

# 1 Kings 19 Commentary

PREVIOUS

NEXT

CLICK VERSE

To go directly to that verse  
1 Kings Commentaries

1 Kings 19:1  
1 Kings 19:2  
1 Kings 19:3  
1 Kings 19:4  
1 Kings 19:5  
1 Kings 19:6  
1 Kings 19:7  
1 Kings 19:8  
1 Kings 19:9  
1 Kings 19:10  
1 Kings 19:11  
1 Kings 19:12  
1 Kings 19:13  
1 Kings 19:14  
1 Kings 19:15  
1 Kings 19:16  
1 Kings 19:17  
1 Kings 19:18  
1 Kings 19:19  
1 Kings 19:20  
1 Kings 19:21

Chart from recommended resource [Jensen's Survey of the OT](#) - used by permission  
[1 Kings Chart](#) from Charles Swindoll

## THE DOWNWARD SPIRAL

Click to Enlarge

(NOTE: Many consider Amaziah and Hezekiah as "good" kings)  
SEE ALSO:  
[ESV chart - kings of Israel - more information](#)  
[ESV chart - kings of Judah - more information](#)

1 Kings 19:1 Now Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and how he had killed all the prophets with the sword.

- **Ahab:** 1Ki 16:31 21:5-7,25
- **how he had killed all the prophets:** 1Ki 18:40
- [1 Kings 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### Related Passages:

1 Kings 18:19+ "Now then send and gather to me all Israel at Mount Carmel, together with **450 prophets of Baal and 400 prophets of the Asherah**, who eat at Jezebel's table."

1 Kings 18:40+ Then Elijah said to them, "**Seize the prophets of Baal**; do not let one of them escape." So they seized them; and Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon, and slew them there.

## BAD BAAL NEWS FOR JEZ

One could also entitle this section "From Public Ecstasy to Private Agony!", "From Elation of Victory to Depression of Defeat", "From Glory to Gloom", "From Conquest to Collapse", "From the Summit to the Abyss," "From the Pinnacle of Joy to the Depths of Despair," "From the Fire of Triumph to the Ashes of Anguish". **Warren Wiersbe** entitles chapter 19 "The Cave Man!" I like [Brian Bell's](#) "outline" - "*Elijah under a **Tree**. Elijah in a **Cave**. Elijah in a **Field**."*

*How quickly we can move from  
the mountaintop of triumph to the valley of testing!*

**Warren Wiersbe** goes on to say "It encourages me when I read James 5:17NLT, "Elijah was as human as we are". I have a tendency to idealize the men and women in Scripture, but the Bible is the "word of truth" (2Ti 2:15) and describes the warts and wrinkles of even the greatest. When James wrote those words, he undoubtedly had 1 Kings 18 and 19 in mind, for in these chapters we see Elijah at his highest and at his lowest. When the psalmist wrote that "every man at his best state is altogether vanity" (Ps 39:5kjv), he included all of us except Jesus. However, the outstanding leaders in Scripture, with all their humanness, knew how to find their way out of what John Bunyan called "the slough [swamp] of despond" and get back on track with the Lord. We can learn from their defeats as well as their successes. Furthermore, by studying passages like 1 Kings 19, we're reminded to give glory to the Master and not to His servants (1Co 1:27-29). We're also reminded to prepare for what may happen after the victories God gives us. How quickly we can move from the mountaintop of triumph to the valley of testing! We need to humble ourselves before the Lord and get ready for the trials that usually follow the victories. If Elijah could have described to a counselor how he felt and what he thought, the counselor would have diagnosed his condition as a textbook case of burnout.... The prophet concluded that he had failed in his mission and decided it was time to quit. But the Lord didn't see it that way. ([Bible Exposition Commentary](#))

[Paul Apple](#) (page 305) - It was natural for Elijah to expect that the report of God's dramatic display of power and sovereignty on Mount Carmel would move the hearts of Israel's leaders to repent of their idolatry and fix their loyalties to the one true God. But such was not the case. How quickly Satan can turn our victories into defeats.

[Thomas Constable](#): Elijah was surprised that the revival he had just witnessed was not more effective in eliminating Baal worship (**ED: BECAUSE IT WAS IN FACT NOT GENUINE REVIVAL!**). Apparently Jezebel's threat drove the lessons of God's power and provision that he had been learning at Cherith, Zarephath, and Carmel out of his memory.

*To win a battle is  
not necessarily to win the war.*

**Iain Provan**: Elijah has been involved in a mighty battle. He seems to think it decisive and so he has left the battlefield for Jezreel. Yet there have been several hints in the narrative thus far that it is the queen, and not the king, who is the real general of the opposing forces. She will not be so easily cowed as her husband, and Elijah is now to see that to win a battle is not necessarily to win the war. That realization will send him into retreat, both physical and mental, as victory becomes defeat. Retreat will in turn lead him to another mountain, to confront, not Baal, but the Lord himself—whom Elijah serves, but whose ways he only partly understands and accepts. (SEE [1 & 2 Kings - Page 4](#))

**Now Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done** - This would have been very disturbing news (that's euphemistic) to this avid Baal worshiper who had staked her life on the power of Baal as superior to Yahweh! A very unwise choice! Note that Ahab still missed the "takeaway" of the Battle of Mount Carmel -- he fails to attribute Elijah's victory to Yahweh essentially denying the multiple miracles he had witnessed (fire from heaven, sending rain, Elijah out running his chariot)! He is telling the "wicked witch" what Elijah did, not what God did!

**THOUGHT** - When we attempt and succeed in some great spiritual feat for God, we need to be prepared for spiritual opposition, which can be subtle or vicious. The takeaway is we all need to be very circumspect (and prayerfully filled with the Spirit and Word) after we have had a spiritual mountaintop experience!

**And how he had killed all the prophets with the sword** - **All the prophets** is somewhat difficult to interpret because in 1Ki 18:40 Elijah had specifically stated "**Seize the prophets of Baal**." There is no mention of the **prophets of Asherah** although in 1Ki 18:19 Elijah had called for all 450 prophets of Baal and 400 prophets of Asherah to gather to Mount Carmel. It is possible only the prophets of Baal came. It is also possible that when Elijah said "seize the prophets of Baal" he was generalizing to include all 850 prophets, for all were idol worshipers. The text is not definitive. In either case Jezebel would have been furious because (if the text is interpreted literally) Elijah had personally slain the false prophets hacking them to death, reminding me of another prophet (and

judge), Samuel, who "hewed (King) Agag to pieces before the LORD at Gilgal." (1Sa 15:32-33+).

**The Pulpit Commentary:** We can readily understand with what a sense of humiliation and shame the weak and excited king, who must have been awed and impressed by the strange portent he had witnessed, would recount the day's proceedings to his imperious and headstrong consort, and with what intense mortification and rage she must have heard of the triumph of the proscribed religion and of the defeat and death of the priests of Baal. One might almost have expected that the testimony of an eyewitness, and that her husband, to the greatness and completeness of Elijah's victory; that his unprejudiced, and indeed unwilling, account of the sacrifices, of the descent of the heavenly fire, of the cries it wrung from the people, etc., would have brought conviction to her mind and taught her how useless it was to kick against the pricks. But there are eyes so blinded (... 2 Corinthians 4:4+ = "the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving") and hearts so steeled against the truth that no evidence can reach them, and this fierce persecutor of the prophets had long been given over to a reprobate mind. She listens to his story, but her one thought is of revenge.

---

**Rod Mattoon** replays the possible scenario - Jezebel was not present at Mt. Carmel. When Ahab returned to Jezreel, he began to talk with his dominant queen. Imagine this possible scenario.

**Jezebel:** How did it go today? What happened? Did fire consume the altar?

**Ahab:** Yes! **Jezebel:** Way to go honey! That will show that pesky prophet and any who might be Jehovah worshipers. Did you get rid of that nut?

**Ahab:** No.

**Jezebel:** Why not?

**Ahab:** The fire fell Jez, but it was the God of Heaven who did it, not Baal. I need to also tell you that 450 prophets of Baal are dead. Elijah had the people execute them. There was nothing I could do!

**Jezebel:** They are all dead!?

**Ahab:** Yes, they are all wiped out!

At this point Jezebel's face may have become flushed with anger. Perhaps she begins to pace back and forth with her fist clenched. She screams for the Jezreel Federal Express man. (See his online [1 Kings Commentary](#))

---

## **A GOD-GIVEN VICTORY 1 KINGS 19:1-3 - James Bolick**

INTRODUCTION. Many times we find ourselves depressed and in the midst of despair. But thank God there is victory to be had even in the midst of such conditions.

Israel was ruled over by wicked Ahab and his ungodly wife Jezebel, but God gave victory unto His prophet Elijah over these evil forces. Listen Christian, God can and will give us victory if we will meet His conditions.

### **I. THE PREREQUISITES OF A GOD-GIVEN VICTORY.**

- A. Elijah had faith. His faith was proved by his works. James 2:18, 20.
  - 1. His faith enabled him to meet Ahab. 1 Kings 18:17, 18.
  - 2. His faith enabled him to challenge the forces of evil. 1 Kings 18:18-20.
  - 3. His faith enabled him to challenge all of Israel. 1 Kings 18:21, 22.
  - 4. His faith enabled him to put God to the test. 1 Kings 18:23, 24.
- B. Elijah scorned the false religious system of Baal.
  - 1. Elijah mocked Baal and his followers. 1 Kings 18:25-29.
  - 2. God's people should expose false religious systems of today. Modernism included. 2 John 9-11.
- C. Elijah rebuilt the altar of God. 1 Kings 18:30-32. We need to rebuild the altar of Christian living. Some stones that are needed are:
  - 1. Personal piety—be right with God. Micah. 6:8.
  - 2. Family devotions. Eph. 6:1-4; Deut. 6:4-7.
  - 3. Church loyalty. Heb. 10:25.
  - 4. Faithful witnessing. Acts 1:8.
- D. Elijah prayed. 1 Kings 18:36, 37.
  - 1. To whom did he pray? "JEHOVAH ELOHIM." 1 Kings 18:36.
  - 2. The purpose of his prayer. 1 Kings 18:36, 37.

### **II. VICTORY WAS GIVEN BY THE LORD GOD.**

- A. The fire of God fell. 1 Kings 18:38.

- B. We need the fire of God today to burn out the sins of our hearts, and to set us afire to win souls for Christ.
- 

**James Smith - ELIJAH, THE DOWNCAST 1 Kings 19:1–8**

“Art thou alone? and dost thy soul complain  
It lives in vain?  
Not vainly does he live who can endure!  
O, be thou sure  
That he who hopes and suffers here can earn  
A sure return.”

—PROCTOR.

“Great men are not always wise.” Elijah failed just at that point where we would have expected him to take an unflinching stand. Yet it may be good for us to know that God’s greatest servants were men of “like passions with ourselves.” As they, like our Lord and Saviour, were made sharers of our infirmities, so we might be made partakers of their virtues and glories. All things are possible to him that believeth. We observe here a—

I. Cowardly Flight. “When he saw that, he arose, and went for his life” (1Ki 19:3). When he saw that Jezebel’s pride and hatred were unsubdued after all that he had done—in proving his authority on Carmel by calling fire from Heaven and praying floods of rain upon the parched land, and showing his loyalty to King Ahab by running as a herald before the royal chariot all those eighteen miles through the drenching storm. As he waits outside the gate all the reward he gets is a message that because he had slain the prophets of Baal his life would be taken “by to-morrow about this time.” So he “went for his life.” Exhausted and disappointed he forgets God and the present need of Israel for a spiritual teacher, and takes to preserving his own life. By faith he boldly stood before Ahab and all the prophets of Baal; by fear he fled before the vain threats of an unprincipled woman. How are the mighty fallen! “Let him that standeth take heed.”

II. Despairing Cry. “He requested for himself that he might die” (1Ki 19:4). He found it a very unprofitable business that of seeking merely to save his own life. A self-centred life is sure to come to grief. When one steps out of the current of God’s will and purpose concerning us our chariot wheels are sure to “drive heavily.” Jonah prayed the same prayer while he was in a bad mood (chap. 4:3). Paul was animated by a different spirit when he wrote, “Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you” (Phil. 1:24). At that moment the kingdom of Israel was in desperate need of that very man who was counting his life a worthless thing. Has the cause of Christ no need of thee?

III. Gracious Touch. “As he lay and slept; behold, an angel touched him, and said unto him, Arise and eat” (1Ki 19:5). Elijah’s merciful Master did not send a messenger to thrash him, or even to rebuke him for his fearfulness. His loving heavenly Father knew best what his tired and weary child needed. “Arise and eat.” The terrible strain of Carmel, the wearisome run before Ahab, the long journey into the wilderness had no doubt brought upon him complete physical and nervous prostration. The remedy provided by God was “a cake baken on the coals and a cruse of water.” He knows the frailty of our frame (John 21:9–12). How long he slept before the angel touched him we cannot know, but perhaps he was, through utter weakness, in danger of sleeping the sleep of death had not the angel wakened him up to eat. Are we not reminded here of that other angel of His presence, the Holy Spirit, whose gentle touch awakens many of God’s downcast ones, and whose tender voice bids them arise and eat of Him who is the Living Bread. That angel may be touching you even now.

IV. Wonderful Discovery. “He looked, and, behold, there was cake baken on the coals; ... and he did eat and drink, and laid him down again” (1Ki 19:6). It is not for naught that the angel of God touches any one. For every Spirit-awakened soul there is a much-needed miraculous feast awaiting them. He was not disobedient to the heavenly touch. “He looked,” and seeing the divine provision he appropriated it. It must have been a very palatable breakfast, cooked by an angel, and all for himself. But God’s provision is always suitable to the needs of the soul. It did not concern Elijah how the cake was formed or the coals kindled. It was enough for him that this was God’s gift to him, and that he needed it and was invited to take it. So it is with the salvation that is in Christ Jesus.

V. Second Blessing. “The angel of the Lord came a second time, and touched him” (1Ki 19:7). He had already got as much of the gift of God as to save his life, but not so much as would strengthen him for the journey that lay before him. So in mercy he was called again to “arise and eat, because the journey is too great for thee.” Are there not many who have received of the Lord Jesus Christ as the gift of God that which has saved their souls from death, but who, like Elijah, have “lain down again” in selfish ease, and who need a second awakening that they might arise and so partake of Christ, that they may be able to go on on in a life of suffering and testimony? Some people don’t believe in a second blessing, but Elijah did.

VI. Supernatural Power. “He went on the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights unto Horeb, the mount of God” (1Ki 19:8). Elijah’s first meal saved his soul, but the second enabled him to witness for God. That forty days’ journey was not accomplished in

his own strength, but in the strength of the gift of God. This grace ministered to him was sufficient to bring him unto the mount of God (a journey of about two hundred miles). All this is most suggestive of what the gift of His grace is able to do for all who will obey the call to “arise and eat” (2 Cor. 12:9). Who has ever yet found out the full “strength of that meat” which is within the reach of every child of God in His blessed Word? Downcast and discouraged soul, this call is for you. “Arise and eat.” “Thy words were found, and I did eat them,” etc. (Jer. 15:16; Psa. 119:111).

---

### **Real Faith in Hard Times By Kevin Riggs 1 Kings 19:1–18**

**INTRODUCTION:** Living by faith means that during hard times you have Someone to lean on. Elijah was a prophet who stood for righteousness during a wicked time. After his defeat of the prophets of Baal on Mt. Carmel, Queen Jezebel vowed to kill him. Elijah fled and became discouraged. God spoke to him and encouraged him. From his experience we learn what to do, and what not to do, during difficult times.

1. What not to do during hard times.
  - A. Don't throw a pity party (vv. 4, 9, 10).
  - B. Don't become a loner (v. 3).
  - C. Don't whine and complain (vv. 4, 10, 14).
  - D. Don't give up (v. 4).
2. What to do during hard times.
  - A. Realize the situation you are in.
  - B. Draw yourself closer to God (vv. 11–13).
  - C. Fellowship with other believers (vv. 15–18).

**CONCLUSION:** Tough times come and go, but tough people come and grow.

---

### **The Great Problem of Loneliness By Billie Friel 1 Kings 19:1–18**

**INTRODUCTION:** Loneliness is one of the most lethal difficulties that we face. We can learn a lot about loneliness and how to handle it through the example of the great prophet, Elijah.

