

***Thirty Years of Following the Spirit in Worship* — September 9 & 10, 2017**
Follow-up Bible Studies

Written by Maggie Baxter

Day One: 1 Kings 18:16-40

- What did Ahab think of Elijah (17)? How did Elijah defend himself (18)? Describe his plan (19-24). In verse 21, why do you think the people were silent? Why do you think they agreed to Elijah's plan?
- Describe the worship of Baal (25-26). What did Elijah's taunts provoke the prophets to do (27-29)? Meditate on the phrase: "there was no response, no one answered, no one paid attention." What must it be like to not experience God's presence in worship?
- How did Elijah set the scene for worshipping the Lord (30-35)? Which elements here move you the most? Why? Summarize Elijah's prayer (36-37). This was not simply a spectacle; he longed to turn people back to God. Is this one of the main functions of worship in your own life? In your church? Pray it would be so.
- How did the Lord respond to Elijah's sacrifice (38)? What chain reaction did this cause (39-40)? Read Deuteronomy 4:28-31. Pray this comes to pass for loved ones in distress and far from God.

Day Two: Psalm 42

- How does the psalmist describe his desperation and humiliation (1-3)? What does he remember (4)? This is someone whose aim is to make God his center, his everything. How is the importance and centrality of worship evident in your words, actions, etc.?
- Summarize the way the psalmist begins speaking to his own soul (5-7). Meditate on the phrase "deep calls to deep." This gets to the heart of what it means to worship God in spirit, the inmost part of us. Reflect on your deepest and most soulful experience of worshipping the Lord. Ask him to renew and multiply the moment.
- Describe the psalmist's re-emphasis on his feelings of desperation and distance from the Lord (9-10). Despite these feelings, what truths does he recall about God's presence (8)? In concluding this poem, what are his final remarks to his soul (11)? Speak to your own soul now, exhorting it to worship the Lord "in spirit and truth."

Day Three: Psalm 86

- What does David need from the Lord (1-7)? In speaking of both God and himself, how does David justify these needs (1-7)? Which of these pleas most resonates with you? Why?
- How does David esteem the Lord (8, 10)? How will the nations inevitably respond to the unparalleled greatness of God (9)? Do you at all see this happening today? Pray for an increase.
- Why does David want to learn God's ways (11)? Why does he want an undivided heart (11)? How will he praise the Lord (12)? What is his testimony of God's love (13)? How do these verses convey that heartfelt worship is something that happens "in spirit and truth"? Pray for increasing knowledge of the Lord via Bible study, etc., and that it would expand your heart for worship.
- What does David briefly say about his enemies (14)? He then writes more about God's goodness and continues to petition him. Summarize these final verses (15-17). How can you persist in worshipping the Lord even when you're under attack?

Day Four: Matthew 6:5-18

- Summarize Jesus' "do's and don'ts" of prayer (5-15). Imagine him giving similar advice for worship. When worshipping with others, how self-conscious are you? Do you ever worship (sing, kneel, raise your hands, etc.) in private? Why or why not? For those times when worship feels like going through the motions or merely the babbling of many words, pray that an outpouring of Holy Spirit power and truth would fall on you and fill you with passion.
- Describe Jesus' "do's and don'ts" for fasting (16-18). Whether it be prayer, fasting or worship, he despises hypocrisy and phoniness. When it comes to how you worship the Lord, ask "your father, who sees what is done in secret," what he observes. What is he speaking to your heart? Read John 4:23-24 and pray that's the sort of worshipper you'd be.

Day Five: Colossians 2:16-23

- What does Paul say is no basis for judging believers (16)? Why (17)? In verse 16, if he were writing this letter today, what examples would he give? Reflecting on verse 17, how is your life centered around not shadows but the reality found in Christ? How does this liberate you from the judgment of others?
- Who should we not let disqualify us (18)? Why (18-19)? Here, losing "connection with the head" means losing connection to Christ. When are you prone to feel disconnected from Jesus? Consider whether "idle notions" that "puff you up" are at play. Repent and pray against this gulf, asking God to knit you in even tighter to his presence, to a place of true humility.
- Describe human-made rules (21-22). What liberates us from them (20)? How do the rules appear (23)? What's their reality (23)? Just as Jesus liberated the Samaritan woman in John 4, he frees us from restrictions on place, time, style, etc. and even our past when we worship him! Respond to him with thanks and praise.