

1 Kings 19.10-18

SPIRITUAL DEPRESSION

Faith on the Line / God's People in Time of Crisis

God's Servant Elijah – hero of the faith / one of best known Prophets

SINGLE-MINDED Commitment / CHALLENGE & CONFRONT SIN

NT Counterpart – John the Baptist – radical, dynamic, charismatic

THORN IN THE SIDE OF King Ahab and Queen Jezebel of Israel

Faithful Messenger of a Righteous God

WITHHELD RAIN FOR THREE YEARS AS JUDGMENT on Sin

“Elijah was a man just like us. He prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the land for three and a half years. Again he prayed, and the heavens gave rain, and the earth produced its crops.” James 5.17,18

NOT POPULAR – ROYAL EDICT ON HIS LIFE – KEPT SAFE

BEST KNOWN EVENT – Showdown on Mt. Carmel

Challenged Priests of Baal – popular god of the people – ANSWER FIRE

HIGH DRAMA – HOT ACTION – HOLY VICTORY

Ch. 19 – Another Mountain – HOREB – Sinai? – hiding in a Cave

ROLLER COASTER OF EMOTIONS – very high to very low

Isaiah 40.31 “Those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, and they will walk and not be faint.”

STRANGE ORDER HERE – If I wrote Bible, probably re-arrange!

GOD DID NEED MY HELP IN WRITING BIBLE – Infinite Wisdom

Ch. 18 – Elijah had “eagle's wings experience” HIGH AS A KITE

Awesome Victory – Triumph of Righteous God – Destruction of Evil

NOT NORMAL EXPERIENCE – once in lifetime, maybe never

RARELY WE “run and do not grow weary” – SPIRITUAL SPRINT
Unusual time of God’s Activity in and Through Us

Many Americans LAST WEEK –Rescue Workers – Leaders and Soldiers

Look back at Mile Markers in Life – Raise your Ebenezer of Testimony

Most of Life is “Walking and not being Faint” DAILY ROUTINE

Getting up in Morning – Trying to find some clean clothes to wear

Coming home at Night – Trying to think of some creative meal to cook

LONG DISTANCE OBEDIENCE IN THE SAME DIRECTION

Walk of Faith – HIGH POINT OF SPIRITUAL MATURITY

“walk by the Spirit” / “walk in Love” / “walk in the Light”

CAN YOU LIVE A REAL HONEST CHRISTIAN LIFE IN THIS WORLD?
DAY BY DAY? WEEK BY WEEK? YEAR BY YEAR?

WILLIAM CAREY WHO DID SO MUCH IN 40 YRS IN INDIA

“I can plod, I can persevere in any definite pursuit. To this I owe everything”

IF YOU GET DOWN, HOW CAN YOU GET BACK UP AGAIN?

CULTURE SHOCK – adjustment to new place - normally 3 STAGES

1) Euphoria – OVERLY POSITIVE - Everything is NEW & WONDERFUL

Kazakhstan is so much better than America – better this, nicer that, all Great!

2) Depression – OVERLY NEGATIVE – Everything here stinks, I quit!

3) Normalcy – EVEN KEEL – BALANCED VIEWPOINT

Some great things here / Some not so great – Struggle to Live Normally

NOT GETTING OUT OF 2ND STAGE – CULTURE SHOCK
CONTINUOUSLY DEPRESSED AND NEGATIVE – BLUE FUNK

Elijah is Clearly Down – DEEP BLUE FUNK

19.3 “Elijah was afraid and ran for his life”

19.4 he “prayed that he might die. I have had enough Lord. Take my life”

19.9 “he went into a cave and spent the night” – Apartment in Almaty?

19.14 “I am the only one left and now they are trying to kill me too”

1. Cause of Spiritual Depression

1) Exhaustion

ELIJAH HAD BEEN ON THE RUN – Literally

TIRING TO READ THE ACCOUNT OF HIS MINISTRY

17.1 “Now Elijah the Tishbite – said to Ahab “As the Lord, the God of Israel, lives, whom I serve, there will be neither dew nor rain in the next few years except at my word” Then the word of the Lord came to Elijah: Leave here, turn eastward and hide in the ravine of Kerith...”

