SEA CHANGE CHURCH

THE CURRENT

Elijah: From Drought to Downpour · S2E3

# Come Out of the Cave

A 7-Day Study

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*"There he came to a cave and lodged in it. And behold, the word of the LORD came to him, and he said to him, 'What are you doing here, Elijah?' He said, 'I have been very jealous for the LORD, the God of hosts. For the people of Israel have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword, and I, even I only, am left, and they seek my life, to take it away.' And he said, 'Go out and stand on the mount before the LORD.' And behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind tore the mountains and broke in pieces the rocks before the LORD, but the LORD was not in the wind. And after the wind an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake. And after the earthquake a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire. And after the fire the sound of a low whisper. And when Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his cloak and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave. And behold, there came a voice to him and said, 'What are you doing here, Elijah?' He said, 'I have been very jealous for the LORD, the God of hosts. For the people of Israel have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword, and I, even I only, am left, and they seek my life, to take it away.' And the LORD said to him, 'Go, return on your way to the wilderness of Damascus. And when you arrive, you shall anoint Hazael to be king over Syria. And Jehu the son of Nimshi you shall anoint to be king over Israel, and Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abel-meholah you shall anoint to be prophet in your place. And the one who escapes from the sword of Hazael shall Jehu put to death, and the one who escapes from the sword of Jehu shall Elisha put to death. Yet I will leave seven thousand in Israel, all the knees that have not bowed to Baal, and every mouth that has not kissed him.'"*

**1 Kings 19:9–18 ESV**

Pastor Adam Stadtmiller · September 6, 2026

## THIS WEEK'S MEMORY VERSE

*"And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose."*

**Romans 8:28**

## HOW TO USE THIS STUDY

Each week, The Current walks through a piece of Sunday's passage: a short verse study, encouragement, journal questions, and a daily prayer.

Take one day at a time. There's no need to rush.

DAY 1

# What Are You Doing Here?

> **1 KINGS 19:9 ESV**
>
> *"There he came to a cave and lodged in it. And behold, the word of the LORD came to him, and he said to him, 'What are you doing here, Elijah?'"*

## VERSE STUDY

Pastor Adam pointed out something easy to miss in this verse: God's word reaching Elijah in the cave is not the same thing as Elijah encountering God's presence. Both matter, but they are different. The word comes first, asking a simple, honest question: what are you doing here? Pastor Adam was careful to note this doesn't read like a question of guilt or accusation. It's an actual question, the kind worth taking seriously and asking yourself.

He shared that this exact question had been working on him personally that week: whenever a certain thought pattern crept in, he'd stop and ask himself, 'What am I doing here, Adam?' It's a question that cuts through autopilot. Elijah is not asked to defend himself. He's simply invited to notice where he actually is and how he got there.

There's something significant about God asking rather than declaring. God already knows exactly where Elijah is, physically and emotionally. But he asks anyway, because the question itself is the doorway into an honest conversation. It gives Elijah room to answer from wherever he actually is, not from where he thinks he's supposed to be.

This week, before jumping to solutions or self-improvement, sit with the same question God asked Elijah. What are you doing here? Not as an accusation, but as an honest invitation to notice.

## TAKE HEART

God's question to Elijah wasn't a trap. It was an invitation to honesty. He's asking you the same thing this week, not to shame you, but to meet you exactly where you are.

## JOURNAL QUESTIONS

1. If God asked you right now, 'What are you doing here?' what would your honest, unfiltered answer be?
2. Is there a thought pattern or place you keep returning to that this question might be inviting you to notice?

## DAILY PRAYER

*Before you pray, spend a few quiet minutes with today's verse: read it slowly once more, or simply sit in silence and let it settle. Then, when you're ready, pray this over your day:*

*Lord, You asked Elijah a question You already knew the answer to, because the question itself was an invitation, not a trap. Ask me that same question today. What am I doing here? Help me*

*answer honestly, without dressing it up or hiding the real state of my heart. Thank You for meeting me in the cave before You ever ask me to leave it. Give me the courage to actually sit with Your question instead of rushing past it. Amen.*

### ACTION CHALLENGE

Write down your honest answer to God's question, 'What are you doing here?' Don't edit it before you write it.

