

TEXT 1 Kings 19:1-18

SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURE Luke 24:13-35

OBJECTIVE The students will be able to explain that God has different ways of communicating with us so that we might know His will. Our responsibility is to be attentive to His Spirit for direction—no matter what way He might choose to reveal His plan for us.

KEY VERSE FOR ANSWER Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not. — Jeremiah 33:3

KEY VERSE FOR SEARCH And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear. — Isaiah 65:24

**ANSWER
TITLE:** **Jeremy’s Exciting Plans**
**SEARCH
TITLE:** **Communication**

REFERENCE INFORMATION

Communication means “giving of and receiving of information, signals, or messages by talk, gestures, or writing.” Our study of communication is primarily concerned with talking to and listening to God. When God created Adam and Eve, He came down in the Garden and talked with them. Sin separated man from God, but there was always a channel of communication left open. God spoke to Noah and commissioned him to build an ark. God spoke to Abraham on various occasions. He spoke to Moses “face to face” (Exodus 33:11), and many times God sent angels with messages to individuals. To many of the prophets He communicated through dreams or visions.

There are those today who have had dreams or seen visions or heard God speak in an audible voice, but for the most part we ascertain the will of God by reading His Word and talking to Him in prayer. Some might question,

“How do you know God hears you?” Every child of God has had prayer answered personally and many are the witnesses to answered prayer among the family of God.

When Elijah challenged the priests of Baal to a contest on Mount Carmel, the Lord sent fire on the altar proving that He, not Baal, was truly God. After that, rain fell and the drought was broken. But Ahab’s queen, Jezebel, was furious. Elijah had not only humiliated her prophets, but had executed them. She vowed to murder him. Afraid, Elijah fled to Mount Horeb to hide. His journey was not an easy one, for Mount Horeb stood over 200 miles south of Mount Carmel, where Elijah had destroyed the priests of Baal. To get to Mount Horeb, the prophet had to cross a wild, barren wilderness. Once there, the Lord spoke to him, not through the wind, earthquake, or fire, but in a still small voice.

YOUR OPENER

Communication

TEXT: 1 Kings 19:1-18

SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURE: Luke 24:13-35

KEY VERSE: And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear. — Isaiah 65:24

God does not always work by precedent. Because He has communicated in one way at one time does not mean that He will always communicate in the same way at subsequent times. However, His will is sure to be made known to us. Our responsibility is to be attentive to His Spirit for direction.

RESPONSES

1. Elijah was despondent and fleeing for his life. Students should find that even in times of despondency God is concerned about their needs and can reveal Himself to them. Help your class understand that listening to the wrong voices will bring a snare. The discussion should center around peer pressure, counsel of the ungodly, and negative thoughts.

2. This should be a heart-searching question. Allow time for your students to express their thoughts. The point should be made that communication from God, however it comes, should never be taken lightly. His message may bring about some soul-searching—and this is in accordance with the Word of God. The Bible says to let a man examine himself whether he be in the faith.

3. Elijah seemed to realize that communication with God was more important than just a physical evidence of the forces of nature. He knew that God was a divine Person who could speak, and realized that this Voice was more than a mere sound or an influence, but an assurance of the presence of a Living Personality. Discuss with your students how they note dramatic occurrences in nature and recognize the power of God displayed in these. But how much more vital is the personal contact through prayer or communication with God!

1. Just prior to our lesson text, Elijah had won a great victory on the mountain and undoubtedly was spiritually very much in tune with God. How quickly this changed! What was Elijah's condition after listening to the threats of Queen Jezebel? What lesson can we learn from this?

2. God sent an angel to instruct and encourage Elijah. Then the prophet journeyed on to Mt. Horeb. When Elijah arrived, God's next communication was direct. It was in the form of a question, "What doest thou here, Elijah?" (verse 9). What would your reaction be if God spoke to you with a direct question?

3. When Elijah heard the still, small Voice, he wrapped his face in his mantle, and went and stood in the entrance of the cave. Why hadn't Elijah shown the same respect or reverence after seeing the manifestations of nature?

ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION NOTES

4. God communicated with Elijah in an audible voice. Often He chooses other methods of revealing His will to us. What might some of these other ways be?

5. Sometimes we may find ourselves having difficulty determining whether an impression or communication we are receiving is from the Lord. How can we know that it is the Lord who is giving us direction?

6. God may speak to man through the forces of nature by way of judgment. See Exodus 7:24. Why is it possible that miracles alone will not lead men to God?

