**SJHD Weekend Away (21st – 23rd March 2025)**

*‘Even as long-established Christians, we can still struggle to believe in the ongoing power of God’s Word, and in the value and effectiveness of prayer; when circumstances of life are tough and signs of God’s work seem few. The prophet Elijah is a powerful example of a man ‘just like us’ (James 5:17), who seems a solitary voice, in dark times, whilst he continues to hold out the Word of life, accompanied by heartfelt prayer. Our study of 1 Kings 17-19 promises to be a time of great encouragement for us all’.*

**Talk Outlines and Discussion Questions**

**Talk 1:** The God who withholds and gives freely (1 Kings 17:1-16)

The incomparable power of the Word of God…

1. To show up the impotence of false gods, v. 1.

2. To bring heavy discipline on His rebellious people, v. 1.

3. To provide creatively for the needs of His prophet, vv. 2-8.

4. To call to life whoever exercises faith in His Word, vv. 9-16.

Discussion Questions

1) How does God’s word in Elijah show up the impotence of Baal? In what ways have you found that declaring Jesus as the living God helps unmask the emptiness of the idols people trust in?

2) What form does the Lord’s provision for His prophet take? Have you known a similar experience of hardship in witnessing to Christ the Word, whilst being sustained by the tender creative care of God?

3) How did the widow exercise faith in YHWH’s word? What lesson regarding her is Jesus teaching us (Luke 4:24-26)?

**Talk 2:** The God who provides and perplexes (1 Kings 17:17-18:19)

1. The widow – perplexed and grieving, learns to trust the Lord’s word.

2. The prophet – pleading his weakness, is answered in prayer.

3. Ahab – facing years of drought, is hardened in heart.

4. Obadiah – showing godly fear, is comforted by his master.

Discussion Questions

1) Can you think of personal examples when, like the woman, God has led you through pain and grief, in order to cause you to trust more closely His word of truth?

2) Do you have a real and regular prayer life? Are you heartfelt in your requests to the Lord?

3) Are there occasions, looking back, when you suffered consequences to your wrongdoing, without learning at the time the spiritual lessons that accompanied them?

**Talk 3:** The only true God (1 Kings 18:20-46)

1. Tracing the marks of false religion.

2. Seeing the Character of the true God.

3. Reflected in His servant.

Discussion Questions

1) What characteristics of false religion emerge so clearly from mount Carmel? What makes them so destructive? Where do you see them at work in people around you?

2) How is the Character of the true God so very different to that of idols? Where would you say you run the risk of “limping” between Him and the worship of other things?

3) How do Elijah’s own words and actions reflect love for his Master? What do you find particularly inspiring in his example?

**Talk 4:** The God who restores and opens a way (1 Kings 19:1-20)

1. To Jezreel (abandonment and apostasy), vv. 1-2.

2. To Beersheba and the wilderness (despondency and recovery), vv. 3-7.

3. To Horeb (refocusing and recommissioning), vv. 8-18.

Discussion Questions

1) If you already know this part of Elijah’s narrative, how have you tended to interpret this chapter?

2) Do Ahab and Jezebel’s reactions surprise you? Have you seen in your experience similar examples of people you know, who harden their heart to clear and privileged revelation?

3) How does the Lord move Elijah from a state of personal despondency to the point of recommissioning?

4) How does remembering the Lord’s covenant faithfulness across all generations inspire us to keep persevering in obedience and service of Christ?