

Study Through the Bible

The Elijah Chronicles

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Leader's Guide – Participant's Guide

Study Through the Bible

The Elijah Chronicles – Study 1

LEADER'S GUIDE

God Is True to His Word

When we stand up for the Word of God, God stands up for us.

At the time of 1 Kings, the worship of God was in disarray following a string of godless monarchs. The current king of Israel was Ahab, who in 1 Kings 16:30 is described as having “done more evil in the eyes of the Lord than any of those before him.” It was not a bright time for Israel.

Elijah arrived on this scene with little introduction, speaking God’s word to Ahab: *There will be no rain or dew until God says so.* When the water ran out, God led Elijah to the home of a widow who had only a little water and meal left to share with her son. The unfolding drama is a testimony of God’s faithfulness to his own.

Scripture:
1 Kings 17

Based on:
“The Elijah Chronicles,” Series Builder by Kenton C. Anderson, PREACHING TODAY SERMONS



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PART 1

Identify the Current Issue

Note to leader: At the beginning of the class, provide each person with the Participant's Guide included at the end of this study.

First Kings 17 begins with Elijah standing confidently before Ahab. Elijah's certainty was striking because of its audacity. How could he act so outrageously unless he had truly heard from God? The text takes pains to emphasize the authority of "the Word of the Lord." It is the Word of the Lord that leads Elijah each step of the way. This emphasis culminates in verse 24 with a dramatic statement of faith: "Now by this I know that you are a man of God, and that the Word of the Lord in your mouth is the truth."

In contrast, contemporary listeners struggle with their level of confidence before God. We might be willing to act confidently if we could be sure that we had truly heard from God. So often, however, we find ourselves hedging our bets instead of declaring what we claim to know and believe.

Discussion starters:

- [Q] What kind of risk was Elijah taking in declaring the Word of the Lord to an evil king?
- [Q] What makes us afraid to speak out about God?
- [Q] Have you ever experienced a moment of confidence in standing up for your faith? What gave you this confidence?

PART 2

Discover the Eternal Principles

Teaching point one: God honors those who take a stand for him.

Read 1 Kings 17. Elijah was a stand-up guy. He was willing to take great risks to stand for the Word of God before kings and widows, defying law, logic, and even the weather. It took confidence to tell the king it wouldn't rain. It took courage to tell the woman that she could give up her last bit of flour and oil because God would ensure that the jar would never run out. When his faith was tested further in the death of the widow's son, Elijah dug in with a deeper, more tenacious faith. God responded by healing the boy. The woman was thus convinced that Elijah came from God and that his word was truth.

- [Q] What do you think gave Elijah his courage? Why was he confident that God would do what he said he would?
- [Q] Can we be this confident in God's Word? In what ways do we need as much courage as Elijah?

Optional Activity

Purpose: *To help us realize we need to know God's revealed Word.*



Activity: Read the following three statements. Two are scriptural truths and one is fictional. Which two are true?

1. God promises salvation to those who earn his favor through faithful prayer.
2. God promises that one day every knee will bow to him.
3. God promises his mercy if we confess our sins.

Note to leader: The first one is wrong—see Ephesians 2:8–9. Two and three are found in Philippians 2:10 and 1 John 1:9, respectively. Talk about how the first one sounds reasonable if we don't know Scripture.

Teaching point two: God stands behind his Word.

In third-world countries, one can often find brand-name products for less than we would pay here. However, on closer inspection, you will find that the product is not that brand at all, but merely includes their label. We look for brands because we want to know that someone will stand behind their product. Our faith is actually in the company who makes the product.

We tend to put confidence in what sounds reasonable to us. But sometimes the things God says don't sound reasonable at all. This is fine, because our confidence is in the God who stands behind his Word. John 1:1 reminds us that “in the beginning was the Word.” God created the world by his Word, and he controls it by his Word. Turning rain on and off like a faucet, ensuring that jars of oil never run dry and that boys come back from the dead might not seem reasonable to you or me, but to the God who created the universe by the power of his Word, these things are easily achieved.