7. What was the result of Elijah's listening and responding to God's communication?

8. God's responsibility is to answer our prayers, providing us with guidance and direction. What is our responsibility?

4. The Lord may communicate with us through a Scripture, a testimony, a song, a sermon, a strong impression during prayer, or through the counsel of the ministry. Your students may offer these and other possibilities. Encourage them to cite specific examples from their own experiences if they would like to do so.

5. Your students should bring out that in the first place, the Spirit and the Word have to agree. God does not give any instructions or communications that are in opposition to what is revealed in His Word. If you don't know for sure if something is from the Lord it's better to back off until you do know for sure. Another point to bring up could be that confusion or troubled feelings are not from the Lord, for that is not the way the Lord deals with us (1 Corinthians 14:33). Your students should also see the advisability of seeking counsel or advice from those God has placed in spiritual authority over us.

6. Unless there is conviction for sin, and repentance in the hearts of the ungodly, no number of miracles or signs will turn them to God. The answer will reveal that "he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Hebrews 11:6). Spend time in discussing the fact that today men often refuse to profit by the demonstration of God's power, or the love and mercy that are manifested all around them, because they prefer sin instead of sinlessness. But God's communication with the sinner, when He sends conviction to draw that one to Him, is one of the most important times of God's dealing with man.

7. He was able to fulfill God's plan for his life. He was instructed to anoint Elisha as his successor, and anoint a king over Syria, and a king over Israel. The answer will show that God is not the author of confusion, but will lead us in a plain path if we are willing to follow. "The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way" (Psalm 37:23).

8. Your students should conclude that it is our responsibility to make our requests known unto God. Wrap up this lesson by discussing with your students how, if they allow God to communicate with them and then follow His directions, they can be assured that He will work out His plan for their lives and their lives will be pleasing unto Him. "For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end" (Jeremiah 29:11).

YOUR WRAP-UP

SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONS

What are the ways God communicated with Elijah in our text today? What are some other ways God communicated that are found in the Bible?

Discuss modern methods of communication, and their shortcomings. Compare this to our communication with God.

How might the Lord communicate with us today concerning His will for us?

How might we prove that it is the Lord giving us direction revealing His will for our lives?

How might we be more prepared and ready to hear God's instructions for our lives?

What are some of the benefits of seeking for, and following the Lord's directives?

Can you name some areas of life—things you have faced or might face in the future—where you might be able to look to the Lord for guidance?

In our ANSWER story, how did God let Jeremy know what he should do? Has God ever spoken to you in this way?

THINGS TO DO

Finger Trust Walk — Set up a small obstacle course on your table or desk top. Divide students into teams, and blindfold one on each team. Blindfolded students must follow directions (which are given by their team-mates) and walk their fingers through the course without touching anything. This should illustrate the importance of listening when God gives us directions.

Divide into groups. Challenge each group to come up with a list of ten or more instances in the Bible when God made Himself known to someone in a dramatic and personal way. 1 Kings 19:12; Isaiah 6:1; Ezekiel 1:15-21; Matthew 3:17; Mark 9:2; Acts 9:1-9; Revelation 1:9-20

Bring a megaphone to class (a rolled up triangular piece of cardboard gives the same effect), a tape recorder with

earphones, a flashlight, and a Bible. Use these to show the different ways in which God communicates with us. The megaphone represents God's speaking to us in an audible voice; the tape recorder with earphones represents God's speaking very softly to our hearts. The flashlight represents God's communicating with us through His angels or visions that we can actually see; and the Bible represents God's speaking to us through His written Word.

Bring a set of ear plugs to class to demonstrate that we must not have any spiritual "ear plugs" that will prevent us from hearing God's words to us. It is important for us to make sure that we remove these ear plugs to hear what the Lord has to say—even if it may hurt us.

Answers for ANSWER

Get That Call!

God has different ways of communicating with us. We must be listening when He speaks. Use the telephone to decode the message below. Find the letter that each number represents. The first number represents the number on the phone button. The second number tells you which of the three letters on the button to use.

CALL UNTO ME, AND I WILL
23 21 53 53 82 62 81 63 61 32, 21 62 31 43 91 43 53 53

ANSWER THEE AND SHEW
21 62 73 91 32 72 81 42 32 32, 21 62 31 73 42 32 91

THEE GREAT AND MIGHTY
81 42 32 32 41 72 32 21 81 21 62 31 61 43 41 42 81 93

THINGS, WHICH THOU KNOWEST
81 42 43 62 41 73, 91 42 43 23 42 81 42 63 82 52 62 63 91 32 73 81

NOT. JEREMIAH
62 63 81. 51 32 72 32 61 43 21 42 33:3