1. God's Physical Provision in Our Lives (vv. 1–8). After fleeing the threat on his life by Queen Jezebel (vv. 1–5), God first provided rest, food, and water for Elijah that supernaturally sustained him for 40 days and nights (vv. 5–8)!
2. God's Presence in Our Lives (vv. 11–12). By revealing Himself to Elijah, God proved His presence. God is always with us.
3. God's Purpose in Our Lives (vv. 15–16). God gave Elijah a purpose, just as He has for each of us. Get your mind off yourself and immerse yourself in service to others.
4. God's People About Our Lives (v. 18). God reminded Elijah that others still worshiped the one true God. We should all be an active part of God's family of faith!

**CONCLUSION:** God's physical provision, presence, purpose, and people guarantee that we are never alone.

---

### **God Is at Work Date preached: By Melvin Tinker 1 Kings 19:1–18**

**INTRODUCTION:** God leads Elijah to a place of restoration, reveals Himself to Elijah, and makes a promise regarding Israel.

1. Elijah and God's Provision (vv. 3–9a).
2. Elijah and God's Presence (vv. 9b–14).
3. Elijah and God's Promise (vv. 15–18).

**CONCLUSION:** The powers of this world will not prevail against God and His people. God sent Jesus that the world might be reconciled to Him and His Holy Spirit that we might be indwelt by Him. God has built His church and hell will not overcome it (Matt. 16:15–20).

---

### **ELIJAH FACES DISCOURAGEMENT 1 Kings 19:1–18 - Croft Pentz**

Elijah had a great victory on Mount Carmel. God sent the fire of heaven. Now Elijah becomes discouraged. He was a man with passions such as all men—James 5:17. Elijah becomes: fearful, lonely, disappointed and discouraged.

1. THE PROPHET'S ESCAPE—vv. 1–4
2. THE PROPHET ENTERTAINED—vv. 5–7
3. THE PROPHET ENCOURAGED—vv. 9–18

Discouragement leads people to these four things: (1) Defeat, (2) Disappointment, (3) Disease, and (4) Death. Don't allow Satan to use discouragement in defeating you.

---

### **Making the Most of Your Nervous Breakdown Scripture: 1 Kings 19:1–21,**

Introduction: The Wall Street Journal recently ran a front page story on the subject of nervous breakdowns, saying "The nervous breakdown, the mysterious affliction that has been a staple of American life and literature for more than a century, has been wiped out by the combined forces of psychiatry, pharmacology, and managed care. But people keep breaking down anyway." According to USA Today's weekend magazine, anxiety disorders are the Number 1 mental health problem in the United States, costing Americans more than \$42 billion a year in doctor bills and workplace losses. In the Bible, the prophet Elijah once had a "nervous breakdown." By studying his experience we can learn how God deals with us when we're overwrought and overstrained.

The Lord wrote a sevenfold prescription for Elijah. The same therapy will work for us.

1. Sleep and nourishment (vv. 4–8). Elijah was exhausted, for he had combated paganism for three years, waged a vigorous war on Mt. Carmel against the prophets of Baal, prayed with exceeding earnestness, and had run a virtual marathon back to Jezreel. When we're exhausted, we have less control over our emotions. Depression descends more easily. Worry grips us more doggedly. Temptations catch us unawares. Verses 4–8 tell of how God provided sleep, bread, and water for Elijah under the broom tree.

2. Angelic help (vv. 5–7). The Lord sent an angel to care for Elijah. Hebrews 1:14 says that angels are ministering spirits sent to serve those who inherit salvation. Many times, according to intimations in the Bible, angels minister to us though we're unaware of it.

3. Ventilation (vv. 9–10). God allowed Elijah to repeatedly ventilate his frustrations. When we can express our feelings to a good friend or to the Lord, it helps reduce our swirling emotions to tangible thoughts and words. We can identify them and begin to get them "out of our system."

4. God's still, small voice (vv. 11–13). The ultimate answer to life's downturns is rediscovering God's infallible Word. Elijah needed a gentle word of reassurance, a gentle whisper. The same whisper comes to us as we open the Scripture. Golfer Tom Lehman gave his life to Christ in high school when a friend invited him to a Fellowship of Christian Athletes meeting. After college, Tom worked hard to enter the PGA Tour, and in 1991 was named the Ben Hogan Tour Player of the Year. But in 1995, his doctors discovered pre-cancerous colon polyps, and surgery was required. Tom and his wife got down on their knees and committed the matter to God, and the Lord gave him Joshua 1:9 to strengthen him during the crisis: Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you.

5. A renewal of purpose (vv. 14–17). The Lord gave Elijah a set of new assignments. Nothing helps us overcome discouragement like rediscovering our purpose in life and setting to work at what God has called us to do.

6. Reassurance (v. 18). Things are never as bad as they appear where God is concerned. Elijah had twice insisted that he was the only surviving worshiper of God. The Lord told him there were 7000 others.

7. A Friend (vv. 19–21). The Lord provided the solitary Elijah with a friend, Elisha, to share the load. A healthy life keeps its friendships in good repair.

Conclusion: Are you overwhelmed, stressed, discouraged, depressed? God wants to renew your strength and to restore your soul. The way He revived Elijah is the pattern He wants to use to revive your spirit, too.

---

### **Castaway**

He went out and departed to a solitary place; and there He prayed. — Mark 1:35

Today's Scripture : 1 Kings 19:1-10

In the film *Castaway*, Tom Hanks plays Chuck Noland, a clock-conscious Federal Express manager who gets shipwrecked on a desert island. Completely cut off from other people and modern conveniences, he must learn the primitive skills of a caveman. He puts arduous effort into harpooning fish, making fire by rubbing sticks together, and opening a coconut to get its milk and sweet fruit. The movie is rich with insights on how difficult life can become for someone who is stranded in an isolated wilderness.

In the Bible, the wilderness is often the setting for the mighty work of God within the human heart. Jesus made a practice of withdrawing to the wilderness to pray and receive direction (Mark 1:35). In a similar setting, God fed the despondent prophet Elijah with heavenly food (1 Kings 19:1-10), and in the wilderness the Ethiopian pondered the gospel (Acts 8:26-40). After Paul's

conversion, he withdrew to the Arabian Desert and was taught by the Spirit (Gal. 1:15-18).

Do you find yourself in a “wilderness” experience, isolated from friends and family? If so, the Lord may want to teach you lessons of faith and endurance that you could never learn in a busy crowd. By: Dennis Fisher (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

In solitude, on wings of prayer  
My soul ascends before the throne;  
My only hope of strength is where  
My heart and His meet all alone.  
—Anon.

God is with you in your most barren wilderness.

**1 Kings 19:2 Then Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah, saying, “So may the gods do to me and even more, if I do not make your life as the life of one of them by tomorrow about this time.”**

- **So may the gods do to me:** 1Ki 2:28 1Ki 20:10 Ru 1:17 2Ki 6:31
- **if I do not make your life:** Ex 10:28 15:9 2Ki 19:10-12,22,27,28 Da 3:15
- **by tomorrow about this time:** Pr 27:1 Ac 12:4-6 Jas 4:13,14
- [1 Kings 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## JEZEBEL'S WARNING TO ELIJAH

**Then Jezebel sent a messenger** ([malak](#) - "angel" in v5) **to Elijah, saying, “So may the gods do to me and even more, if I do not make your life as the life of one of them by tomorrow about this time** - One could paraphrase it “*Get out of town by sundown, Elijah, or you are a dead man!*” Jezebel issues a warrant for Elijah's life but some think she was bluffing or she would have sent an executioner, not a messenger. Jezebel is swearing an oath, calling upon her pagan gods Baal and Asherah to kill her if she does not fulfill her threat against Elijah. We see a similar oath by pagan Ben-Hadad in 1Ki 20:10. Of course Jezebel is deceived because her gods could not even call down fire from heaven on Mt Carmel, so clearly they had no power. Yahweh however did have that fire. And the irony is that she would die a horrible death in 2Ki 9:30-37, a death that was prophesied by Elijah the Tishbite (2Ki 9:36) in 1 Kings 21:23+ declaring to Ahab “Of Jezebel also has the LORD spoken, saying, ‘The dogs will eat Jezebel in the district of Jezreel.’”

[Paul Apple \(page 305\)](#) - Was he afraid because he did not want to die? Not entirely the whole story because he is going to request that the Lord take his life. Allen suggests that he did not want Jezebel to be the one to take his life and gain a perceived victory over God. Elijah was still concerned for God's reputation. We can speculate regarding what would have happened if Elijah had stayed there and held his ground and depended on the Lord to protect him. Certainly we don't see any word from the Lord directing him to flee. Instead we see the Lord questioning him twice later in the passage: “What are you doing here, Elijah?”

**William Barnes** - “The best defense is a good offense” is a maxim Jezebel seemingly understood well. She was evidently a devout, religious woman, and such effrontery to her god, Baal, simply could not be tolerated. Religion is a very dangerous thing—if it does not make a person very much better, it will make that person very much worse (cf. C. S. Lewis) (See [1-2 Kings - Page 162](#))

[Bob Utley](#) - Even after a powerful demonstration of YHWH's power she refused to believe (cf. 2 Cor. 4:4)! She was a very powerful personality, as was her daughter, Athaliah (2 Kgs. 8:11; 2 Chronicles 21; Psalm 45).

**Josephus**, *Antiq.* 8.13.7, says “At this Elijah was frightened.”

[The Pulpit Commentary](#) makes a good point that “It is evident that for the moment Elijah had lost faith in God, otherwise he would certainly have waited for the ‘**word of the LORD**,’ which had hitherto invariably guided his movements (1Ki 17:2, 8; 1Ki 18:1). No doubt other emotions besides that of fear were struggling in his breast, and prominent among these was the feeling of profound disappointment and mortification. It is clear that he had hoped that the ‘day of Carmel’ would turn the heart of the entire nation back again (SEE THIS VOICED IN 1 Kings 18:37), and the great shout of 1Ki 18:39 (“**The LORD, He is God; the LORD, He is God**”), and the subsequent execution, at his command, of the men who had deceived and depraved the people, might well justify the most

sanguine expectations. We can readily imagine, consequently, how, especially after the excitement and fatigues of that day, the threatening and defiant message of the queen would seem the death blow of his hopes, and how, utterly dispirited and broken down, he lost all trust, all faith, and, while fleeing for his life, 'requested for himself that he might die.'

**Warren Wiersbe** agrees with [The Pulpit Commentary](#) writing that "For three years, Elijah had not made a move without hearing and obeying the Lord's instructions (1Ki 17:2-3, 1Ki 17:8-9; 1Ki 18:1), but now he was running ahead of the Lord in order to save his own life. ([Bible Exposition Commentary](#))

**1 Kings 19:3 And he was afraid [OR "and he saw"] and arose and ran for his life and came to Beersheba, which belongs to Judah, and left his servant there.**

KJV 1 Kings 19:3 And **when he saw** that, he arose, and went for his life, and came to Beersheba, which belongeth to Judah, and left his servant there.

[ASV](#) And **when he saw** that, he arose, and went for his life, and came to Beer-sheba, which belongeth to Judah, and left his servant there.

[BRG](#) And **when he saw** *that*, he arose, and went for his life, and came to Beer-sheba, which *belongeth* to Judah, and left his servant there.

[CJB](#) **On seeing that**, he got up and fled for his life. When he arrived in Be'er-Sheva, in Y'hudah, he left his servant there;

[DARBY](#) And **when he saw** [that], he arose, and went for his life, and came to Beer-sheba, which belongs to Judah, and left his servant there.

[GNV](#) ¶ **When he saw** that, he arose, and went for his life, and came to Beersheba, which is in Judah, and left his servant there.

[JUB](#) And **when he saw** *that*, he arose and departed *to save* his life and came to Beersheba, which *is* in Judah, and left his servant there.

[MEV](#) **When he saw** that she was serious, he arose and ran for his life to Beersheba, which belongs to Judah, and left his servant there.

[NKJV](#) And **when he saw** *that*, he arose and ran for his life, and went to Beersheba, which *belongs* to Judah, and left his servant there.

BGT 1 Kings 19:3 κα φοβθη Ηλιου κα νστη κα πλθεν κατ τ ν ψυχ ν αυτο κα ρχεται ε ς Βηρσαβεε τ ν Ιουδα κα φ κεν τ παιδ ριον α το κε

LXE 1 Kings 19:3 And Eliu feared, and rose, and departed for his life: and he comes to Bersabee to the land of Juda, and he left his servant there.

NET 1 Kings 19:3 Elijah was afraid, so he got up and fled for his life to Beer Sheba in Judah. He left his servant there,

CSB 1 Kings 19:3 Then Elijah became afraid and immediately ran for his life. When he came to Beer-sheba that belonged to Judah, he left his servant there,

ESV 1 Kings 19:3 Then he was afraid, and he arose and ran for his life and came to Beersheba, which belongs to Judah, and left his servant there.

NIV 1 Kings 19:3 Elijah was afraid and ran for his life. When he came to Beersheba in Judah, he left his servant there,

NLT 1 Kings 19:3 Elijah was afraid and fled for his life. He went to Beersheba, a town in Judah, and he left his servant there.

- **he arose:** Ge 12:12,13 Ex 2:15 1Sa 27:1 Isa 51:12,13 Mt 26:56,70-74 2Co 12:7
- **Beersheba:** 1Ki 4:25 Ge 21:31 Am 7:12,13
- [1 Kings 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

**Related Passages:**



James 5:17+ **Elijah was a man with a nature like ours**, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the earth for three years and six months.

## ELIJAH'S FLIGHT: PROPHET ON THE RUN

**And he was afraid** (KJV - "WHEN HE SAW") - MARGINAL READING IN NASB = "Reading of many mss; Heb text may read saw."

**Disclaimer** - While I do take the approach that Elijah was afraid, there are some excellent arguments that this was not actually Elijah's state of mind! See [Was Elijah Truly Afraid?](#) Be a Berean!

This is the same man who encouraged the widow of Zarephath "Do not fear!" (1Ki 17:13). Even a man of God's faith can falter. Faith is the antithesis of fear, and here fear seems to win out! Elijah has a knee jerk reaction of Jezebel's threat. This prophet of great faith who had just called down fire from heaven how is bombarded with doubts because of Jezebel's fiery threat. Recall that in James 5:17 "Elijah was a man with a nature like ours" and so he was vulnerable to emotions like fear. As has been well said the best of men are only men at best! The man of God who was like a "braveheart" before 450 Baal prophets but seems to be derailed by one woman!

**Matthew Henry** - He that stood undaunted in the midst of the terrors both of heaven and earth trembles at the impotent menaces of a proud passionate woman.... Great faith is not always alike strong.



[Click to enlarge](#)

**And arose and ran for his life and came to Beersheba, which belongs to Judah** - In chapter 18 he risked his life and in chapter 19 he ran for his life. In Chapter 18 he *risked* his life for God's Glory, in Chapter 19 he tries to *save* his life for his own sake. For 3.5 years Elijah had placed his faith in Yahweh's provision and protection, but now runs for his life. There is a sad irony here because Elijah had just run to the winter palace at Jezreel, clearly doing so by God's supernatural "hand," (1Ki 18:46+) but now, with his faith faltering, like a dog with his tail between his legs, Elijah runs from Jezreel.

I tend to agree with **Adam Clarke** who wrote that Elijah "probably thought that the miracle at Carmel would have been the means of effecting the conversion of the whole court and of the country, but, finding himself mistaken, he is greatly discouraged."

The text says he **ran for his life** but this time there is no mention of the hand of the LORD empowering his run. There is no mention that the LORD told him to run (like when he told him to go to Brook Cherith). There is no mention that he prayed and then ran. His actions strongly suggest he is out of the will of the LORD. And he did not likely literally run the entire distance to **Beersheba** for this was far south in Judah about 100-120 miles south of Jezreel and would have been an "ultramarathon." He was obviously putting as much distance as possible between Jezebel and himself.

**Spurgeon** - "Elijah failed in the very point at which he was strongest, and that is where most men fail. In Scripture, it is the wisest man who proves himself to be the greatest fool; just as the meekest man, Moses, spoke hasty and bitter words. Abraham failed in his faith, and Job in his patience; so, he who was the most courageous of all men, fled from an angry woman."

**And left his servant there** - This is the second time we are told Elijah had a **servant** (first = 1Ki 18:43), and here he leaves his servant at **Beersheba**.

