

**BIG WORD: 1 Kings**  
Homework for Chapters 17—18  
Discussion Dates: 10 April 2013 (in house)  
and 11 April 2013 (online)

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**DAY ONE: Overview**

PRAY for the Holy Spirit to clear your mind so that you may focus on God's Word without distractions or preconceptions. Ask Him to help you discern only what He wants for you in this reading and for this day.

READ: 1 Kings 17—18.

If possible, read both chapters in one sitting. Make notes of any details that stick out to you, questions that rise and/or personal insights God gives you while you read.

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**DAY TWO: Meet Elijah**

READ 1 Kings 16:29—17:7.

Who was king of Israel at this time?

The end of chapter 16 provides a summation of this king and his reign. What are some key points highlighted? What distinguishes this king from all others? List at least three things you find significant.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Chapter 17 opens with an introduction of Elijah. Who was he?

What message did he have from the LORD for Ahab?

Were there any conditions or qualifications for recapitulation? What could Ahab do to change his fate?

Why or why not? What do you think about this?

After Elijah spoke the word of the LORD to Ahab, he received a message for himself. What was it?

What was his response?

One of the most popular Old Testament Bible stories is right here in verses 4—6. It's not much, but it's memorable and retold countless times in children's Bibles, books and sermons. What happened? What do you make of these events?

What does this story teach us about the character of God?

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### **DAY THREE: The Widow of Zarephath**

READ 1 Kings 17:8—16.

The word of the LORD came to Elijah again. What instructions did He give to Elijah this time?

What do you think of Elijah's initial interactions with the widow of Zarephath?

Did he tell her about God?

Did he consider her needs and provide for her?

Did he inquire about her beliefs?

Did he offer her assurances?

Did he treat her with kindness?

READ Deuteronomy 10:17—19.

These verses offer instructions regarding sojourners and widows. The Mosaic Law repeats similar instructions several times throughout Exodus, Deuteronomy and Leviticus. Do you see this passage enacted in 1 Kings 17? How so?

READ 2 Kings 17:17—24.

When the widow's son became ill and died, what accusations were made?

How did Elijah respond?

What did God do?

Verse 24 intrigues me. Up to this point, the widow had seen her flour and oil multiply for "many days" (according to verse 15), but she did not proclaim trust in Elijah or faith in God until verse 24. Why do you think this is?

It's not entirely clear, even upon the resurrection of her son, whether this widow placed trust in the LORD or simply in Elijah as a servant of the LORD. Which do you think it is?

Why?

Does it make a difference?

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**DAY FOUR: Elijah and Obadiah**

READ 1 Kings 18:1—15.

About three years passed from the beginning of chapter 17 to the beginning of chapter 18. We first met Elijah at the beginning of chapter 17. At that time, God told him to confront Ahab and then go hide. Here we read of another time when the word of the LORD came to Elijah. What did He say?

In verse 3 we meet Obadiah. List three things (or more) we immediately learn about him.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

What were Ahab and Obadiah doing here?

How did Obadiah react when he saw Elijah?

What does this tell you about Obadiah?

What does this tell you about Elijah and his reputation?

Elijah asked Obadiah to announce his presence to Ahab. Why do you think he did this? If they were together at the same location, wouldn't it have been just as quick for Elijah to go to Ahab himself?

Describe Obadiah's response.

Obadiah's response gives us several details about what happened in Israel while Elijah was in hiding. Why is this important?

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### **DAY FIVE: Prophets Stand-off**

READ 1 Kings 18:16—40.

What was the tone of Elijah and Ahab's discourse when they finally met?

Did Elijah ever appear to lack confidence?

How many prophets routinely ate at the Queen's table?

Elijah proposed an exhibition to determine the supreme deity of Israel. Describe the challenge. What would they do and how would they know who won?

Elijah allowed Jezebel's prophets to go first. How long did they petition their gods?

What happened?

When Elijah's turn finally came, he altered the challenge, making it more difficult, from a human standpoint, for him to win. What did he do?

Compare Elijah's prayers to that of the false prophets. How did they differ in tone and conduct?

How long did it take God to respond?

Clearly a massive audience had gathered to watch. How did they respond?

What instructions did Elijah give to the crowds? How did they respond?

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## **DAY SIX: God Sends Rain**

READ 1 Kings 18:41—46.

After dismissing Ahab to get some rest and food (a beautiful act of mercy and grace on Elijah's part), the prophet ascended Mount Carmel to pray and watch and wait.

Why do you think Elijah initiated this back-and-forth interaction with his servant?

God had already told Elijah that He would send rain (18:1), so why the fetal position and the frantic checking for clouds?

Up to this point, Elijah appeared confident, unshakable, and fully consumed with faith in God. Do you see any changes in him here? If so, what?

Immediately after seeing the first cloud, Elijah sent word to Ahab to return to the capital and prepare for a storm. Why didn't Ahab leave immediately after the battle with the priests?

The people of Israel seemed to have changed sides promptly, even enthusiastically (18:39-40). Do you see any sign of repentance in Ahab?

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### **DAY SEVEN: God's Provision**

This portion of Kings screams one predominant theme: God's Provision and Supremacy. The LORD provided food, water, discipline, direction, friendship, support, fire and proof that He is the one true and living God. **He is the great I Am.**

I once heard Beth Moore speak about our great I Am. She encouraged us to complete the sentence with whatever it is that we crave. That God is.

God is ... security.  
God is ... love.  
God is ... acceptance.  
God is ... wisdom.  
God is ... peace.  
God is ... freedom.

God Is ... the Answer to everything! He is all that we need.

Can you think of a time that God has provided for you in tangible ways?

Are you trusting God for provision today? Are there any areas of your life you need to surrender to Him?

READ Matthew 5:44—46.

Too often we confuse comfort with blessing. We expect good things to happen to good, godly people and bad things to happen to bad, ungodly people. These verses clearly contradict any false theology behind that belief.

God provided for Elijah during the drought, but his brook still ran dry.  
God provided for the widow, but her son still died.

How can we reconcile God's goodness with our discomfort?

How should we respond when, in spite of all our efforts to be godly and pursue righteousness, we meet the same fate as those who reject God?