[Q] Read Psalm 119:129–130. Why is the Word of God so powerful?

[Q] Read 2 Timothy 3:16. How do we hear the Word of God today? What does it mean that all Scripture is God-breathed?

[Q] Read 2 Peter 1:20–21. How did we get the Word of God? According to these verses, why can we have supreme confidence in it?

[Q] With which statement do you find yourself agreeing most:

- 1) The Bible is mostly true but has some errors in translation.
- 2) The Bible is written by men; therefore it's thoroughly flawed.
- 3) The Bible is inspired by God and true in its entirety.
- 4) The Bible is true in its broad strokes but false in its details.

Explain why you chose the statement you did. What difference does it make which statement you believe? How does that belief affect your life?

Teaching point three: God's Word to us is clear.

It may be hard to identify with Elijah. For instance, can we pray with confidence that God will heal someone who's sick? If the sick person were to die, could we pray that God would raise him from the dead?

James 5 says that “Elijah was a man just like us” and that “the prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.” In the same chapter, however, James describes the need for believers



to be patient in suffering. So how do we know when we have heard from God? Perhaps we could start with what we know for sure. God's Word is clear, and there is plenty within its pages for me to stand up for right now.

Read James 1:2–8.

- [Q] What does perseverance have to do with our faith in God? What does it mean that it has to “finish its work”?
- [Q] What are we to pray for according to verse 5? Why is that more important than just getting what we want?
- [Q] What does it mean when it says we are to believe and not doubt (v. 6)? What are we to believe God will do for us according to these verses?
- [Q] What does it mean to be double-minded (v. 8)? Why does being double-minded make us unstable in all we do?

Teaching point four: Miracles happen when we stand up for God's Word.

We can probably all think of a time when we stood up for the truth. A miracle is when God gets involved, changing someone's mind, rearranging circumstances, even altering the weather. Does God still do these kinds of things? Of course he does; otherwise why would we pray? We need to listen carefully for the Word of God, and when we hear it we need to stand up for it confidently. Perhaps we will need to tell truth to our friends, our children, or even to ourselves. Even if it doesn't sound reasonable, we need to affirm God's Word and let him work miracles.

Look again at 1 Kings 17 and discuss the following:

- [Q] What kinds of miracles did Elijah see happen? Why do you think God performed those miracles? Which requires more faith—to believe God for a miracle today, or to believe the one he performed long ago? Why?
- [Q] What kind of miracles should we be praying for? Is the miracle of our own sinful behavior changing less powerful than a prayer that controls the weather? Why or why not?

PART 3

Apply Your Findings

“Don't neglect your critical faculties. Remember that God is a rational God, who has made us in his own image. God invites and expects us to explore his double revelation, in nature and Scripture, with the minds he has given us, and to go on in the development of a Christian mind to apply his marvelous revealed truth to every aspect of the modern and the postmodern world.”

—John Stott, *“CT Classic: Basic Stott,”* interview by Roy McCloughry,
CHRISTIANITY TODAY (1-8-96)

- [Q] What is your favorite way to learn God's Word?
 - Listening to sermons



- Reading the Bible
- Reading a devotional book
- Participating in a Bible study
- Listening to Scripture on tape

After identifying which method of learning is your favorite, commit to following through with one or more of these this week.

- [Q]** What is one area where you have difficulty trusting in God's Word? What can you do to surrender that to God?
- [Q]** Ask God what miracle he would like to perform in your life. Give him your permission to change you.

—Study by Kenton C. Anderson, with JoHannah Reardon



Study Through the Bible

The Elijah Chronicles – Study 1

PARTICIPANT'S GUIDE

God Is True to His Word

When we stand up for the Word of God, God stands up for us.

