



GROW IN THE WORD

Elijah & the LORD

an inductive group study

The questions in this study are based on the [Grow in the Word Women's Workshop](#) led by Colleen McFadden at Bronx Household of Faith on Sept. 12, 2020.¹ Although some of the questions here are a bit more detailed than those in her handouts, they are largely applications of her threefold emphasis: *Context, Structure, Jesus Christ*.

This study is intended to model one way to apply the approach taught in the workshop, in this case, to Old Testament narrative. You don't need to answer every question; the goal is to grow in your understanding of the *context, structure, connection to Christ, and application* of the section of 1 Kings you're studying. Please refer to your notes/handouts from the workshop for clarification or more direction.

By God's grace, your knowledge of and therefore your love for the God of Scripture will grow deeper, richer, and stronger as you seek to understand what he reveals in the book of 1 Kings. God bless your study together!

Structure of this Booklet

This booklet divides **1 Kings 16:29–19:21** into four sections. Each section has four main steps, except the last session, which adds one final wrap-up for the whole study. The four steps are:

- Reading the Word in its **context** (A)
- Reading the Word in its **structure** (A)

- Reading the Word in light of **Jesus Christ** (B)
- **Applying** the Word you've read (B)

→For a 4-meeting study, discuss all four steps of a section in one meeting.

→For an 8-meeting study, discuss the first two steps (labeled A) of a section in one meeting and the last two steps (labeled B) in the next meeting.

Obviously your group is free to adjust this "schedule" as needed!

Studying as a Group

The most effective approach to using this study is probably for each member to work through the questions individually throughout the week(s), and then to get together with the group to compare notes. If that's not possible you can certainly work through the study together! If you do that, you might find it necessary to only answer the most relevant questions from each part of the session.

Simplifying the Study

An alternative to using this booklet would be to use the more basic questions included in the appendix on page 27. Your group can simply get together, read the passage for the week, and work through those questions together. You could always use the questions in the main part of this booklet as a supplement or for personal study.

¹ Some questions are also taken/adapted from David Helm's *One-to-One Bible Reading: A Simple Guide for Every Christian*, 86–87.

Some notes before you start studying...

Old Testament Narrative

Old Testament narrative is the 'story' part of the Old Testament. If you look at the table of contents of an English Bible, Old Testament narrative covers Genesis through Esther. Also called 'history', it recounts the story of God's people from the beginning of creation through their many high and low points to their scattering and exile. The narrative passages read very much like other narratives or stories, and so share many of the same literary features: plot, characterization, setting, and the like. (One-to-One Bible Reading, 59)

Old Testament narrative relates lessons about our God and our salvation by telling the story of God's actual revelatory relationship with his people in the past. Because God doesn't change, what was revealed about him then relates to us now. But what is revealed about him is largely revealed in story-form. So, in order to best understand the teaching of narrative passages, we need to understand the story they tell. One tool for understanding stories is plot analysis.

Plot Analysis

Many storylines (plots) follow the same basic pattern ("a narrative arc") which includes the following steps. Identifying these steps in a given story can help you identify its main themes and main point:

Step 1: Problem – A goal to be pursued or a problem to be faced.

Step 2: Rising Action – Changes that take place as a consequence or as a response to the goal or problem.

As characters seek to achieve the goal or solve the problem, "conflict" or tension arises when it isn't easily solved for one reason or another (sometimes it *is* easily solved, in which case the story is not going to be super-dramatic). This rising conflict is what we mean by "rising action."