**Donald Wiseman** has an interesting point about leaving the **servant** - The historian deliberately selects events which parallel Moses who also left his servants (Exod. 24:2ff.; 33:11), as did Abraham (Gen. 22:5), so that he could face God alone. So must all of us who would reconsider God's call and our mission. (See [1 and 2 Kings: An Introduction and Commentary - Page 184](#))

**R D Patterson** points out that "What Elijah needed to learn, God would soon show him (1Ki 19:11-12). God does not always move in the realm of the extraordinary. To live always seeking one "high experience" after another is to have a misdirected zeal. The majority of life's service is in quiet, routine, humble obedience to God's will." (See [1 and 2 Kings](#))

---

## WAS ELIJAH TRULY AFRAID?

The answer is not as easy as you might think. You are undoubtedly saying "Of course he was afraid because that is what all the modern translations say." And since you are a literalist, you say how could one even entertain any other consideration? That is a fair question.

The answer is that one major point of contention is how to translate the opening words of 1Ki 19:2? Most modern translations have some variation of "**AND HE WAS AFRAID**," but a number of translations including the KJV have "**AND WHEN HE SAW**." There is a big difference between the verbs **AFRAID** and **SAW** in English but as explained below not such a big difference between the Hebrew words.

**Paul Apple** ([page 305](#)) who I respect as a very conservative commentator writes "I have grown up all my life with a misunderstanding about this controversial text of Scripture. I just assumed that it was a psychological profile of a broken man who had given in to self-pity and was totally focused on his own sorry lot in life. The commentary of Dale Ralph Davis (summarized in the Notes section of my pdf commentary - [scroll down to page 313](#)) has enlightened me to a different approach to this passage. All of God's servants have experienced the discouragement of thinking they have ministered in vain. When the desired visible results are not evident; when it seems like you are not making a difference; you can succumb to the temptation to want to call it quits. Especially when you have a heart that is passionate to see God's kingdom agenda advanced and God's people repent and mature in the faith."

The **NET Note** adds that "The **Masoretic Text** (Wikipedia note - "the authoritative [Hebrew](#) and [Aramaic](#) text of the 24 books of the [Hebrew Bible](#) (*Tanakh*) in [Rabbinic Judaism](#)") has "and he saw," but some medieval Hebrew Manuscripts as well as several ancient versions support the reading "**he was afraid**." The consonantal text (וַיַּרְא, vayyar) is ambiguous and can be vocalized וַיַּרְא (from רָאָה, ra'ah, "to see") or וַיִּירָא (vayyira', from יָרָא, yare', "to fear").

Here is an excerpt from **Dale Ralph Davis** who argues that Elijah was in fact not actually afraid. For the full discussion see [Paul Apple's Pdf commentary on 1 Kings and scroll down to page 313](#).

*The upshot is that 'see' is more likely the true text.*

**1. Weigh the text.** In the traditional Hebrew text the first word of verse 3 is a form of the verb rā'āh and may be rendered, 'And/then he saw,' or 'When he saw (that).' However, a few Hebrew manuscripts read a form of yārē', 'to fear, be afraid.' The LXX and derivative versions follow this latter reading. This reading (**Then he was afraid**) seems to fit so naturally that most all modern English versions adopt it (e.g. NIV, NASB, NRSV; the last does not even indicate 'he saw' as an alternative). These two verbs look very much alike, especially in the 'imperfect' verb form used here, and so can be easily confused. Which was likely original? How can we tell? Ask which reading better explains the other. That is, is it more reasonable to assume that 'fear' was original and was changed to 'see', or that an original 'see' was changed to 'fear'? If 'fear' (yārē') were original we have a problem, for it fits so naturally after Jezebel's threat in verse 2 that we can't imagine any scribe ever changing it to 'see' (rā'āh) and that reading then appearing in the bulk of Hebrew manuscripts (the **Masoretic Text**). But if 'he saw' were original we can easily understand someone looking at that and thinking that the text must have meant to use the very similar looking 'he was afraid.' (At this point I am afraid to ask if you see that!) The upshot is that 'see' is more likely the true text.

Supposing then that 'he saw' is the original reading, how does it fit the context, coming as it does between Jezebel's threat in verse 2 and the following clauses of verse 3 ('**he rose and went for his life**')? We must remember chapter 18, where Yahweh, in living color and on turf known to be sacred to Baal, had publicly and irrefutably shown Baal to be the non-god he was; by both fire and rain Yahweh had proven he was the only real God—and the people had confessed as much (1Ki 18:39). Ahab, of course, told Jezebel all about this and about Elijah's execution of the prophets of Baal (1Ki 18:40). Then Jezebel sent her death-threat to Elijah (1Ki 19:2). Hence Elijah saw that in spite of the Carmel Apologetic nothing was going to change in Israel; Jezebel was still wearing not only the pantyhose but the pants in the kingdom and calling the shots. Since he was not required to be meek meat under Jezebel's guillotine, Elijah left the kingdom, but not because he was afraid of dying. Rather, (ED: AS RONALD ALLEN WRITES)

*He wanted to die, for he was broken. He did not wish to die at Jezebel's hand, for that would be judged her victory—hence his flight. But south of the proverbial southernmost city of the southern kingdom, in the wilderness of Judah, where none would give Jezebel credit for his death—there he begged Yahweh to*

take his life. ([Elijah the Broken Prophet](#))

I think Allen is right. Elijah was broken. But one can be broken without being psychotic.

**For the rest of Davis' 3.5 page argument** (he has 6 major points) **against Elijah being afraid** see [Paul Apple's Pdf commentary on 1 Kings and scroll down to page 313](#)

**Ronald Allen** - [Elijah the Broken Prophet - JETS - 22:3, 1979 \(10 page article\)](#) -

**Excerpt** - The Conundrum Of His Character - "And he was afraid and arose and ran for his life" (1 Kgs 19:3a NASB)." What kind of a man is it who alone can face the 450 prophets of Baal without flinching, but who then runs in cowardly fear because of the rantings of one woman? Expositors and preachers have had a field day exulting at the contrast of the Elijah of Mount Carmel, bold and dashing in victory, versus the Elijah of the wilderness, bowed in quaking fear under a desert shrub. If ever there was a portrait painted "warts and all," this is surely it. Elijah is the "Peter of the OT," a favorite object of expository contempt and stern moralizing. Perhaps a few examples should be given to demonstrate the intensity of the attack upon him.

First, the words of **Merrill F. Unger**: "*What a contrast! Elijah the hero of faith on Carmel victorious over Baalism! Elijah the coward of unbelief at Horeb, self-occupied, utterly discouraged, wishing to die (cf. Rom 11:2-4), praying against rather than for God's people.*" (Borrow [Unger's Bible Handbook page 222](#)) (J. V. McGee speaks of his "cowardly retreat" in Notes for Through the Bible)

British expositor **A. W. Pink** comments on Elijah's loss of faith in this way: "*Hitherto Elijah had been sustained by faith's vision of the living God, but now he lost sight of the Lord and saw only a furious woman.*" ([Life of Elijah](#)) **Pink** then makes the proverbial comparison: "*As Peter's courage failed him in the presence of the maid, so Elijah's strength wilted before the threatenings of Jezebel.*"

Some have argued that Elijah's flight was not only an act of cowardice and faithlessness but also the rash action that destroyed the possibility for continuing his revival.

**F. B. Meyer** speaks of him as being "*utterly demoralized and panic-stricken.*" ([How the Mighty Fell!](#)) But then he wistfully notes: "What might have been! If only Elijah had held his ground—dwelling in the secret place of the Most High, and hiding under the shadow of the Almighty—he might have saved his country; and there would have been no necessity for the captivity and dispersion of his people." ([Ibid](#))

**Leon Wood** follows the same approach: "*The evidence is all too clear that Elijah indeed was wrong, and tragically so. He had conducted himself so well until this point, providing a shining example of strength and faith as we have seen; but here he failed. When he ran that night, he did nothing less than take all chance for revival with him.*" (Elijah the Prophet of God - see his related work ["Prophets of Israel"](#))

**Howard G. Hendricks** seems almost to relish the flaw of fear he finds in Elijah: "*Single-handedly he took on 850 prophets, but one woman said, 'I'll get you,' and he ran.*" (Borrow [Elijah : confrontation, conflict, and crisis](#)) Hendricks also goes so far as to criticize the prayer of Elijah in the desert, terming it "hypocritical":

**Hendricks** also goes so far as to criticize the prayer of Elijah in the desert, terming it "hypocritical": "*The longer I examine this, the more I think there is a touch of the hypocritical in Elijah's prayer. Whenever you have distorted perspective, you always become dishonest, even in your praying. I don't think Elijah wanted to die. If he had wanted to die, he did not have to travel 120 miles south. All he had to do was to make himself available to Jezebel. She'd be delighted to accommodate him.*" ([Ibid](#))

Taken together we have a most curious picture of the prophet of Yahweh. On the one hand we read (with strong assent) the finely worded commendation of Elijah by the late **H. H. Rowley**: "*The prophet Elijah is one of the great figures of the Old Testament. In Jewish expectation it was believed that he would return to herald the messianic age, and we know that in New Testament times there were some who asked whether Jesus was Elias redivivus. In the story of the Transfiguration of our Lord, Moses and Elijah appeared on the mountain with Jesus. Moses led the Israelites out of Egypt and was the mediator of the Sinai Covenant. Elijah was the prophet who saved the Israelite faith in the greatest peril it had to face between the days of Moses and the Exile.*" (Borrow [Men of God](#))

On the other hand we are told by some writers that in Elijah's flight from Jezebel this great figure of OT prophetism was cowardly, unfaithful to God, guilty of self-pity, responsible for the failure of the revival, and even hypocritical in his prayer. These are serious charges.

*Is it really credible that a man of such*

*bold daring would really become afraid of Jezebel?...*

***Elijah was broken, but he was not afraid!***

While it is certainly true that even the greatest Biblical heroes are often described in their moments of defeat, sin and despair, and while it is also possible that Elijah's fear before Jezebel may be described as psychologically understandable, when one takes into account the tremendous inner strain he must have suffered during the conflict on Carmel—is it really credible that a man of such bold daring would really become afraid of Jezebel? Does saying, “Ah! But you never saw Jezebel!” really answer this basic question? **It is the contention of this paper that the most common approach to 1 Kgs 19:3a is decidedly in error.** Elijah was broken, but he was not afraid! (Read the complete article online to fully grasp Ronald Allen's reasoning = [Elijah the Broken Prophet](#) - JETS - 22:3)

**1 Kings 19:4 But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree; and he requested for himself that he might die, and said, "It is enough; now, O LORD, take my life, for I am not better than my fathers."**

NET 1 Kings 19:4 while he went a day's journey into the desert. He went and sat down under a shrub and asked the LORD to take his life: "I've had enough! Now, O LORD, take my life. After all, I'm no better than my ancestors."

CSB 1 Kings 19:4 but he went on a day's journey into the wilderness. He sat down under a broom tree and prayed that he might die. He said, "I have had enough! LORD, take my life, for I'm no better than my fathers."

ESV 1 Kings 19:4 But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness and came and sat down under a broom tree. And he asked that he might die, saying, "It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life, for I am no better than my fathers."

NIV 1 Kings 19:4 while he himself went a day's journey into the desert. He came to a broom tree, sat down under it and prayed that he might die. "I have had enough, LORD," he said. "Take my life; I am no better than my ancestors."

NLT 1 Kings 19:4 Then he went on alone into the wilderness, traveling all day. He sat down under a solitary broom tree and prayed that he might die. "I have had enough, LORD," he said. "Take my life, for I am no better than my ancestors who have already died."

- **sat down under a juniper tree:** 1Ki 13:14 Ge 21:15,16 Joh 4:6
- **he requested:** 1Ki 19:3 Nu 11:15 2Ki 2:11 Job 3:20-22 Jer 20:14-18 Jon 4:3,8 Php 1:21-24
- **better:** Am 6:2 Na 3:8 Mt 6:26 Ro 3:9
- [1 Kings 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## **EXHAUSTED & DOWNCAST ELIJAH PONDERES A DEATH WISH**

**But** (term of contrast) **he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness-** A day's journey would have taken him about 15-25 miles into the wilderness (depending on his pace considering he had just run almost 100 miles from Jezreel not to mention that this is in the [Negev](#) which was hot and arid.)

**THOUGHT** - Isolation from spiritual fellowship can deplete our ability to fight temptation. ([Paul Apple page 307](#))

**and came and sat down under a juniper tree** - This is often called a **broom tree** (*Retama raetam*), which averaged 6-10 feet height and was more like a large shrub or small tree than a towering tree. The branches were long, thin, green and covered with small green leaves (to reduce water loss) and small, white pea-like flowers (blooming in spring) which provided limited shade.

**THOUGHT** - Elijah's experience of despair challenges us not to get the wrong idea about Christianity. Many people still have the idea that if they trust in Jesus, all their troubles will be over....People have these wrong ideas about Christianity in part because the American church gets big, unhealthy doses of the health-and-

**and he requested for himself that he might die, and said, "It is enough; now, O LORD, take my life, for I am not better than my fathers** - In the previous verse Elijah ran for his life and here in verse 4 he wanted to run from life! How quickly it seems that he forgot the lessons from Brook Cherith, Zarephath and Mount Carmel! (We never do that do we? Rhetorical!) Elijah "prayed that he might die. "I have had enough, LORD," he said. "Take my life, for I am no better than my ancestors who have already died." (NLT) Ironically not only did God not answer his prayer, Elijah is one of the few men in Scripture to NEVER die! Other great men of God have prayed for death (cf. Moses in Nu 11:15, Job in Job 10:18–22, Jeremiah in Jer 20:14-18, see Jonah below). Now the truth is if Elijah really wanted to die, then why did he run? All he had to do was stay in Jezreel and Jezebel would have taken his life.

One is reminded of Jonah's sad state after seeing Nineveh repent at his preaching. Jonah prayed "Therefore now, O LORD, please take my life from me, for death is better to me than life."...8 When the sun came up God appointed a scorching east wind, and the sun beat down on Jonah's head so that he became faint and begged with all his soul to die, saying, "Death is better to me than life." (Jonah 4:3,8)

**David Guzik:** Thankfully, this was a prayer not answered for Elijah. In fact, Elijah was one of the few men in the Bible to never die! We can imagine that as he was caught up into heaven, he smiled and thought of this prayer – and the blessed no that answered his prayer. To receive a no answer from God can be better than receiving a yes answer.

**Brian Bell** on requested...that he might die - "I bet you have also. I know I have. (ED: YOUR WRITER WOULD INCLUDE HIMSELF IN THIS GROUP!) But taking your life isn't the answer to despair for 2 reasons: 1) it is selfish AND (2) it does not bring glory to the Lord.

*Let those who long to die, leave God to choose the day;  
else they may miss the horses and chariots of fire.*  
-- F.B.Meyer

**For I am not better than my fathers** - This may allude to the fact that Elijah's efforts to eradicate idolatry were not better than godly men who had preceded him.

**Paul Apple page 307** on **I am not better than my fathers** - My prophetic ministry has proven to be no more effective than those who preceded me. What is the point in continuing on in such futile ministry? The very reason for his living was to serve God. If that made no difference, than what was the point?

**Donald Wiseman** - God will take his servant to himself in his own time and manner (2 Kgs 2:11). It is not up to us to ask for death but for life. (See [1 and 2 Kings: An Introduction and Commentary - Page 184](#))

**G. K. Chesterton** said "Not only is suicide a sin, it is the sin. It is the ultimate and absolute evil, the refusal to take an interest in existence; the refusal to take the oath of loyalty to life. The man who kills a man, kills a man. The man who kills himself, kills all men; as far as he is concerned he wipes out the world."