18.1 “After a long time, in the third year, the word of the Lord came to Elijah: Go and present yourself to Ahab, and I will send rain on the land”

18.42 “Elijah climbed to the top of Mt. Carmel, bent down to the ground and put his face between his knees”

18.46 “The power of the Lord came upon Elijah and, tucking his cloak into his belt, he ran ahead of Ahab all the way to Jezreel” SIX MILES

19.3 “Elijah was afraid and ran for his life”

19.4 “he went a day’s journey into the desert”

19.8 “he traveled forty days and forty nights until he reached Horeb”

ELIJAH –THE IRON MAN– W/out GATORADE

SOMETIMES the MOST SPIRITUAL THING WE CAN DO IS SLEEP

GOD MADE US WHOLE PEOPLE – BODY, SOUL, AND SPIRIT

PRAYER JESUS TAUGHT US TO PRAY – Family Prayer

Give us our Daily Bread / BEFORE “Forgive our Sins”

BREAD – First Petition - BODY PRIMARY NEED – in Real World

“Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to him, ‘Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well fed,’ but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead” James 2.15-17

NOT FOR NOTHING GOD MADE A PATTERN IN CREATION

“6 days you shall labor and do all your work, but in the 7th day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work” Exodus 20.9,10

SOMETIMES OUR WORK SAVING, TIME SAVING, GADGETS
EAT UP MORE TIME AND MAKE US MORE EXHAUSTED

Whole Person – physical exhaustion – spiritual exhaustion / depression

2) Persecution

ELIJAH HAD BEEN UNDER THE GUN – or the Sword – Literally

18.19 “Four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal and four hundred prophets of Asherah, who EAT AT JEZEBEL’S TABLE”

SO HER HOMEBOYS ARE DEAD AND SHE’S FIGHTING MAD

19.2 Jezebel sent a message to Elijah to say, “May the gods deal with me, be it ever so severely, if by this time tomorrow I do not make your life like one of them.” Elijah was afraid and ran for his life.

19.10 “The Israelites have...put your prophets to death with the sword. I am the only one left, and now they are trying to kill me too”

Persecution – Exhilaration/ Excitement / Euphoria –EAGLES WINGS

Worked in UGANDA during three Military Coups – fighting and fear
REFUSED A SHAKEDOWN SEARCH FROM THUG / SOLDIERS

All cocked backed machine guns and pointed them at me

Almost 15 yrs ago – sometimes still wake up in cold sweat - Remember

Similar problem of JONAH – fear of the fierce Ninevites

3) Isolation

ELIJAH ON THE RUN, UNDER THE GUN, ALL ALONE

19.10 “I am the only one left”

18.4 “Jezebel was killing off the Lord’s prophets”

18.20 “Ahab sent word throughout all Israel and assembled the prophets on Mt. Carmel - 450 Prophets of Baal / 400 Prophets of Asherah

Elijah went before the people and said, How long will you waver between 2 opinions? If the Lord is God, follow him; but if Baal is God, follow him.”

BUT THE PEOPLE SAID NOTHING

DANGER OF CALLING PITY PARTY & YOU ARE ONLY GUEST

INVITE SOME ONE ELSE – shoulder of another to cry on / Wake up!!

HERE I AM – STUCK IN THE MIDDLE OF KAZAKHSTAN

NO HOT WATER – NO INTERNET CONNECTION – NO McDonalds

Elijah must have felt like MXPX

It seems like every time I get something going it falls apart right in my hands
It seems like every time I get it figured out and I have no doubt, that’s when I’m
farthest from the truth. My world is breaking down around me. I see my
destroyed world in front of me. Any and everything I trusted, I weep for my
world disgusted.

