

Experiencing God: The Lord Shows Himself in Unexpected Ways

Experiencing God is rarely how we think it will be.

We hope for a booming voice, maybe an eye-popping miracle, or even an instant solution to all our life problems. What actually happens is something quite different. This all-wise, all-powerful Ruler of the Universe does indeed touch the lives of his followers, but in this day and age, he typically does it in a way that is very private and very personal.

The Example We Tend to Forget

When it comes to people experiencing God in the Bible, we think of Jesus' miracles, the [parting of the Red Sea](#), or Daniel surviving the [lions' den](#). We tend to forget a very odd occasion when the prophet [Elijah](#) was waiting for God:

"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." (1 Kings 19:11-13, [NIV](#))

Elijah hid his face because he knew the Lord was in the gentle whisper. If we are wise, we also will listen for the gentle whispers in our lives, because that is when we are most likely to experience God.

Experiencing God in the Quiet

What fills your head? God will not break in on your cell phone conversations or whatever is playing on your iPod. If you constantly fill your head with noise, God will not compete with it. The Bible tells us to approach God with reverential awe: *"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding."* (Proverbs 9:10, [NIV](#)) Fear, in this sense, is not fright but respect. To [hear from God](#), you must give him the respect he deserves. God is not a genie, a butler, or the customer service department. Treating him like those things insults him.

We don't need to take a vow of silence to hear from God. We do, however, owe him a quiet, receptive mind. If you are serious about experiencing God, give him opportunities to speak to you. Taking a walk, meditating on Scripture, or coming to him in [prayer](#) are proven ways to invite God into your heart. Just as we would not expect an intimate conversation with someone we just met, we should not expect God to speak with us until we have established a meaningful [relationship with him](#) through his son, [Jesus Christ](#).