**J Vernon McGee** - You must admit that this is quite a change for the man who stood on top of Mount Carmel and defied the prophets of Baal. Now he is hiding under a juniper tree way down at the other end of the land, hiding from a woman, Jezebel. Ahab had not made any effort to arrest him or destroy him, but Jezebel hated Elijah, and she was not going to let him live if she could help it....When Ahab went back and reported to Jezebel all that had happened, she sent a telegram to Elijah saying, "I want you to know that I intend to get you!" She is the most wicked woman in the Bible. Elijah got his eyes off the Lord and ran to an area that was beyond the farthest outpost of civilization. When he got to Beer-sheba, he just kept going. Finally he felt that he was out of her reach....I am sure that some very pious Christian would have given Elijah a fine little lecture on how to be cheerful and optimistic and smile in his situation. They would tell him that Romans 8:28 was still in the Bible. May I say to you, I don't think you could have gotten Elijah to smile while he was under that tree. (SEE [Thru the Bible Vol. 13: History of Israel - 1 and 2 Kings](#))

---

**JUNIPER** [ISBE] 1 Ki 19:4 f, margin "broom"; Ps 120:4, m "broom"; Job 30:4 translated "broom"): This is quite certainly the Arabic ratam (Retama retem, Natural Order, Leguminosae), a variety of broom which is one of the most characteristic shrubs of the deserts of Southern Palestine and southward to Egypt. Though the shade it affords is but scanty, in the absence of other shrubs it is frequently used by desert travelers as a refuge from the sun's scorching rays (compare 1 Ki 19:4). The root yields good charcoal, giving out much heat (Ps 120:4). For people to be reduced to chew it for nourishment betokens the lowest depth of starvation (Job 30:4). (E. W. G. Masterman)

---

**Spurgeon Study Bible** - 1 Ki 19:4 "I have had enough! LORD, take my life, for I'm no better than my fathers."

When we read the Scriptures in our youth, we are often astonished at the peculiar conditions in which we find even good people. It



is difficult for us to understand why David could be in such distress and why such a man as Elijah could be so dreadfully depressed. As we get older, and as trials multiply around us, we can better understand why God allowed his ancient servants to be put into such peculiar situations, for we find ourselves in similar places. We might wonder why Elijah should get under a broom tree. We can understand his attitude on Mount Carmel and comprehend his slaughtering the prophets of Baal, but we ask in perplexity, "What are you doing here, Elijah, under a broom tree, or away there in a cave on the hillside?" (see 19:9). But when we get under the broom tree ourselves, we are glad to recall the fact that Elijah once sat there. And when we are hiding away in the cave, it is a source of comfort to us to remember that such a man as this great prophet of Israel was there before us. He, too, could grow weary of his appointed service and ask to be allowed to die. The best of people are but people at the best. He was one whose spirit could be depressed even to the uttermost, just as the spirit of any one of us might be. He failed, as all God's people have done. I scarcely know of any exception in all the biographies of the Old or New Testament. It is some comfort to us when we see that we are not the only persons who have failed through the infirmity of the flesh. I do not hold up Elijah's passions as any excuse for us to indulge them, but if any are almost driven to despair because such passions have overcome them, let them shake off that despair. Nobody doubts that Elijah was a child of God. God loved him even when he sat trembling under the broom tree.

---

**Charles Swindoll - SELF-PITY** 1 Kings 19 [Day by Day with Charles Swindoll: Daily Devotions for a ... - Page 47](#)

A severe case of ingrown eyeballs strikes all of us every once in a while. In both dramatic and subtle ways, the stubborn enemy of our souls whispers sweet little nothings in our ears. He reminds us of how unappreciated and ill-treated we are . . . how important yet overlooked . . . how gifted yet ignored . . . how capable yet unrecognized . . . how bright yet eclipsed . . . how valuable yet unrewarded.

But the most damaging impact of self-pity is its ultimate end. A frown will replace your smile. A pungent criticism will replace a pleasant, "I understand." Suspicion and resentment will submerge you like a tidal wave, and you will soon discover that this sea of self-pity has brought with it urchins of doubt, despair . . . and even the desire to die.

An exaggeration? If you think so, sit with me awhile beneath the shade of a juniper tree located at 19 First Kings, the address of a prophet named Elijah.

Elijah had just won a great victory over Ahab and his Baal-worshiping pawns. In fact, God stamped His approval upon Elijah in such a way that all Israel knew he was God's mouthpiece. As a result, Jezebel, Ahab's spouse (he was her mouse), declared and predicted Elijah's death within twenty-four hours.

Now, the seasoned prophet had surely been criticized before. But this threat somehow found the chink in his armor.

So Elijah ran for his life. Then, beneath the tree, overwhelmed with self-pity, he said, "I've had enough . . . take away my life. . . . I've worked very hard for the Lord God of the heavens; but the people of Israel have broken their covenant with you and torn down your altars and killed your prophets, and only I am left; and now they are trying to kill me, too" (1 Kings 19:4, 10TLB).

Yet God didn't rebuke His man, nor strike him dead. He encouraged him to take a rest, enjoy a catered meal or two . . . and get his eyes off himself and his situation so that they might get back on the Lord. God even gave him a close friend, a fella named Elisha, with whom he might share his life and his load.

Feeling sorry for yourself today? Why not try God's remedy: Take a break, stop trying to work things out yourself. And take a long, loving look at your Savior in His Word . . . and then spend some time with a friend. You'll be amazed at the outcome.

Self-pity is the smog that pollutes and obscures the light of the Son.

---

**John MacArthur** - Elijah lost hope because he failed to see his circumstances through the eyes of faith; he was attempting to fight the battle on his own. He allowed himself to become emotionally, physically, and spiritually spent, and he became overwhelmed with self-pity. He felt utterly alone. But God hadn't abandoned Elijah. He was still in control, and His people were numerous (v. 18). Elijah had, in effect, removed his helmet of salvation and received a near-fatal blow to his confidence in God's blessing on his life.

There may be times when, like Elijah, you lose your confidence and doubt God's faithfulness. At such times, putting on the helmet of salvation means taking your eyes off your circumstances and trusting in God's promises. You may not always sense His presence or understand what He's doing, but be assured that He will never leave you or forsake you (Heb. 13:5); His purposes will always be accomplished (Rom. 8:28).

---

**Spurgeon - Morning and Evening** - It was a remarkable thing that the man who was never to die, for whom God had ordained an infinitely better lot, the man who should be carried to heaven in a chariot of fire, and be translated, that he should not see death—should thus pray, "Let me die, I am no better than my fathers." We have here a memorable proof that God does not always

answer prayer in kind, though he always does in effect. He gave Elias something better than that which he asked for, and thus really heard and answered him.

Strange was it that the lion-hearted Elijah should be so depressed by Jezebel's threat as to ask to die, and blessedly kind was it on the part of our heavenly Father that he did not take his desponding servant at his word. There is a limit to the doctrine of the prayer of faith. We are not to expect that God will give us everything we choose to ask for. We know that we sometimes ask, and do not receive, because we ask amiss. If we ask for that which is not promised—if we run counter to the spirit which the Lord would have us cultivate—if we ask contrary to his will, or to the decrees of his providence—if we ask merely for the gratification of our own ease, and without an eye to his glory, we must not expect that we shall receive.

*"If the Lord does not pay in silver, he will in gold;  
and if he does not pay in gold, he will in diamonds."*

Yet, when we ask in faith, nothing doubting, if we receive not the precise thing asked for, we shall receive an equivalent, and more than an equivalent, for it. As one remarks, "If the Lord does not pay in silver, he will in gold; and if he does not pay in gold, he will in diamonds." If he does not give you precisely what you ask for, he will give you that which is tantamount to it, and that which you will greatly rejoice to receive in lieu thereof. Be then, dear reader, much in prayer, and make this evening a season of earnest intercession, but take heed what you ask.

---

**John G Butler** - 1 Kings 19—Fainting of Elijah. After the great victory at Mount Carmel, Elijah experienced a bad fainting spell but eventually recovered from it.

- Persecution of Elijah: Jezebel, the wicked wife of Ahab, started the fainting spell by sending a message to Elijah that she intended to kill him in the next 24 hours.
- Panic of Elijah: after getting this message, Elijah "went for his life, and came to Beer-sheba" (1Ki 19:3) in southern Judah. •Pouting of Elijah: he asked God to take his life, "It is enough" (1Ki 19:4) was his pouting complaint.
- Preservation of Elijah: an angel fed him several meals.
- Path of Elijah: he headed to Horeb (Mount Sinai where Israel camped for a year after the exodus from Egypt).
- Probing of Elijah: "What doest thou here?" (1Ki 19:9, 13) was asked twice by God; Elijah's answer was the same both times—between the questions was a demonstration of wind, earthquake, fire, and a still small voice.
- Precepts for Elijah: he was told to anoint two kings (Hazeel of Syria and Jehu of Israel), and to anoint Elisha as a prophet.
- Prophet for Elijah: he called Elisha who served Elijah until Elijah was taken to heaven.

---

**Had Enough? Joni Eareckson Tada** - [More Precious Than Silver: 366 Daily Devotional Readings - Page 4](#)

I have had enough, LORD...Take my life.—1 Kings 19:4

Ever feel as if you have spaghetti for a backbone? When I feel like giving up, I think of good ol' Elijah and our verse for today. Even a powerful prophet can discover he has noodles for knees. Queen Jezebel had heard through the grapevine that Elijah had wiped out hundreds of her prophets. So she went after his neck. And Elijah ran for his life. When he reached the desert, Elijah gave up. He didn't even have the courage to do himself in. Instead he begged God to perform a mercy killing on him.

Do you see yourself in this picture? Whether we're terminally ill, on our last legs, or hunch-shouldered with a bad case of the Monday morning blues, all of us sometimes say, "I've had enough." There's hardly a one of us who hasn't at one time or another wanted to throw in the towel.

Each of us can draw comfort that we are all as vulnerable as Elijah. How did this mighty prophet surface out of his despair? God didn't give answers; he gave himself. He ministered to the prophet, handing him food and giving him sleep. God even offered a listening, empathetic ear. The record shows that the Angel of the Lord agreed that "the journey is too much for you" (1 Kings 19:7). Then God presented Elijah with new work to do. Sometimes switching focus onto others is just what the doctor would order.

As surely as the Angel of the Lord gave the prophet a sip of cool water and laid him down to rest, the Lord touches your life through the people he places around you. People are the hands and heart of God to you. If there are no people? God will personally come

through for you, giving you strength out of nowhere.

Do what Elijah did. Carve out time for rest. Watch your nutrition. Spend time with God. Seek out fellowship. Look for ways to help others. It's a prescription to help ease depression.

God of rest and restoration, show me how to turn to you for help when I slump emotionally. Tune my heart to the ways in which you want to minister to me, and help me to be responsive.

---

## Spurgeon - sermon notes - 1 Kings 19:4

We may learn much from the lives of others. Elijah himself is not only a prophet but a prophecy. His experience is our instruction. Sometimes we enter into a strange and mysterious state of depression, and it is well to learn from Scripture that another has been in that Valley of Deathshade. Weary, and sick at heart, sorely tried ones are apt to faint. At such a time they imagine that some strange thing has happened unto them; but, indeed, it is not so. Looking down upon the sands of time they may see the print of a man's foot, and it ought to comfort them when they learn that he was no mean man, but a mighty servant of the Lord. Let us study—

### I. ELIJAH'S WEAKNESS. "He requested for himself that he might die."

1. He was a man of like passions with us. James 5:17.

He failed in the point wherein he was strongest; as many other saints have done. Abraham, Job, Moses, Peter, &c.

This proved that he was strong not by nature, but in divine strength. He was no unfeeling man of iron, with rerves of steel. The wonder is not that he fainted, but that he ever stood up in the fierce heat which beat upon him.

2. He suffered from a terrible reaction. Those who go up go down. The depth of depression is equal to the height of rapture.

3. He suffered grievous disappointment, for Ahab was still under Jezebel's sway, and Israel was not won to Jehovah.

4. He was sadly weary with the excitement of Carmel, and the unwonted run by the side of Ahab's chariot.

5. His wish was folly. "O Lord, take away my life."

He fled from death. If he wished to die, Jezebel would have obliged him, and he needed not to have fled.

He was more needed than ever to maintain the good cause.

That cause was also more than ordinarily hopeful, and he ought to have wished to live to see better times.

He was never to die. Strange that he who was to escape death should cry, "Take away my life!" How unwise are our prayers when our spirits sink!

6. His reason was untrue. It was not enough: and the Lord had made him, in some respects, better than his fathers.

He had more to do than they, and he was stronger, more bold, more lonely in witness, and more terrible in majesty.

He had more to enjoy than most of the other prophets, for he had greater power with God, and had wrought miracles surpassed by none.

He had been more favoured by special providence and peculiar grace, and was yet to rise above all others in the manner of his departure: the chariots of God were to wait upon him.

### II. GOD'S TENDERNESS TO HIM.

1. He allowed him to sleep: this was better than medicine, or inward rebuke, or spiritual instruction.

2. He fed him with food convenient and miraculously nourishing.

3. He made him perceive angelic care. "An angel touched him."

4. He allowed him to tell his grief (see verse 10): this is often the readiest relief. He stated his case, and in so doing eased his mind.

5. He revealed himself and his ways. The wind, earthquake, fire, and still small voice were voices from God. When we know what God is we are less troubled about other matters.

6. He told him good news: "Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel": verse 18. His sense of loneliness was thus removed.

7. He gave him more to do—to anoint others by whom the Lord's purposes of chastisement and instruction should be carried on.

Let us learn some useful lessons.

It is seldom right to pray to die; that matter is best left with God; we may not destroy our own lives, nor ask the Lord to do so.

To the sinner it is never right to seek to die; for death to him is hell. The wilful suicide seals his own sure condemnation.

To the saint such a wish is allowable, only within bounds. He may long for heaven, but not for the mere sake of getting away from service or suffering, disappointment or dishonour.

To desire death may be proper under some aspects; but not to pray for it with eagerness.

When we do wish to die, the reason must not be impatient, passionate, petulant, proud, or indolent.



We have no idea of what is in store for us in this life. We may yet see the cause prosper and ourselves successful. In any case let us trust in the Lord and do good, and we need never be afraid.

## SELECTIONS

What is this we hear? Elijah fainting and giving up! that heroic spirit dejected and prostrate! He that durst say to Ahab's face, "It is thou and thy father's house that trouble Israel"; he that could raise the dead, open and shut the heavens, fetch down both fire and water with his prayers; he that durst chide and contest with all Israel; that durst kill the four hundred and fifty Baalites with the sword,—doth he shrink at the frowns and threats of a woman? Doth he wish to be rid of his life, because he feared to lose it? Who can expect an undaunted constancy from flesh and blood when Elijah fails? The strongest and holiest saint upon earth is subject to some qualms of fear and infirmity: to be always and unchangeably good is proper only to the glorious spirits in heaven. Thus the wise and holy God will have his power perfected in our weakness. It is in vain for us, while we carry this flesh about us, to hope for so exact health as not to be cast down sometimes with fits of spiritual distemper. It is no new thing for holy men to wish for death: who can either marvel at or blame the desire of advantage? For the weary traveller to long for rest, the prisoner for liberty, the banished for home, it is so natural, that the contrary disposition were monstrous. The benefit of the change is a just motive to our appetite; but to call for death out of a satiety of life, out of an impatience of suffering, is a weakness unbecoming a saint. It is not enough, O Elijah! God hath more work yet for thee: thy God hath more honoured thee than thy fathers, and thou shalt live to honour him.

Toil and sorrow have lulled the prophet asleep under this juniper tree; that wholesome shade was well chosen for his repose. While death was called for, the cozen of death comes unbidden; the angel of God waits on him in that hard lodging. No wilderness is too solitary for the attendance of those blessed spirits. As he is guarded, so is he awaked by that messenger of God, and stirred up from his rest to his repast; while he slept, his breakfast is made ready for him by those spiritual hands: "There was a cake baked on the coals, and a cruse of water at his head." Oh, the never-ceasing care and providence of the Almighty, not to be barred by any place, by any condition! When means are wanting to us, when we are wanting to ourselves, when to God, even then doth he follow us with his mercy, and cast favour upon us, beyond, against expectation! What variety of purveyance doth he make for his servant! One while the ravens, then the Sareptan, now the angel, shall be his caterer; none of them without a miracle: those other provided for him waking, this sleeping. O God! the eye of thy providence is not dimmer, the hand of thy power is not shorter: only teach thou us to serve thee, to trust thee.—Bp. Hall.

Elijah "arose and went for his life." But better he had stood to his task as a prophet, and answered as Chrysostom did when Eudoxia the empress threatened him. "Go tell her," said he, "I fear nothing but sin"; or as Basil did, when Valens, the Arian emperor, sent him word that he would be the death of him: "I would he would," said he: "I shall but go to heaven the sooner." Luther had his fits of fear, though ordinarily he could say, "I care neither for the Pope's favour nor fury." Gregory doubted not to say, that because Elijah began to be tickled with high conceits of himself for the great acts which he had done, he was suffered thus to fear, and to fall beneath himself, for his humiliation. The like we see in Peter, scared by a silly wench: to show us how weak, even as water, we are, when left a little to ourselves.—John Trapp.

Who told Elijah it was "enough"? God did not; he knew what was enough for Elijah to do and to suffer. It was not enough. God had more to teach him, and had more work for him to do. If the Lord had taken him at his word, and had also said "it is enough," Elijah's history would have wanted its crowning glory.—Kitto.

