too many activities even good activities if these eat into my time reserved for the Lord.

Interior noise from my mind. Interior noise in my mind comes from my set way of thinking, a thinking that is cultivated by the world around me, by what I went through, by my life experiences. I have my own idea of what is important to me, what I should do with my life. I have my own desires, my own opinions, my own convictions, my goals. All these can be quite apart from what I believe in my faith. I put them into separate compartments. These will be the interior noises that will compete with the soft whisper of God's voice. Haven't we experience the difficulty of trying to reason with someone who cling obstinately to his/her own opinion? Have I thought about surrendering my mind to the Lord, asking Him to change my way of thinking, my way of looking at things, my desires and goals to be conformed to His plan for me? Do I believe His plan is better than mine? His way of thinking far superior than mine? *Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight (Proverbs 3:5-6).*

Interior noise from my heart. The heart cannot be quiet and still when it is tortured by grudges, hatred, unforgiveness, fears, inordinate self love. Negative feelings such as these cause the heart to be like a stricken ship tossed like a piece of cork by a great storm. Let me surrender whatever wounds and hurts that I have in my heart when I come before Him in prayer so that my heart and soul can become quiet and open to the voice of the Lord and the workings of the Holy Spirit. It is only the Lord who can take all these from me and give me His peace.

Conversation with Jesus

Precious Lord there are many distractions that prevent me from coming before You in stillness and quiet. Give me the grace to allocate time for quiet prayer and meditation on You in my daily life, no matter how busy I am. I wish to grow in faith, for the heart of my soul to listen to Your gentle voice and to yield to the inspirations of the Holy Spirit so that I can become what You want me to be. Mary, Protectress of the Faith, form my heart only for Jesus. Thank You, Jesus. Praise You, Jesus.