

LIFE GROUP GUIDE
WEEK of January 21-27

PREPARE:

Before your group arrives, make sure you take a few minutes to review the Life Group video and the Life Group Guide.

- It will help you be prepared for Life Group conversations ahead of time.
- Test your video display option to make sure it is working before your Life Group members arrive.

WELCOME:

Take a few minutes to welcome Life Group members.

VIDEO:

Watch the video together

SCRIPTURE:

Read **1 Kings 18:16-39** together.

REFLECT

Give a few minutes after reading the passage together for your group to think about what these verses are trying to teach us.

1 Kings 18:

¹⁶So Obadiah went to meet Ahab and told him, and Ahab went to meet Elijah.¹⁷When he saw Elijah, he said to him, "Is that you, you troubler of Israel?"

¹⁸"I have not made trouble for Israel," Elijah replied. "But you and your father's family have. You have abandoned the Lord's commands and have followed the Baals. ¹⁹Now summon the

LIFE GROUP GUIDE
WEEK of January 21-27

people from all over Israel to meet me on Mount Carmel. And bring the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal and the four hundred prophets of Asherah, who eat at Jezebel's table."

²⁰ So Ahab sent word throughout all Israel and assembled the prophets on Mount Carmel. ²¹ Elijah went before the people and said, "How long will you waver between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow him; but if Baal is God, follow him." But the people said nothing.

²² Then Elijah said to them, "I am the only one of the Lord's prophets left, but Baal has four hundred and fifty prophets. ²³ Get two bulls for us. Let Baal's prophets choose one for themselves, and let them cut it into pieces and put it on the wood but not set fire to it. I will prepare the other bull and put it on the wood but not set fire to it. ²⁴ Then you call on the name of your god, and I will call on the name of the Lord. The god who answers by fire—he is God."

Then all the people said, "What you say is good."

²⁵ Elijah said to the prophets of Baal, "Choose one of the bulls and prepare it first, since there are so many of you. Call on the name of your god, but do not light the fire." ²⁶ So they took the bull given them and prepared it.

Then they called on the name of Baal from morning till noon.

"Baal, answer us!" they shouted. But there was no response; no one answered. And they danced around the altar they had made.

²⁷ At noon Elijah began to taunt them. "Shout louder!" he said.

"Surely he is a god! Perhaps he is deep in thought, or busy, or traveling. Maybe he is sleeping and must be awakened." ²⁸ So they shouted louder and slashed themselves with swords and spears,

LIFE GROUP GUIDE
WEEK of January 21-27

as was their custom, until their blood flowed. ²⁹ Midday passed, and they continued their frantic prophesying until the time for the evening sacrifice. But there was no response, no one answered, no one paid attention.

³⁰ Then Elijah said to all the people, "Come here to me." They came to him, and he repaired the altar of the Lord, which had been torn down. ³¹ Elijah took twelve stones, one for each of the tribes descended from Jacob, to whom the word of the Lord had come, saying, "Your name shall be Israel." ³² With the stones he built an altar in the name of the Lord, and he dug a trench around it large enough to hold two seahs of seed. ³³ He arranged the wood, cut the bull into pieces and laid it on the wood. Then he said to them, "Fill four large jars with water and pour it on the offering and on the wood."

³⁴ "Do it again," he said, and they did it again.

"Do it a third time," he ordered, and they did it the third time. ³⁵ The water ran down around the altar and even filled the trench.

³⁶ At the time of sacrifice, the prophet Elijah stepped forward and prayed: "Lord, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, let it be known today that you are God in Israel and that I am your servant and have done all these things at your command. ³⁷ Answer me, Lord, answer me, so these people will know that you, Lord, are God, and that you are turning their hearts back again."

³⁸ Then the fire of the Lord fell and burned up the sacrifice, the wood, the stones and the soil, and also licked up the water in the trench.

LIFE GROUP GUIDE
WEEK of January 21-27

³⁹ When all the people saw this, they fell prostrate and cried, “The Lord—he is God! The Lord—he is God!”

QUESTION:

What talents or abilities do think you have?

