

DISCUSSION GUIDE TEMPLATE

Elijah...

Discussion Guide

Week of August 27, 2023 - **"God Ministers!**

(How is God ministering to you while you serve Him?)

Scripture verse: 1 Kings 19:1-18

LOOKING BACK:

1. Last week, we saw Elijah in a momentous triumph as God proved His might and power once again to the people of Israel. God asked Elijah to shine brightly into the darkness enveloping the people of Israel and when Elijah did as God asked, God showed up in a mighty way.
 - a. God may not be calling you to defeat hundreds of false prophets in front of an entire community, but He does have a mission for you. As you have prayed and spent time with Him, where has God asked you to shine a light into the darkness?
 - b. God's mission field for you may be exactly the opposite of what you had hoped. Maybe your preference would be to serve anyone besides a middle school or high school aged young person, yet that is what you are sensing He is calling you to do. Maybe He's placed a distant relative or friend on your heart. What steps are you taking to obey this prompting? What reason might the Lord have for asking you to serve in a way you never considered?
2. Call upon one group member to pray for your group time. Ask the Holy Spirit to bring clarity to God's word. Pray for hearts to be opened wide to receive His instruction and encouragement.

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OPENING QUESTION:

Often when we achieve an exceptional victory, like Elijah, we expect our mountain top moment to continue – especially when we are serving where God has led us. Sometimes, we stay on that mountain top for a long time, experiencing great and wonderful things. Faithful as we may be, however, mountain top moments cannot continue unendingly. They are, after all, called “moments” for a reason. Consider a time in your life when you have experienced a mountain top moment. Did you continue to experience continued victory for some time, or did you soon end up walking once again in the valley? Why might God allow these valley times to happen in our lives?

LOOKING UP:

Elijah was actually at the top of the mountain in our last study, not just physically but also spiritually. He had spent the last three years praying and being obedient to what God had asked of him, and the moment he had been anticipating finally arrived ... the moment God would use all of Elijah’s hard work, preparation, and obedience to restore the people of Israel to Himself.

1. Read 1 Kings 18:41-46. As Elijah raced Ahab down the mountain to Jezreel, what do you think he may have been feeling in that moment?
2. When you experience those “mountain top” moments, to what or whom do you give credit? Do you look for God’s handiwork, or do you give credit to your hard work and efforts? Can you think of a time in your life when your “mountain top” moment was obviously not because of any work, preparation, or effort you actually put into it?
3. As we move forward to find out what happens next in Elijah’s journey, choose two group members and ask each to prepare to read 1 Kings 19:1-18 for the group in the same translation of the

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Bible (for example the NIV or NLT). Have one read verses 1-9a and the other read verses 9b-18. Then open your group to discuss questions 1 and 2 of the passage. Ask two others to re-read the passages in a different translation (for example the ESV or CSB). The group should then discuss questions 3 and 4.

READ THE PASSAGE **1 Kings 19:1-18**

Answer the first 2 questions after reading the passage

1. What stood out to you most?
2. What was challenging or hard to understand?
3. What does this teach us about God?
4. What does this teach us about people?

RE-READ THE PASSAGE

Read the passage again using another Bible translation... then answer the last 2 questions

LOOKING FORWARD:

Elijah's "mountain top" moment quickly became a time of fear and depression, as he ran for his life in fear of Jezebel's retribution. After walking so closely with God for so long, Elijah suddenly felt tired and alone. But God recognized what was happening and provided for Elijah's needs. He ministered to Elijah, bringing him food, rest, and companionship from an angel when he most desperately needed them.

Going where you have been called to shine light in the darkness can be hard work. It often stretches and challenges you in ways you never thought possible. But God never leaves you to face the challenges alone. He always stands in the gap of your talents, skill, and intelligence to fulfill the mission He has called you to, ministering to YOUR needs.

- a. In what ways has God ministered to your deepest needs and greatest fears as you have begun to serve Him where He has called you? Has he provided rest when you've lost the

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strength to keep going? Has he given you companionship/friendship when you have felt all alone? Has he given you other resources you needed to move forward in your mission?

- b. ~~After~~ When Elijah hid in the cave at Mt. Horeb, why do you think God asked him why he was there?
2. As you consider Elijah's terrified escape, why do you think like he was the only believer left?

God easily saw each of Elijah's needs and met them a step at a time: first food and rest; second, a little more food and rest; third, shelter (after a long hike); fourth, His presence; and finally, work! Yes, that's right! He recognized Elijah's need to do something besides hide out in fear. He gave Elijah an apprentice – someone to mentor and teach to love God the way Elijah did. He gave Elijah a friend, to vanquish feelings of being alone. And in providing that mentor and friend, God gave Elijah a new purpose, to help prepare the next generation for His work.

The purpose God has given every one of His disciples is to make more disciples! We are called to share the love of God with everyone we know, so that none should perish. As Elijah experienced, our efforts may not always cause a life change in that moment, but we cannot give up. We are not alone, because we serve a God who knows us, who sees our needs (sometimes before we even recognize them), and he provides. And, he doesn't wait for us to have a mountain top moment to do so. He carefully prepares and provides throughout each step and phase of our lives.

Is there somewhere in your life you are feeling overlooked, unseen, and utterly alone? Go and seek the Presence of the Lord, and ask Him to confirm why you're there. He cannot wait to show you the good gifts He has prepared for you!

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Ask your group members to be prepared to share next time:

1. How God confirmed where they are serving. or
2. Did they attend one of the Find Your Fit sessions to discover how and where they should serve? or
3. Did God provide rest and replenishment if they've become weary in serving?
 - a. As you wrap up your study session, ask someone to pray for each member. Ask God to reveal someone with whom each of you can share His story so that He will be made known to the world in every generation. Thank God for those people who have come alongside your group members to help them grow to love Him. Thank Him for seeing and meeting your needs in times of struggle and loneliness.