

# GOD'S *Compassionate* HEART

1 Kings 18:40-19:8 | Dr. Stephen G. Tan

## DISCUSS

The Bible teaches that God is BOTH equally a God of justice and God of compassion. His holiness and justice does not preclude Him from being compassionate and merciful, and He demonstrates His compassionate heart in ways that emphasizes His love, His desire to show mercy, and His natural inclination to show pity. Let us look at three ways God evidences His compassion in our daily lives. Read 1 Kings 18:40-19:8.

### Background: Where is God's compassion?

Our passage takes place after Elijah had his showdown with 450 prophets of Baal on Mt. Carmel. It was there where God showed Himself sovereign, living, and great, with fire from heaven to consume the sacrifice offered to Him by Elijah.

- What did Elijah ask the people of Israel to do after that showdown, which was the punishment for all false prophets as mandated in the Old Testament from God?
- What does it tell you about God's justice?
- What other characters of God does Scripture tell us about Him (Hebrews 4:16)?

### God's forgiving restoration evidences His compassion (v. 41-45)

- How did God forgive and restore His people from the consequence of their turning away from Him for a long time?
- What is the significance of rain in that context? Was God under obligation to bring back the rains to the people after they turned away from Him for so long?
- How does God deal with you when you fall into sin?

- When you had repented from your sin, how did you know that He has forgiven you and restored you to a right standing before Him and others?
- Does God's restoration after forgiveness always come immediately once you confess? In what ways do you see His forgiveness and restoration tangibly every day in your life?

### God's patience with our thoughts and actions evidences His compassion (v. 46-19:1-3)

- What caused Elijah to be spiritually depressed and pray to God to take his life after being on a spiritual high?
- What did he forget that God did for him during the last three years of severe drought? What was God's response when he was expressing his anger and frustrations?
- In the midst of going through something that caused you to be angry and frustrated, have you ever asked God, "Where are you, Lord?" "Why don't You seem to do anything?" "Why would You allow something like this to happen to me?" "Do You still care for me?"
- Do you recognize God's patience in your life, which is a picture of His compassion towards you? What does it look like? Has Psalm 86:15 ever become real to you?

### God's gentleness in caring for our needs evidenced His compassion (v.5-6).

- How did Elijah experience God's gentle care as an evidence of His compassion?
- Do you believe that while you are sleeping and resting, God is at work (Psalm 3:3-6)?
- Share how you have personally experienced that while you've been resting during the time that something was heavy in your heart, God did the work and you found out that your problem had been resolved.

## **REFLECT**

God is compassionate and it is shown clearly in the life of Christ. In fact, Jesus' whole ministry could be summed up in this one word—COMPASSION. When was the last time you experienced or felt the compassion of God in your life? When was the last time you showed compassion for another person?

## **PRAY**

Heavenly Father, You are indeed the God who is compassionate. Thank You that You have clearly shown me the evidence of Your compassion in forgiving and restoring me from the sins that I have committed. Thank You, Father, for Your patience with my thoughts and actions, and Your gentle care to meet my needs. You are truly a God of compassion, as is evident in my daily life, and I can't thank and praise You enough, Lord. I pray in Jesus' name. Amen.