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### NOTES

DAY 2

# Answering From Your Pain

> **1 KINGS 19:10 ESV**
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> *"He said, 'I have been very jealous for the LORD, the God of hosts. For the people of Israel have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword, and I, even I only, am left, and they seek my life, to take it away.'"*

## VERSE STUDY

Elijah's answer is raw and unfiltered, and Pastor Adam highlighted how remarkable that actually is. Elijah doesn't clean himself up before speaking to God. He answers straight from his pain: I've been zealous for you, they've torn everything down, and I'm the only one left. It's an honest, wounded answer, and Pastor Adam pointed out that being honest with God like this, even when it's messy, is exactly right.

But here's the catch. Four parts of Elijah's statement are true. He really had been zealous for the Lord. The people really had forsaken the covenant, torn down altars, and killed prophets. And then comes the fifth statement: 'I, even I only, am left.' That one is false, and Pastor Adam named it directly: Satan is the master of the partial truth. Nine truths and one lie, and our minds tend to fixate on the lie every time.

This is worth sitting with honestly. Elijah wasn't lying to manipulate anyone. He believed what he was saying. That's what makes partial truth so dangerous: it doesn't feel like deception from the inside. It feels like an accurate account of reality, built on facts that are individually true but assembled into a conclusion that isn't.

It's okay to answer from your pain. God isn't asking for a polished report. But this passage invites you to hold your own conclusions a little more loosely, especially the ones that sound absolute: always, never, only, alone. Those words are often where the lie is hiding inside the truth.

## TAKE HEART

You're allowed to answer God honestly, straight from your pain, without cleaning it up first. He can handle it. He can also, gently, show you which parts of your honest answer aren't actually true.

## JOURNAL QUESTIONS

1. What is one true, painful thing you need to say to God honestly today, without editing it?
2. Is there a conclusion you've drawn about your life that sounds absolute, always, never, only, alone, that might be a partial truth rather than the whole truth?

## DAILY PRAYER

*Before you pray, spend a few quiet minutes with today's verse: read it slowly once more, or simply sit in silence and let it settle. Then, when you're ready, pray this over your day:*

*Lord, like Elijah, I want to be honest with You about my pain instead of dressing it up into something more presentable. Thank You that You can handle my raw, unfiltered answers. But I also ask You to show me where my pain has led me to a conclusion that isn't fully true. Help me hold the difference between what I feel and what is actually real. Sift the truth from the lie in what I'm carrying today. Meet me in my honesty and correct me in Your gentleness. Amen.*

## ACTION CHALLENGE

Identify one absolute statement you've made about your life recently, always, never, only, alone, and test it honestly against what you actually know to be true.

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## NOTES

DAY 3

# He Stayed Until the Whisper

> **1 KINGS 19:12-13 ESV**
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> *"And after the earthquake a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire. And after the fire the sound of a low whisper. And when Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his cloak and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave."*

## VERSE STUDY

God tells Elijah directly, in verse eleven, to go out and stand on the mountain. But Pastor Adam pointed out something easy to skim past: Elijah doesn't actually leave the cave right away. A wind tears the mountains apart. An earthquake shakes the ground. A fire passes by. And through all three of those enormous events, Elijah stays inside the cave. He only comes out after the whisper.

Pastor Adam connected this to the nature of whispers themselves: they require proximity. You can feel an earthquake from far away, and smell smoke from a fire miles off, but a whisper only reaches you if you're close. That's what draws Elijah out, not the volume of the wind or the fire, but the intimacy of something quiet enough that it required him to actually be near.