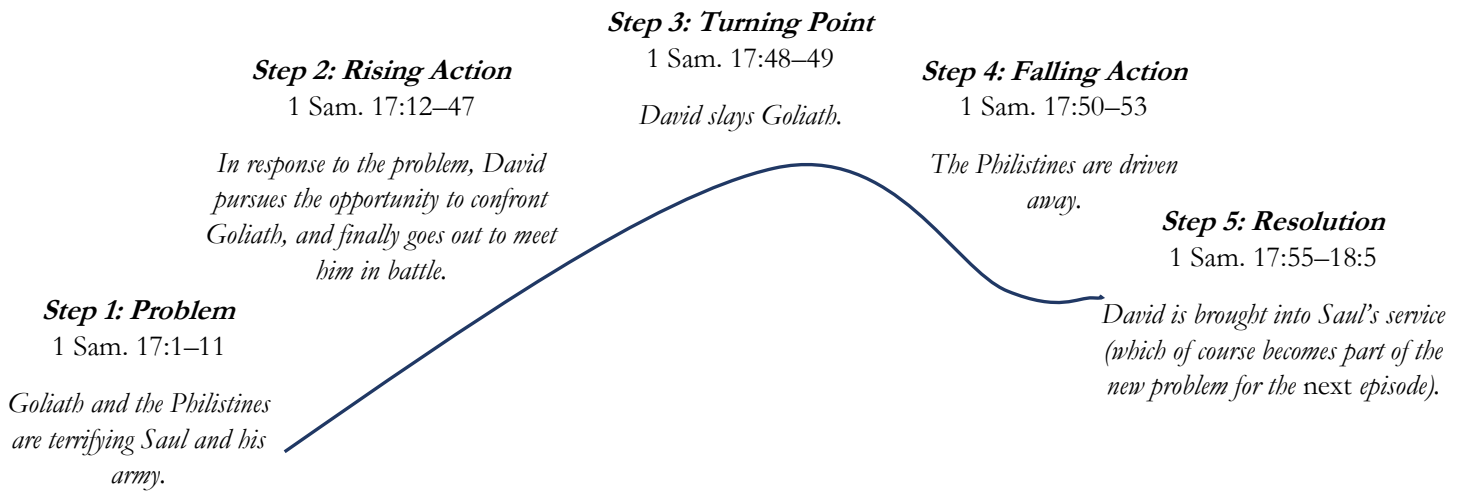
Step 3: Turning Point – The point of the story where the goal is achieved or the problem substantially solved, OR where it becomes clear the goal *won't* be achieved/the problem won't be solved.

Step 4: Falling Action – What happens as a consequence of the turning point.

Step 5: Resolution – The final state of affairs, the "new normal" at the end of the episode. This sometimes becomes the new Step 1 for the next episode.

One thing to keep in mind for this Study is that there are episodes (shorter plots) within the bigger section on Elijah. The episodes each have their own "narrative arc," but the bigger story itself combines these into its own narrative arc.

Here's an example of a narrative arc based on the story of David and Goliath:



Old Testament Prophets

One more thing to note as you study this book is that Elijah is a prophet. Prophets have a particular role in the Old Testament. They are human messengers speaking God's word for God's people. While some of the prophets do predict the future, that is never their main function. Especially in 1 Kings, the prophets make God's will known to God's people by calling them to live in the light of God's covenant promises, commands, and warnings. This very often takes the form of calling God's wayward people to repentance.

As God's messengers, the prophets also perform actions that represent God to his people. This combination of speaking and acting as God's representative is one way the Old Testament prefigures Christ—the ultimate prophet who does not just speak and act *for* God, but *as* God (Hebrews 1:1–4). Very unlike Christ, however, the Old Testament prophets are also finite and sinful. The prophets therefore should never be mistaken for God, though the words they speak in his behalf are totally trustworthy, as the story of Elijah shows.

SECTION 1: 1 KINGS 16:29–17:24

Reading the Word in its context

{Session 1A}

Pray.

- 1) *Literary context:* If you have time, ideally you should read the entire book of 1 Kings on your own! The book of Deuteronomy also contains important background to the problems Israel faces/causes in 1 Kings. But that's a lot of reading on short notice! If it's not realistic for you to do that, try to read the chapter or two before and after the passage for this study to get a sense of the context. Then...
 - a. Read the entire section of 1 Kings you'll work through over the course of this entire study (**1 Kings 16:29–19:21**). Make basic notes of the following:
 - i. Who are the main characters? Describe them each in a few words.
 - ii. Where are the main locations?
 - iii. What are the main problems faced by the characters?
 - iv. List a few words that seem on first read to be main *themes* in this story.
 - v. What strike you as the main *turning points* in the story? (You can always revise your list!)
- 2) *Historical Context: 1 Kings 16:29–17:24*
 - a. Which characters are introduced? Are they introduced in ways that clue the reader in to their relationship with God and his people? If so, how so?
 - b. Are there any words or places you need to look up? Do any of the *names* of the characters have particular significance or meaning? (You could look them up in other parts of the Bible or refer to a Bible dictionary or commentary.) Briefly note what you discover.
 - c. Think about the connection between Ahab's idolatry and the famine, in light of other Old Testament texts like Exodus 34:11–16; Lev 26:18–20; Deut 28:20–24. Describe the reasons for the famine below:

Read **1 Kings 16:29–17:24** (once out loud, then once quietly on your own).

