

The Year of Discipleship in 3-D

(Further Developing Devoted Followers of Christ)



Welcome! Growing into more fully-devoted followers of Christ, may this time help all: **Grow Upward** into a more mature personal relationship and commitment to Christ Jesus faithful to God's Word!

Grow Outward to neighbor and world around, learning how to love well and to lead in what matters to God - guided by God's Word, by Jesus Himself, and by the Holy Spirit!

And, **Grow Inward** to discover a more contemplative faith, enhanced by both silence and prayer!

The Scripture for Sunday, November 7, 2021

[STUDY LESSON 9]

THE OLD TESTAMENT READING:

1 Kings 19:1-18

{1} Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and how he had killed all the prophets with the sword. {2} Then Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah, saying, "So may the gods do to me, and more also, if I do not make your life like the life of one of them by this time tomorrow." {3} Then he was afraid; he got up and fled for his life, and came to Beer-sheba, which belongs to Judah; he left his servant there.

{4} But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a solitary broom tree. He asked that he might die: "It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life, for I am no better than my ancestors." {5} Then he lay down under the broom tree and fell asleep. Suddenly an angel touched him and said to him, "Get up and eat." {6} He looked, and there at his head was a cake baked on hot stones, and a jar of water. He ate and drank, and lay down again. {7} The angel of the LORD came a second time, touched him, and said, "Get up and eat, otherwise the journey will be too much for you." {8} He got up, and ate and drank; then he went in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights to Horeb the mount of God. {9} At that place he came to a cave, and spent the night there.

Then the word of the LORD came to him, saying, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" {10} He answered, "I have been very zealous for the LORD, the God of hosts; for the Israelites have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword. I alone am left, and they are seeking my life, to take it away."

{11} He said, "Go out and stand on the mountain before the LORD, for the LORD is about to pass by." Now there was a great wind, so strong that it was splitting mountains and breaking rocks in pieces before the LORD, but the LORD was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake; {12} and after the earthquake a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire; and after the fire a sound of sheer silence. {13} When Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his mantle and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave. Then there came a voice to him that said, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" {14} He answered, "I have been very zealous for the LORD, the God of hosts; for the Israelites have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword. I alone am left, and they are seeking my life, to take it away." {15} Then the LORD said to him, "Go, return on your way to the wilderness of Damascus; when you arrive, you shall anoint Hazael as king over Aram. {16} Also you shall anoint Jehu son of Nimshi as king over Israel; and you shall anoint Elisha son of Shaphat of Abel-meholah as prophet in your place. {17} Whoever escapes from the sword of Hazael, Jehu shall kill; and whoever escapes from the sword of Jehu, Elisha shall kill. {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."

DISCUSSION GUIDANCE AND QUESTIONS:

For an overview of 1 & 2 Kings consider watching: <https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/kings/>

For an overview of “The Prophets” theme consider watching: <https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/the-prophets/>

1. Open (*or have someone in the group open*) with a prayer inviting the work of the Holy Spirit to open up the hearts and lives of any and all to shape believers into more fully devoted following of Christ.
2. Read (*or have one or more persons read*) the passage printed above (*or from a bible*).
3. What part of this account are you particularly drawn to? Can you answer why that is for you?
 - a. Elijah being on the run, fearing for his life from the wicked Queen Jezebel (*1 Kings 19:1-3*)
 - b. Being alone and distraught in the wilderness (*1 Kings 19:4-5a*)
 - c. Sensing a touch from God, God’s profound provision, grace and generosity (*1 Kings 19:5b-9a*)
 - d. Needing to defend yourself and your actions before God (*1 Kings 19:9b-10*)
 - e. A profound “God moment” and being nearly overwhelmed by the presence of God in a certain place and showing up in a dramatic way (*1 Kings 19:11-13a*)
 - f. Receiving distinct instructions from God and being convinced of God’s will and purpose for you in the midst of a season of uncertainty (*1 Kings 19:13b-18*)
4. Immediately preceding this narrative, the prophet Elijah (*prophet to the Northern Kingdom of Israel*) was involved in a contest atop Mt. Carmel with the false prophets of Baal. The contest was to determine which God was for real by revealing the God who would come down as fire to consume the sacrifice upon an altar. The consequence of being a false prophet was death. The Lord God of Elijah showed up and the prophets of Baal (*promoted by Queen Jezebel*) were put to death. How do you process a mighty prophet, such as Elijah, instrumental in victory over the false prophets, living in fear and hiding out?
5. What are any of the circumstances of life you experience where your faith and trust in Christ seems to be called into question?
6. Have you had any experiences in life where you may have sensed, heard or interpreted as such, God saying to you, “What are you doing here?” (*1 Kings 19: 9b, 13b*)
7. Verse 12 describes God showing up not in the mighty and miraculous, so to speak, but in “a sound of sheer silence,” or as it can be otherwise translated, “a still small voice.” How might one discern such a voice? Are you able to experience intentional silence to hear the voice of God in your life and walk as a disciple?
8. Take some time for “holy imagination” as you enter into the life of the prophet Elijah. What are you feeling as you journey with him and witness what he’s experiencing in these encounters with God?
9. Spend some time talking or reflecting upon trusting God and silence and listening for God as aspects of discipleship. If willing, share (*or personally identify within yourself*) a time in life where you distinctively placed unwavering trust in God, and/or a time when you removed distractions and was able to hear God speaking to you in the silence.
10. What is your main discipleship “takeaway” from this text?
11. (*Optional*) Read the passage once more. Then, take some time to close (or have someone close) with a prayer.