It cannot be denied, that in the expression "it is enough!" we behold the anguish of a soul which, disappointed in its fairest expectations, seems to despair of God and of the world, and is impatient and weary of the cross; a soul which, like Jonah, is dissatisfied with the dealings of the Almighty, and by desiring death, seeks, as it were, to give him to understand, that it is come to such an extremity, that nothing is left but the melancholy wish to escape by death from its sufferings. Nevertheless, a Divine and believing longing accompanied even this carnal excitement in the soul of Elijah, which, thirsting after God, struck its pinions upwards to the eternal light; yes, the key-note of this mournful lamentation was the filial thought that the heart of his Father in heaven would be moved towards him, that his merciful God would again shine forth upon his darkness, and comfort the soul of his servant. Thus we see, in the prayer of our prophet, the elements of the natural and of the spiritual life fermenting together in strange intermixture. The sparks of nature and of grace, mutually opposing each other, blaze up together in one flame. The metal is in the furnace, the heat of which brings impurity to light; but who does not forget the scum and the dross at the sight of the fine gold?—F. W. Krummacher.

I. The cause of Elijah's despondency. 1. Relaxation of physical strength. 2. Second cause—Want of sympathy. "I, even I only, am left" Lay the stress on only. The loneliness of his position was shocking to Elijah. 3. Want of occupation. As long as Elijah had a prophet's work to do, severe as that work was, all went on healthily: but his occupation was gone. To-morrow and the day after, what has he left on earth to do? The misery of having nothing to do proceeds from causes voluntary or involuntary in their nature. 4. Fourth cause—Disappointment in his expectations of success. On Carmel the great object for which Elijah had lived seemed on the point of being realized. Baal's prophets were slain—Jehovah acknowledged with one voice: false worship put down. Elijah's life-aim

—the transformation of Israel into a kingdom of God, was all but accomplished. In a single day all this bright picture was annihilated. II. God's treatment of it. 1. First, he recruited his servant's exhausted strength. Read the history. Miraculous meals are given—then Elijah sleeps, wakes, and eats: on the strength of that, he goes forty days' journey. 2. Next, Jehovah calmed his stormy mind by the healing influences of nature. He commanded the hurricane to sweep the sky, and the earthquake to shake the ground. He lighted up the heavens till they were one mass of fire. All this expressed and reflected Elijah's feelings. The mode in which nature soothes us is by finding meeter and nobler utterances for our feelings than we can find in words—by expressing and exalting them. In expression there is relief. 3. Besides, God made him feel the earnestness of life. What doest thou here Elijah? Life is for doing. A prophet's life for nobler doing—and the prophet was not doing, but moaning. Such a voice repeats itself to all of us, rousing us from our lethargy, or our despondency, or our protracted leisure, "What doest thou here?" here in this short life. 4. He completed the cure by the assurance of victory. "Yet have I left me seven thousand in Israel who have not bowed the knee to Baal." So, then, Elijah's life had no failure after all.—F. W. Robertson.

---

J R Miller - He himself went a day's journey into the desert. He came to a juniper tree, sat down under it and prayed that he might die. "I have had enough, LORD," he said. "Take my life; I am no better than my ancestors." 1 Kings 19:4

He was sorely discouraged. It seemed to him that all he had done, had come to nothing. There are few things we need more to guard against than discouragement. When once we come under its influence, it makes us weak, robbing us of our hope and making cowards of us. Many a life is discredited and drawn down to failure, through discouragement.

It is surely a sad picture: this greatest of the old prophets lying there under the little bush, in the wilderness, longing to die! If he had died then and there, what an inglorious ending it would have made of his life! As it was, however, he lived to do further glorious work and to see great results from his contest with idolatry. God was kinder to him, than he knew.

It is wrong to wish ourselves dead. Life is God's gift to us, a sacred trust for which we shall have to give account. While God keeps us living—he has something for us to do. Our prayer should be for grace to do our duty bravely and well unto the end. From Elijah's after-experience, we learn that we would never be cast down by any discouraging experiences. The things we think have failed are often only slowly ripening into rich success. We have only to be faithful to God and to duty, and we may always rejoice. What seems failure—is often best success.

---

#### **J Oswald Sanders - Responding in Service** Numbers 11:11 (From [A Spiritual Clinic](#))

Until the very moment of his collapse, Moses had been selfless in his care of his people. Indeed, when the anger of God was kindled against the idolatrous people, Moses had asked that his name be blotted out of God's book (Exodus 32:32), if only they might be spared. But he dropped to a lower plane in Numbers 11:11–15. Forgetting the desperate spiritual need of the people, he reproached God and indulged in self-pity. He lost sight of all that God had enabled him to achieve and became self-absorbed.

Elijah, too, in his time of reaction, reproached God and in strange disillusionment cried: "I am not better than my fathers" (1 Kings 19:4 KJV). His self-esteem had been dealt a shattering blow. "I have been very jealous for the LORD God," he complained (v. 14 KJV), implying that in spite of his zeal, he had been "let down." His twice repeated, "I, even I only, am left" (vv. 10, 14 KJV), indicates his sense of loneliness in his devotion to God. He too was engulfed in self-pity.

Nor was the case different with Jonah. His cause for reproaching God was resentment of His grace and forbearance! The real trouble was that God's goodness to Nineveh had shattered his reputation as a prophet. Jonah had prophesied judgment, and God had exercised mercy. Since his reputation was gone, Jonah concluded that it would be better to die than to live.

In each case the desire to die stemmed from making self and self-interest supreme instead of God and His glory. Is not all despondency in essence a manifestation of self in one form or another?

---

#### **Real Faith in Hard Times By Kevin Riggs - [Zondervan 2013 Pastor's Annual](#)**

SCRIPTURE: 1 Kings 19:1–18

**INTRODUCTION:** Living by faith means that during hard times you have Someone to lean on. Elijah was a prophet who stood for righteousness during a wicked time. After his defeat of the prophets of Baal on Mt. Carmel, Queen Jezebel vowed to kill him. Elijah fled and became discouraged. God spoke to him and encouraged him. From his experience we learn what to do, and what not to do, during difficult times.

##### **(1) What not to do during hard times.**

- A. Don't throw a pity party (1Ki 19:4, 9, 10).
- B. Don't become a loner (1Ki 19:3).

- C. Don't whine and complain (1Ki 19:4, 10, 14).
- D. Don't give up (1Ki 19:4).

**(2) What to do during hard times.**

- A. Realize the situation you are in.
- B. Draw yourself closer to God (1Ki 19:11–13).
- C. Fellowship with other believers (1Ki 19:15–18).

**CONCLUSION:** Tough times come and go, but tough people come and grow.

---

## **H A Ironside - 1 Kings 19:4, 10**

It took real courage—the courage borne of the conviction that he was God's own messenger—for this sturdy Tishbite to rebuke so powerful and wicked a ruler as Ahab. It took even more courage to declare beforehand what nature saw no evidence of, but which faith counted on God to perform (1 Kings 18:41). Yet we see this bold man tremble before the wrath of a proud, haughty, vixen-like Jezebel (1 Kings 19:2–3), whose threatening words so disturbed him that he preferred death to further conflict (1 Kings 19:4). In this we may see how he was a man of like passions with ourselves: not some wonderful, mysterious, superhuman being, but a very human person who God had taken up in grace and commissioned for a great work. His greatest weakness was in connection with his outstanding testimony: he was inclined to think of himself as Jehovah's sole representative on earth. When he said, "I alone am left (1 Kings 19:14), God rebuked him by telling of seven thousand hidden ones in Israel who had not bowed the knee to Baal (chapter 19:18). We need to learn the same lesson. However faithful or devoted we may imagine ourselves to be, God has many more than ourselves who are true to His Word and faithful in their stand against apostasy.

Not that there be less to bear,  
Not that there be more to share;  
But for braver heart for bearing,  
But for freer heart for sharing—  
Here I pray.

Not that joy and peace enfold me,  
Not that wealth and pleasure hold me;  
But that I may dry a tear,  
Speak a word of strength and cheer  
On the way.

---

## **Billy Graham - Overcoming Discouragement 1 Kings 19:4NIV - Hope for Each Day**

We all experience discouragement, and sometimes it can be almost overwhelming.

Look at Elijah. He had been one of God's most faithful servants, never wavering in the face of disaster or King Ahab's threats. Then God used Elijah to confront the pagan prophets of Baal and demonstrate to all the nation that God alone was worthy of their worship.

But only days later, discouragement and depression almost overwhelmed him. Fearing Queen Jezebel's rage and convinced the people's hearts were unchanged, Elijah fled to the desert and concluded he was a failure: "I have had enough, LORD."

How did God answer? First, He provided rest and food: Elijah had neglected to take care of himself, and it affected his emotions. Second, God showed Elijah His glory, reminding him of the greatness of the God he served. Finally, God assured him that He still had work for him to do. When discouragement comes and you wonder if you can go on, remember Elijah—and be encouraged.

---

## **David Jeremiah - DELIVERANCE FROM DESPAIR [Your Daily Journey with God: 365 Daily Devotions - Page 206](#)**

Why are you cast down, O my soul? And why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God, for I shall yet praise Him for the help of His countenance. Psalm 42:5

Many new Christians are surprised to discover that some of the greatest saints in history suffered from moments of despair, even depression. The prophet Jeremiah cursed the day of his own birth (Jeremiah 20:14), and the prophet Elijah pleaded with the Lord to take his life (1 Kings 19:4). And no one could fault Job for his lament that he had ever been born (Job 3).

The single most encompassing statement in Scripture about despondency is found three times in the book of Psalms (42:5, 11; 43:5). In the first half of the statement, the psalmist acknowledges that his soul is "cast down" and "disquieted" within him. Being

honest about one's condition is an important first step. But the psalmist doesn't stop there. He immediately tells himself, "Hope in God." He looks to the future and says, "I shall yet praise Him for [His] help." Identifying the problem is good, but moving to God's solution—hope—is better.

If you are downcast today, admit it to yourself and God. And then confess your hope in Him and praise Him for his help.

The Christian's chief occupational hazards are depression and discouragement. JOHN R. W. STOTT

---

### **The Battle Within - N D Hillis**

"Every person will have to bear ... his own ... load of oppressive faults." (Galatians 6:5—Amplified)

One of the toughest battles you will continually face in life is with yourself:

- Your self-incrimination from an overactive conscience.
- Your fear of rejection ... failure ... the future.
- Your inner spiritual turmoil over reappearing sin.

Someone has jokingly said, "If life is a bowl of cherries, why am I always in the pits?" Well, at times, life is the pits!... For ALL of us:

- Paul spoke of being perplexed ... wretched ... (despairing) even of life."<sup>15</sup>
- Jonah and Elijah harbored a death wish; Moses approached burnout. (Jonah 4:8; 1 Kings 19:4; Exodus 18:13–20)

So ... What is the answer to bearing my "own load of oppressive faults"? Escape to the Fiji Islands or South America? Hardly, since you still have to face yourself.

Perhaps the simplest answer is JESUS: "Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest ... for I am gentle and humble in heart; and you shall find rest for your souls." (Matthew 11:28, 29)

He is the solution to every heartache, every dilemma, every unsolvable problem, every disappointment ... the deepest loneliness.

Have you ever crawled up on His lap ... buried your head in His shoulder and wept? Poured out your soul to Him?

It is doubtful that all the psychology and self-help books in the world can give you the peace and release that true intimacy with the Lord Jesus affords.

It is to us He says, "How often I wanted to gather (you) together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling ..." And when our inclination is to turn to everyone but Him He says, "your house is being left to you desolate."<sup>16</sup>

---

**Charles Swindoll - WHEN THE DARKNESS HITS** Read 1 Kings 19:1–9 [Great Days with the Great Lives: Daily Insight from Great ... - Page 181](#)

Why did Elijah fear Jezebel's intimidating threats? Why did he run away from his longstanding priority of serving God and hide in fear under the shadow of that solitary tree, deep in the wilderness?

**First**, Elijah was not thinking realistically or clearly. He was so shortsighted that he failed to consider the source of this threat. Think about it. The threat hadn't come from God; it had come from an unbelieving, carnal human being who lived her godless life light-years from God. If Elijah had been thinking clearly and realistically, he would have realized this.

**Second**, Elijah separated himself from strengthening relationships.

**Third**, Elijah was caught in the backwash of a great victory. Our most vulnerable moments usually come after a great victory, especially if that victory is a mountaintop experience with God. That's when we need to set up a defense against the enemy.

**Fourth**, Elijah was physically exhausted and emotionally spent. For years Elijah had lived on the edge. He was a wanted, hunted man, considered by the king to be Public Enemy Number One. There is little doubt that Elijah had come to the end of his rope physically and, for sure, emotionally—all of which couldn't help but weaken him spiritually. I don't know if Elijah was disgusted, but I can tell you he was exhausted. You can hear it in his weary words: "It is enough; now, O LORD, take my life, for I am not better than my fathers" (1 Kings 19:4).

**Fifth**, Elijah got lost in self-pity. Self-pity is a pathetic emotion. It will lie to you. Exaggerate. Drive you to tears. It will cultivate a victim mentality in your head. And in the worst-case scenario, it can bring you to the point of wishing to die, which is exactly where Elijah was.

We open the door for that pathetic liar, self-pity, when we establish an unrealistic standard and then can't live up to it. Self-pity mauls its way inside our minds like a beast and claws us to shreds.

---

**Watch for God's faint beginnings!** He...sat down under a juniper tree. (1 Kings 19:4) [Springs in the Valley - Page 30](#)

This is Elijah! One is startled, perplexed, disappointed. A while ago we saw him on Mount Carmel surrounded by the thronging thousands of Israel, undismayed by the bold audacity of the worshipers of Baal, and confidently appealing to God to vindicate His own honor, and confound Baalim. Here he is, the prey of deep depression, forgetful of the past, giving all up, wanting God to take away his life. God has not once failed him. Not to any extent at all has one single foe prevailed against him. He should not have lost heart, should not have fled, should not have asked God to take away his life; all this was wrong. He should have remembered how God had wonderfully stood by him in the past, and have firmly trusted Him still. Is not his privilege ours also? May not God's people trust Him fully, firmly, and under all circumstances, and at all times? God is not "afar off," neither has He forgotten to be gracious; and that which He has promised He will unfailingly remember, and do. Are we not always in His hands and under His care? Should we ever have a single fear? Why should we be cast down, or disquieted? J. T. W.

Have faith in God, the sun will shine,  
Though dark the cloud may be today!  
HAVE FAITH IN GOD!

---

**The Man Who Feels Sorry for Himself** (1 Kings 19:4).

Scripture Reading: 1 Kings 19:1–18

### Introduction

Elijah comes upon the stage of Israel's history with the shout of a prophet and disappears from it in a whirlwind. When Jesus came on the earth, people thought he was much like Elijah, so much so that some said that he was Elijah come back to earth again. The prophet Malachi had said, "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD: And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse" (Mal. 4:5–6).

Jesus said that John and Baptist was that Elijah (Matt. 17:10–13). John the Baptist and Elijah had remarkable similarities: they wore the same kind of clothes, they were sons of the desert, they were called upon to preach messages of judgment, they displayed superb courage, they were hated by a woman, they were immortal in their faith, they stood with the Lord, and they suffered a temporary eclipse of faith.

**F. B. Meyer** said, "It is noteworthy that the Bible saints often fail just where we should have expected them to stand." Elijah showed human weakness when he was under the juniper tree. Sitting there under the juniper tree, he said, "It is enough." He felt he was through. He was a man who felt sorry for himself.

### **I. The man who feels sorry for himself must understand that God's people will experience opposition from Satan and the world**

Ahab and Jezebel were Satan's agents at work in Elijah's day. Ahab had said that Elijah was the one who was troubling Israel (1 Kings 18:17). Ahab also called Elijah his enemy (21:20). Ahab adopted this viewpoint because he was unrighteous, while Elijah was righteous.

The person who dares to stand for the right and live for the Lord can expect opposition from Satan and the world. Paul said, "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (2 Tim. 3:12). Elijah was feeling sorry for himself because he was now experiencing opposition.

### **II. The man who feels sorry for himself must remember that the most powerful forces are not vocal**

Elijah stood at the entrance of a cave on Mount Horeb. The sky blackened. The wind tossed boulders down the mountainside and broke them in pieces. Elijah said, "This is God." But God was not in the wind. Then an earthquake convulsed the land. Elijah said, "This is God." But God was not in the earthquake. After the earthquake there was a fire. Elijah said, "This is God." But God was not in the fire. After the fire there was a small voice—the sound of gentle stillness; God spoke (1 Kings 19:8–18).

