

FAITH SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

April 18th, 2010

“What Are You Doing Here”

Focal Passage: 1 Kings 19

Central Idea: Arrogance and pride are the key ingredients for the downfall of an individual and even an entire nation. The Nineteenth Chapter of 1 Kings gives us vivid examples of both. The monarchy of Israel and Judah, with a few righteous exceptions, had become secular and self centered. It seemed that each King was more sinful than the one before. As a result God’s anger burned against His nation and the outlook was dim. There were men and women of great faith who saw the blessings of God and did the right thing under difficult circumstances. Elijah was a strong voice for the Lord, yet even he was not immune to the temptation of unhealthy pride. In His faithfulness God found him and changed him.

Lesson Idea: We often seek flashy experiences with God. The key is to consistently remain faithful and be open to the voice of the Lord.

Historical Context: King Ahab harshly ruled Israel from his throne in Samaria. As sinful and evil as Ahab’s actions were, even he was afraid of his wife Jezebel. To prove the power and supremacy of God, Elijah challenged the prophets of Baal on Mt. Carmel. Following defeat the prophets were killed and Ahab was shamed. He told Jezebel and she sent Elijah a threatening edict. She allowed him to live in order that she might ridicule him and his God when the new converts cowered in fear.

Bible in a Year Daily Readings

April 11th – April 18th, 2010

Apr. 11 1 Kings 6-7
Apr. 12 1 Kings 8-9
Apr. 13 1 Kings 10-12
Apr. 14 1 Kings 13-15
Apr. 15 1 Kings 16-18
Apr. 16 1 Kings 19-20
Apr. 17 1 Kings 21-22
Apr. 18 2Kings 1-3

Read the Bible Through

1 Kings 7 Solomon dedicates his palace of Lebanon

1 Kings 8 The Ark brought into the Temple and Solomon’s
Prayer of dedication

1 Kings 9 The Lord appears to
Solomon a second time

1 Kings 10 The Queen of Sheba
is impressed by Solomon

1 Kings 11 Solomon’s downfall and God’s judgment

1 Kings 12:25-33 Jeroboam has Golden Calf set up for worship

1 Kings 15:9 The legacy of King Asa

1 Kings 17:7 The Widow at

Highlights of the Week:

April 11 – April 18^h, 2010

Zarephath

1 Kings 21 Naboth's Vineyard

1 Kings 19:1-9a **Elijah Flees to Mt. Horeb**

¹ Now Ahab told Jezebel everything Elijah had done and how he had killed all the prophets with the sword.

² So Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah to say, "May the gods deal with me, be it ever so severely, if by this time tomorrow I do not make your life like that of one of them."

³ Elijah was afraid and ran for his life. When he came to Beersheba in Judah, he left his servant there,

⁴ while he himself went a day's journey into the desert. He came to a broom tree, sat down under it and prayed that he might die. "I have had enough, LORD," he said. "Take my life; I am no better than my ancestors."

⁵ Then he lay down under the tree and fell asleep. All at once an angel touched him and said, "Get up and eat."

⁶ He looked around, and there by his head was a cake of bread baked over hot coals, and a jar of water. He ate and drank and then lay down again.

⁷ The angel of the LORD came back a second time and touched him and said, "Get up and eat, for the journey is too much for you."

⁸ So he got up and ate and drank. Strengthened by that food, he traveled forty days and forty nights until he reached Horeb, the mountain of God.

⁹ There he went into a cave and spent the night.

It has often been asked how a man could experience such divine provision, perform such great miracles, singlehandedly withstand 450 pagan prophets and the king himself, and yet cower before feminine threats. It must be remembered, of course, that Jezebel was anything but a "mere woman." She was of royal blood and every bit a queen. She could be ruthless in pursuing her goals ([21:11-15](#)).

Yet Elijah was not without blame. God's subsequent tender dealings with his prophet were to bring his spiritual problem to light. His God-given successes had fostered an inordinate pride (cf. vv. [4](#), [10](#), [14](#)) that had made him take his own importance too seriously. Moreover Elijah had come to bask in the glow of the spectacular. He may have fully expected that because of what had been accomplished at Mount Carmel, Jezebel would capitulate and pagan worship would come to an end in Israel—all through his influence!

