

# Connect360: Fire From Heaven

May 26, 2023

- *Lesson 11 in the Connect360 unit “How Great Is Our God: Passing the Faith Along” focuses on 1 Kings 18:30-39.*

When we come to God in our brokenness, we are in ruins and need to be restored. Yet, instead of restoring our lives so we can come to God, we come to God so he can restore our lives.

Elijah rebuilt the altar, but the text is unclear on exactly how he restored it. One possibility is he took the same broken stones and put the pieces back together. Yet, a more likely possibility is that he rebuilt it with new stones. In fact, according to verse 31, Elijah took 12 stones (one for each tribe) and built an altar to God from them. The text seems to imply these are new stones that represent a new day in the life of Israel and the renewal of the worship of God.

Second Corinthians 5:17 says, “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!” God is in the business of making all things new, and God transforms us into altars that worship him when we refocus on who he is and come to him—just as we are.

Then, Elijah dug a trench around the newly formed altar. The trench was enough to hold two *seahs* of grain seed. When converted to weight, it is estimated that this was approximately 24 pounds, which is a little under three gallons of water. This may not seem like a lot of water for a trench, but the nation was in a severe, three-year famine. Water was precious and scarce. So, when Elijah dug a trench for water around the altar, he did so with great faith.

Elijah arranged the wood on the altar, prepared the bull and set it on the wood, and then called for four large jars of water to be poured over the altar three times. The water soaked the sacrifice and the wood, running down and filling up the trough. These 12 washings of the altar (four jars three times each) represented the washing of the 12 tribes as they refocused on God in worship.

When we refocus on God, we find that his forgiveness washes away our failures, immorality and wickedness. God accepts every “tribe” as his own people. All are welcome to come in our brokenness to be restored as we refocus our attention on worshipping the Lord.

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