The most powerful forces in the world are not always those that make the most noise. Often we confuse noise with influence, prominence with eminence, glaring light with sunshine. Too often we fail to distinguish between shadow and substance. God speaks to us when we feel sorry for ourselves.

### III. The man who feels sorry for himself puts himself at the center of the universe and God at the circumference

When Elijah lay down under the juniper tree, he put himself at the center of the universe and God at the circumference. Jezebel got after him, and she became central in his thoughts. He started feeling sorry for himself.

The moment God is not central, life becomes complex, filled with frustration and futility, and we feel sorry for ourselves.

Have we put God at the circumference and humanity at the center of our universe today? Do many not believe that science is the ultimate source of knowledge? Do many not look to the government for their needs? Humanity has accomplished much, and many feel that ingenuity is sufficient for any and all situations. Do many not believe that the absence of faith is a sign of intellectual acumen?

Well, we should know better. Our world has not turned out so well. The moment God is not central, life becomes confused and we feel sorry for ourselves.

### IV. The man who feels sorry for himself underestimates the power of God

Elijah became too sure of himself and too unsure of God. He said, "I have been very jealous for the LORD God of hosts: for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away" (1 Kings 19:10). God answered Elijah by saying, "Yet 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" (v. 18).

Because our plans fail is no reason to conclude that all other people have failed or that God is dead and his cause defeated. When our purposes turn sour, God's cause is not doomed. When we feel sorry for ourselves, God does not become weak, and his work does not stop. God is not indifferent. He always cares, and he is always at work.

### Conclusion

Look to the Lord in the hour of discouragement. Look to the Lord in the hour of defeat. Look to the Lord, and he will show you the way. He will speak to you and lead you out of your despondency.

---

### Spurgeon - IT IS ENOUGH! 1 Kings 19:4

It is difficult for a young person to understand why Elijah could be so dreadfully depressed as to pray, "It is enough! Now, LORD, take my life" (1 Kin. 19:4). As we grow older and more experienced, our trials multiply and our inner life enters difficult conflicts. Because we are in similar places, we better understand why God allowed His ancient servants to be put in these situations. There is relief in discovering that we are walking paths that others have traveled.

We understand Elijah's attitude on Mount Carmel when he said, "I alone am left" (1 Kin. 18:22), and we comprehend why he executed the prophets of Baal (1 Kin. 18:40). If we are puzzled as to why he got under a juniper bush (1 Kin. 19:4) or hid in a cave (1 Kin. 19:13), we understand the reasons when we ourselves get under the juniper and remember that Elijah once sat there. When we hide in a cave, it is a comfort to remember that this great prophet also did.

Perhaps you have prayed Elijah's prayer. One saint's experience is instructive to others. Many of the psalms—called Maschil, or instructive psalms—record the writer's experiences and become our textbooks.

If the Holy Spirit will guide me, I may be able to say something to help. You do not know how much there is to live for. Nevertheless, God has such blessings in store that your mouth will be filled with laughter and your tongue with singing. The Lord has done great things for you, and you will be glad (Ps. 126:2–3). Be of good courage. Strengthen your heart and wait on the Lord until He comes. May His blessing be with you forever!

---

### Scraped Butter

I have had enough, Lord . . . Take my life; I am no better than my ancestors. 1 Kings 19:4

In J. R. R. Tolkien's book *The Fellowship of the Ring*, Bilbo Baggins starts showing the effects of carrying, for six decades, a magical ring with dark powers. Weighed down by its slowly corrosive nature, he says to the wizard Gandalf, "Why, I feel all thin, sort of stretched, if you know what I mean: like butter that has been scraped over too much bread." He decides to leave his home in search of rest, somewhere "in peace and quiet, without a lot of relatives prying around."

This aspect of Tolkien's story reminds me of an Old Testament prophet's experience. On the run from Jezebel and wrung out after his battle with false prophets, Elijah badly needed some rest. Feeling depleted, he asked God to let him die, saying, "I have had

enough, Lord" (1 Kings 19:4). After he fell asleep, God's angel woke him so he could eat and drink. He slept again, and then ate more of the food provided by the angel. Revitalized, he had enough energy for the forty-day walk to the mountain of God.

When we feel scraped thin, we too can look to God for true refreshment. We might need to care for our bodies while we also ask Him to fill us with His hope, peace, and rest. Even as the angel tended to Elijah, we can trust that God will impart His refreshing presence on us (see Matthew 11:28).

When you're wrung out and exhausted, what actions tempt you? How can you put your trust in God when you're tired and overwhelmed?

Strengthening God, I look to You for true rest. Please help me put my hope in You and fill me with Your presence.

Today's Insights - Elijah's plea for God to take his life (1 Kings 19:4) may give us some insight into his condition. His wish for death wasn't just because he feared Jezebel's death threat, but because he felt he was "no better than [his] ancestors" (v. 4). It's possible that his depression was rooted in the reality that though he'd trusted God to do the impossible when He consumed the burnt offering (18:38-39) and witnessed His power when He sent rain (vv. 41-46), he'd immediately fled in fear of Jezebel. Perhaps he felt that his own faith, like that of his ancestors, was weak and fickle. Or he may have been discouraged because he'd failed to rid Israel of Baal worship and idolatry. Amy Boucher Pye (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

---

"Now, Lord, take my life, for I am no better than my fathers!" ([1 Kings 19:4](#)).

A letter came to Radio Bible Class that bore no signature and no return address. It read, "By the time you receive this letter, I will have committed suicide. I accepted Christ two years ago. Lately my world has been crumbling around me. I can't take it anymore. I can't fall again or be 'bad' anymore. God and I have drifted apart... Lord, help me. Could you take a moment and say a prayer for me, a teenager? Lord forgive me!"

Even Christians can get so desperate that they want to take their own life. In 1 Kings 19 we read that Elijah was so physically and emotionally exhausted that he asked God to take his life. Although that's not suicide, his request arises from the same feelings of despair. But God brought Elijah out of his depression. He lifted him up by strengthening him with food, restoring him through sleep, listening to his complaint, gently correcting him, reassuring him in a still, small voice, giving him new work to do, and telling him that all was not lost.

Most people who take their own lives do so when they are deeply depressed. Reality has become distorted, and they can't see the selfish, sinful nature of their act. But God wants to restore and uphold them. Sometimes He speaks hope directly to the soul, but more often He uses sensitive, caring people who come alongside to help. We can be God's hope to others. With a word, a smile, or a helping hand we can say to those who are cast down, "In Christ there is hope." -D J De Haan (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

---

## ELIJAH

"Elijah ... arose and ran for his life, and went ... a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a broom tree. And he prayed that he might die (1 Kings 19:2-4).

Adoniram Judson, the pioneer missionary to Burma who translated the Bible into Burmese and is considered one of the great early missionaries, had difficulty dealing with the death of his wife, Nancy. In deep depression, he said, "God is to me the Great Unknown. I believe in him, but I find him not."

We have all gone through times when the only certainty was uncertainty. Like Christian in Pilgrim's Progress, we have all faced Giant Despair. As Winston Churchill put it, we are sometimes overtaken by the "black dog of depression."

Jezebel scared Elijah with her death threat, and he ran for his life. He was so discouraged that he asked God to carry out Jezebel's pronouncement. Instead, God reassured Elijah with His presence and plan for the future.

Like Elijah, the two disciples from Emmaus were near despair. Their hope that Jesus would redeem Israel had been dashed, leaving them disappointed and puzzled-but only until the resurrected Christ appeared. With His presence came a bright light for the future.

Faith and doubt travel hand in hand, and doubt about God's goodness and care often leads to depression. Yet sorrow has a spur; depression can drive us to Him. If we do not find Him, He finds us; and we cry out for joy. He is alive and He loves us.



Why are you cast down, O my soul? ... Hope in God, for I shall yet praise Him. --Psalm 42:5

A woman who was widowed for the second time felt the loss deeply. She saw little reason to go on living.

One day she got into the car with her young grandson. After securing him properly, she started the car without fastening her own seatbelt. When the 5-year-old politely pointed this out to her, she told him she didn't care about her safety because she wanted to go to Jesus and Grandpa. The boy replied, "But Grandma, then you would leave me!"

God used this youngster to bring to her the realization that He still had service for her to perform, and that her situation was not as hopeless as it seemed to be.

During almost 50 years of ministry, I've seen many despairing people come to the place where they felt there was no way out. Like Elijah, they wanted to die (1 Ki. 19:4). God sustained them, however, and showed them that He still had work for them to do. They discovered that the situation was not as dark as they had thought and that God had a reason for them to go on living.

Don't give in to despair! Remind yourself of God's goodness and love. Talk to Him. He will meet your needs. He'll lead you in paths of love and light and joy where you will find new hope. --H V Lugt (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Beyond the losses of this life  
That cause us to despair,  
New hope is born within our hearts  
Because our God is there.  
-DJD

---

## There Is Hope

It is enough! Now, Lord, take my life, for I am no better than my fathers. — 1 Kings 19:4

Today's Scripture : 1 Kings 19:1-7

An old legend tells of an angel who was sent by God to inform Satan that all his methods to defeat Christians would be taken from him. The devil pleaded to keep just one. "Let me retain depression," he begged. The angel, thinking this a small request, agreed. "Good!" Satan exclaimed. He laughed and said, "In that one gift, I have secured all."

In a now out-of-print book about depression, author Roger Barrett describes it as a "wretched experience that leaves you exhausted, uninvolved, and in deep, hopeless despair. . . . You feel doomed, trapped. . . . It's awful!"

In every age, God's people have struggled with this crippling emotion. Elijah's cry "It is enough! Now, Lord, take my life!" is the cry of a despondent man (1 Kings 19:4). Others like Job and David knew similar agony of soul, but they emerged from it with stronger faith. That's encouraging!

Depression can be rooted in spiritual, mental, or physical causes, and we should not be afraid to seek godly counsel and medical help. Whatever the initial cause, Satan would love to defeat us by keeping us in our hope-starved condition. That's why we need to see that our ultimate help is in God—for He loves us and longs to shine His light through the clouds that surround us. He is the God of hope. By: Dennis J. DeHaan (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Lord, give us grace to trust You when  
Life's burdens seem too much to bear;  
Dispel the darkness with new hope  
And help us rise above despair.  
—Sper

No one is hopeless who knows the God of hope.

---

## Light In The Darkness

Now, Lord, take my life, for I am no better than my fathers. --1 Kings 19:4

Christians who pass through the dark tunnel of depression tend to focus on their sins and weaknesses and failures so much that they may even want to die. God can use times like this, however, to increase their awareness of His inexhaustible grace.



In 1964, Alan Redpath, former pastor of Moody Church in Chicago, sank into the depths of despondency following a near-fatal stroke. He wrote later of having terribly wicked thoughts. "O Lord," he prayed, "take me right home!" It was then he sensed that the Lord was saying, "It is I, your Savior, who has brought this experience into your life to show you [that] this is the kind of person--with all your sinful thoughts and temptations which you thought were things of the past--that you always will be, but for My grace."

Redpath's experience reminds me of the prophet Elijah. He too wanted to die. He cried out, "Lord, take my life!" (1 Kings 19:4). Although Elijah had been mightily used of God, he needed to be reminded of God's sustaining grace. Depression, which in his case was triggered by physical and emotional exhaustion, became God's mirror of truth to let him see anew the marvelous light of His grace. The darkest night is never without that light. --D J De Haan (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Though tempted and sadly discouraged,  
My soul to this refuge will flee  
And rest in this blessed assurance:  
"My grace is sufficient for thee."  
-Anon.

Amid the darkness of sin, the light of God's grace shines brightest.

[When Hope Is Lost: Dealing With Depression](#)

---

## RENEWED HOPE

[Elijah prayed], "Lord, take my life."... Then the Lord said to him, "Go, return on your way." -1 Kings 19:4, 15

People who live without hope can become suicidal. So it was with an Italian prisoner of war being held on a military base in the United States during World War II. He had become despondent after learning that his wife had died in Italy. The camp commander, knowing that the man had been a stonemason, asked him if he could design a chapel for the base. The POW accepted the assignment and even supervised construction.

Today a unique chapel stands at the Letterkenny Army Depot in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania. The formerly despondent prisoner found renewed hope by using his God-given talents to bless others.

In 1 Kings 19, we read that Elijah was despondent. He was physically and emotionally drained after fleeing from the evil Queen Jezebel. In despair, he asked God to take his life. Instead, the angel of the Lord ministered to his physical needs. Some days later, the Lord spoke to Elijah and told him that his work was not over.

When you are in despair, the first step on the pathway to new hope is to take care of your physical needs. Then listen to God's voice through the Scriptures. The Lord will show you your spiritual condition and tell you what He would have you do to bless others.-- D J De Haan (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

When plunged in darkness and despair,  
Our only hope is in the Lord;  
Not once does He withhold His care,  
Or ever fail to keep His Word.  
-- DJD

**God gives hope to us as we give help to others.**

---

## A Good Day To Die?

It is enough! Now, Lord, take my life! — 1 Kings 19:4

Today's Scripture : 1 Kings 19:1-18

Hopelessness and anger combined to bring death to a young man in my neighborhood. Someone had beaten him up for something he said. To retaliate, he came back with a gun. The police were called. When they arrived he ran, shooting at them. To protect everyone, they shot him. He lost his life at age 21. Later it was reported that he had told a family member that morning: "Today would be a good day to die." I wonder what brought him to such despair.

There was a day when the prophet Elijah felt hopeless and wanted to die. He had just experienced a great victory over the prophets of Baal, but now his life was being threatened by the king's wife Jezebel. In fear, he ran into the wilderness (1 Kings 19:4). There he

“prayed that he might die, and said, ‘It is enough! Now, Lord, take my life!’”

We may think that Elijah was overreacting, but hopeless feelings are real. He wisely went to the right source for help—he cried out to God. The Lord knew Elijah needed restoration, so He provided for his needs (vv.5-7). He revealed Himself to him (vv.9-13) and renewed Elijah’s sense of purpose by giving him work to do (vv.15-17). God brought him hope by reminding him that he was not alone (v.18).

Look to God. He is your source of hope. By: Anne Cetas (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Lord, give us grace to trust You when  
Life's burdens seem too much to bear;  
Dispel the darkness with new hope  
And help us rise above despair.  
—Sper

No one is hopeless whose hope is in God.

**1 Kings 19:5 He lay down and slept under a juniper tree; and behold, there was an angel touching him, and he said to him, “Arise, eat.”**

- **he lay:** Ge 28:11-15
- **was an angel touching him:** Ps 34:7,10 Da 8:19 9:21 10:9,10 Ac 12:7 Heb 1:14 13:5
- [1 Kings 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## ELIJAH SUDDENLY TOUCHED BY AN ANGEL

**He lay down and slept under a juniper tree** - Undoubtedly exhausted physically and mentally he feel asleep.

**and behold** (pay attention! - [hinneh](#); Lxx - [idou](#)), **there was an angel** ([malak](#)) **touching him, and he said to him, “Arise, eat.”** - NET = "All of a sudden an angelic messenger touched him and said, "Get up and eat." As subsequent passages show this is not just a created angel but the angel Creator, the [Angel of the LORD](#). He knew what Elijah needed in his exhausted, downcast condition.

**THOUGHT** - You may think you are alone, especially when you are downcast. You are not alone!

**Rod Mattoon** - Elijah is sleeping under a juniper tree which is also known as a broom bush. It is here that the Lord is going to start sweeping "stinkin' thinkin'" out of Elijah's life and get this man back on his feet physically and spiritually. (Online [1 Kings Commentary](#))

---

### F. W. KRUMMACHER 1 KINGS 19:5. He lay and slept under a juniper tree.

Even in the midst of the desert our gracious God is able to provide for us a place of repose; the storm does not rage incessantly; peaceful hours intervene unawares, and the burden upon our shoulders becomes for a while a resting pillow to our heads, upon which we insensibly gather recruited strength.... The very days of storm and tempest have their hours of repose and mercy. Therefore let no one be anxious, however steep and thorny his path, however rough and dreary his road. When the weary knees are ready to sink, God will know how to provide him a resting-place, and he shall be able to say, "I laid me down and slept; I awaked, for the Lord sustained me." And although these may be only short pauses; still they remind us how easily He could, if He pleased, at any moment, deliver us out of every trouble. And a believing assurance of this is sufficient to overcome every anxiety and fear.

