



# SMALL GROUP STUDY GUIDE

Week 3 September 5, 2021  
“Now and Then”



## OPENING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, thank you for never leaving us or forsaking us. But as you know we sometimes forget your past faithfulness and we focus on the worries of tomorrow. Father, we don't want to live like that, so would you help us to remember your faithfulness and to put our trust in you with the uncertainty of tomorrow. We pray this in the name of Jesus. Amen.

## SCRIPTURE PASSAGES

### 1 Kings 19:1-18 (NIV)

*Now Ahab told Jezebel everything Elijah had done and how he had killed all the prophets with the sword. <sup>2</sup>So Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah to say, “May the gods deal with me, be it ever so severely, if by this time tomorrow I do not make your life like that of one of them.”*

*<sup>3</sup>Elijah was afraid<sup>[a]</sup> and ran for his life. When he came to Beersheba in Judah, he left his servant there, <sup>4</sup>while he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness. He came to a broom bush, sat down under it and prayed that he might die. “I have had enough, Lord,” he said. “Take my life; I am no better than my ancestors.” <sup>5</sup>Then he lay down under the bush and fell asleep.*

*All at once an angel touched him and said, “Get up and eat.” <sup>6</sup>He looked around, and there by his head was some bread baked over hot coals, and a jar of water. He ate and drank and then lay down again.*

*<sup>7</sup>The angel of the Lord came back a second time and touched him and said, “Get up and eat, for the journey is too much for you.” <sup>8</sup>So he got up and ate and drank. Strengthened by that food, he traveled forty days and forty nights until he reached Horeb, the mountain of God. <sup>9</sup>There he went into a cave and spent the night.*

#### **The Lord Appears to Elijah**

*And the word of the Lord came to him: “What are you doing here, Elijah?”*

*<sup>10</sup>He replied, “I have been very zealous for the Lord God Almighty. The Israelites have rejected your covenant, torn down your altars, and put your prophets to death with the sword. I am the only one left, and now they are trying to kill me too.”*

*<sup>11</sup>The Lord said, “Go out and stand on the mountain in the presence of the Lord, for the Lord is about to pass by.”*

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE CONTINUED (1 Kings 19:1-18, NIV)

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*Then a great and powerful wind tore the mountains apart and shattered the rocks before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind. After the wind there was an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake. <sup>12</sup>After the earthquake came a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire. And after the fire came a gentle whisper. <sup>13</sup>When Elijah heard it, he pulled his cloak over his face and went out and stood at the mouth of the cave.*

*Then a voice said to him, “What are you doing here, Elijah?”*

*<sup>14</sup>He replied, “I have been very zealous for the Lord God Almighty. The Israelites have rejected your covenant, torn down your altars, and put your prophets to death with the sword. I am the only one left, and now they are trying to kill me too.”*

*<sup>15</sup>The Lord said to him, “Go back the way you came, and go to the Desert of Damascus. When you get there, anoint Hazael king over Aram. <sup>16</sup>Also, anoint Jehu son of Nimshi king over Israel, and anoint Elisha son of Shaphat from Abel Meholah to succeed you as prophet. <sup>17</sup>Jehu will put to death any who escape the sword of Hazael, and Elisha will put to death any who escape the sword of Jehu. <sup>18</sup>Yet I reserve seven thousand in Israel—all whose knees have not bowed down to Baal and whose mouths have not kissed him.”*

## INTRODUCTION

We rarely worry about the present. What we really worry about is what may or may not happen in the future. And we usually forget what has happened in the past. We forget about how our worries didn't alleviate our fears. In this week's message, we learned about a person who forgot about God's past faithfulness. His worries drove him to a place emotionally, spiritually, physically, and relationally he should never have gone. And in response, God asked him a very important question that continues to speak to us today.

Just like Elijah, when our worries overwhelm us, we retreat to places we should never go. We forget about God's past faithfulness, because we are too concerned with the uncertainty of the future. God's invitation to us every day is to go back—go back and fully engage with the reality of today, trusting that God is more concerned for your tomorrow than you ever need to be.

## QUESTIONS

1. When have you experienced God's faithfulness in helping you through past difficult circumstances?
2. Finish this statement: When I begin to worry, I... (e.g., am less productive at work; am less sensitive to others; can't concentrate or make wise decisions)
3. In 1 Kings 17-18, God shows his faithfulness to Elijah on several occasions. Yet, later on in his life, Elijah allowed his worries to crowd out the memories of God's past faithfulness. What can you do to remember God's past faithfulness during your present times of worry?
4. Read 1 Kings 19:1-18 on page 1. Elijah had allowed his worries to drive him to places he should never have gone. What is the worst place that worrying has taken you?

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5. God asks Elijah, “What are you doing here?” Elijah had forgotten to recognize the presence of God in his life. And as a result, Elijah had disengaged from his present life. What can you do to remind yourself that God is present in your life?

## **FINAL APPLICATION**

What would your life look like if you trusted God with your tomorrow and did all you could today? How can this group help?