Patterson, Richard D., Hermann J. Austel. "(5) Elijah and Jezebel (19:1-9a)" In *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*: Volume 4. 148. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, © 1988.

QUESTIONS

1. Do you think Elijah had become arrogant as the commentator above suggests?
2. In v. 4, why was Elijah ready to give up?
3. How did God provide for Elijah?
4. How have you seen God provide in times of fear and doubt?
5. In what ways do we allow our fear to diminish God's power?
6. Have you ever dwelled on a "mountain top experience" with God only to doubt soon after?

1 Kings 19:9b-18 **God Appears to Elijah**

And the word of the LORD came to him: "What are you doing here, Elijah?"

¹⁰ He replied, "I have been very zealous for the LORD God Almighty. The Israelites have rejected your covenant, broken down your altars, and put your prophets to death with the sword. I am the only one left, and now they are trying to kill me too."

¹¹ The LORD said, "Go out and stand on the mountain in the presence of the LORD, for the LORD is about to pass by." Then a great and powerful wind tore the mountains apart and shattered the rocks before the LORD, but the LORD was not in the wind. After the wind there was an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake.

¹² After the earthquake came a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire. And after the fire came a gentle whisper.

¹³ When Elijah heard it, he pulled his cloak over his face and went out and stood at the mouth of the cave. Then a voice said to him, "What are you doing here, Elijah?"

¹⁴ He replied, "I have been very zealous for the LORD God Almighty. The Israelites have rejected your covenant, broken down your altars, and put your prophets to death with the sword. I am the only one left, and now they are trying to kill me too."

¹⁵ The LORD said to him, "Go back the way you came, and go to the Desert of Damascus. When you get there, anoint Hazael king over Aram.

¹⁶ Also, anoint Jehu son of Nimshi king over Israel, and anoint Elisha son of Shaphat from Abel Meholah to succeed you as prophet.

¹⁷ Jehu will put to death any who escape the sword of Hazael, and Elisha will put to death any who escape the sword of Jehu.

¹⁸ Yet I reserve seven thousand in Israel—all whose knees have not bowed down to Baal and all whose mouths have not kissed him."

QUESTIONS

1. Why did God ask Elijah, "what are you doing here?" Did God not know?
2. What did Elijah's response (same one twice) say about Elijah?
3. Does God only speak in a gentle whisper?
4. What is the point of v. 18 for Elijah?
5. Have you ever been "zealous" for God and felt alone and mistreated?
6. When great things are done are we tempted to take credit and then cry out to God when circumstances change? Why?

1 Kings 19:19-21

The Call of Elisha

¹⁹ So Elijah went from there and found Elisha son of Shaphat. He was plowing with twelve yoke of oxen, and he himself was driving the twelfth pair. Elijah went up to him and threw his cloak around him.

²⁰ Elisha then left his oxen and ran after Elijah. "Let me kiss my father and mother good-by," he said, "and then I will come with you." "Go back," Elijah replied. "What have I done to you?"

²¹ So Elisha left him and went back. He took his yoke of oxen and slaughtered them. He burned the plowing equipment to cook the meat and gave it to the people, and they ate. Then he set out to follow Elijah and became his attendant.

QUESTIONS

1. How did Elisha know he was to go with Elijah?
2. What did he do with his former tools of the trade as a farmer?
3. What does this say about his readiness to be a leader?
4. Did Elisha take Elijah's place immediately?
5. What does this say about the value of discipleship/mentoring?

Elisha meant business for God. Taking his leave of Elijah, Elisha returned home to enjoy a farewell meal with his family and friends. The meat was cooked over Elisha's own plowing equipment. Thus he had burned his past behind him. Henceforth he would serve God. However this first meant learning more of him through Elijah.

Patterson, Richard D., Hermann J. Austel. "(7) Elijah and the call of Elisha (19:19-21)" In *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*: Volume 4. 151. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, © 1988.

APPLICATION

It is exciting when we see a God do miraculous and powerful thing that proves Him right and the world wrong. This is what had happened to Elijah on Mt. Carmel. However we must remember two things that Elijah forgot. First the action, the miracle is God not an individual. Secondly, God's point is only to prove He is right and draw others to Him. God works and acts on His terms and not ours. May we resist the temptation to believe that we have God figured out. May we follow the example of Elisha and just be faithful to move when God says move, blessing others along the way, and being willing to learn before we lead.