- In what ways does this talent help you in life?
- Do others tend to respect or approve of you because of this talent?
- Do you think your talent adds to your work load in your life? In what ways?

What talent do you wish you had?

- What kind of expectations and obligations do you think would come with that?

QUESTION:

When something goes wrong in your life, who do you tend to blame?

- Do you tend to blame yourself? Why do you do that?
- Do you tend to blame others?
- Do you tend to blame God?

OBSERVATION:

King Ahab worshipped and served Baal – one of the gods that the surrounding nations believed in and sacrificed to. Baal worship included worshipping

- Sex

LIFE GROUP GUIDE
WEEK of January 21-27

- Power
- Fertility

QUESTION:

What do you think the consequences or side effects are of idolizing and pursuing things like sex, power, or fertility?

OBSERVATION:

In 1 Kings 17, Elijah declared there would be no more rain.

- This was not so much a punishment that God was imposing on people. It was more of a natural consequence for the choices they were making and the way they were living.
- It is a picture – when you abandon God’s ways, life tends to dry up.

QUESTION:

Why do you think people tend to abandon or ignore God’s ways to live?

- Do you think this happens more on purpose or do you think they tend to drift towards the patterns they see all around them?
- Do you think that people who drift realize they are making a choice?
- Do you think they realize they are allowing other people to make that choice for them?

LIFE GROUP GUIDE
WEEK of January 21-27

OBSERVATION:

Elijah called the nation to a decision. Indecision in life will paralyze you.

- A person who will not make a decision will feel stuck and eventually they surrender their right to make a decision to someone else.

QUESTION:

Do you think God wants people to make their own decisions, or do you think God wants people to surrender their right to make decisions to others?

- What are the advantages and disadvantages of making your own decisions?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of allowing others to make decisions for you?

OBSERVATION:

When Elijah called the nation to a decision about who they would worship, they did not say anything. The nation had not completely abandoned God, but they had not walked away from Baal either.

- Sometimes people have nothing to say because they want things to stay the way they are.

QUESTION:

What are some other reasons you think people might be silent when called to a point of decision?

LIFE GROUP GUIDE
WEEK of January 21-27

- Have you ever been in a situation where you wanted someone to make a decision and they seemed unwilling to do so? How did that make you feel?
- Have you ever felt stuck because someone else would not make a decision? How did you work through that situation?

OBSERVATION:

When the prophets of Baal try to get their god to answer, they do a lot of injury to themselves. They exhaust themselves with dancing and shouting. They cut themselves until their blood was spilling on the altar they had created.

- Their worship does not result in an answer, it results in cuts, bruises and exhaustion.

QUESTION:

Do you think God requires people to exhaust themselves and harm themselves to get Him to answer prayer? Why do you think that?

OBSERVATION:

Our prayers change once we have made a decision. Elijah believed that God would do what was necessary to turn people's hearts back to Him. Elijah had committed to following God. It enabled him to pray bolder prayers.

QUESTION:

How can you tell when you are praying a bold prayer?

LIFE GROUP GUIDE
WEEK of January 21-27

- Do you have a story of a time when you prayed a bold prayer? What happened? What gave you the boldness at the time you prayed it?

OBSERVATION:

God answered. Fire consumed the water drenched sacrifice. The result was that those who witnessed it made a decision. They chose to follow the living God.

QUESTION:

How would you describe your decision-making process?

- Do you require a lot of information and data to make a decision?
- Do you make a decision based on how you feel?
- Do you use a different approach when you are making a decision about relationships than you do about finances?
- What do you think are some wise things to consider when making spiritual decisions?

OBSERVATION:

God has given you great power in decision making. He offers resources to help us make wise decisions – but even God will not make our decisions for us.

- Some may not want to feel responsible for the outcome of a decision.
- The most important decision we can make is to follow Christ. This gives us access to God's wisdom through His Word and through His people.

LIFE GROUP GUIDE
WEEK of January 21-27

PRAYER:

Give your group an opportunity to identify some upcoming decisions they need to make. Ask God to provide wisdom to inform their decision and courage for them to be able to make it.