

# praying inward

SACRED INVITATION: A LIFE OF PRAYER · 1 KINGS 19:1-15A · AUGUST 27, 2023 · PASTOR MATT ERICKSON

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*"There he went into a cave and spent the night. And the word of the Lord came to him:  
'What are you doing here, Elijah?'" (1 Kings 19:9)*

## Prayer and the Power of God

- Elijah on Mount with Baal's prophets and the dramatic answer
- Elijah praying for rain and the dramatic answer
- Elijah's experience of God's power throughout his life and ministry

## Running From...

- Elijah running (1 Kings 19:3)
- Elijah's weary prayer (1 Kings 19:4)
- God's unasked provision (1 Kings 19:5-9a)

## Prayer and the Presence of God

- In the cave with God's question (1 Kings 19:9b)
- Elijah's informative response (1 Kings 19:10)
- God's invitation (1 Kings 19:11)
- From prayer as power to prayer as presence (19:11b-12)
- Elijah stepping forth (19:13a)
- God's question re-asked (1 Kings 19:13b)
- Elijah's repeated response (1 Kings 19:14)
- God's invitation to return (1 Kings 19:15a)

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. When have you most needed to hear from God? What did you do to hear from Him?
2. This week we continue our series "Sacred Invitation: A Life of Prayer" by looking at the life of Elijah in 1 Kings 19:1-15a. Whether you are on your own or with others, begin your study in prayer, asking God to speak to you as you study His word.

3. First read 1 Kings 18:16-46. Summarize in your own words what happened in Elijah's showdown with the prophets of Baal in 1 Kings 18.
4. What do you think Elijah learned most about God from that experience?
5. Now read 1 Kings 19:1-15a. Do you get the sense that this is a different Elijah than 1 Kings 18? What do you think happened to him in the midst of this rush of events?
6. When have your circumstances lead you to act in a way that is inconsistent with your beliefs? What happened?
7. In 1 Kings 19:3-9, Elijah rushes by foot to Mt. Horeb, the mountain of God, which is another name for Mt. Sinai (see Exodus 3:1; 17:6; 33:6; Deuteronomy 4:10; 5:2; 1 King 8:9), where God delivered the Ten Commandments to Moses. Why do you think that Elijah rushed to that spot?
8. God asks Elijah a question twice (1 Kings 19:9, 13). What do you think God was trying to get Elijah in touch with in himself?
9. When have you felt out of touch with yourself in prayer? What would you say are things that often get us out of touch with ourselves in prayer?
10. What helps you get in touch with yourself in prayer even as you get in touch with God?
11. What do you notice about the appearance of God and the voice of God in 1 Kings 19:11-13?
12. What does God speak back to Elijah and what does this tell us about what God wants from Elijah after his long journey to Mt. Horeb?
13. What is one specific thing that God is speaking to you through this study? If you are with a small group, discuss that with one another and then take extended time to pray about what you share. If you are studying on your own, write it down, pray about it, and share this with someone during the next few days.

## DIG DEEPER:

- Memorize 1 Kings 19:11-12
- Draw, paint, or letter some or all of 1 Kings 19:1-19. As you do that, prayerfully talk with God about what God wants to speak to you through this story of Elijah.
- Consider reading a book on prayer, such as:
  - Anthony Bloom, *Beginning to Pray*
  - Eugene Peterson, *Answering God: The Psalms as Tools for Prayer*
  - MaryKate Morse, *A Guidebook to Prayer: 24 Ways to Walk with God*