2. Cure for Spiritual Depression

Mercy of our Heavenly Father / Adopts children not Conscripts slaves

WE ARE SONS AND DAUGHTERS NOT SLAVES

God is concerned about our emotional well-being

1) Cure for Exhaustion – Experience God's Power

19.5 “an angel of the Lord touched him and said, “Get up and eat”

19.7 “the angel of the Lord came back a second time and touched him and said,
“Get up and eat, for the journey is too much for you”

“You prepare a table for me in the presence of my enemies” Ps 23.5

19.11-12

**THE GOD OF WIND – EARTHQUAKE – and FIRE
ALSO THE GOD OF THE GENTLE, QUIET VOICE**

GOD IS ABLE TO SPEAK TO ELIJAH DESPITE HIS WEAKNESSES

Jesus our High Priest “on the basis of the power of an indestructible life”

Heb 7.16

“You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be
my witnesses”

Acts 1.8

“Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine,
according to his power that is at work within us” Eph 3.20

“Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be
thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe”

Heb 12.28

“My grace is sufficient for you, my power is made perfect in weakness”

2 Corinth 12.9

2) Cure for Persecution – Understand God’s Program

PERSECUTED ONE COULD EASILY THINK – world is out of control

Secular Publication

Last week, before the insanity began... the mind-boggling events of the last week

REASONABLE – almost impossible to imagine a good plan or purpose

ELIJAH KNEW THE TRUTH --- READ 18.36,37

HE IS LORD – ruler of the universe, Lord of the nations

GOD OF A, I, & J – God of the Covenant / PERFECT PLAN FOR PEOPLE

DONE ALL THESE THINGS AT YOUR COMMAND

19.15 “anoint Hazael king over Aram. Also anoint Jehu king over Israel, and anoint Elisha to succeed you as prophet”

SOVEREIGN OVER CHURCH AND STATE – raises leaders at will

God is going to “bring all things in heaven and on earth together under one head, even Christ”
Ephes 1.10

“God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be the head over everything for the church”
Ephes 1.22

“His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms, according to his eternal purpose which he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord”
Eph 3.10

“One half of the world is always in the light, while the other half is always in darkness. When one part of the world is going to bed, another part is just getting out of bed. While one part is hard at work, the other part is fast asleep. While some of God’s servants are carrying forward their mission, others are resting in preparation for the new day that will soon dawn. Somewhere, twenty-four hours a day, God’s message is being spoken; his Word applied; people are being saved. The sun never sets on the work of God and the witness of his people”
R. S. Greenway

3) Cure for Isolation – Enjoy God’s People

19.10 “I am the only one left”

19.18 “I reserve 7000 in Israel – all whose knees have not bowed down to Baal and all whose mouths have not kissed him”

LONELINESS IS BASED ON HIS IGNORANCE

PERHAPS ELIJAH WAS SO RADICAL – HE WENT HIS OWN WAY
MAYBE NO ONE ELSE COULD KEEP UP WITH HIM

God made us social creatures – Formed us in community – Need People

EVEN INDEPENDENT AMERICANS CAME TOGETHER IN CRISIS

SOME OF LAST WRITTEN WORDS OF APOSTLE PAUL
TO HIS SON IN THE FAITH TIMOTHY – FROM ROMAN PRISON

“To Timothy, my dear son...recalling your tears, I long to see you, so that I may be filled with joy...“Do your best to come to me quickly...Do your best to get here before winter”
2 Tim 1.2,4; 4.9,21

EVEN MIGHTY APOSTLE TO GENTILES NEEDED PEOPLE

Robert Morrison – missionary to China in early 1800’s - wrote
“Yesterday I received your very welcome letter. It is only the second that I have received after having written at least two hundred”

About the same time in Africa David Livingstone wrote
“Shall I tell you what sustained me amidst the toil, the hardship, and loneliness of my exiled life? It was the promise, “Lo, I am with you always, even to the end”

19.19 “Elijah went from there and found Elisha” APPRENTICE

GREW AS KINDRED SPIRITS IN GOD’S SERVICE

As Elijah was taken to heaven Elisha cried out “My father, my father”

MAY GOD GIVE YOU GOOD FRIENDS IN THIS WALK OF LIFE

IT IS NOT GOOD THAT MAN BE ALONE – marriage and the Church

JESUS SAID “I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master’s business. Instead, I have called you friends” Jn 15.15

Elisha asked “Where now is the Lord, the God of Elijah?” 2 Kings 2.14

ELIJAH SAW HIM FACE TO FACE – w/ Moses & Peter, James, John
“His face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as the light”

GOD OF ELIJAH – GOD & FATHER OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

In Him we find – God’s Power, God’s Plan, and God’s Presence

WE WOULD SEE JESUS