PLOT

- 1) What are the different “scenes” of this passage? Where do they take place? Is there any chance the places mentioned might be significant? Note what that significance might be, if anything.

The end of chapter 16 establishes the context/background for the events that unfold beginning in chapter 17... It also helps establish the setting for the story.

- 2) What is/are the problems introduced as regards Israel as the story gets started? This is the basic set-up for the passage as a whole.
- 3) What is/are the problems/obstacles introduced as regards *Elijah*?
- 4) What is/are the problems/obstacles introduced as regards *any other characters*?
- 5) What are repeated phrases/topics that tie together the different scenes? (Hint: sometimes the *endings* of scenes repeat key ideas and draw our attention to a major theme of the story).

Each one of the scenes in chapter 17 has its own narrative arc, and they combine together something like this:



- 6) List all the turning points you see in this section and the verses they occur (you can plot them above or make your own arc below! Next to each turning point, list who/what contributes the definitive resolution to the problem faced in that scene.
- 7) Optional: Fill in the following chart for chapter 17.

	Scene 1	Scene 2	Scene 3
Goal/Problem			
Rising Action			
Turning Point			
Falling Action			
Resolution			

- 8) How are all the turning points related? Do they build on each other in some way or are they seemingly unrelated episodes? If they are related to each other, this creates the *rising action* of this whole section.
- 9) What is the final turning point (the climax) of this section? Who/what contributes the definitive resolution to the problems faced?
- 10) What is the falling action? (Hint: it's just a couple verses)
- 11) What is the resolution (the new "normal" that sets us up for the next section)? In other words, briefly describe how things stand at the end of this section. If there are any unresolved problems, either old or new, list them.

CHARACTERS

- 12) What do you learn about the main characters in this section (including God)? How does the author describe them? How do they describe themselves (if applicable)?
- 13) List any ways that the characters/events may possibly have symbolic meaning.
- 14) What surprises are there?

MEANING

- 15) Are there any "editorial" comments from the *author* about the events in the narrative? How do these comments illuminate what is happening?
- 16) What recurring elements show up in this section (e.g., food, water, fire, etc.)? How does this relate to the points being made?
- 17) Does someone in the narrative learn something or grow in some way? How? What does this person learn?
- 18) What stands out most clearly about the people in these scenes?
- 19) What stands out most clearly about God in these scenes?
- 20) Sum up the meaning of this passage in your own words, using the following to get you started:
"The author wants his readers to know that...and to respond by..."

Read the following excerpt:

Many of the Old Testament narratives have a particular function in relation to the whole Bible. They articulate the promise of Jesus Christ, the coming savior. Often through typology or illustration, Old Testament narrative lays out a specific path toward a [prophet, priest, and king] of God's people who will both sacrifice himself for them and rule them in eternal glory (One-to-One Bible Reading, 59–60).

- 1) Are there any characters who prefigure or contrast Christ's role in ruling, saving, or leading God's people? How does God's work through them point forward to Jesus by comparison or by contrast?
- 2) Are there any "gospel principles" about how Christ relates to his enemies and to his people that are modeled or taught in this section?
- 3) Are there any events that relate to biblical themes that get "illuminated" by the teachings, miracles, and saving work of Christ? Do any of Elijah's words or works find their "fulfillment" in Christ? Write some of your thoughts here.
- 4) Are any verses from this section quoted or referred to in the New Testament? (Check cross references in a reference Bible).
- 5) How does this passage point forward more generally to what God is going to do in the future, if at all? Does it prophesy or anticipate Jesus Christ in some way not covered above?
- 6) Re-label the parts of your narrative arc from question 6 in the previous section, this time making **God** the primary subject whenever possible.
 (For example, I would revise my David and Goliath chart this way: **Rising Action:** *God* raises up David. **Turning Point:** *God* defeats Goliath through an unlikely shepherd boy. **Falling Action:** *God* gives his people victory over the Philistines. Etc.)
- 7) Try to sum up the meaning and application of this passage with reference to Christ by using the following phrase to get started; include Christ in your summary sentence:
"God wants you to know that...and to respond by..."