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Identify the Current Issue

First Kings 17 begins with Elijah standing confidently before Ahab. Elijah's certainty was striking because of its audacity. How could he act so outrageously unless he had truly heard from God? The text takes pains to emphasize the authority of "the Word of the Lord." It is the Word of the Lord that leads Elijah each step of the way. This emphasis culminates in verse 24 with a dramatic statement of faith: "Now by this I know that you are a man of God, and that the Word of the Lord in your mouth is the truth."

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Teaching point four: Miracles happen when we stand up for God's Word.

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"Don't neglect your critical faculties. Remember that God is a rational God, who has made us in his own image. God invites and expects us to explore his double revelation, in nature and Scripture, with the minds he has given us, and to go on in the development of a Christian mind to apply his marvelous revealed truth to every aspect of the modern and the postmodern world." (John Stott, "CT Classic: Basic Stott," interview by Roy McCloughry, CHRISTIANITY TODAY, 1-8-96)

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Study Through the Bible

The Elijah Chronicles – Study 2

LEADER'S GUIDE

Only God Can Make It Rain

We need to trust God during our own times of drought.

1 Kings 18 is set in the nation of Israel during a time of terrible drought and famine. The people were in a beaten down and powerless state. They had seen so much hunger and death that it was hard for them to recognize a fresh alternative in the face of Ahab's power. There was little faith, and what there was of it was hiding in the caves. The worship of Yahweh was virtually extinct, until one man, Elijah, stood and challenged the people's lethargy. This text describes a true power encounter. God rests his credibility upon his ability to outperform the prophets of Baal.

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PART 1

Identify the Current Issue

Note to leader: At the beginning of the class, provide each person with the Participant's Guide included at the end of this study.

In his memoir, *Wolf Willow*, Wallace Stegner describes the Dust Bowl drought of 1917 in southern Saskatchewan:

There was a whole folklore of water. People said a man had to make a dipperful go as far as it would. You boiled sweet corn, say. Instead of throwing the water out, you washed the dishes in it. Then you washed your hands in it a few times. Then you strained it through a cloth into the radiator of your car, and if your car should break down, you didn't just leave the water to evaporate in its gullet, but drained it out to water the sweet peas.

Wallace Stegner could identify with the experience of the people of Israel, who were discouraged by years of drought and hardship. We can identify with them too. Even though we may not have known a physical drought, we probably have lived through a spiritual or emotional drought at some time or other. In those times, the God of our fathers became a distant memory while we were caught up in the struggle to empower ourselves and live independently. That is a fool's game. Those who try that game find themselves beaten down and discouraged. Only God can make it rain.

Discussion starters:

- [Q] Have you ever been in any kind of physical drought? What was the worst thing that happened to you and your neighbors in that drought?
- [Q] Have you ever experienced a spiritual or emotional drought? What were some of your symptoms? What brought you out of this drought?

PART 2

Discover the Eternal Principles

Teaching point one: Our courage and trust in God comes and goes.

Read 1 Kings 18:1–15. The people of Israel were dry and lifeless, depleted by the drought God had brought upon the land. But hope was on the way. God told Elijah that the drought was about to end. The trouble was that Elijah had to face Ahab, a prospect that particularly disturbed Obadiah.

- [Q] What do you admire about Obadiah in this account? How do his deeds demonstrate his bravery? Why then was he so terrified of telling Ahab that Elijah wanted to meet with him?
- [Q] Can you think of an example when you were brave in one instance and fearful immediately after it, or vice versa? What made the difference in your courage?



Optional Activity

Purpose: To help us realize our frailty and our need for courage beyond our own strength.

Activity: Take two raw or hardboiled eggs. (Whichever you choose to use is fine. The raw eggs make a more dramatic statement but are messier.) As your group is watching, wrap one of the eggs gently in a thick towel. Tape or tie it securely so that it cannot fall out. Leave the other egg as it is. Throw each of them high into the air. The unprotected egg will break, but the protected egg will be fine. Ask the following questions:

1. What kind of spiritual illustrations can we get from this exercise?
2. What might the towel represent in our lives?
3. What does this have to do with our courage when we face a difficult situation?

