

# Chapter 11

## Divine Revelation in Natural Phenomena: A Phenomenological Approach to God's Revelation in 1 Kings 19:11–13

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### **ABSTRACT**

*In 1 Kings 19:11-13, God revealed himself through a “gentle whisper” rather than his earlier manifestation through “powerful wind,” the “earthquake,” and “the fire.” A shift to the “gentle whisper” needs re-investigation. The problem is the inconsistencies in divine revelation in natural phenomena. This chapter is responding to the question on why the natural phenomena which used to depict the presence of God to Moses depicted his absence to Elijah. Secondly, this chapter examines the revelation of Yahweh in a silent wind. A phenomenological approach can guide a better appreciation of God's attributive revelation even in current situations.*

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## **INTRODUCTION**

This chapter, “Divine Revelation in Natural Phenomena: A Phenomenological Approach to God’s Revelation in 1Kings 19: 11-13” is an interrogation of the way in which Yahweh revealed himself to Elijah through an entirely distinctive phenomenon in 1Kings 19:11-13 as compared to the previous natural phenomena in other biblical texts such as Exodus 19. Yahweh revealed himself through a silent wind or a gentle whisper other than the fire or earthquake. Yahweh did not speak through the violent phenomena, but he only spoke through the “silent wind”. The problem is the inconsistencies in divine revelation in natural phenomena. This chapter is responding to the question on why the natural phenomena which used to depict the presence of God to Moses depicted his absence to Elijah. Secondly this chapter examines the revelation of Yahweh in a silent wind. A phenomenological approach has been used to qualify the epochal tendencies in divine revelation in which the earlier phenomena is deconstructed. Yahweh earlier used violent phenomena for the purpose of demonstrating his power to Moses. Yet to Elijah he demonstrates his mercy through the soft breeze. This research is consistent with the doctrine of natural revelation which is not exclusively Israelite.

## **DEFINITION OF TERMS**

1. **Reveal:** The word “reveal” is the verbal root for the noun form “revelation” According to Dictionary.Cambridge.org the term ‘reveal’ means “to make known or show something that is surprising or that was previously secret”. What is made known should be understood to be formerly hidden or concealed. The fact that God reveals himself presupposes that God is not known except when he makes himself known.
2. **Violent:** The term “violent” depicts the character of God in his use of destructive images like fire, heavy winds and earthquake. The nonviolent characteristics are depicted in his revelation through silent wind which naturally is not associated with destructive power of force.
3. **Theophany:** Theophany means the visible manifestation of God to human beings.
4. **Moses:** Moses was the leader appointed by God to deliver the children of Israel from the land of bondage. God revealed himself to Moses in earthquake and thunder.
5. **Elijah:** Elijah was the prophet of God recorded in 1Kings. He represents the prophetic traditions and was witnessed at the Mountain of transfiguration with Moses representing the law.

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