

# Elijah

## Discussion Guide

Week of August 13, 2023 - **"God Provides"**

**Scripture verse: 1 Kings 17:2-24**

### **LOOKING BACK:**

1. Since the last meeting, how have you increased your use of the "most powerful resource"? How have you intentionally relied on prayerful conversation with God to identify His calling on your life?
  - a. How has God helped you to erase ~~your objections and your~~ inhibitions towards serving Him?
  - b. Anything still holding you back from where God may be calling you to serve?
  - c. Leaders: Sometimes sharing out loud, especially in a new group, can be difficult. It may be beneficial to have paper and pens/pencils available and suggest that your group write out their answers. You might also consider starting with your own answers.
2. If you have not already, select someone to pray for your group time, asking for the Holy Spirit to help encourage obedience to what the Lord is calling each person to in their lives.

### **OPENING QUESTION:**

Several years ago, while going through a difficult divorce, a young woman with children was struggling to make all of the financial ends meet. Christmas was coming up and, while she could just manage her bills, finding a way to eek out anything extra for Christmas that year seemed impossible. In the midst of that struggle, she received a note from her small group asking

members to provide gifts for another family experiencing similar difficulty. Her initial response was to refuse. She was even a little angry to be asked. After much consideration and prayer, she finally donated \$50 all while trying to come up with ways to make up for the deficit. At the next meeting, the group presented the other family with collected donations, then also gave her a gift of donations. The very first gift she saw was a \$50 gift card. Though she had felt abandoned and unseen, God provided above and beyond what she had given.

How have you seen God provide in your life? Maybe it was a monetary provision, but maybe it was a trusted friend and confidante, or a solution to a seemingly unresolvable problem.

### **LOOKING UP:**

In our last meeting, we discovered Elijah was just a regular guy, like the rest of us. There was nothing particularly special or outstanding about Elijah except his unerring use of his most powerful resource: prayer. That, and his faithful commitment to God, is what makes him one of God's more well-known prophets.

1. When you think of being called into God's mission, what is your first consideration? Many of us start asking what we are going to have to give up. Often, we think being on mission with God means sacrifice: giving up our jobs, moving away to a foreign country, or giving large sums of time and/or money.
2. Is sacrifice - giving - the only consideration in serving God?
3. Before moving onto the study passage, ask a group member to pray for your discussion and to ask the Holy Spirit to help each member learn more about God's character as provider (Jehovah Jireh). Select two group members to prepare to read the passage 1 Kings 17:2-24. Answer the first two questions after the passage

is read in one Bible translation (NIV, ESV, CSB), then re-read the passage in a second translation (NLT, NKJV, NASB) and answer questions 3 and 4.

<p><b>READ THE PASSAGE</b> <b>1 Kings 17:2-24</b></p> <p>Answer the first 2 questions after reading the passage</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. What stood out to you most?</li><li>2. What was challenging or hard to understand?</li><li>3. What does this teach us about God?</li><li>4. What does this teach us about people?</li></ol>	<p><b>RE-READ THE PASSAGE</b></p> <p>Read the passage again using another Bible translation... then answer the last 2 questions</p>
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### **LOOKING FORWARD:**

God consistently provided for Elijah as he used Him for His purposes. From hiding in a ravine and being fed by ravens (unclean birds in Jewish custom). Then to living with a pagan, widowed woman and her son. Then next, being used to miraculously restore the boy to life. Elijah's trust in God was unwavering. Elijah asked the pagan widow to provide for him out of her last meal, allowing God to prove once again that He always provides. Last time, Elijah's most powerful resource was prayer. This session, we learn that Elijah's most powerful provision is God Himself.

- a. God promises to provide when His people are obedient. What do you need to do to obey God today? What keeps you from trusting God's provision to provide? Being honest with ourselves about our own doubts and lack of trust helps us be open to becoming a partner with God in His miraculous provision.
- b. Bible teacher Priscilla Shirer says, "Here's how you know when God is beginning to prepare you for the next season in

your journey with Him. He calls you to release your grasp on something, someone, or someplace.” What sacrifice are you having difficulty making? Why is it hard to trust that God will provide if you sacrifice that something, someone, or someplace?

2. We don't always know in advance what provision God will make for us when we obey, but He promises to always be there, even when we feel alone. Take time today to reflect on what He has given you and give Him thanks for that provision. Then, ask how you can help further His mission.
3. This week, keep a mental or physical list of how God has provided for you. Be prepared to share next time any ways God surprised you in how He provided.

Wrap your group meeting with prayer, asking the Holy Spirit to prompt a spirit of obedience within you and the members of your group. Ask for His help trusting in His provision, especially when the “sacrifice” seems overwhelming.