Teaching point two: Only God is sovereign over the world he has made.

Read 1 Kings 18:16–40. Baal, the god of sun and rain, had disappointed the people of Israel. Yet when Elijah challenged them to make their choice between Baal and the Lord God, they were paralyzed (v. 21). Elijah stimulated their distant memory of the God of their fathers, but he was just one scrawny prophet standing up against 950 prophets of Baal and Asherah, not to mention the power structure of Ahab's palace. But when the prophets of Baal proved their futility and the God of Elijah responded with such drama and power, the people were awakened from their stupor. They bowed before the only God who is sovereign over the world he has created.

- [Q] What did the prophets of Baal do to try to get their god to act on their behalf? Why didn't it work?
- [Q] Why were the people indifferent as to which god they believed in? Why did the miracle change their mind?
- [Q] How did Elijah's belief in God's sovereignty affect the outcome of his experiment?
- [Q] What impossible situation in your life do you need to trust God with?

Teaching point three: There's a drought in our land too.

In an old Donald Duck comic strip, Donald went up in an airplane built by his inventor uncle with the intent to seed the clouds to make it rain. Recently a documentary on television explored whether such a thing could happen. The results so far have not been encouraging. With all of our science and technology, we still can't make it rain.

We would like to think we are more sophisticated than the people in this Bible account; that our sources of power are less primitive than the appeal to lightning bolts from heaven. Is Elijah relevant? We would like to think we are beyond these concerns, but we know there is a spiritual drought in our land, a desperate dryness.

- [Q] Read Romans 1:18–24. How does this ancient account of sin sound like our society today? How have things changed since then and how are they still the same?



- [Q] Read Romans 3:10–18. Why do all societies eventually become corrupt?
- [Q] Read 1 Corinthians 2:14. Why do most people reject spiritual truths?
- [Q] Which of the following statements best describes spiritual drought? Explain your answer.
1. Most people try to be good, but they often fail.
 2. Most people don't try to be good. They are after their own self-interests.
 3. People are evil by nature.
 4. Most people believe in God but don't know how to please him.

All the statements can be true. Discussing which statement best describes spiritual drought will help your group think about what it means.

Teaching point four: God rains his love and blessing in our hearts.

In the 1956 movie *The Rainmaker*, Katharine Hepburn plays the daughter of an old farmer in a time of drought. She has lost hope for the future. There is no one who understands her and no one to love. Burt Lancaster plays a con man who promises to make it rain for the small sum of \$100. Though he has never made it rain before, it rains this time—a miracle of sorts. The bigger miracle, however, is not the rain that falls from the sky but the rain that falls from Katharine Hepburn's eyes. He has brought her hope and love. She can see her future, and it warms her heart.

Can we let God rain his love and blessing in our hearts? Can we let him soften up our crustiness and bring a fresh vitality into our lives? Elijah calls us to get off the fence and choose whom we will serve. We ought to choose now to serve the creator God—the only one who can make it rain. He will shower blessing in our lives.

Read 1 Kings 18:41–46.

- [Q] What made Elijah confident that the small rain cloud would develop into a heavy rain?
- [Q] What small rain cloud in your life right now is an evidence of God's love and care for you? How can you let God's rain flow into your life?

PART 3

Apply Your Findings

John Grisham wrote a book called *The Rainmaker*, about an insurance lawyer who is powerful enough to fix any case, make any deal, and secure any solution for the company. The lawyer projects an illusion of power, but only God can make it rain.

1 Kings 18 addresses some of the most elemental aspects of life in the universe: fire and rain. Just as Jesus spoke a word to quiet the storm, Elijah called on Yahweh God, who can produce fire or rain on demand by his Word. Elijah's challenge was blasphemy against Baal, who was supposed to be the god in charge of the sun and the rain. We discover instead that only God is sovereign over the world he has created. Only God has power to achieve the things we need in this world.