He was honest about how much easier it is to relate to God through his word than through his actual presence, comparing it to a marriage sustained only by phone calls versus one where you're actually in the same room. Both have real connection, but they aren't the same thing. Pastor Adam pointed to Brother Lawrence's classic 'Practicing the Presence of God' as a picture of the one-two punch: not just the word, but the presence too.

There may be plenty of loud things in your life right now, as loud as earthquakes and storms, but they may not be what draws you out of hiding. It might be something quieter and closer that finally does.

## TAKE HEART

You don't need the loudest, most dramatic moment to be called out of hiding. Sometimes it's the quiet, close whisper that finally reaches you, and that's not a lesser encounter with God. It's an intimate one.

## JOURNAL QUESTIONS

1. What loud things in your life have failed to actually draw you closer to God, no matter how big they were?
2. When have you experienced something quiet and close with God that moved you more than anything dramatic ever did?

## DAILY PRAYER

*Before you pray, spend a few quiet minutes with today's verse: read it slowly once more, or simply sit in silence and let it settle. Then, when you're ready, pray this over your day:*

*Lord, Elijah stayed hidden through the wind, the earthquake, and the fire, and only came out for the whisper. I confess I often expect You to show up loud before I'll actually respond. Teach me to recognize Your voice in the quiet, close moments, not just the dramatic ones. Draw me out of whatever cave I'm hiding in through Your nearness, not just Your noise. Help me practice Your presence the way Brother Lawrence describes, not only knowing Your word but knowing You. Come close enough that I can hear the whisper. Amen.*

## ACTION CHALLENGE

Spend five minutes today in complete quiet, close enough to notice a whisper, and simply wait without expecting anything dramatic.

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## NOTES

DAY 4

# Nine Truths and One Lie

> **1 KINGS 19:14 ESV**
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> *"He said, 'I have been very jealous for the LORD, the God of hosts. For the people of Israel have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword, and I, even I only, am left, and they seek my life, to take it away.'"*

## VERSE STUDY

What stands out here is that Elijah gives the exact same answer twice. He comes out of the cave for the whisper, hears the question again, and repeats word for word what he said before, lie included. Pastor Adam noted how entrenched this perspective had become: even Elijah, a prophet who later stands with Jesus at the Transfiguration, cannot simply shake off a false story on his own the second time around.

This is instructive. Recognizing a lie once doesn't automatically dissolve its grip. Elijah heard God's voice, stood in his presence, felt the whisper, and still walked back out reciting the same partial truth. Pastor Adam's point was direct: this is exactly why God doesn't just call Elijah out of the cave and leave him there. God speaks a second time, specifically to correct what wasn't true.

Verse fifteen is where Pastor Adam said God 'gets down to business.' Rather than simply repeating comfort, God answers Elijah's lie with a concrete, corrective truth: he is not alone, and he is not finished. The correction isn't abstract. It comes with real names, real assignments, real specifics.

If you've recognized a lie in your own thinking before and found yourself repeating it anyway, you're in good company. The goal isn't to shame yourself for the repetition. It's to let God's specific truth interrupt the pattern, the same way it interrupted Elijah's.

## TAKE HEART

Recognizing a lie once doesn't mean you're finished fighting it. Elijah needed God's truth a second time, spoken specifically into his exact situation, and so might you. That's not failure. That's how real correction usually works.

## JOURNAL QUESTIONS

1. What lie have you recognized before but found yourself repeating anyway?
2. What specific, concrete truth from God might need to interrupt that repeated pattern, rather than just a general reminder?

## DAILY PRAYER

*Before you pray, spend a few quiet minutes with today's verse: read it slowly once more, or simply sit in silence and let it settle. Then, when you're ready, pray this over your day:*

*Lord, I confess there are lies I've recognized before that I still find myself repeating, the same way Elijah did. Thank You for not giving up after the first correction, but speaking to me again, specifically, until the truth actually lands. Give me the same grace You gave Elijah: not shame for repeating the lie, but patience to hear the truth as many times as I need to. Interrupt my entrenched patterns with Your specific word for my specific situation. Amen.*

### ACTION CHALLENGE

Write down the lie you keep repeating, and next to it, write one specific, concrete truth from God that directly answers it.