Reflect on and then discuss answers to some or all of the following questions:

- 1) How is my/our own situation similar to or different from the Israelites in Elijah's day?
- 2) How is my/our own situation similar to or different from Elijah's?
- 3) How is my/our own situation similar to or different from that of the widow and her son?
- 4) How does this passage challenge (or confirm) my understanding of God and his ways?
- 5) How does this passage point me to Jesus's sufficiency for me? How does it point to his authority over me?
- 6) Is there someone's example I'm intended to follow? What might that look like in my situation?
- 7) How does this passage call on me to change the way I live, think, or feel? The way I pray?

What are ways I can pursue this?

- 8) How does this passage lead me to worship?
- 9) Sum up the application of this passage using the blank to identify those whom the passage most directly addresses. Build on your answer to question 7 from the previous section.

*"God wants those who _____ to know that... **and to respond by...**"*

Pray.

SECTION 2: 1 KINGS 18:1–19

Reading the Word in its context

{Session 2A}

Read **1 Kings 18:1–19**. Pray.

1) *Literary context:*

- a. What has happened just prior to the section you are reading?
- b. How does this passage relate to what preceded it? (Is it continuing the story? Is it a side story? Is there a sudden shift in tone? Etc.)
- c. Does this section compare/contrast with any previous section in particular?
- d. Are other scenes or themes of the Old Testament mentioned or alluded to in this text? What part do these 'memories' play in the passage, if so?

2) *Historical Context:*

- a. Have time and location changed? Describe the changes.
- b. Record any additional information we learn about the historical situation in general.
- c. Which characters are introduced or referenced in this section? Are they introduced in ways that clue the reader in to their relationship with God and his people? If so, how so?
- d. Are there any people, words or places you need to look up? (You could look them up in other parts of the Bible or refer to a Bible dictionary or commentary.) Briefly note what you discover.

PLOT

- 1) What are the different “scenes” of this passage? Where do they take place? Is there any chance the places mentioned might be significant? Note what that significance might be, if anything.
- 2) What is/are the goals/problems introduced as regards each of the following characters?

God

Elijah

Ahab

Israel

Obadiah

Anyone else?

- 3) What are repeated phrases/topics that tie together the different parts of this section (if any)?
- 4) Try to identify the parts of the narrative arc for this section:
 - a. **Main** Goal/Problem
 - b. Rising Action (what obstacle(s) get in the way of the goal being accomplished?)
 - c. Turning Point (when is the main obstacle overcome?)
 - d. Falling Action
 - e. Resolution (might be same as the falling action). In other words, briefly describe how things stand at the end of this section. If there are any unresolved problems, either old or new, list them.

CHARACTERS

- 5) What do you learn about the main characters in this section? How does the author describe them? How do they describe themselves (if applicable)?
- 6) List any ways that the characters/events may possibly have symbolic meaning.
- 7) Are any of the characters presented as opposites? What stands out as their major differences?
- 8) What surprises are there?

MEANING

- 9) Are there any “editorial” comments from the *author* about the events in the narrative? How do these comments illuminate what is happening?
- 10) What recurring elements show up from previous sections (e.g., food, water, fire, etc.)? How does this relate to the points being made?
- 11) Does someone in the narrative learn something or grow in some way? How? What does this person learn?
- 12) What stands out most clearly about the people in these scenes?
- 13) What stands out most clearly about God in these scenes?
- 14) Sum up the meaning of this passage in your own words, using the following to get you started:
“The author wants his readers to know that...and to respond by...”

- 1) Are there any characters who prefigure or contrast Christ's role in ruling, saving, or leading God's people? How does God's work through them point forward to Jesus by comparison or by contrast?

- 2) Are there any "gospel principles" about how Christ relates to his enemies and to his people that are modeled or taught in this section?

- 3) What details if any prefigure truths about Christ's relationship to his people and their relationships with each other?