- [Q] What area of your life are you tempted, like Obadiah, to panic about? How can believing that God is sovereign over your situation help you?
- [Q] How can you be “Elijah” in someone else’s life by helping them to believe God?

—Study by *Kenton C. Anderson, with JoHannah Reardon*



Study Through the Bible

The Elijah Chronicles – Study 2

PARTICIPANT'S GUIDE

Only God Can Make It Rain

We need to trust God during our own times of drought.

1 Kings 18 is set in the nation of Israel during a time of terrible drought and famine. The people were in a beaten down and powerless state. They had seen so much hunger and death that it was hard for them to recognize a fresh alternative in the face of Ahab's power. There was little faith, and what there was of it was hiding in the caves. The worship of Yahweh was virtually extinct, until one man, Elijah, stood and challenged the people's lethargy. This text describes a true power encounter. God rests his credibility upon his ability to outperform the prophets of Baal.

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PART 2

Discover the Eternal Principles

Teaching point one: Our courage and trust in God comes and goes.

Teaching point two: Only God is sovereign over the world he has made.

Teaching point three: There's a drought in our land too.

[Q] Which of the following statements best describes spiritual drought? Explain your answer.

1. Most people try to be good, but they often fail.
2. Most people don't try to be good. They are after their own self-interests.
3. People are evil by nature.
4. Most people believe in God but don't know how to please him.

Teaching point four: God rains his love and blessing in our hearts.

PART 3

Apply Your Findings

Elijah called on Yahweh God, who can produce fire or rain on demand by his Word. Elijah's challenge was blasphemy against Baal, who was supposed to be the god in charge of the sun and the rain. We discover instead that only God is sovereign over the world he has created. Only God has power to achieve the things we need in this world.

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Study Through the Bible

The Elijah Chronicles – Study 3

LEADER'S GUIDE

God Never Leaves Us Alone

God's kingdom is bigger than our little circle of the world.

In 1 Kings 19 we see the passing of the torch, or in this case the mantle of leadership, from Elijah to Elisha. It follows upon Elijah's dramatic triumph on Mount Carmel over the prophets of Baal. This text is more personal, dealing with Elijah's emotional response to the situation in Israel. In this study, we will see that God never leaves us alone, even though God's kingdom is bigger than we can imagine.

Scripture:

1 Kings 19

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PART 1

Identify the Current Issue

Note to leader: At the beginning of the class, provide each person with the Participant's Guide included at the end of this study.

Jezebel, the wicked queen, showed a strong-minded determination to flaunt the power of God. It was a brazen thing for her to do, given all that the Lord God had just done, but her reputation was at stake. Yahweh was not the god of her fathers, but that mattered little. She determined to kill Elijah, causing him to run.

Unlike the previous chapters, this text focuses on Elijah himself. This is his pain and frustration coming out of the renewed threat. We get a sense of the prophet's humanity, his tendency toward depression and fear. We see waffling and almost irrational response. He compares himself to his fathers ("I am no better") and emphasizes his professional and personal loneliness ("I alone am left").

Elisha is God's answer to Elijah's complaint that he is alone in his task. Elisha would carry the mantle from there on, along with 7,000 others who had never bowed down to Baal.

Discussion starters:

- [Q] Describe a time when you felt lonely, perhaps even depressed. Were you truly alone, or did you just feel alone? What's the difference?
- [Q] How can knowing that others are with you in purpose help your attitude? Give an example.

PART 2

Discover the Eternal Principles

Teaching point one: Despair can make us lose perspective.

Read 1 Kings 19:1–9a. Elijah is afraid. Jezebel has threatened his life, and so he is on the run. "I have had enough...Take my life," he says to the Lord. Elijah's depression might seem irrational given his recent experiences of the power of God, yet we can probably understand how he felt. Instead of reprimanding Elijah for his lack of faith, God sent an angel to care for him.

