

ELIJAH NOTES

Week 6

You made it ladies! I want to thank you for the time and energy you spent preparing every week to meet with the ladies in your group. I appreciate it more than you know.

Day 1

In this day we look at the state of Elijah after the Mount Carmel showdown. Two key ideas stood out to me: The importance of rest and the reality of misplaced expectations.

Rest is a natural rhythm of life- God demonstrated that when we read the creation account in Genesis 2:2. In order to serve God our best, we must build in time for rest (that rhymes). God does not want us to serve Him out of exhaustion or obligation- that only leads to burn-out and a bad attitude. And a bad attitude can totally negate the work that you are trying to accomplish for the Lord! So be sure to factor in times of rest when you are making your plans. Do fewer things, but do them well.

In regards to expectations, God has taught me a few things that I will share with you in case you find them helpful.

- I do not need to be God in someone's life. My job is to plant spiritual seeds and create an environment to let the Holy Spirit work. When I try to force someone's spiritual progress - I have ended up frustrating and/or offending someone. That does not mean that I water down truth, I just rely on God to be God in their lives.
- I may not see the completion of God's work in someone. But I need to be sure to do my part when the "baton" is passed to me regarding that person.
- People can reach maximum absorption levels at times. There may be lots of truth that you can share, but be sensitive to overwhelming someone with too much at one time. They may need time to process what they are currently dealing with. As said before, God will pace their progress based on what they are juggling in life.
- God's grace is powerful and plentiful to cover my shortcomings. If I have done my best but am worried that it was not enough, I need to trust God's grace to fill in all of the gaps where I lack.
- When I let God be God, it takes the pressure off. I can point others toward Him and His word, but ultimately God does the work in someone's life, because it is only God that has the wisdom and strength to be what that person needs. I want the person to have a God sized whole in their heart, not an "Alisa" sized hole in their heart.
- My life needs to be an example of the truth I claim to believe. That is the most compelling evidence I have at my disposal to share with someone.



Central**WOMEN**

Day 2

In this day, we focus in on our safeguarding our thought life from Satan's attacks. I never realized that in 1 Kings 19:4, Elijah prayed that "God would take his life away," and essentially, God did what Elijah asked. Elijah was soon instructed to appoint Elisha as his successor, and after a few years, Elijah was taken off into heaven (see 2 Kings 2:1-14- he may not have died, but he certainly retired!)

This day is such a good reminder to hide God's word in our hearts and meditate on it day and night (Joshua 1:8) so that we will live a life obedient to Scripture. The world's messages come hard and fast, and will destroy us spiritually and emotionally, if we do not use Scripture to combat it. If we do recognize that we will lose the battle in our minds every time.

Day 3

How awesome is the first sentence of this day: "One of the most meaningful aspects of our redemption in Christ is that you and I can never reach a place so far away that we are beyond the reach of our Father's love, grace and mercy." How can we ever be sad again after knowing that? Who in your life needs to know that?

I hope the ladies enjoyed looking up the character studies on page 201. These examples are in the Bible for us to learn from! Biblical narratives are ingenious because they instead of God just giving us a list of do's and don'ts for life, biblical narratives are a chance for us to put ourselves in the place of the characters, and ask, "What would I do in this circumstance?" Through this exercise we are reminded that God meets us right where we are at. We do not need to have all the answers. We simply need to trust that God will provide the answers when the time is right. How different would our state of mind be if we focused our energy into trusting Him than worrying or manipulating a situation?

Day 4

I really liked this day. We are experts at rationalizing our sin and/or our self-pitying, resentful thoughts (at least I am!). I love what Priscilla says at the bottom of page 207. "The trajectory of a heart that is turned inward on itself cannot help but take a downward path." We would be wise to realize this about ourselves and do something about it!

God is someone you can trust to bear your heart in front of. And good news, He is the only one who can offer real help. It was eye opening to realize how many questions God asks His creation! I think He does that so that we can articulate and understand the state of our own hearts. That way, we can see where the root of our heart problem exists. God is so patient and kind. He will lead the way and give us the direction and courage to follow His plan. Our job is to be authentic, honest and humble before Him.

Day 5

This is a great way to end the study - full of anticipation for the future. God does not always operate the same way every time, so do not put Him in a box or think you are smarter than Him. Simply pray, pray, pray and obey, obey, obey and see what God does through you in this world for the glory of His kingdom! We have every reason to be excited and hopeful!