

Michael's Message

We heard the sirens wail or the cell phones alert us to the presence of tornadoes. The wind suddenly stilled, and an eerie calm settled over the area as many of us grew worried and some of us began to panic. We had seen the pictures and videos of tornadoes and the damage that they caused, or we had experienced one.

At the school the next day, some children told me about going into basements or huddling in bathrooms. The sense of awe and fear was present as many realized what the weather could do. Some of the Purple Gang kids now understood why we practiced tornado drills at Purple Gang.

Frightening moments like those remind us that life is perilous and that we can't guarantee anyone's safety. We can practice various safety drills and reduce the danger, but some risk always remains.

As people of faith, it is much easier to live with the scary part of life. We know that God is all powerful and loves us. The God who loves us will protect us so that we can live in God's presence after our earthly life is over.

The weather is getting more dangerous, the world seems to be spinning out of control, and the divisions in our nation are widening and deepening. In these circumstances, many of us want to stop the world, or flee to a safer place, or crawl under the blankets and hide.

A powerful prophet did flee for forty days and nights when his life was threatened. Elijah had just defeated the prophets of Baal in a contest and he had them killed. Jezebel threatened his life in return, and he went to Mount Horeb.

After he arrived, he heard an earthquake rumbling, thunder booming, and fire burning, but God was not in any of the sounds. Then there was the sound of sheer silence. We are not told that God was in the silence, but I suspect that he was.

The Psalmist tells us, "Be silent and know that I am God." I think we must take time to be silent and listen for God's silence. When we do, we may hear God speaking to us as he did Elijah. God asked Elijah, "What are you doing here?" God then reassured him, asked him to resume his task, and gave him some specific goals.

I believe that God still speaks in silence and in the moments that we decide to be still and listen for God's voice. I hope that you will dedicate some moments each day to doing just that.

Michael

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