

Selah of Elijah

Discussion Questions

1. How would you describe the current pace of your life? What practical steps can you take to build regular *Selah* pauses—spiritual time-outs—into your daily or weekly routine?
2. The message encourages us to "pop the hood" and check our internal state. What is one area of your life right now where you need God's truth to move from mere head knowledge to actual heart transformation?
3. James 5:17 reminds us that Elijah was "a man of like passions just as we are." How does seeing Elijah's struggle with fear and emotional fatigue change the way you view your own spiritual highs and lows?
4. James 5 outlines a healthy spiritual community where people share joy, pray in sickness, and confess sins to one another. How easy or difficult is it for you to be open with other believers when you are struggling, and what holds you back?
5. *Shalom* is described as an inexplicable peace during life's storms rather than just the absence of trouble. Can you share a time when you experienced God's peace in the middle of a hard situation? What helped keep your hope anchored?
6. Elijah's walk was defined by simple obedience: going when God said "Go," and staying when God said "Stay." Are you currently in a "Go" season or a "Stay" season, and what makes that season challenging for you?
7. God allowed the Brook of Cherith to dry up to prompt Elijah's next step. Has God ever allowed a temporary stream in your life (a job, a comfort zone, a season of ease) to dry up? How did He use that transition to redirect you?
8. The widow of Zarephath was asked to step out in faith and bake Elijah a cake first, despite having almost nothing left. Where is God asking you to step out in faith and trust His provision when your own capacity or resources feel depleted?
9. Elijah ran for his life into the wilderness immediately after his massive spiritual triumph on Mount Carmel. Why do you think we are often so vulnerable to fear, exhaustion, or spiritual attack right after major victories or high points?

10. When Elijah was exhausted in the wilderness, God met him with gentleness and a still, small voice. What noisy, competing voices do you need to turn down this week so you can hear God speaking to your current situation?

Summary

In our ongoing spiritual journey, it is vital to cultivate a practice that invites us into a continuous conversation with Jesus, allowing Him to speak directly to our hearts through His Word. A powerful framework for this is the concept of **Selah**—a word found throughout the Psalms that invites us to stop, pause, and think.

Applying this *Selah* rubric to scripture allows us to slow down and ask fundamental questions about our lives:

- Where am I finding my strength right now?
- Where do I turn for encouragement?
- What is causing me to level
- Where am I finding a sense of awe that causes me to stop in my tracks, reorient my life, and press the reset button?
- Where do I turn for hope when I find myself in hopeless and helpless situations?

Selah is a spiritual time-out. It is an opportunity to reorient ourselves away from the competing, noisy voices of the world and tune in to the still, small voice of God. It pushes us past mere head knowledge and intellectual study into heart-level self-examination. It encourages us to "pop the hood" and examine what is truly going on inside us, asking whether God's truth is having the transformational impact on our hearts that it is meant to have.

Elijah: A Man Just Like Us

When we look at the prophet Elijah, it is easy to view him like a comic book superhero—an untouchable, Teflon prayer warrior with flowing robes who prays and stops the rain for three years, prays again for a downpour, and calls down fire from heaven. But if we only focus on his mountain-top victories, we miss the profound spiritual lessons found in his deepest valleys.

In James 5:17, scripture reveals a grounding truth: *Elijah was a man of like passions just as we are.*

Despite the staggering miracles, Elijah was fully human. He faced the same emotional crashes, internal struggles, misplaced priorities, and fear that we experience today.

James 5 outlines the rhythms of a healthy, praying community:

Is anyone in trouble? Let them pray.

Is anyone happy? Let them sing songs of praise.

Is anyone sick? Let them call the elders of the church to pray over them and anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord. The prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well, and if they have sinned, they will be forgiven.

Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed.

James concludes this section by reminding us: *"The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much."* There is immense power in the prayer of someone who recognizes that their strength and righteousness are not their own, but belong entirely to Christ.

From the Seeds of Selah to the Fruit of Shalom

When you plant the seeds of *Selah* in your life, you begin to harvest the fruit of **Shalom**. Shalom is more than just a quiet moment; it is the peace of God that surpasses human understanding. It is the inexplicable peace that holds you steady when you receive a hard phone call or an unexpected medical diagnosis. It causes people to look at you in the middle of a storm and ask, "How are you still standing right now?"

The answer is simple: your hope is anchored in Jesus, and you are surrounded by people calling you upward into the call of God. This is precisely what we signed up for when we responded to the gospel—to find real freedom from guilt and condemnation, to have a Savior, and to experience a life that makes sense even when the world around us is falling apart.

The Pattern of Obedience: Go and Stay

Throughout 1 Kings 17, 18, and 19, a clear pattern defines Elijah's walk with God: **the Lord says "Go," and Elijah goes; the Lord says "Stay," and Elijah stays.**

When Elijah confronted King Ahab and declared that it would not rain for three years because of Israel's idolatry, he instantly became public enemy number one. God then instructed Elijah to go and hide at the Brook of Cherith.

The Brook of Cherith was not a pleasant, picturesque park; it was located at the bottom of a deep, dark, isolated ravine. Living at the bottom of a ravine meant limited sunlight, total isolation, and basic survival. Yet, God provided water from the stream and sent ravens to bring him food.

This season highlights key truths about spiritual obedience:

1. **Keep doing the last thing God told you to do until He gives you a new direction.** Obedience means staying faithful in the quiet, hidden places until God

says move.

2. **God sometimes allows our temporary streams to dry up.** When the brook at Cherith eventually dried up due to the drought, it forced Elijah back into conversation with God to receive his next instruction.

God then sent Elijah to Zarephath—which happened to be the hometown of Queen Jezebel, right in the belly of the beast. God informed Elijah that a poor widow there would provide for him. When Elijah arrived, he found a destitute woman gathering sticks to bake one final meal with her last handful of flour and drop of oil so that she and her son could eat it and die.

In an act of extreme faith, Elijah asked her to make him a small cake first, promising that God would continuously supply her flour and oil throughout the famine. God honored her faith, keeping her jars full.

While we can read 1 Kings 17 in just a few minutes, these events unfolded over three long years. We do not always know what chapter of God's story we are currently living in, but taking a *Selah* pause reminds us to reset our trust in God regardless of the timeline.

Facing the Counterattack

The spiritual enemy often launches counterattacks on the heels of our greatest victories. Immediately following Elijah's monumental triumph on Mount Carmel—where God answered by fire, proving He alone is God, and the false prophets of Baal were defeated—Ahab reported everything to Jezebel.

In 1 Kings 19, Jezebel sent a death threat to Elijah. After witnessing God's miraculous power firsthand, Elijah became terrified and ran for his life into the wilderness.

This shift reveals how vulnerable we can be after peak spiritual moments. The enemy whispers that our victories are our own doing, leading to pride, or he strikes at the underpinnings of our soul with fear and isolation.

When those spiritual crashes happen, the call remains the same: step back, take a *Selah* moment, reorient your eyes toward heaven, and listen for the still, small voice of the Lord calling you back to Himself.