

## **1 Kings 19:4-8<sup>iv</sup> <sup>v</sup> with Psalm 34: 1-8<sup>vi</sup>**

Elijah went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a solitary broom tree. He asked that he might die: "It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life, for I am no better than my ancestors." Then he lay down under the broom tree and fell asleep. Suddenly an angel touched him and said to him, "Get up and eat." He looked, and there at his head was a cake baked on hot stones, and a jar of water. He ate and drank, and lay down again. The angel of the LORD came a second time, touched him, and said, "Get up and eat, otherwise the journey will be too much for you." He got up, and ate and drank; then he went in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights to Horeb the mount of God.

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### **<sup>iv</sup> About 1 Kings 19:4-8**

Today's reading is from the Elijah cycle of stories. Elijah was a prophet to Israel, sent to call the unfaithful kings back to the covenant. Elijah confronts King Ahab's endorsement and even sponsorship of Baal worship. Baal was believed to be the god of fertility, particularly in the forces of rain and harvest. Elijah comes in judgment on this infidelity to the covenant and prophesies a drought, powerfully demonstrating God's sovereignty (17:1).

The drought ends at God's command, as demonstrated through Elijah's defeat of the Baal priests. Ahab's wife, Jezebel, seeks vengeance on the prophet, who flees for his life in utter despair.

Elijah's exhaustion and hunger drive him to the brink of collapse, at which point an angel feeds him, touches him and encourages him on his journey to Horeb, the mountain of God (also called Mt. Sinai). The story acknowledges the depression and despair that can come on the heels of great successes and points, in the end, to the presence of God as the only source of strength.

### **<sup>vi</sup> Psalm 34:1-8<sup>vi</sup>**

I will bless the LORD at all times; \*  
his praise shall ever be in my mouth.

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I will glory in the LORD; \*  
let the humble hear and rejoice.

Proclaim with me the greatness of the LORD; \*  
let us exalt his Name together.

I sought the LORD, and he answered me \*  
and delivered me out of all my terror.

Look upon him and be radiant, \*  
and let not your faces be ashamed.

I called in my affliction and the LORD heard me \*  
and saved me from all my troubles.

The angel of the LORD encompasses those who fear him, \*  
and he will deliver them.

Taste and see that the LORD is good; \*  
happy are they who trust in him!