



Unit .13

Session .02

The Signs of God's Presence

Scripture



1 Kings 18:31-39; 19:5-8,15-18

31 Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, to whom the word of the LORD came, saying, "Israel shall be your name," **32** and with the stones he built an altar in the name of the LORD. And he made a trench about the altar, as great as would contain two seahs of seed. **33** And he put the wood in order and cut the bull in pieces and laid it on the wood. And he said, "Fill four jars with water and pour it on the burnt offering and on the wood." **34** And he said, "Do it a second time." And they did it a second time. And he said, "Do it a third time." And they did it a third time. **35** And the water ran around the altar and filled the trench also with water. **36** And at the time of the offering of the oblation, Elijah the prophet came near and said, "O LORD, God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, let it be known this day that you are God in Israel, and that I am your servant, and that I have done all these things at your word. **37** Answer me, O LORD, answer me, that this people may know that you, O LORD, are God, and that you have turned their hearts back." **38** Then the fire of the Lord fell and consumed the burnt offering and the wood and the stones and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. **39** And when all the people

saw it, they fell on their faces and said, "The LORD, he is God; the LORD, he is God."... **5** And he lay down and slept under a broom tree. And behold, an angel touched him and said to him, "Arise and eat." **6** And he looked, and behold, there was at his head a cake baked on hot stones and a jar of water. And he ate and drank and lay down again. **7** And the angel of the LORD came again a second time and touched him and said, "Arise and eat, for the journey is too great for you." **8** And he arose and ate and drank, and went in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights to Horeb, the mount of God. ... **15** 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. **16** 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. **17** 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. **18** 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."

How often do you ask God to turn people to Himself in repentance?

Hardly at all

Sometimes

Often

Daily

Elijah stood on the side of truth in the midst of widespread opposition to him and his belief in God. What are some ways we can do the same in our own culture today?



99 Essential Doctrines

Christ's Humiliation

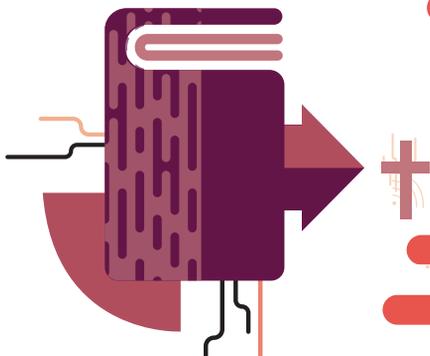
Although God the Son was equal with God and worthy of all the glory God receives, He chose to humble Himself by taking on human flesh. He left His glorious state and came in the likeness of sinful flesh (Rom. 8:3), and He experienced a humiliating death on a cross (Phil. 2:6-8) by becoming sin for us so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God (2 Cor. 5:21).

Main Point

Even in our moments of fear and stress, God is with us.

What brings you the most discouragement? In what ways do you identify with Elijah's struggle?

Share about a difficult time in your life when God was faithful in ministering to you.



Christ Connection

Elijah was a prophet whom God used to perform amazing miracles, yet he still faced persecution and opposition from those who rejected God. His example points forward to Jesus, the greatest prophet, who endured opposition and rejection for delivering God's words of life.

How are you tempted to forget about God's power and allow your circumstances to overwhelm you?

In Defense



Previously in Israel's history, God sent fire at the inauguration of the tabernacle worship (Lev. 9:24). It signified Yahweh's acceptance of the sacrificial system. Later, David sacrificed, as ordered by God at Ornan's threshing floor, and Yahweh answered with fire, signifying his acceptance of the offering (1 Chron. 21:26). David then said that this particular spot would be the place for the future temple (1 Chron. 22:1). Similarly, when Solomon completed and dedicated the temple, fire again fell, showing God's acceptance of their worship (2 Chron. 7:1-3). Here in our story, the fire from heaven was a sure sign that God accepted Elijah's sacrifice.



Head

How does the showdown between Elijah and the prophets of Baal mirror our situation in today's culture?

Elijah confronted the false prophets, not to show that he was superior, but so they would know God is the one true God who could turn their hearts to Him. What does this tell us our motivation should be today when we stand for truth?



Heart

What can we learn from Elijah's own period of fear and hopelessness?

What are some biblical and healthy ways we can respond to moments of fear?

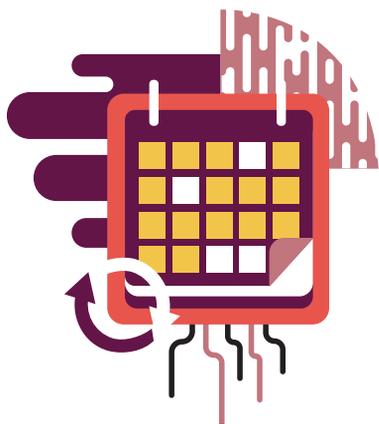


Hands

Part of Elijah's disappointment came from the fact that the events at Mount Carmel didn't have quite the impact he imagined they would. Have you ever experienced something similar? In light of Elijah's story here, how should you respond to similar moments?

How can you use your difficult times to minister to others this week?