- [Q] Elijah had just seen God do a mighty thing in front of the prophets of Baal. Why do you think he fell apart now?
- [Q] How had Elijah lost perspective? What would have been the correct response to his troubles?
- [Q] Why do you think Elijah traveled to Horeb?
- [Q] The following well-known people in the Bible lost perspective at various times in their lives. See if you can name them by their statements:



1. “Why, O LORD, do you stand far off? Why do you hide yourself in times of trouble?”
2. “My days are swifter than a weaver’s shuttle, and they come to an end without hope.”
3. “I have seen all the things that are done under the sun; all of them are meaningless...”
4. “The harvest is past, the summer has ended, and we are not saved.”

1) David in Psalm 10:1; 2) Job in Job 7:6; 3) Solomon in Ecclesiastes 1:14; 4) Jeremiah in Jeremiah 8:20.

Optional Activity

Purpose: To help us grasp how Elijah must have felt.

Activity: You, the leader, will pretend to be Elijah. Read through these questions ahead of time and decide how you would answer them. Ask someone in the group to do a mock talk show interview using the following questions:

1. Wow, Elijah, that was amazing how you called fire from heaven to burn up that offering. You must be flying high. What great feat will you do next?
2. You sure made Queen Jezebel mad. How are you going to handle her threat to kill you?
3. You seem a little down for having just done something so amazing. What’s bothering you?
4. Good grief, Elijah, I think you could use some counseling. Wanting God to kill you is a little drastic, don’t you think? How are you going to pull out of this funk?

Teaching point two: God’s voice is more powerful than miracles.

Read 1 Kings 19:9b–14. Elijah felt sorry for himself. “I have been very zealous for the LORD,” he complained. “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.” You might want to criticize Elijah for this after all the acts of God’s power that he has witnessed, but he was no different than the people of Israel who had promptly repented on Mount Carmel and then went back to their old ways. Jezebel, also, ought to have repented at the sight of the miracles God did. Instead she chose to rebel. We like to think that miracles impress us, but they seldom have staying power in our lives.

God told Elijah to stand by while he buffeted the mountain with wind, earthquake, and fire. The Lord wasn’t in any of those great forces. Instead, the Lord came to Elijah through a gentle whisper, a still, small voice.

- [Q] Why do miracles often fail to create lasting faith and confidence in God?
- [Q] What do you think was the point of God’s demonstration to Elijah on Mount Horeb?
- [Q] Think of the times you have grown most in your faith in God. What made you grow?
- [Q] Why is God’s voice more powerful than demonstrations of nature?



Teaching point three: Even if we feel alone, we're not alone.

Read 1 Kings 19:15–18. Instead of reprimanding Elijah for his lack of faith, God gave him a job to do. The purpose of this job was to encourage Elijah that, contrary to his feelings, he was not alone.

Recent studies in leadership have emphasized team ministry over the old hierarchical style. It can be lonely at the top. Elijah needed to understand that this ministry was not about what he was doing but about what God was doing, and Elijah was part of a team of many like-minded individuals who were a part of the unfolding of God's great plan.

Appearances and our feelings to the contrary, God will never leave himself without a witness. God has always set aside those people who will be faithful to his call. When we are faithful to God, he will never leave us alone. This text is about hope. God is on the job. He is working his plan. When we serve him, we are part of that big thing God is doing across time to redeem the world to himself. He will never leave us alone.

- [Q] What impact do you think these words from God had on Elijah? How would they have made him feel?
- [Q] It's ironic that Elijah had to go back the way he had come (v. 15). Why did Elijah miss all these believers the first time he went through the desert? What parallels might we find to this in our own lives?
- [Q] What can we learn from this passage about our feelings of loneliness?

Teaching point four: God will build his kingdom.

God has not left himself without a witness. Elijah obeyed God and anointed Elisha, who carried on Elijah's ministry of prophecy and the affirmation of the presence and power of Yahweh in the world. God lifted Elijah from his depression by commissioning him to a task. Here is our task: we must train our children. We must pass on our faith. Instead of greedily hanging on to power, we need to look for ways to pass our ministry on to people of every nation and generation. This train cannot be derailed. The kingdom will come.