- 4) Are there any events that relate to biblical themes that get "illuminated" by the teachings, miracles, and saving work of Christ? Do any of Elijah's words or works find their "fulfillment" in Christ? Write some of your thoughts here.

- 5) Are any verses from this section quoted or referred to in the New Testament? (Check cross references in a reference Bible).

- 6) How does this passage point forward more generally to what God is going to do in the future, if at all? Does it prophesy or anticipate Jesus Christ in some way not covered above?

- 7) Try to sum up the meaning and application of this passage with reference to Christ by using the following phrase to get started:
"God wants you to know that...and to respond by..."

Reflect on and then discuss answers to some or all of the following questions:

- 1) How is my/our own situation similar to or different from those in the story?
- 2) How does this passage challenge (or confirm) my understanding of God and his ways?
- 3) How does this passage point me to Jesus's sufficiency for me? How does it point to his authority over me?
- 4) Is there someone's example I'm intended to follow? What might that look like in my situation?
- 5) How does this passage call on me to change the way I live, think, or feel? The way I pray?
What are ways I can pursue this?
- 6) How might this passage particularly help a Christian who is...
 - straying?
 - idle?
 - fainthearted?
 - weak?
 - suffering?

(These categories are mostly drawn from 1 Thessalonians 5:14.)

Which is most relevant to you right now?

- 7) How does this passage inform or direct how I relate to
 - my church?
 - other believers?
 - the world?
- 8) What are ways my church community should be challenged and/or encouraged through this? How can I/we contribute to making that happen?
- 9) Sum up the application of this passage using the blank to identify those whom the passage most directly addresses. Build on your answer to question 7 from the previous section.

*"God wants those who _____ to know that... **and to respond by...**"*

Pray.

SESSION 3: 1 KINGS 18:20–46

Reading the Word in its context

{Session 3A}

Read **1 Kings 18:20–46**. Pray.

1) *Literary context:*

- a. What has happened just prior to the section you are reading?
- b. How does this passage relate to what preceded it? (Is it continuing the story? Is it a side story? Is there a sudden shift in tone? Etc.)
- c. Does this section compare/contrast with any previous section in particular?
- d. Are other scenes or themes of the Old Testament mentioned or alluded to in this text? What part do these 'memories' play in the passage, if so?

2) *Historical Context:*

- e. Have time and location changed? Describe the changes.
- f. Record any additional information we learn about the historical situation in general.
- g. Which characters are introduced or referenced in this section? Are they introduced in ways that clue the reader in to their relationship with God and his people? If so, how so?
- h. Are there any people, words or places you need to look up? (You could look them up in other parts of the Bible or refer to a Bible dictionary or commentary.) Briefly note what you discover.

PLOT

- 1) What are the different “scenes” of this passage? Where do they take place? Is there any chance the places mentioned might be significant? Note what that significance might be, if anything.

- 2) What are repeated phrases/topics that tie together the different parts of this section (if any)?

- 3) Try to identify the parts of the narrative arc for this section:
 - a. **Main** Goal/Problem

 - b. Rising Action (what obstacle(s) get in the way of the goal being accomplished?)

 - c. Turning Point (when is the main obstacle overcome?)

 - d. Falling Action

 - e. Resolution (might be same as the falling action). In other words, briefly describe how things stand at the end of this section. If there are any unresolved problems, either old or new, list them.

- 4) Is there any resolution to problems introduced in earlier sections? Briefly note them here if so.

CHARACTERS

- 5) What do you learn about the main characters in this section? How does the author describe them? How do they describe themselves (if applicable)?

- 6) List any characters/events/actions that seem to have particularly symbolic meaning (in other words they make a statement about overarching truths, not just something in the story).

- 7) Are any of the characters presented as opposites? What stands out as their major differences?

- 8) What surprises are there?

MEANING

- 9) Are there any “editorial” comments from the *author* about the events in the narrative? How do these comments illuminate what is happening?

- 10) What recurring elements show up from previous sections (e.g., food, water, fire, etc.) How does this relate to the points being made?

- 11) Does someone in the narrative learn something or grow in some way? How? What does this person learn?

- 12) What stands out most clearly about the people in these scenes?

- 13) What stands out most clearly about God in these scenes?