Daily Devotions



Day 1

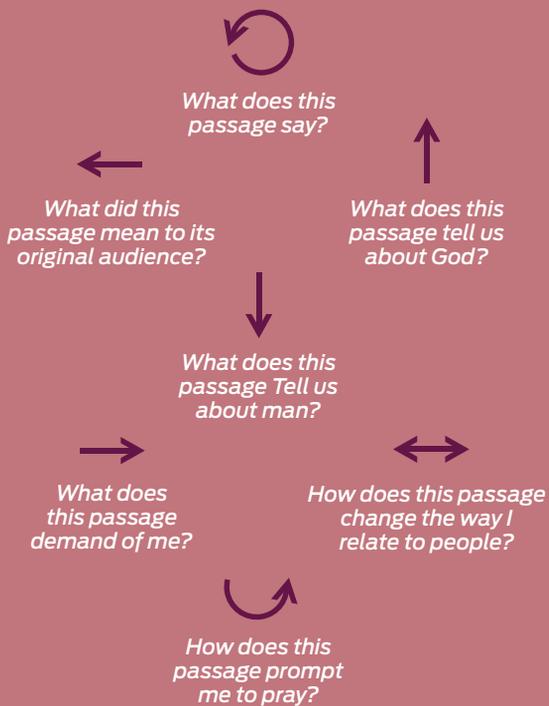
1 Kings 18:1-19

Not everyone will be called to formal ministry like Elijah, but many will be called to serve like Obadiah. Elijah's ministry was more public and confrontational; Obadiah worked quietly in behind-the-scenes fashion and yet was faithful in the sphere where God placed him.

Obadiah illustrates how one should use their influence and resources. Obadiah had access to provisions and made them available to these persecuted prophets. Those who work in professions that allow them to receive good salaries and benefits should consider how to use such blessings to advance the kingdom. One might object claiming that Obadiah was being deceitful, but nothing in the text says that he lied or did anything unethical. He knew about the suffering believers, and he used what he had to provide for them.

Second, Obadiah teaches us to be courageous. He ultimately followed Elijah's instructions at great risk to his own life. The lesson here is that if you are ever in a position where it's either obedience to God or obedience to man, choose God—even if it might cost you your job or your life (Acts 5:29).

The 7 Arrows of Bible Reading



How does Obadiah's life set an example for those who want to be faithful in their everyday work?

1 Kings 18:20-29

The battle at Mount Carmel was really about whether Baal or Yahweh answered prayer. The false prophets called upon Baal from “morning until noon” (v. 26), but there was no answer. Elijah’s prayer was short, and God responded!

A long prayer doesn’t mean a better prayer, especially if you are praying to the wrong god. You can pray five times a day facing any direction you want while dressing with religious garb and burning incense, candles, and more, but if you aren’t praying to the God of Elijah, you are engaging in spiritual futility.

Next, the false prophets danced around the altar, but it too accomplished nothing spiritually. Elijah responded to their lengthy prayers and ritual dances with some holy sarcasm (v. 27). The false prophets then cut themselves and raved, but their frenzy produced no fire either.

Though the story is spectacular and miraculous, the application is simple. The God of the Bible hears and answers prayer. And because of our relationship with Him by grace through faith in Christ, He invites us to call upon Him and promises to hear us.

How does this story encourage you to pray more faithfully and fervently?

1 Kings 18:30-46

We learn three important lessons on prayer from Elijah’s petition at Mount Carmel. First, have a relationship with the living God. Elijah prays to the God of the covenant, the God of Abraham. We can call upon God, and even call him “Father” if we know him by grace through faith in Christ (Mark 14:36).

Secondly, seek the glory of God. Elijah’s prayer is God-centered. He wants people to recognize the glory of God. Jesus taught us to long for God’s name to be glorified and God’s kingdom to cover the earth.

Third, pray for idolaters to turn to the living God. Elijah prayed that God would turn the people’s hearts back to the living God. He prayed that they would know and respond to the truth (v. 36). Let us pray for God to turn idol worshipers into Christ worshipers (1 Thess. 1:9-10).

Elijah’s brief, God-centered prayer stands in great contrast to the empty prayers of “Baal’s boys.” Let us follow Elijah’s example.

How are you praying for God’s glory to be made known in your home, your church, your city, and around the world?

1 Kings 19:1-8

Have you ever said, “I’ve had enough, Lord”? If so, then you can identify with Elijah. If you haven’t, more than likely you will have times in your life where you are drained physically and emotionally. You may have times when you are also exhausted spiritually as you keep giving. You may also lose sight of the glory of God’s greatness as your circumstances overwhelm you. The good news in this story is that God is gracious to His weary saints. He gave Elijah food and rest; He spoke to Elijah from the mountain; and He gave Elijah a new vision for the future.

Make sure you take care of yourself physically. Make sure you are hearing and studying God’s Word. And ask God to give you a compelling vision for how you should fulfill the Great Commission. Don’t throw in the towel, but instead strive to receive God’s renewing grace and press on.

Have you ever heard a sermon on “sleep”? Why is it important for Christians to maintain good eating habits, along with healthy rest, work, and recreation rhythms?

1 Kings 19:9-18

As Elijah stood before the Lord, the Lord “passed by,” and a great wind tore through the mountains (1 Kings 19:11). Then there was an earthquake, then a fire. But the Lord was not in these powerful displays. Instead, after a fire, Elijah heard a “soft whisper” (v. 12).

Previously, God showed up with fire, consuming the drenched altar. People marveled. But here, the emphasis is on God’s quiet ways. God often appears not in the spectacular but in the gentle whisper.

This phrase, “a soft whisper” (v. 12), only appears two others times. It appears in Job 4:16 and Psalm 107:29, as an almost silent sound. It’s used in both passages in the context of rest and refreshment in the midst of pain, distress, and fear.

Let’s remember that God often works in quiet ways. Sometimes the fire seems to fall in corporate gatherings, but God is working quietly through His written Word and by His Spirit in the hearts of His people. Seek the God of grace in the quiet place. Get alone with Him and listen to His Word.

What is your plan for pursuing quiet communion with God on a daily basis?