

May 9, 2021

# God in the Quiet Sound

## 1 Kings 19:9-18

Every year or so, I'll see a headline like this recent one from CNN.com: "Another Italian Town is Selling Houses for One Euro."<sup>1</sup> And every year or so, like clockwork, my husband and I will have a daydream conversation about buying a dilapidated farmhouse in the Sicilian countryside to slowly fix up over the years before retiring there. We'll pick out imaginary tile, plant imaginary flowers, and walk down imaginary dirt paths to the imaginary market, calling "Buongiorno!" to our imaginary neighbors. Then, we'll start settling back down to earth. We'll remember that every member of our families lives in the United States, that our children are here, our memories are here, and that neither of us speaks a word of Italian outside of "Buongiorno!" Italy seems like a beautiful dream, an escape, a warm place to hide.

The thing that struck me most about this week's Scripture, as it does every time I read Elijah's escape story, was the latter part of 1 Kings 19:9: "The LORD's word came to him and said, 'Why are you here, Elijah?'" In other words, "What are you doing here, man? You don't belong here. This isn't your place." Elijah responded with some very good excuses for being on the run, but deep down he knew that hiding out in a cave was not where he belonged. He just needed a little bit of reassurance, a little reminding of who he was and Who was with him...Who was passing by him.

Elijah was a soldier of God, and he belonged in the fight. He knew his place, but he needed to rest and regroup. I know I don't belong in Sicily planting flowers and practicing Italian. I belong here, among my family, to watch children grow and be part of their lives well into the future. I belong here, to be a supportive and constructive member of my community. I belong to my faith community, as well. When I need a break, I can always fly off to Italy where someone is renting out a remodeled farmhouse, perfect for a little escape.

1. Why do you think Elijah chose to escape to the place he did?
2. Do you feel like God has called you to a certain place or profession? What is it?
3. Where do you like to go to rest and regroup when you're overwhelmed?

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1 <https://www.cnn.com/travel/article/castiglione-di-sicilia-one-euro-houses/index.html>