

First after Trinity – 1 Kings chapter 19, verses 1 – 16:-

Verses 1 – 2:- To understand the background to this section of the story of Elijah it is necessary to read the whole of chapter 18. Ahab, the King of Israel at that time was a weak man, much influenced by his pagan wife Jezebel. (1 Kings chapter 16, verses 29 - 33). After 3 years of drought Elijah, sent by the Lord God, challenges the pagan prophets of the god Baal to prove to the people which is the true God. - the One who speaks by fire! (remember Pentecost!).

Verse 4:- After the ‘spiritual high’ of his experience on Mount Carmel, Elijah hits rock bottom! He runs away from Jezebel and takes refuge in the southern country of Judah.

Verses 5 – 8:- In answer to his prayer, the Lord provides food to give strength for the immediate future. Elijah seeks the presence of the Lord God at the place where His will was revealed to the great prophet Moses through the Commandments. Remember that Moses met with the Lord God on Sinai / Horeb - read Genesis chapter 33, verses 12 – 22 and chapter 34, verses 1 – 9.

Verses 9 – 10:- Elijah’s complaint! Who would be a prophet? *“I have done all this for you Lord and look, nothing has changed!”* One description of a prophet that I have heard likens them to the nut between a set of nut crackers. One half of the nutcrackers is the holiness and righteousness of the Lord God; the other half the darkness and sinfulness of the world. The prophet is squeezed between the two!! a good description of what Elijah was feeling at this time.

Verses 11 -12:- Compare the description in these verses with Psalm 29. *“The God of glory thunders”*. The Lord God is in complete control of nature, but after a tremendous demonstration of His power Elijah recognised the *“still small voice”* as that of the Lord God Himself.

Verses 13 – 18:- Note that Elijah *“wraps his face in his mantle”* before he goes out to meet the Lord God. He then repeats his complaint! It is important to notice that the Lord does not answer that in any way! Rather He gives Elijah a new ministry; that of anointing future leaders, kings for Israel and Syria and Elisha as a successor for himself as prophet. He also receives encouragement in the assurance of a continuing faithful remnant of the Lord’s people.

Points for prayer:-

For the prophetic ministry of the people of God!

For the continuing faithful ministry of the leaders of God’s people, remembering that although the secular leadership of nations is seemingly godless yet the Lord God is sovereign!

For ourselves when we meet with discouragements, especially any which follow a rich spiritual experience! Up on the mountain-top with the Lord and then down into the valley of despair. It does happen!

1) *Thou Christ of burning, cleansing, flame,
Send the fire!
Thy Blood-bought gift today we claim,
Send the fire!
Look down and see this waiting host,
Give us the promised Holy Ghost,
We want another Pentecost,
Send the fire!*

2) *God of Elijah, hear our cry;
Send the fire!
To make us fit to live or die,
Send the fire!
To burn up every trace of sin,
To bring the light and glory in,
The revolution now begin,
Send the fire!*

Original words by William Booth, Salvation Army 1894