

From Despair To Hope

The Story of Elijah



What does the Bible teach?

Being at the top with Jesus requires honesty about our condition. (v. 17-19)

We cannot get to the top without full commitment to Jesus. (v. 20-21)

We see Jesus work in our lives when we are faithful to him. (v. 36-46)

What should I do?

If you are not at the top of the world with Jesus:

Take an honest assessment of your spiritual condition.

Instead of wandering between opinions, fully commit to Jesus.

Be faithful to learn from Jesus, obey him, and follow him.

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1 Kings 18:1-46

20 So Ahab summoned all the Israelites and gathered the prophets at Mount Carmel. 21 Then Elijah approached all the people and said, "How long will you waver between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow him. But if Baal, follow him." But the people didn't answer him a word.

22 Then Elijah said to the people, "I am the only remaining prophet of the Lord, but Baal's prophets are 450 men. 23 Let two bulls be given to us. They are to choose one bull for themselves, cut it in pieces, and place it on the wood but not light the fire. I will prepare the other bull and place it on the wood but not light the fire. 24 Then you call on the name of your god, and I will call on the name of the Lord. The God who answers with fire, he is God." All the people answered, "That's fine."

Living at the Top of the World

25 Then Elijah said to the prophets of Baal, "Since you are so numerous, choose for yourselves one bull and prepare it first. Then call on the name of your god but don't light the fire." 26 So they took the bull that he gave them, prepared it, and called on the name of Baal from morning until noon, saying, "Baal, answer us!" But there was no sound; no one answered. Then they danced around the altar they had made.

27 At noon Elijah mocked them. He said, "Shout loudly, for he's a god! Maybe he's thinking it over; maybe he has wandered away, or maybe he's on the road. Perhaps he's sleeping and will wake up!" 28 They shouted loudly, and cut themselves with knives and spears, according to their custom, until blood gushed over them. 29 All afternoon they kept on raving until the offering of the evening sacrifice, but there was no sound; no one answered, no one paid attention.

30 Then Elijah said to all the people, "Come near me." So all the people approached him. Then he repaired the Lord's altar that had been torn down: 31 Elijah took twelve stones—according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, to whom the word of the Lord had come, saying, "Israel will be your name"— 32 and he built an altar with the stones in the name of the Lord. Then he made a trench around the altar large enough to hold about four gallons. 33 Next, he arranged the wood, cut up the bull, and placed it on the wood. He said, "Fill four water pots with water and pour it on the offering to be burned and on the wood." 34 Then he said, "A second time!" and they did it a second time. And then he said, "A third time!" and they did it a third time. 35 So the water ran all around the altar; he even filled the trench with water.

36 At the time for offering the evening sacrifice, the prophet Elijah approached the altar and said, "Lord, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, today let it be known that you are God in Israel and I am your servant, and that at your word I have done all these things. 37 Answer me, Lord! Answer me so that this people will know that you, the Lord, are God and that you have turned their hearts back."

38 Then the Lord's fire fell and consumed the burnt offering, the wood, the stones, and the dust, and it licked up the water that was in the trench. 39 When all the people saw it, they fell facedown and said, "The Lord, he is God! The Lord, he is God!"

40 Then Elijah ordered them, "Seize the prophets of Baal! Do not let even one of them escape." So they seized them, and Elijah brought them down to the Wadi Kishon and slaughtered them there. 41 Elijah said to Ahab, "Go up, eat and drink, for there is the sound of a rainstorm."

42 So Ahab went to eat and drink, but Elijah went up to the summit of Carmel. He bent down on the ground and put his face between his knees. 43 Then he said to his servant, "Go up and look toward the sea." So he went up, looked, and said, "There's nothing." Seven times Elijah said, "Go back."

44 On the seventh time, he reported, "There's a cloud as small as a man's hand coming up from the sea." Then Elijah said, "Go and tell Ahab, 'Get your chariot ready and go down so the rain doesn't stop you.'"

45 In a little while, the sky grew dark with clouds and wind, and there was a downpour. So Ahab got in his chariot and went to Jezreel. 46 The power of the Lord was on Elijah, and he tucked his mantle under his belt and ran ahead of Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel

Living at the Top of the World

Group Discussion

1. What does the passage say?

What is the writer ultimately trying to communicate to his readers? What issue is the writer addressing?

2. What did this passage mean to its original audience?

How would a 1st Century Christ-follower receive this message?

3. What does this passage tell us about God?

Explain what you understand about God from the text. Is that a new idea or truth for you?

4. What does this passage tell us about man?

In your own words share what this passage encourages us to do to follow Jesus more fully and faithfully?

5. What does this passage demand of me?

Personally speaking, what areas of living in relationship with Jesus do you need to address?
How should you live in light of what this passage says?

6. How does this passage change the way I relate to people?

What does this passage communicate about the need for grace and humility in community with others? Whom should I invite to seek Jesus?

7. What does this passage prompt me to pray to God?

Are you in need of forgiveness or repentance?

Do you need to intercede for others?

Do you need an “extra measure” of faith to follow Jesus or engage the community and world?