

BEING WITH GOD IN THE DARK

1 KINGS 19:1-18

CHURCH GROUP SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE - JANUARY 28, 2024

SCRIPTURE READING

1 Kings 19:1-18 ESV

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 as the life of one of them by this time tomorrow." 3 Then he was afraid, and he arose and ran for his life and came to Beersheba, which belongs to Judah, and left his servant there. 4 But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness and came and sat down under a broom tree. And he asked that he might die, saying, "It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life, for I am no better than my fathers." 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. 9 There he came to a cave and lodged in it. And behold, the word of the Lord came to him, and he said to him, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" 10 He said, "I have been very jealous for the Lord, the God of hosts. For the people of Israel have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword, and I, even I only, am left, and they seek my life, to take it away." 11 And he said, "Go out and stand on the mount before the Lord." And behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind tore the mountains and broke in pieces the rocks 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 the sound of a low whisper. 13 And when Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his cloak and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave. And behold, there came a voice to him and said, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" 14 He said, "I have been very jealous for the Lord, the God of hosts. For the people of Israel have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword, and I, even I only, am left, and they seek my life, to take it away." 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."

ICE BREAKER QUESTION

How could fear, discouragement, disappointment, or weariness put you into a dark place?

SERMON RECAP

Elijah was afraid, discouraged, disappointed, dejected, depressed, and in despair; exhausted, tired, weary, alone, in self-pity, and self-condemnation. These feelings led him to a dark place.

- In the dark, don't forget that God is God, God is good, and God is relentless in His pursuit of you and your good.

Darkness should lead us to question whether God is enough, which should lead us to call out to God.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Observation: What does the passage say?

1. Read 1 Kings 19:1-18 aloud as a group. Let group members share observations. Try not to move into interpretation of the passage or application of what you read quite yet. Simply share what you observe.
 - What happens to Elijah in verses 1-4?
 - From where does Elijah gain strength in verses 5-8?
 - Between the bookends of "What are you doing here, Elijah," in verses 9-13, what did Elijah experience?
 - What promises does the Lord make to Elijah in verses 14-18, and how would you summarize 1 Kings 19:1-18 in your own words?

Interpretation: What does the passage mean?

1. God is God.
 - In 1 Kings 18, God defeated the prophets of Baal through Elijah. How could Elijah experience that Divine, miraculous provision, only to forget it so quickly?

- Where is God when Elijah begins spiraling downward in verses 1-4, and how low does Elijah sink in verse 4?
 - What human failings may have contributed to Elijah's fear?
2. God is good.
 - Why would God send an angel to Elijah?
 - Beyond food, what provision does the angel bring?
 - Horeb is the Hebrew name for Mount Sinai. What parallels can you draw between Elijah's wanderings, Moses' wanderings, and that they would both end up at the same place in the desert?
 3. God is relentless in his pursuit of you and your good.
 - What evidence do you see that Elijah did not fully grasp God's Word in 1 Kings 19:9?
 - Why didn't Elijah see God in the supernatural phenomena he witnessed?
 - Why did Elijah finally recognize God's voice as a whisper?

Application: How can we apply this passage to our lives?

1. God is over all, and through all, and in all. (Ephesians 4:6)
 - When your life doesn't work out the way you want, is God enough for you?
 - How can your Church Group help strengthen you in the Lord?
2. God relentlessly pursues us. (Luke 15:4-6)
 - What is God calling you to trust Him with in the dark today?
 - How can your Church Group support you as you seek to trust God more fully and deeply?
3. God deserves that we faithfully seek Him. To do that:
 - Get alone with God and honestly, faithfully pray to Him.
 - Listen to the whisper of His voice, in His Word.
 - Share with others how they can be praying for or with you in the darkness.
 - Don't forget that God is God, God is good, and God is relentless in His pursuit of you and your good.

LEADER NOTES

21 DAYS OF PRAYER | Over three weeks, from January 15-February 4, we are taking extra time to dedicate this year to the Lord. Sign up to let us know you're joining us, and access helpful resources for this intentional season of prayer at mcleanbible.org/21days.