

Elijah, Go To Work

One night last month I was telling Albert Jay Nock how difficult it had become to make people understand the full implications of a free economy. How even after they had read several books of Henry George there still lurked in their minds the thought that some regulation of man by that undefined divinity, the State, was necessary, even beneficial. How the tentacles of collectivistic thought have so fastened themselves on the public mind that there seemed, to me at least, no hope of freeing it.

Perhaps Mr. Nock detected a despairing what's-the-use-of-it-all. For he said: "Remember the story of Elijah. You can't quit."

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I read the story of Elijah. The prophet had got into a rumpus with Ahab, a king of Israel who had forsaken Jehovah for Baal, apparently at the behest of his heretical wife, Jezebel. The theological controversy led to much murder. In fact, all the other prophets of Israel were slain. And Elijah, the only one left, felt so despondent over the whole affair—and particularly because the children of Israel had forsaken the truth for a false god—that he ran away into the wilderness, and he asked the Lord to take his life too. "For I am not better than my fathers."

Elijah had quit—quit cold on his job. But the Lord (or was it that inner voice that pipes up when we go haywire?) wouldn't let him. He told Elijah to get back to his work, gave him some directions, and convinced him with this

argument: "I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him."

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So, those are the ones we are working for—"the seven thousand" who never have and never will accept the modern Baal of regimentation. Where are they? Only the Lord knows, for we find some in high places and some in low places. Among the Sanhedrin and among the unlearned, in the pent houses and in the ditches dwell the seekers of truth. Who are they? The half of that mystical two per cent who reply to our circulars and have the predilection for freedom that prompts an honest inquiry of its philosophy.

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When our friends and loved ones snicker at our enthusiasm, when our publicans and our literati proclaim the supremacy of Baal, when the hungered mob roars out its liturgy of slavery, when the powerful preach the doctrines of more power and more privilege—when, indeed, the struggle for freedom seems most hopeless, let us remember the Lord's "seven thousand." Though we know them not, they will come to us, and be of us, because they are the saving Remnant who throughout time have been the prophets of truth.

So, out of the wilderness, Elijah, and get to work!