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### NOTES

DAY 5

# You Are Not Alone

> **1 KINGS 19:18 ESV**
>
> *"Yet I will leave seven thousand in Israel, all the knees that have not bowed to Baal, and every mouth that has not kissed him."*

## VERSE STUDY

Elijah's core lie was simple and devastating: I, even I only, am left. Pastor Adam named this as one of the most common lies people carry: no one understands what I'm going through, no one gets it, I'm alone. God's answer isn't a pep talk. It's a number. Seven thousand. Real people, faithful, who had not bowed to Baal, who Elijah had no idea even existed.

Pastor Adam was honest that even when he can name a hundred people who are for him, fifty who pray for him weekly, there are still moments, middle of the night or middle of the afternoon, when the feeling of aloneness shows up anyway. Facts don't always erase feelings instantly. But God's answer to Elijah wasn't just comfort. It was information Elijah genuinely didn't have.

This is worth remembering: God has people you don't even know about yet, layers of his work happening in places you can't currently see. When you start worrying about your family, your future, your nation, that worry often comes from believing you can see the whole picture. Pastor Adam pointed to Romans 8:28 here, that all things work together for good for those who love God and are called according to his purpose, precisely because you don't have to carry the illusion of full visibility.

You are not the only one left. Whatever you're facing, there are others further along in the same fight, and there are people God intends to connect you with that you haven't met yet.

## TAKE HEART

The number seven thousand was news to Elijah, not something he had to manufacture through positive thinking. God already has people for you too, some you haven't even met yet. You are not the only one left.

## JOURNAL QUESTIONS

1. In what area of your life does the lie 'I'm the only one' or 'no one understands' show up most often?
2. Who is one person, past or present, who has reminded you that you're not actually alone in what you're facing?

## DAILY PRAYER

*Before you pray, spend a few quiet minutes with today's verse: read it slowly once more, or simply sit in silence and let it settle. Then, when you're ready, pray this over your day:*

*Lord, like Elijah, I sometimes believe the lie that I'm the only one left, that no one truly understands what I'm carrying. Thank You for the seven thousand You already have in place, people I don't even know about yet who are part of Your work in my life. Help me trust that all things are working together for good, even the parts I cannot currently see. Remind me that isolation is a feeling, not always a fact. Connect me to the people You've already prepared for this season. Amen.*

### ACTION CHALLENGE

Reach out to one person today who reminds you that you are not alone, or ask God to show you who that person might be.

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### NOTES

DAY 6

# Your Next Assignment

> **1 KINGS 19:15-17 ESV**
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> *"And the LORD said to him, 'Go, return on your way to the wilderness of Damascus. And when you arrive, you shall anoint Hazael to be king over Syria. And Jehu the son of Nimshi you shall anoint to be king over Israel, and Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abel-meholah you shall anoint to be prophet in your place.'"*

## VERSE STUDY

Notice what God doesn't do here: he doesn't sit and process Elijah's emotions indefinitely, and he doesn't simply argue Elijah out of his lie with more comfort. He gives him an assignment. Go. Anoint Hazael. Anoint Jehu. Anoint Elisha. Pastor Adam called this God 'getting down to business,' moving Elijah from crisis into calling in the space of a few verses.

There's something significant in the specific names. Hazael will eventually be used by God to judge and displace the very rulers, Ahab and Jezebel, who drove Elijah into hiding in the first place. Jehu will replace Ahab's line entirely. And Elisha will be anointed as Elijah's own successor, meaning God is even giving him permission to eventually step down. Pastor Adam put it plainly: God basically tells Elijah, 'I'm going to let you quit too, eventually. Here's your retirement plan.'