Read 1 Kings 19:19–21.

- [Q] What was the significance of Elijah throwing his cloak over Elisha?
- [Q] Why do you think Elisha was so willing to go with Elijah? Why did he burn the plowing equipment and cook the oxen?
- [Q] What can we learn from Elisha's example? How can we wholeheartedly pass our faith on to others?



PART 3

Apply Your Findings

You may have heard it said that the church is always one generation away from extinction. Some believe that this could be that one last generation. Where once we saw ourselves as part of a nation under God, now it seems to many that we have no memory of the God we once served. As individuals or as churches who are striving to be faithful, it is easy for us to feel that no one else is as faithful as we are and that no one else understands or cares. And yet God continues to build his kingdom. We need to understand that the kingdom is bigger than our little circle of the world.

- [Q]** Do you get discouraged about the lack of Christian principles in our society? How has this study helped you put that in perspective?
- [Q]** What area of your life do you need to listen to God about?
- [Q]** Can you think of someone like Elijah who needs your encouragement?
- [Q]** Spend some time in prayer asking God to help you see your circumstances from his point of view.

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The Elijah Chronicles – Study 3

PARTICIPANT'S GUIDE

God Never Leaves Us Alone

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Scripture:
1 Kings 19

Based on:

"The Elijah Chronicles," Series Builder by Kenton C. Anderson, PREACHING TODAY SERMONS



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PART 1

Identify the Current Issue

Unlike the previous chapters, this text focuses on Elijah himself. This is his pain and frustration coming out of a renewed threat. We get a sense of the prophet's humanity, his tendency toward depression and fear. We see waffling and almost irrational response. He compares himself to his fathers ("I am no better") and emphasizes his professional and personal loneliness ("I alone am left").

Elisha is God's answer to Elijah's complaint that he is alone in his task. Elisha would carry the mantle from there on, along with 7,000 others who had never bowed down to Baal.

PART 2

Discover the Eternal Principles

Teaching point one: Despair can make us lose perspective.

[Q] The following well-known people in the Bible lost perspective at various times in their lives. See if you can name them by their statements:

1. "Why, O LORD, do you stand far off? Why do you hide yourself in times of trouble?"
2. "My days are swifter than a weaver's shuttle, and they come to an end without hope."
3. "I have seen all the things that are done under the sun; all of them are meaningless..."
4. "The harvest is past, the summer has ended, and we are not saved."

Teaching point two: God's voice is more powerful than miracles.

Teaching point three: Even if we feel alone, we're not alone.

Teaching point four: God will build his kingdom.

PART 3

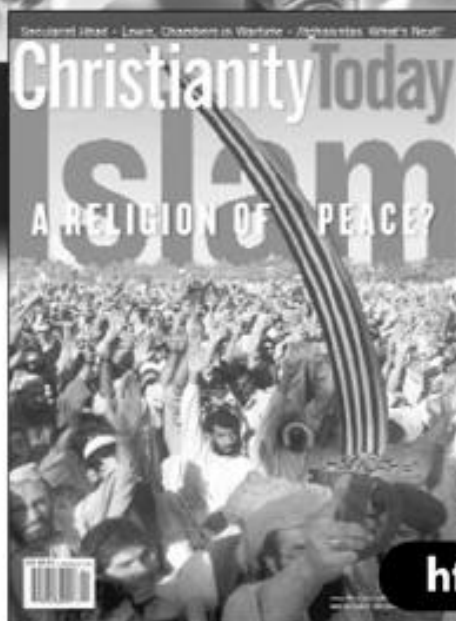
Apply Your Findings

As individuals or as churches who are striving to be faithful, it is easy for us to feel that no one else is as faithful as we are and that no one else understands or cares. And yet God continues to build his kingdom. We need to understand that the kingdom is bigger than our little circle of the world.

—Study by Kenton C. Anderson, with JoHannah Reardon



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