- 14) What possible significance do you see in the *order* of these scenes? In other words, why does God do what he does in the *order* we find here?

- 15) Sum up the meaning of this passage in your own words, using the following to get you started:
“The author wants his readers to know that...and to respond by...”

- 1) Are there any characters or events that prefigure or contrast Christ's role in ruling, saving, or leading God's people? How does God's work through them point forward to Jesus by comparison or by contrast?
- 2) Are there any "gospel principles" about how Christ relates to his enemies and to his people that are modeled or taught in this section?
- 3) Are there any events that relate to biblical themes that get "illuminated" by the teachings, miracles, and saving work of Christ? Do any of Elijah's words or works find their "fulfillment" in Christ? Write some of your thoughts here.
- 4) Are any verses from this section quoted or referred to in the New Testament? (Check cross references in a reference Bible). What about this Old Testament narrative do those New Testament references draw our attention to?
- 5) How does this passage point forward more generally to what God is going to do in the future, if at all? Does it prophesy or anticipate Jesus Christ in some way not covered above?
- 6) Re-label the parts of your narrative arc from question 3 in the previous section, this time making **God** the primary subject whenever possible.
(For example, I would revise my David and Goliath chart this way: **Rising Action:** *God* raises up David. **Turning Point:** *God* defeats Goliath through an unlikely shepherd boy. **Falling Action:** *God* gives his people victory over the Philistines. Etc.)
- 7) Try to sum up the meaning and application of this passage with reference to Christ by using the following phrase to get started:
"God wants you to know that...and to respond by..."

Reflect on and then discuss answers to some or all of the following questions:

- 1) Are there any characters in the story or the context who we can relate to (hint, believers are all three!)
 - as sinners?
 - as sufferers?
 - as saints? (that is, as God's special people?)

- 2) How does this passage challenge (or confirm) my understanding of God and his ways?

- 3) How does this passage point me to Jesus's sufficiency for me? How does it point to his authority over me?

- 4) Is there someone's example I'm intended to follow? What might that look like in my situation?

- 5) How does this passage call on me to change the way I live, think, or feel? The way I pray?

What are ways I can pursue this?

- 6) What are ways my church community should be challenged and/or encouraged through this? How can I/we contribute to making that happen?

- 7) How does this passage lead me to worship?

- 8) Sum up the application of this passage using the blank to identify those who the passage most directly addresses. Build on your answer to question 7 from the previous section. (You can write more than one application if you want!)

*"God wants those who _____ to know that... **and to respond by...**"*

Pray.

SESSION 4: 1 KINGS 19:1–21

Before you read...

Pray.

This week's passage includes the well-known yet often misinterpreted "still, small voice" in 19:12. Read the following excerpt for some possible interpretations. Remember as you seek to come to your own interpretation to keep in mind the major themes in the prior chapters as well as the immediate context of verse 12. It is helpful to remember that Elijah's feelings in this chapter are a response to the seeming failure of the contest on Mount Carmel to deter Ahab and Jezebel.

This theophany, or appearance of the Lord, reminds readers of Exod. 33:18–22, where Moses desires to see God's glory and is rewarded by being allowed to view 'the back' of the Lord's splendor. God places Moses in the rock and covers him with a divine 'hand' to protect him. Here, Elijah waits for God's word through tearing wind, ground shaking earthquake, and roaring flame. The Lord does not speak, however, through these natural phenomena. Certainly Elijah has experienced God's sovereignty over nature, and has benefited from miraculous fire, but what he needs now is a definitive word from the Lord.

He receives this word in 'a gentle whisper.' Perhaps the Lord attempts to teach Elijah not to expect always the miraculous and wondrous deliverance from problems. Maybe God wants 'to signify to the prophet that He did not work in His earthly kingdom with the destroying zeal of wrath, or with the pitiless severity of judgment.' Or the Lord may simply try to explain to Elijah that he works in small ways at this time. God speaks in a quiet voice here to a prophet drained of strength. The next passage will reveal still further the Lord's willingness to labor with relatively limited human resources. Regardless of the meaning of the natural wonders, however, it is God's word alone that will heal the prophet in this moment of crisis. (Paul House, 1, 2 Kings, The New American Commentary, 223–224)

Reading the Word in its context

{Session 4A}

Read 1 Kings 19:1–21. *Pray.*

- 1) *Literary context:*
 - a. What has happened just prior to the section you are reading?
 - b. How does this passage relate to what preceded it? (Is it continuing the story? Is it a side story? Is there a sudden shift in tone or focus? Etc.)
 - c. Does this section compare/contrast with any previous section in particular?
 - d. Are other scenes or themes of the Old Testament mentioned or alluded to in this text? What part do these 'memories' play in the passage, if so?
 - e. Are there other scenes or themes in the New Testament that seem to recall this text? What are some of the similarities between those scenes and this one?

