

ACTS2COMMUNITY

STUDYQUESTIONS

July 19, 2009

Scripture Reading: I Kings 19:1-18

Leaders: What happens when I've had enough of "life" (tired)?

God helps us by offering encouragement through His word and the love and presence of others around us. When you are discouraged, it does not mean that God had forsaken you or left you alone. He is still with you through your discouragement

Getting Started

Describe something you worked really hard to achieve, and why it was so meaningful?

Did you experience a let down after you achieved it?

Digging Deeper

Elijah was a prophet of the Lord, sent to bring the message of judgment and redemption to the nation of Israel during a time of severe disobedience.

You should first familiarize yourself with his story, read I Kings 17-18. This will give you a full picture of what Elijah had been through, and why he was so weary.

Read I Kings 19:1-3. Why were Jezebel's words able to discourage him?

She offers death to Elijah.

What was his response?

He was fearful, and ran for his life. IMPORTANT: He left his servant there, which isolated himself.

When do you become easily discouraged? What is *your* response?

Read I Kings 19:4-9a. Throughout Elijah's story, God had given him very specific instructions on where to go. In these verses, where was Elijah going? Did God send him? (Cite a verse to support your answer).

Elijah was going to Beersheba in Judah, the farthest southern region. God did not send him.

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How does God respond to Elijah's discouragement?

The angel touches him. God gives him practical sustenance: food. He doesn't just comfort Elijah, he asks him to do something ("Get up" in this verse can also mean "continue" or "perform" what he had been doing for God.) Through Elijah's discouragement, God does not forsake him.

Fill in the blank:

In my own discouragement, God seems _____.

Finish reading I Kings 19:9b-18. Now, how does God respond to Elijah (aside from his discouraged state)?

- 1. God is asking Elijah to come out from cave, and witness the Lord passing by. Elijah is to be encouraged not by the food God gave him, or the angel sent, but by God himself. (v. 10-14)*
- 2. God gives Elijah the companionship of others (v. 15-18)*

Application

"God has not designed us to live like hermits in a cave. He has designed us to live in friendship and fellowship and community with others. That's why the church, the body of Christ, is so very important, for it is there that we are drawn together in love and mutual encouragement. We're meant to be a part of one another's lives. Otherwise, we pull back, focusing on ourselves—thinking how hard we have it or how unfair others are." (In "Elijah" by Charles R. Swindoll; *this is a great resource for further reading on Elijah*)

How are you living a life of intentional community/friendship with others? Is this community "drawn together in love and mutual encouragement"?

CHALLENGE!

Enjoy intentional community this week. Read Psalm 103 with a friend. Share with each other how these words are an encouragement from God.