

BIBLE STUDY
August 5 and 6, 2026

THE NINETEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

1 Kings 19: 9a, 11-13a

Matthew 14: 22-23

Romans 9: 1-5

1. 1 Kings 19: 9a, 11-13a

- This story follows that of Elijah's challenge to the priests of Baal on Mt. Carmel. After Elijah killed the prophets of Baal, Jezebel vowed to kill him. Elijah fled and was ready to give up when the Lord sent him food. On the strength of that food, he travelled for 40 days and nights to Mt. Horeb (Sinai). There the Lord revealed himself to Elijah.
- V.9: Elijah takes refuge in a cave on Mt. Horeb. The Lord asks him why he is there.
- V. 10: Elijah responds that he is fleeing from Jezebel because he has been zealous for the Lord and has opposed the betrayal of Israel's covenant.
- V. 11: The Lord tells Elijah to come out of the cave and stand on the mountain, and the Lord will pass by. The belief was that no one could see the face of God and live. So, the Lord would just pass by and show himself in a sign. There was a mighty wind, but God was not in the wind. There was an earthquake, but God was not in the earthquake.
- V. 12: There was fire, but God was not in the fire. Then there was a light, silent sound. Other translations are "still small voice" (KJV), "a sound of sheer silence (NRSV), "a sound of silent stillness (Byrne, SJ).
- V. 13: Elijah acknowledges the presence of God by hiding his face in his cloak. The Lord then commissions Elijah to anoint Hazael as King of Israel, and call Elisha as prophet.

2. Matthew 14: 22-33

- V. 22: After the multiplication of the loaves and fishes, Jesus sends the disciples off in a boat while he dismisses the crowds.
- V. 23: Jesus goes off to a mountain to pray, and he was there by himself. Jesus balanced time in serving others with quiet time to refresh and restore his spirit.
- V. 24: A storm comes up on the lake and threatens the boat in which the disciples are riding. They cannot row against the wind. In Scripture, the boat is a symbol of the Church. The Church will face times of struggle and danger.
- V. 25: Between 3 AM to 6 AM, Jesus comes walking on the water. The disciples have been rowing against the wind all night long. Sometimes, we feel abandoned by the Lord. It feels as if the Lord has left us on our own. Only God can walk on the water. Jesus is revealing himself as God. He is the Son of God, the Creator.

- V. 26: The disciples are understandably terrified because they have never seen anything like this before. They think it is a ghost.
- V. 27: Jesus tells them to be courageous. "It is I. Do not be afraid." The exhortation to be not afraid is the biblical sign of God's presence. Jesus' identification "It is I," echoes the name of God revealed to Moses in the burning bush, "I AM." Jesus reveals himself as the divine Son of God and the same one who has called them as disciples.
- V. 28: Peter asks the Lord to let him join him on the water. This is a characteristic move of Peter fueled by both desire and bravado. His desire and Jesus' invitation are Peter sharing in the divine nature that will become a reality after the Resurrection.
- V. 29-30: Peter walks on the water for a few seconds before he is overcome by fear and doubt. Peter is just like us. We desire to do wonderful things for the Lord, but doubt and fear inhibit us and we sink. We want to walk by faith and not by sight, but we are weak. His cry is like a prayer, "Lord, save me!"
- V. 31: Jesus saves him "immediately." He grabs him with the hand and pulls him out of the water. He chides him for having little faith.
- V. 32: Only after Jesus gets into the boat does the wind die down. Peter was in the water amid the storm.
- V. 33: The disciples worship him with a new understanding of his being the Son of God and sharing in the power of God.
- In Mark's Gospel, he makes clear that this is a revelation of the power of God. But, as in the OT, God just passes by and people do not see his face, Jesus gets into the boat with the disciples. They see him face to face and live. This is a new manifestation of God as Emmanuel, God with us.
- Peter represents us who have great desires to serve God but are weak in faith and trust. Jesus invites us to share in his divine nature and be his presence in the world, but we are fearful and full of doubts.

3. Romans 9: 1-5

- Paul speaks of his great sorrow that his own people, the Jews, have not accepted Jesus as Messiah and Lord.
- V. 1: Paul swears that he is speaking the truth. The Holy Spirit bears testimony to him.
- V. 2: His heart and soul suffer pain and anguish.
- V. 3: He would even accept being cursed and separated from Christ if it could bring about the salvation of his people.
- V. 4: Paul lists the spiritual gifts of the Jewish people. Christian roots lie deep within the Jewish tradition. Paul's love for them is based in the continuity of God's promises that has now been extended through them to all of humanity.