

# Abide in Me

**John 15:4**

**Bible studies for disciples  
who make disciples**



Volume 9 - Number 1

The Week of October 8, 2023

*Unrivaled*

**The Lord, He is God!**

1 Kings 18:1-2; 17-40

Welcome to your Growth Group! LCC's Growth Group (GG) ministry represents the basic building blocks in our commitment to discipleship, community-building, and prayer. Our prayer is that God will use the regular gathering of your GG to deepen your walk with Christ and build up your faith as you share life with one another. The use of *Abide* is an opportunity to reinforce and interact with others over the previous Sunday's message. It is structured around three parts: Observation, Interpretation, and Application.

- *Take a few minutes to [re]introduce yourselves to the group.*

This is our fourth message in a series called *Unrivaled* based on Elijah's life. As we have seen, King Ahab and Queen Jezebel have enticed Israel to split its allegiance between Yahweh and Baal. In her quest to subvert the worship of Yahweh, Jezebel instigated a reign of terror by seeking to eliminate all the prophets of Yahweh, the only Sovereign God.

When we first met Elijah he announced to King Ahab God's judgment on Israel for its idolatry by sending a drought which resulted in a severe famine throughout the entire region. Ultimately, a dramatic confrontation would be necessary to catalyze the nation's repentance and need for change. As our passage opens, God tells Elijah to show himself to Ahab.

**OBSERVATION** (*What does the passage say?*)

Before your GG gathers, read through the passage at least twice and perform the following prompts:

- Place brackets around the timeline-reference in verse 1.
- In the left margin of verses 1-2 write: *God's Command to Elijah.*
- Underline the phrase *the word of the Lord* (v. 1, 31) and *at your word* (v. 36).
- Double underline God's promise to Elijah in verse 1.
- Circle and draw a line connecting *troubling* and *troubled* in verses 17-18.
- Circle and draw a line connecting *all Israel* in verse 19 to *all Israel* in verse 20.
- In the left margin of verse 21 write: *Elijah's Challenge.*
- In the right margin of verse 21 write: *Matthew 6:24.*
- Underline the phrases *Elijah came near* (v. 21), *came near to him* (v. 30), and *the prophet came near* (v. 36).
- Circle the word *limping* (v. 21) and the phrase *limping around* in verse 26.
- In the left margin of verses 22-29 write: *Elijah Taunts Baal.*
- In the left margin of verses 30-34 write: *Elijah Repairs the Altar of God.*
- In the left margin of verses 36-37 write: *Elijah Prays.*
- In the left margin of verse 40 write: *Elijah's Command to Israel.*
- Double underline the people's response in verse 39. In the right margin write: *Yahweh is God. Yahweh is God!*

1 After many days the word of the Lord came to Elijah, in the third year, saying, "Go, show yourself to Ahab, and I will send rain upon the earth." 2 So Elijah went to show himself to Ahab. Now the famine was severe in Samaria.

16 So Obadiah went to meet Ahab, and told him. And Ahab went to meet Elijah. 17 When Ahab saw Elijah, Ahab said to him, "Is it you, you troubler of Israel?" 18 And he answered, "I have not troubled Israel, but you have, and your father's house, because you have abandoned the commandments of the Lord and followed the Baals. 19 Now therefore send and gather all Israel to me at Mount Carmel, and the 450 prophets of Baal and the 400 prophets of Asherah, who eat at Jezebel's table."

20 So Ahab sent to all the people of Israel and gathered the prophets together at Mount Carmel. 21 And Elijah came near to all the people and said, "How long will you go limping between two different opinions? If the Lord is God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him." And the people did not answer him a word.

22 Then Elijah said to the people, "I, even I only, am left a prophet of the Lord, but Baal's prophets are 450 men. 23 Let two bulls be given to us, and let them choose one bull for themselves and cut it in pieces and lay it on the wood, but put no fire to it. And I will prepare the other bull and lay it on the wood and put no fire to it. 24 And you call upon the name of your god, and I will call upon the name of the Lord, and the God who answers by fire, he is God." And all the people answered, "It is well spoken." 25 Then Elijah said to the prophets of Baal, "Choose for yourselves one bull and prepare it first, for you are many, and call upon the name of your god, but put no fire to it." 26 And they took the bull that was given them, and they prepared it and called upon the name of Baal from morning until noon, saying, "O Baal, answer us!" But there was no voice, and no one answered. And they limped around the altar that they had made. 27 And at noon Elijah mocked them, saying, "Cry aloud, for he is a god. Either he is musing, or he is relieving himself, or he is on a journey, or perhaps he is asleep and must be awakened." 28 And they cried aloud and cut themselves after their custom with swords and lances, until the blood gushed out upon them. 29 And as midday passed, they raved on until the time of the offering of the oblation, but there was no voice. No one answered; no one paid attention.

30 Then Elijah said to all the people, "Come near to me." And all the people came near to him. And he repaired the altar of the Lord that had been thrown down. 31 Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, to whom the word of the Lord came, saying, "Israel shall be your name," 32 and with the stones he built an altar in the name of the Lord. And he made a trench about the altar, as great as would contain two seahs of seed. 33 And he put the wood in order and cut the bull in pieces and laid it on the wood. And he said, "Fill four jars with water and pour it on the burnt offering and on the wood." 34 And he said, "Do it a second time." And they did it a second time. And he said, "Do it a third time." And they did it a third time. 35 And the water ran around the altar and filled the trench also with water.

36 And at the time of the offering of the oblation, Elijah the prophet came near and said, "O Lord, God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, let it be known this day that you are God in Israel, and that I am your servant, and that I have done all these things at your word. 37 Answer me, O Lord, answer me, that this people may know that you, O Lord, are God, and that you have turned their hearts back." 38 Then the fire of the Lord fell and consumed the burnt offering and the wood and the stones and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. 39 And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces and said, "The Lord, he is God; the Lord, he is God."

40 And Elijah said to them, "Seize the prophets of Baal; let not one of them escape." And they seized them. And Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon and slaughtered them there.

Discussion Starter: *High-stakes battles are often box office gold. What is so exciting about a showdown between long-standing rivals?*

**INTERPRETATION** (*What does the passage mean?*)

1. God commanded Elijah to go meet with the person who had been hunting him down to kill him. So far in our study, how many different times has God directed Elijah to move? What's the connection between the Word of God and our obedience?

2. When Ahab meets Elijah, he calls him "you troubler of Israel." Why would Ahab make this accusation? What does this say about the blinding nature of sin?

3. What's the purpose of this confrontation between Elijah (God's prophet) and the prophets of Baal?

4. To *limp* in Hebrew literally means to sink or collapse. How does living with divided loyalties actually lead to collapse?

5. How do the details of the story reinforce its purpose? Consider:

- Elijah's taunting (27)
- The extremes to which the prophets of Baal go to get Baal's attention (28-29)
- The extra water poured on God's altar (35)
- The simplicity of Elijah's prayer (36-37)
- The fire of the Lord consuming everything (38)
- The peoples' response to God's power (39)
- The slaughter of the prophets of Baal (40)

6. What does Elijah's prayer reveal about the simplicity and power of prayer?

7. Why was it necessary for the prophets of Baal to be destroyed?