---

[Springs in the Valley](#) - And as he lay and slept under a juniper tree, behold, then an angel touched him. (1 Kings 19:5)

God does not chide His tired child when that weariness is a result of toil for Him: "I know thy toil" (Rev. 2:2)—the Greek is "labor to weariness." And what happened? "Behold, then an angel touched him." There is no wilderness without its angels. Though Elijah knew it not, angels guarded him round about in his blackest depression and were actually placing bread and water at his head while he was asking for death.

A man may have to cry in the midst of an apostate community, "I, even I only, am left"; but he is always companied by legions of holy angels. But more than that. Who is this angel? It is the Angel of the LORD, the Jehovah Angel; the One who, centuries later in

Gethsemane, had to have an angel to strengthen Him. He touched His exhausted child. Blessed exhaustion that can bring such a touch!

As the Psalmist has said (Ps. 127:2), "He giveth to His beloved while they sleep" (RSV, margin). And God does not chide His tired child. THE DAWN

Dear child, God does not say today, "Be strong";  
He knows your strength is spent; He knows how long  
The road has been, how weary you have grown,  
For He who walked the earthly roads alone,  
Each bogging lowland, and each rugged hill,  
Can understand, and so He says, "Be still,  
And know that I am God." The hour is late,  
And you must rest awhile, and you must wait  
Until life's empty reservoirs fill up  
As slow rain fills an empty upturned cup.  
Hold up your cup, dear child, for God to fill.  
He only asks today that you be still.  
GRACE NOLL CROWELL

---

**Oswald Chambers** - The initiative against depression Arise and eat. 1 Kings 19:5.

The angel did not give Elijah a vision, or explain the Scriptures to him, or do anything remarkable; he told Elijah to do the most ordinary thing, viz., to get up and eat. If we were never depressed we should not be alive; it is the nature of a crystal never to be depressed. A human being is capable of depression, otherwise there would be no capacity for exaltation. There are things that are calculated to depress, things that are of the nature of death; and in taking an estimate of yourself, always take into account the capacity for depression.

When the Spirit of God comes He does not give us visions; He tells us to do the most ordinary things conceivable. Depression is apt to turn us away from the ordinary commonplace things of God's creation, but whenever God comes, the inspiration is to do the most natural simple things—the things we would never have imagined God was in, and as we do them we find He is there. The inspiration which comes to us in this way is an initiative against depression; we have to do the next thing and to do it in the inspiration of God. If we do a thing in order to overcome depression, we deepen the depression; but if the Spirit of God makes us feel intuitively that we must do the thing, and we do it, the depression is gone. Immediately we arise and obey, we enter on a higher plane of life.

---

**F B Meyer** - Behold, an angel touched him.

In all probability the angels often touch us when danger is near, threatening our health and life, or when foul fiends step up to us with hideous temptation. They find us out, especially when, like Elijah, we are alone and depressed; when nervous depression has crept about our hearts; when we seem to have failed in the conflict against evil and long for death to end our long and weary strife. It was the lament of a holy soul on the verge of eternity, that he had made so little of the ministry of God's holy and tender angels.

It was very gracious for God to deal thus with His servant. (ED: INDEED, I THINK IT WAS [Angel of the LORD](#)) We might have expected rebuke or remonstrance, chiding or chastisement; but we would hardly have expected such loving, gentle treatment as this. Is this the man who defied Ahab and all his priests? He is as frail and impotent as any! Nay, but God looked beneath the surface depression, and detected the strong fountains of courage and devotion that lay beneath, only capable of being called again into intense manifestation. He knew His servant's frame, and recognized that he was dust. He knew how to distinguish between the passing overstrain of the body and the heroic temper of the spirit. So, He understands us in our fits of depression and despair.

Whenever these angel-fingers touch you, whether directly or through the medium of loving mortal hands, you will always find the cake and the cruse of water. God never awakens to disappoint. It is an infinite pleasure to Him to awaken His loved ones to good things, which they had neither asked nor thought. Will not dying be something like this! The angel of life will touch us, and we shall awake to see what love has prepared.

---

**G Campbell Morgan** - Arise and eat.—1 Kings 19.5.

The story of Elijah is very human, and appeals to us because it is so true to the experience of life. The account of his encounter with the prophets of Baal is full of majesty. With calm dignity he stood against the combined evils of a corrupt court and a pagan religion.

His vindication by the fire of God was perfect. The slaughter of the prophets of Baal aroused the ire of Jezebel to such a degree, that she sent a direct message, full of fury, to Elijah. Then came reaction. The man who had stood erect, confronting all the forces of evil, now fled for his life. Full of beauty is the story of God's method with His over-wrought and fearful servant. Before entering into that communion with him which was for the correction of his false attitude of fear, He commanded him to eat, thus ministering to his physical weakness. The words which are suggested by the story are those of the psalmist: "He knoweth our frame; He remembereth that we are dust." How often the way to spiritual strength and mental restoration is that of physical renewal! While we are serving our King in this sphere of earth there can be no divorce between physical and spiritual health. Over and over again the breakdown of spiritual vision is the result of physical weariness. Let us never forget that the word of Jehovah to His servant of old under these conditions was, first: "Arise and eat." He had much to say to Elijah afterwards, and much to reveal to him; but He prepared him by renewing his bodily strength. A wonderful, understanding God is ours!

---

#### **Depression And Despair - Facts of the Matter** - N D Hillis

Those dark undercurrents of desperate emotions that drag us down into the murky shadows of hopelessness and despondency.

The bad news is that every follower of Christ seems to be subjected from time to time to this state of gloom ... this so-called "Dark Night of the Soul:"

Job, while languishing near death cried out, "May the day of my birth perish ... I despise my life ... my days have no meaning." (Job 3:3a; 7:16)

Elisha, after a great spiritual victory lamented, "I have had enough, Lord ... take my life." (1 Kings 19:5)

Paul, while suffering intense hardship in Asia, wrote, "We were under great pressure, far beyond our ability to endure, so that we despaired even of life. Indeed, in our hearts we felt the sentence of death ..." (2 Corinthians 1:8, 9a)

Today, if you are in the midst of one of these "Dark Nights of the Soul," consider and claim God's promises from His Word. Keep in mind however, that with most promises there is a condition for us to fulfill:

Promise: "Even in darkness light dawns for the

[Condition:] upright, for the gracious and compassionate and righteous man." (Psalm 112:4)

Promise: "I am the Light of the world.

[Condition:] Whoever follows Me

[Promise:] will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." (John 8:12)

Condition: "If you spend yourselves in behalf of the hungry and satisfy the needs of the oppressed:

[Promise:] then your light will rise in the darkness, and your night will become like the noonday. The Lord will guide you always; He will satisfy your needs in a sun-scorched land and will strengthen your frame. You will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters never fail." (Isaiah 58:10, 11)

Because DEPRESSION and DESPAIR are tools the Enemy often uses in his attacks against Christ's followers, it is imperative that we fight back with God's spiritual arsenal, which includes the Word of God. So claim His promises, fulfill the Word's conditions, and then see Him win the victory on your behalf. (See Ephesians 6:10-20)

---

#### **NOTHING LEFT TO DO BUT DIE**

Now, O Lord, take away my life... And the Lord said unto him, Go ... anoint Hazael ... and Jehu ... and Elisha 1 Kings 19:5, 15, 16

The words, "There's nothing left to do but die," spoken by a twenty-year-old girl who attempted suicide after a drug-taking episode, still ring in my ears. She was a picture of abject hopelessness and despair as she sat across the desk from me for our interview. She declared that she had committed every kind of sin imaginable, and had never done anything commendable that she could recall. Her moments of exhilaration had come only while under the influence of forbidden and habit-forming drugs. Now, confined to prison for her misdeeds, she said she expected soon to die, but admitted she was desperately afraid. I assured her that God still loved her, that Jesus died for her sins, and that the Lord would save her and make the rest of her life worth-while if only she would receive Christ. I pointed out that if she came to know the Lord, she would become a new and vibrant person, full of eager anticipation for the future. After counseling with her, giving her some additional Scriptures to read, and praying with her, I left. Since then I have been praying that God will reach her by His grace and claim her for himself. As yet she has not responded to the Holy Spirit's wooings.

Friend, don't make the mistake of that girl in prison who can-not bring herself to believe that God loves her. It is surprising that even Christians sometimes doubt the Lord when confronted by adverse circumstances. Note the case of Elijah mentioned in our text. Although a child of God, he too was discouraged and wished to die, but the Lord still had much work for him to do. God in His own good time will call us Home when our task on earth is finished, but let us never faithlessly declare, because of our limited perspective, that we have "nothing left to do but die." God loves us and has a plan for each of us to follow. Life with Christ is always worth living! (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Don't be downhearted, look up, look up,  
For Jesus is on the Throne,  
And He will supply every need from on High;  
Cheer up, cheer up, cheer up!  
-Old Chorus

**No life is hopeless unless Christ is ruled out!**

---

### **Life's Darkest Moments**

Read: 1 Kings 19:1-8

An angel touched [Elijah], and said to him, "Arise and eat." —1 Kings 19:5

Charles Whittlesey was a hero's hero. Leader of the so-called "Lost Battalion" in World War I, he was awarded the Medal of Honor for his bravery when his unit was trapped behind enemy lines. When the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier was dedicated, Charles was chosen to serve as pallbearer for the first soldier laid to rest there. Two weeks later, it is presumed that he ended his own life by stepping off a cruise ship in the middle of the ocean.

Like Elijah (1 Kings 19:1-7), Charles was publicly strong, but in the quiet, post-public moments, his feelings of despair set in. People today frequently face situations bigger than they can handle. Sometimes it's temporary despair brought on by fatigue, as in Elijah's case. He had been part of a great victory over the prophets of Baal (18:20-40), but then he feared for his life and ran into the wilderness (19:1-3). But often, it's more than despair and it's more than temporary. That's why it is imperative that we talk about depression openly and compassionately.

God offers His presence to us in life's darkest moments, which enables us, in turn, to be His presence to the hurting. Crying out for help—from others and from God—may be the strongest moment of our lives.

Father, grant us the candor to admit to each other that sometimes life overwhelms us. And grant us the courage to help others find help—and to seek it when we need it.

Hope comes with help from God and others.

**INSIGHT:** Elijah, deemed Israel's greatest prophet, was highly revered and well spoken of by the Jews, by the Lord Jesus Himself, and by the apostles (Matt. 17:10-11; Luke 1:17; Rom. 11:2-4, James 5:17-18). He appeared with Moses at the transfiguration of Jesus (Matt. 17:3). Because Elijah did not die (2 Kings 2:1), the Jews believed he would come back again (Mal. 4:5). Many scholars believe that Elijah will be one of the two witnesses mentioned in Revelation 11. - Randy Kilgore (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

---

### **A Neglected Remedy**

He gives His beloved sleep. — Psalm 127:2

Today's Scripture : 1 Kings 19:1-18

I am often asked to speak on the subject of stress. I'm not an expert on stress, just an experienced sufferer! I simply share counsel from God's Word that helps me live less stressfully and more restfully. Many listeners are desperate for any new insight I might offer. What blank looks I sometimes get when I make this particular recommendation: "Get more sleep!" In their longing to deepen their experience of God's peace, they were hoping for something more spiritual than that.

But I'm not alone in linking spirituality to sleep. A godly Bible teacher was asked to share the key ingredient in his own life for walking in the Spirit. He studied the Bible and prayed regularly, but his surprising reply was this: "Get 8 hours of sleep each night."

This reply is less surprising in light of God's initial remedy for Elijah's stress and depression (1 Kings 19:1-18). Twice God gave him

food and undisturbed sleep before gently confronting him at Mt. Horeb with his error.

Psalm 4:8 says, "I will both lie down in peace, and sleep; for You alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety." Sleep is not the full remedy for stress, but other solutions can become clearer to people who get adequate rest. By: Joanie Yoder (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

When life is so busy and hectic and humming,  
You're uptight and frazzled and stressed;  
Slow down for a while and spend time with the Savior,  
And be sure to get adequate rest.  
—Fitzhugh

We can sleep in peace  
when we remember that God is awake.  
(See Pr 6:20-23)

#### Related Resources:

- [Safe & Secure](#)
- [What Can I Do With My Worry?](#)

**1 Kings 19:6** Then he looked and **behold**, there was at his head a bread cake baked on hot stones, and a jar of water. So he ate and drank and lay down again.

- **cake:** 1Ki 17:6,9-15 Ps 37:3 Isa 33:16 Mt 4:11 6:32 Mk 8:2,3 Joh 21:5,9
- [1 Kings 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### DIVINE PROVISION FOR ELIJAH

One could subtitle this passage "Divine Care Catering Service."

**Then he looked and behold** (pay attention! - [hinneh](#); Lxx - [idou](#)), **there was at his head a bread cake baked on hot stones, and a jar of water** - The detail of **baked on hot stones** is fascinating as if God had just "baked" it for Elijah! This third miraculous provision should have jogged Elijah's memory of his days when Yahweh miraculously daily provided raven catering and a widow's flour and oil. God is once again demonstrating His sufficiency to take care of the needs of His downcast prophet.

One is reminded of Paul's words in Php 4:19+ "And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus."

**So he ate and drank and lay down again** - His hunger was satiated but he was still physically and emotionally exhausted. Remember James says "Elijah was a man with a nature like ours." (Jas 5:17).

**Peter Pett:** God had seen the need of His servant for sustenance, and would not leave him to die. It was both an act of infinite compassion, and a pointed reminder to Elijah that God still had a purpose for him. (ED: BELOVED THE SAME GOD SEES OUR NEED.)

**1 Kings 19:7** The angel of the LORD came again a second time and touched him and said, "**Arise, eat**, because the journey is too great for you."

- **angel of the LORD:** 1Ki 19:5
- **because the journey:** De 33:25 Ps 103:13,14
- [1 Kings 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Genesis 16:7+ Now the [Angel of the LORD](#) found her by a spring of water in the wilderness, by the spring on the way to Shur.



## ANGEL OF THE LORD SPEAKS TO ELIJAH

The **Angel of the LORD** came again a second time- The designation suggests that this was not just any "angel" but was a theophany, a pre-incarnate appearance of Christ (Christophany).

**J Vernon McGee** - Do you know who I think baked that bread? I believe it was the same One who prepared that breakfast on the shore of Galilee one morning after the Resurrection. It was our Lord who comforted Elijah, fed him, and then put him back to sleep. (SEE [Thru the Bible Vol. 13: History of Israel - 1 and 2 Kings](#))

**Allen Ross** on the **Angel of the LORD** - The Angel of Yahweh appears a good bit in the narratives of Elijah, such as in 1 Kings 19 and 2 Kings 1. It seems pretty clear in these and other passages that the title "the Angel of Yahweh" refers to "Yahweh" Himself, and so it is a description of an incarnation of the Lord, for He appeared in human form to many people. The Bible does not clarify who this Yahweh is Who appears as the "Angel" (or messenger), but every indication is that it would be the **second person of the trinity, the divine Son**. What commends this interpretation is 1) the appearances of the Angel of Yahweh parallel appearances of Yahweh which later Scriptures indicate would be Christ, 2) and this fits theology because it is the property of the Son to be the one who reveals the Godhead on earth, the Father never having taken on human form to walk among men, and the Spirit never having the property of corporeality, and 3) the phenomenon of the visitation of this Angel of Yahweh ceases when the incarnation occurs, indicating that there would no longer be a need for a "pre-incarnate" appearance now that the LORD took on mortal flesh to reveal the Godhead fully

**And touched him and said, "Arise, eat, because the journey is too great for you."** - The Angel shows His omniscience in foreseeing Elijah's imminent trip to Mount Horeb. The Angel indicates Elijah will need to take in nutrition before he makes that 40 day journey, estimated to be 200-250 miles further south of Beersheba.

**Spurgeon** - "The spirit needs to be fed, and the body needs feeding also. Do not forget these matters; it may seem to some people that I ought not to mention such small things as food and rest, but these may be the very first elements in really helping a poor depressed servant of God."