2) *Historical Context:*

- a. Have time and location changed? Describe the changes.

- b. Record any additional information we learn about the historical situation in general.

- c. Which characters are introduced or referenced in this section? Are they introduced in ways that clue the reader in to their relationship with God and his people? If so, how so?

- d. Are there any people, words or places you need to look up? (You could look them up in other parts of the Bible or refer to a Bible dictionary or commentary.) Briefly note what you discover.

PLOT

- 1) What are the different “scenes” of this passage? Where do they take place? Is there any chance the places mentioned might be significant? Note what that significance might be, if anything.

- 2) What are repeated phrases/topics that tie together the different parts of this section (if any)?

- 3) Try to identify the parts of the narrative arc for this section (be specific by including the relevant verse(s):
 - a. **Main** Goal/Problem introduced

 - b. Rising Action (what obstacle(s) get in the way of the goal being accomplished? How are they resolved to continue the movement to the main turning point?)

 - c. Turning Point (when is the main obstacle overcome?)

 - d. Falling Action

 - e. Resolution (might be same as the falling action). In other words, briefly describe how things stand at the end of this section. If there are any unresolved problems, either old or new, list them.

- 4) What if anything stands out as particularly interesting/surprising about the way the story unfolds?

- 5) Is there any resolution to goals/problems introduced in earlier sections? Briefly note them here if so.

CHARACTERS

- 6) What do you learn about the main characters in this section? How does the author describe them? How do they describe themselves (if applicable)? What surprises are there?

- 7) List any characters/events/actions that seem to have particularly symbolic meaning (in other words they make a statement about overarching truths, not just something in the story).

- 8) Are any of the characters presented as opposites? What stands out as their major differences?

- 9) What surprises are there?

MEANING

- 10) Are there any “editorial” comments from the *author* about the events in the narrative? How do these comments illuminate what is happening?

- 11) What recurring elements show up from previous sections (e.g., food, water, fire, etc.) How does this relate to the points being made?

- 12) Does someone in the narrative learn something or grow in some way? How? What does this person learn?

- 13) What stands out most clearly about the people in these scenes?

- 14) What stands out most clearly about God in these scenes?

How does God respond to Elijah’s problems? Do any of God’s questions/phrases seem to have particular teaching significance?

- 15) How does this final section of our study “wrap-up” or bring some closure/hope to the problems introduced back at the beginning?

- 16) Sum up the meaning of this passage in your own words, using the following to get you started:
“The author wants his readers to know that...and to respond by...”

- 1) Are there any characters or events that prefigure or contrast with Christ's work in ruling, saving, or leading God's people? How does God's work through those characters or events point forward to parts of Jesus's person or ministry? List similarities and differences.
- 2) What might God intend to show us through the fact that Elijah weakens so much at the end of this bigger story of 1 Kings? What are ways you see his weakness/limitation in this passage? How is Christ the more faithful Elijah?
- 3) Are there any "gospel principles" about how Christ relates to his enemies and to his people that are modeled or taught in this section?
- 4) Are there themes in this passage which get "illuminated" by the teachings, miracles, and saving work of Christ? Do any of Elijah's experiences find their "fulfillment" in Christ? Write some of your thoughts here.
- 5) How is the present-day believer in a *better* situation than Elijah's, given the power and work of the Holy Spirit on this side of the cross? Include some New Testament verses that are relevant to this question.
- 6) Are any verses from this section quoted or referred to in the New Testament? (Check cross references in a reference Bible). What about this Old Testament narrative do those New Testament references draw our attention to?
- 7) How does this passage point forward more generally to what God is going to do in the future, if at all? Does it prophesy or anticipate Jesus Christ in some way not covered above?
- 8) Re-label the parts of your narrative arc from question 3 in the previous section, this time making **God** the primary subject whenever possible.
(For example, I would revise my David and Goliath chart this way: **Rising Action:** *God* raises up David. **Turning Point:** *God* defeats Goliath through an unlikely shepherd boy. **Falling Action:** *God* gives his people victory over the Philistines. Etc.)
- 9) Try to sum up the meaning and application of this passage with reference to Christ by using the following phrase to get started:
"God wants you to know that...and to respond by..."

