

Why Are You in This Place?

Where are you in life? Do you like where you are? Is the place you find yourself centered in God's plan & purpose for your life? If not, are you willing to move? In today's Templates of Truth, we find the prophet Elijah being confronted by God with these same penetrating questions, and how it motivated him to get back on track with God's will, plan and purpose for his life.

In I Kings 18:16-46, Elijah had just staged one of the most famous show-downs recorded in Scripture - he, the lone prophet of God, against 850 prophets of Baal & Asherah. The challenge took place atop Mount Carmel with God & Elijah emerging as the easy victors. Among the life lessons we learn from this event is that no matter how many the enemy numbers, when it is you and God, you are the majority and you will win because God fights the battle for you. Such a grand display of the power of God should have left Elijah with a faith that was strong and confident. Instead, he feared for his life and fled at the first sign of retaliation (I Kings 19:1-3).

The place where Elijah finally came to rest was under a juniper tree a day's journey into the wilderness from Beersheba (19:4). Several words come to mind that describe the character of that place, and may also qualify the character of the place you find yourself currently in life. It was an **improper place**. The ministry God anointed and set Elijah apart to do was not under a tree in the wilderness. Elijah had removed himself from the arena of God's will for his life, and that made the place he indwelt an improper place. Perhaps you have done the same. You have allowed selfish ambition, personal greed and various fears & insecurities to drive you away from the places of Godly sanction. You are not where you should be because the place you indwell is a place of disobedience, unfaithfulness and God doesn't accept or approve of the place you have chosen. You are with the wrong people, involved in the wrong kinds of activities, and the Holy Spirit is convicting you of your insubordination. You are in an improper place.

It was also an **impoverished place**. There were no ravens or widows to provide vital sustenance and it left Elijah in physical, emotional and spiritual depletion. He was so weak he could not travel and all he wanted to do was sleep. He was so depressed and despondent that all he wanted to do was die. He was so shamed & humiliated that he could see no value or worth in continuing his prophetic ministry. His drive, passion and motivation for life & service to God were gone. Have you ever been there in life? A place completely void of any self-worth, self-confidence or motivation to do anything positive or constructive? A place so impoverished that you just wanted to give up, lie down and die? The wilderness of a person's life is a dry, desolate, impoverished place.

Elijah also found himself in an **imprisoned place**. He felt rejected, isolated, abandoned and all alone. He saw the failure of God's people as a rejection of his personal ministry and concluded that he was the only one left who truly believed in God; and look where that got him! He ran away from the threat, but the fear and stress of the situation were still very much a part of the

new geography. He was imprisoned to his own failure and guilt. That distorted his perspective about God, God's people and the role of God's call on his own life. Many believers are prisoners of their own choices and failures in life. Addictions and strongholds grip their desires and demand fulfillment. They feel trapped in the weakness of their flesh and don't know how they will ever break free from the things that shackle their lives, families, careers, finances and health. Life feels like a prison from which there is no escape.

Well, God doesn't want any of His children to dwell in an improper place, an impoverished place, or an imprisoned place. He wants us to be in an **important place**. There is no place of any greater importance than the place of His will, plan and purpose for your life. In His grace, He came to minister to Elijah, giving him food and rest for the journey back to God's place for him. God graciously revealed His presence to Elijah and restored to him the faith he needed to continue in his ministry & calling. God will do the same for you and me. We just have to come to grips with honestly answering the question, "Why are you in this place?" Then we must get up, get out, get back and get on with God's program.

That's today's Templates of Truth. This is your Bible teacher, Rick Smith, reminding you to attend church this Sunday for Bible study and worship, pray for one another, and always strive to abide in Christ. Until next time, have a blessed and glorious day in the Lord Jesus.

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