This is worth noticing: God's response to Elijah's collapse is not indefinite rest. It's restored direction. The whisper called him out. The word corrected his perspective. And now the assignment gives him somewhere to walk. Pastor Adam's framing was direct: we can't be part of the solution if we're stuck in the cave.

Whatever assignment God has for you may not erase the pain that led you into hiding in the first place, but it does something else: it gives you somewhere to walk that isn't backward into the same lie.

## TAKE HEART

God doesn't just want to comfort you out of your cave. He has an assignment waiting for you on the other side of it, one that moves you from crisis back into purpose.

## JOURNAL QUESTIONS

1. What assignment or next step might God be inviting you toward, even while you're still processing pain?
2. Is there something you've assumed your calling was over because of, that this passage challenges you to reconsider?

## DAILY PRAYER

*Before you pray, spend a few quiet minutes with today's verse: read it slowly once more, or simply sit in silence and let it settle. Then, when you're ready, pray this over your day:*

*Lord, You didn't leave Elijah in the cave, and You didn't leave him only comforted either. You gave him somewhere to walk. Show me the assignment You have for me on the other side of my own hiding place. I don't want to stay stuck rehearsing the lie that kept me here. Give me the courage to step back into purpose, even if the pain that brought me here hasn't fully resolved. Thank You that You still have work for me to do. Lead me back onto the road. Amen.*

## ACTION CHALLENGE

Name one specific next step, even a small one, that would move you from where you've been hiding back toward your assignment.

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## NOTES

DAY 7

# Come Out of the Cave

> **ROMANS 8:28 ESV**
> *"And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose."*

## VERSE STUDY

Pastor Adam summarized the whole passage in one line: the whisper called Elijah out, the word corrected his perspective, and the assignment restored his direction. That's the full arc, and it's worth walking back through this week: presence, truth, purpose. None of the three stages skips the others. Elijah needed to be drawn out before he could be corrected, and he needed to be corrected before he could be sent.

The practical takeaway is direct and personal: don't build your life around the story fear is telling you. Come out of the cave and let God tell you what is true. Pastor Adam asked the church to take the same question God asked Elijah and turn it on themselves this week: what am I doing here? Not as self-condemnation, but as an honest inventory of whatever cave has become familiar.

He was specific about naming what keeps people in the cave: addiction, isolation, distraction, whatever numbs the pain instead of facing it honestly with God. The invitation isn't to white knuckle your way out through willpower. It's to let the same sequence that worked for Elijah work for you: come into God's presence, let his word correct whatever partial truth you've been living inside, and receive whatever assignment is waiting for you on the other side.

Physically, Elijah was hiding in a cave. Internally, he was hiding inside a false story. The same is often true for us. Come out of the cave this week, not because the fear is gone, but because God has already shown you what is actually true.

## TAKE HEART

Whatever cave you've been hiding in, physical or internal, God is not finished with you. The same sequence that restored Elijah, presence, truth, assignment, is available to you too.

## JOURNAL QUESTIONS

1. What is the 'cave' you find yourself returning to most often when you're discouraged, afraid, or alone?
2. As you come out of it this week, what is one true thing God wants you to build your life around instead of the story fear has been telling you?

## DAILY PRAYER

*Before you pray, spend a few quiet minutes with today's verse: read it slowly once more, or simply sit in silence and let it settle. Then, when you're ready, pray this over your day:*

*Lord, thank You for the whisper that calls me out, the word that corrects my perspective, and the assignment that restores my direction. I don't want to build my life around the story fear keeps telling me. Show me clearly what cave I've been hiding in, whether it's fear, isolation, distraction, or something I haven't even named yet. Meet me there with Your presence first, then Your truth, then Your purpose. I want to come out and walk back into what You've called me to. Amen.*

## ACTION CHALLENGE

Write down the name of your 'cave' plainly, then write one true assignment or next step God is inviting you into instead of staying there.

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## NOTES

MEMORY VERSE

*“And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.”*

Romans 8:28

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