Reflect on and then discuss answers to some or all of the following questions:

- 1) Are there any characters in the story or the context who we can relate to (hint, believers are all three!)
 - as sinners?
 - as sufferers?
 - as saints? (that is, as God’s special people?)

- 2) How does this passage challenge (or confirm) my understanding of God and his ways?

- 3) How does this passage point me to Jesus’s work for me? How does it point to Jesus’s sufficiency for me? How does it point to his authority over me?

- 4) Is there someone’s example I’m intended to follow? What might that look like in my situation?

- 5) How does this passage call on me to change the way I live, think, or feel? The way I pray?

What are ways I can pursue this?

- 6) What are ways my church community should be challenged and/or encouraged through this? How can I/we contribute to making that happen?

- 10) How does this passage inform or direct how I relate to
 - God?
 - my suffering?
 - my church?
 - other believers?
 - the world?

- 7) How does this passage lead me to worship?

- 8) Sum up the application of this passage using the blank to identify those who the passage most directly addresses. Build on your answer to question 7 from the previous section. (You can write more than one application if you want!)

“God wants those who _____ to know that...and to respond by...”

Pray.

- 1) Try to make a narrative arc of the entire passage you've studied. Under the resolution, be sure to note any unresolved questions that may get resolved in future passages, but also to note what's changed after this story.
- 2) If you had to summarize the main point of the whole passage of 1 Kings 16:29–19:21 (**to the author's original audience**), what would you say?
- 3) How would you rephrase that main point to Christians living in the 21st Century U.S.?
- 4) List the truths demonstrated in this story...
 - a. about God
 - b. about God's people
 - c. about God's Son
 - d. about God's enemies
- 5) What means of growth will you pursue in response? What truths from 1 Kings will you rest in and how? What truths from 1 Kings must you reorient your life around and how?
- 6) Complete the following sentences with as much detail from the story as possible:
 - a. Like Elijah, I am...
 - b. Unlike Elijah, I am not...
 - c. Like Elijah, Christ...
 - d. Unlike Elijah, Christ...
- 7) Elijah's prayers in chapter 19 are prayers of discouragement and complaint. In response, the LORD responds with *miraculous provision, supernatural revelation, and a reminder of the broader community.*

Write a brief prayer of *complaint to God about difficulties/problems you often struggle to accept*. Then write a letter to yourself from the perspective of Elijah, encouraging and challenging you with the things he learned through his experience. He might even point you forward to Christ with his letter.

Pray.

APPENDIX: SIMPLIFIED QUESTIONS

(Adapted from *One-to-One Bible Reading*, by David Helm, pp. 86–87)

For each segment of the study, you can use the following questions to guide your personal or group study:

Context:

- What has happened so far in the narrative? Have there been any major events, characters or themes?
- What has happened just prior to the section you are reading?

Observation:

- What do you learn about the main characters in this section? How does the author describe them? How do they describe themselves?
- Is time or place significant in the events that happen in the passage?
- Is there a conflict or high point in the passage?
- Do you think there is a main point or theme in this section of the story?
- What surprises are there?

Meaning:

- Are there any “editorial” comments from the author about the events in the narrative? How do these comments illuminate what is happening?
- Does someone in the narrative learn something or grow in some way? How? What does this person learn?
- How does the passage point forward to what God is going to do in the future? Does it prophesy or anticipate Jesus Christ in some way?
- How could you sum up the meaning of this passage in your own words?

Application:

- How does this passage challenge your understanding about who God is and what he is like?
- How does this passage point you to Jesus’s sufficiency for you? How does it point to his authority over you?
- Is there some attitude you need to change? What is it? What would change look like?
- How does this passage call on you to change the way you live?