**Rod Mattoon** - There are some great insights here!

1. In mercy, the angel speaks to him again because he knows Elijah is not prepared and equipped for the journey. The Lord knows you better than you do! When God calls, don't resist Him.
2. The Word of God is our supernatural spiritual food. It gives strength to the believer.
3. Life's journey is too great for us. We cannot be victorious in our own strength. We need the strength of the Word in our own life (Mt 4:4). Rarely do I find a depressed Christian who walks with God each day, carefully reads the Word of God, and gives his burdens to the Lord. When we see Elijah, we see that the Lord fed him so he would walk! (Online [1 Kings Commentary](#))

---

### Loins Girded - Arise and Eat    1 Kings 19:7 - J J Knapp

It is hard to believe that it was the same man: the Elijah who had stood on the height of Carmel, calling for fire from heaven to consume the sacrifice, and who had helped destroy the priests of Baal with his own hands, and the Elijah, who fled for the evil Jezebel, had thrown himself under a juniper tree in the desert, and had called upon death as a saviour. What a relapse in faith in this prince in the Kingdom of heaven! The Almighty One, however, knew the cause of this weakness in the soul: she lay in the bodily exhaustion of the prophet, who had demanded too much of his strength in the struggle upon Carmel and also later; what the prophet needed before other things was rest and renewal of strength. Therefore twice an angel was sent. He prepared for him a little food and a draught of water, allowed him afterwards to enjoy a refreshing sleep, and awoke him a second time to eat once more,—and yes, then the old Elijah appeared again: the way that lay before him was not too much for him any more, but marvellously strengthened he went by the power of that food forty days and nights without interruption to the mountain of God, Horeb.

How well does the Lord know to lift His servants with the exact fitting means from their spiritual depression, and to prepare them for the way, that was designed for them, that would have been too much for them in their state of despondency. We all know hours of dejection, they often follow Carmel-hours promptly, in which our faith lifted us as it were beyond ourselves, and made us capable of things that would seem impossible to us in ordinary circumstances. Is it not ashaming already to hear that the Lord gave His undivided attention as much to the servant who lay complaining like a weakling under a bush, as well as to the hero who triumphed upon the height of Carmel? Is it not a comfort that He makes us in our weakness of soul to arise and be strengthened as by an angel's hand? The means He uses for it are various, but they always fit our condition. For Elijah it was a meal and some quiet sleep. For someone else it shall be a word of appreciation, a loving encounter, an agreeable surprise,—usually a small thing as for Elijah a cake of bread and a bottle of water; but these small things are given to us as by angels ministering, and in the final instance they

come forth from the compassion of God, who knows His creature. In this manner the Lord makes us to arise. Then we are fit again for even the hardest way, that would be too much for us without the refreshing of the Lord,—we walk forty days without becoming tired, we walk forty nights without becoming weary.

---

### **Streams in the Desert - “The journey is too great for thee.” (1 King 19:7)**

AND what did God do with His tired servant? Gave him something good to eat, and put him to sleep. Elijah had done splendid work, and had run alongside of the chariot in his excitement, and it had been too much for his physical strength, and the reaction had come on, and he was depressed. The physical needed to be cared for. What many people want is sleep, and the physical ailment attended to. There are grand men and women who get where Elijah was—under the juniper tree! and it comes very soothingly to such to hear the words of the Master: “The journey is too great for thee, and I am going to refresh you.” Let us not confound physical weariness with spiritual weakness.

“I’m too tired to trust and too tired to pray,  
Said one, as the over-taxed strength gave way.  
The one conscious thought by my mind possessed,  
Is, oh, could I just drop it all and rest.

“Will God forgive me, do you suppose,  
If I go right to sleep as a baby goes,  
Without an asking if I may,  
Without ever trying to trust and pray?

“Will God forgive you? why think, dear heart,  
When language to you was an unknown art,  
Did a mother deny you, needed rest,  
Or refuse to pillow your head on her breast?

“Did she let you want when you could not ask?  
Did she set her child an unequal task?  
Or did she cradle you in her arms,  
And then guard your slumber against alarms?

“Ah, how quick was her mother love to see,  
The unconscious yearnings of infancy.  
When you’ve grown too tired to trust and pray,  
When over-wrought nature has quite given way:

“Then just drop it all, and give up to rest,  
As you used to do on a mother’s breast,  
He knows all about it—the dear Lord knows,  
So just go to sleep as a baby goes;

“Without even asking if you may,  
God knows when His child is too tired to pray.  
He judges not solely by uttered prayer,  
He knows when the yearnings of love are there.

“He knows you do pray, He knows you do trust,  
And He knows, too, the limits of poor weak dust.  
Oh, the wonderful sympathy of Christ,  
For His chosen ones in that midnight tryst,

“When He bade them sleep and take their rest,  
While on Him the guilt of the whole world pressed—  
You’ve given your life up to Him to keep,  
Then don’t be afraid to go right to sleep.”



"The journey is too great for thee."—1 Kings 19:7

This text has been illustrated by ten thousand men. Livingstone consecrated himself to African exploration. He performed two journeys, but the third was too great for him. His health failed. Two of his servants deserted him, and they took with them his medicine chest. "I never dreamed," he wrote, "that I should lose my precious quinine." One of the last entries in his journal was: "I am pale, bloodless, and weak from bleeding profusely ever since March 31st last. An artery gives off a copious stream, and takes away my strength; oh, how I long to be permitted by the Over-Power to finish my work!" When he could work no longer he was carried on a frame of wood with some grass and a blanket upon it. And when he could endure to be carried no farther, his faithful servants built him a little hut, and in that rude structure he died. He was a great traveller. He contributed much to our knowledge of Central Africa. The coloured races owe him a mighty debt of gratitude. He was one of the bravest of Christian men. But the journey of African exploration was too great for him.

---

James Smith - THE POWER OF THE DIVINE TOUCH.

I. The Power of His Touch in Nature (Psa. 144:5).

II. The Ministry of His Touch in Grace:

1. Awakening, 1 Kings 19:5
2. Healing, Matt. 8:3
3. Cleansing, Isa. 6:7
4. Shrivelling the self-life, Gen. 32:25
5. Bestowing Holiness, Exod. 29:37
6. Giving a willingness to serve, 1 Sam. 10:26
7. Bestowing power to speak, Jer. 1:9
8. Suffering, Job 19:21

(ED - Rev 1:17 removing fear from John).

---

**J J Knapp - The Loins Girded - Arise and Eat** 1 Kings 19:7

It is hard to believe that it was the same man: the Elijah who had stood on the height of Carmel, calling for fire from heaven to consume the sacrifice, and who had helped destroy the priests of Baal with his own hands, and the Elijah, who fled for the evil Jezebel, had thrown himself under a juniper tree in the desert, and had called upon death as a saviour. What a relapse in faith in this prince in the Kingdom of heaven! The Almighty One, however, knew the cause of this weakness in the soul: she lay in the bodily exhaustion of the prophet, who had demanded too much of his strength in the struggle upon Carmel and also later; what the prophet needed before other things was rest and renewal of strength. Therefore twice an angel was sent. He prepared for him a little food and a draught of water, allowed him afterwards to enjoy a refreshing sleep, and awoke him a second time to eat once more,—and yes, then the old Elijah appeared again: the way that lay before him was not too much for him any more, but marvellously strengthened he went by the power of that food forty days and nights without interruption to the mountain of God, Horeb.

How well does the Lord know to lift His servants with the exact fitting means from their spiritual depression, and to prepare them for the way, that was designed for them, that would have been too much for them in their state of despondency. We all know hours of dejection, they often follow Carmel-hours promptly, in which our faith lifted us as it were beyond ourselves, and made us capable of things that would seem impossible to us in ordinary circumstances. Is it not ashaming already to hear that the Lord gave His undivided attention as much to the servant who lay complaining like a weakling under a bush, as well as to the hero who triumphed upon the height of Carmel? Is it not a comfort that He makes us in our weakness of soul to arise and be strengthened as by an angel's hand? The means He uses for it are various, but they always fit our condition. For Elijah it was a meal and some quiet sleep. For someone else it shall be a word of appreciation, a loving encounter, an agreeable surprise,—usually a small thing as for Elijah a cake of bread and a bottle of water; but these small things are given to us as by angels ministering, and in the final instance they come forth from the compassion of God, who knows His creature. In this manner the Lord makes us to arise. Then we are fit again for even the hardest way, that would be too much for us without the refreshing of the Lord,—we walk forty days without becoming tired, we walk forty nights without becoming weary.

---

**Robert Hawker - The Poor Man's Evening Portion** - 1 Kings 19:7, 8.

How blessed is it to observe, in the several instances of God's people, that the Lord measures out strength in proportion to their

wants, and fits every back for the burden. The prophet was obliged to flee from the king's court, but the King of kings will give him a table in the wilderness. Elijah shall be taught at one time, how to live by faith, when fed by ravens! and at another, how to go forty days and forty nights without food, when sustained by grace in going to Horeb. My soul! canst not thou find, in thy experience, similar exercises of faith; if not so splendid, yet at least no less profitable? Hath not Jesus many a time fed thee at his banqueting house, and made thy cup run over, when telling thee, in some sweet communion visit, either at his table or thine own, either in the Church or in the closet, how suited his grace is for thee, and that his strength is perfected in thy weakness? And hath not Jesus, as in the instance of Elijah, touched thee a second time, yea, and a third, and many a time, and laid in refreshments for thee, against the coming hour of trial, when the journey of spiritual exercises, that were to follow, would otherwise have been too great for thee? Knowest thou nothing of these things? Surely, in such trainings as these, the Lord is as much leading on his people now, as he did of old. Doth he come in a full tide of glory, and show himself to be Jesus, and open to our spiritual sight his pierced hands, and his side? Doth he come into the soul as the King of glory, openly manifesting his refreshing, his comforting, his strengthening, his loving presence; and, at the same time, opening our eyes and hearts to receive him; so that the soul is made joyful, and brought as into the very suburbs of heaven?—Mark what follows: perhaps, as in the case of the prophet, a long abstinence is to follow. Jesus hath therefore laid in a store of comforts. He hath victualled the ship. He hath fortified the garrison. "The just shall live by faith." Precious Jesus! give me to live on thee, when all outward comforts fail. In fulness or in famine, in life or death, if I have thee, I have enough to live upon, and in thy strength to go forty days and forty nights; yea, for ever, to the mount of God in glory!

---

Vance Havner - "The Journey is too Great" [Living in Kingdom Come - Page 106](#)

... the journey is too great for thee (1 Kings 19:7).

IT IS THE comforting word of the angel to rugged Elijah under the juniper. If ever a man seemed equal to any emergency, it was this granitic prophet. He was built for storm and stress. Like the New Testament Elijah, John the Baptist, he was not a reed shaken by the wind nor a wearer of soft clothing in kings' houses, but, just the same, he collapsed, and we do well to take warning.

It had been a great day on Carmel. Elijah had prayed down both fire and water and had annihilated the prophets of Baal. He was established as the champion of Jehovah in the land, but any man who calls for a showdown between Baal and the true God is in for trouble in any generation. Elijah might have advocated peaceful coexistence. Carmel would have been a great spot for a summit conference! The great prophet took a stance that exacted a terrific toll of body and mind. The next day, after Carmel, has put many a seer under the juniper. After our Lord's baptism, came His temptation. Dr. Scroggie says, "After the dove came the devil." It was after Paul's third heaven experience that he listed his thorn in the flesh.

They had needed rain in Israel for a long time, but before the showers, there must be a showdown, and before the showdown, there must be a prophet. We have been singing "There Shall Be Showers Of Blessing" for years, but so far there has been only a sprinkle here and there. There will be no downpour of revival blessing until we face the issue of Baal or Jehovah. When Elijah asked, "How long halt ye between two opinions?" (1 Kings 18:21) the people answered him not a word. It is so today. Call on the average Sunday morning congregation to take a stand and there will be a profound silence.

You have all the elements of revival on Carmel. There is the prophet calling the people to God in a day of apostasy. There is the confrontation with the forces of Baal. There is the rebuilding of God's altar. After the sacrifice came supplication. Then came the fire of God's power and the flood of God's blessing. It was a great day on Carmel, but the preacher who calls his people to the test of fire had better be ready for trouble. It is easier to talk on other subjects, and a minister may save himself a trip to the wilderness and a session under the juniper.

On top of all this came the threat of Jezebel to kill the preacher. Jezebel was one of the wickedest women of all time. She had brought her heathen religion into Israel, and had set up the altar of Baal beside the altar of Jehovah. Jezebel is still with us, and any prophet who calls for a showdown on Carmel will have a head-on collision with Ahab's queen. In the Book of Revelation we find a Jezebel in the church at Thyatira endeavoring to mix the church and the world—the mystery of godliness with the mystery of iniquity. Today any preacher who challenges Baal and refuses to be manipulated by Babylon infiltrating the church under the guise of recreation or social innovations will hear from Jezebel!

When Jezebel threatened Elijah, we read, "... when he saw that, he arose, and went for his life..." (1 Kings 19:3). The man who was accustomed to standing before the Lord God of Israel lets a wicked woman scare him almost out of his senses. We think of Simon Peter who, "... when he saw the wind boisterous, was afraid..." (Matthew 14:30).

This was Elijah's greatest blunder. He was on the threshold of a great revival in Israel. The prophets of Baal had been slain. The people had cried, "The Lord He is the God" (1 Kings 18:39). If Elijah had stood his ground, the seven thousand faithful believers in Israel might have rallied to him.

The history of a nation might have been changed. Many a prophet has let the devil and Jezebel scare him out of the greatest victory of his life. Sometimes pastors who dare to expose sin in the church win the first round of the battle; then the devil puts on the pressure, some prominent member gets angry and Elijah takes off to the wilderness saying, "It is enough" (1 Kings 19:4). "I've had it," would be his words today.

God knows our frame and remembers that we are dust. The angel fed Elijah and put him to sleep. Some prophets have had too

much food and sleep. God save us from overeating and oversleeping! Others have worn themselves out seeking strange experiences, when they really need food and rest. Elijah had his greatest experience of God after he rested. At Cherith, he learned the lesson of God's provision; at Carmel, he learned the lesson of God's power; but in the cave, he learned the lesson of God's presence as he had never known it before.

Elijah had a lot to learn. God met him at Horeb with the question, "What doest thou here, Elijah?" (1 Kings 19:9). Many a man running from his post of duty needs to hear that voice, but, instead of confessing his mistake, Elijah justifies himself, "I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts..." (v. 1). Now every preacher ought to be jealous, not of other preachers, but for God. Paul was jealous over his Corinthian flock. God is jealous and will not share His throne with another. We ought to be jealous when we see Christians living with a divided allegiance—when Jezebel sets up an altar to Baal. A cave is a poor place for an Elijah when he should have been standing up for God against Jezebel in Samaria.

Elijah learned three lessons at Horeb. First, he learned something about self-pity. He lamented that the prophets had been slain..." and I, even I only, am left..." (1 Kings 19:10). He was the surviving saint, with a martyr complex. Any preacher with a streak of the prophet in him is always in danger of imagining himself to be the lone survivor of a vanishing breed—the last of the old, school.

Elijah learned something about statistics. Good men, jealous for God, often have trouble with statistics. God had a different set of figures from Elijah's. Seven thousand in Israel had not bowed to Baal. God has a faithful remnant today. There were a few "even in Sardis," in that dead church, with an image to be alive. They may be a minority, but God knows who and where they are. Elijah should have stayed in Samaria and rallied that spearhead for God and righteousness. If God's prophets would defy Jezebel and exalt God today, His seven thousand might take heart, rise up, and be counted. There are many good people today who do not like the way things are going in state and church. We need to stand on Carmel, call for a showdown, repair God's altars, and pray down fire and water until there is the sound of abundance of rain.

Finally, Elijah learned a lesson in stillness. God did not speak in wind, earthquake, or fire, but in the still, small voice. Now God does speak sometimes in wind as at Pentecost, in earthquake as at the crucifixion and the resurrection, and in fire as with cloven tongues when the Spirit came, but He also speaks in a whisper. Elijah had been through days of wind, earthquake, and fire. He needed to be still and know God. It is wrong to hide in a cave in quiet solitude, cultivating our own souls, when we need to wrestle with stormy issues of our day. It is equally wrong to become so involved with controversial problems, so obsessed with the world situation, theological issues or personal difficulties, that we have no time for communion with God.

We are living, we are dwelling, in a grand and awful time,  
In an age on ages telling; to be living is sublime.

We can become so wrought up over movements and counter movements that we try to stay on Carmel and end in collapse. God did not demote the wearied Elijah. After the stillness, came action. He ordered Elijah to pass the torch on to his successors. What a trio he was to ordain: Hazeel, Jehu and Elisha! God has His men in the offing, and some of them are not the sort we might have chosen. Let us not try to perpetuate ourselves into the next generation. There is only one of a kind. There is only one like you, or me, for which let us be thankful! Let us serve our generation by the will of God, then anoint some Elisha to carry on where we left off. Remember that Elisha was not a second Elijah.

"The journey is too great," for all of us. If you are under the juniper, for whatever reason, press on to Horeb, and get your orders; not in wind, earthquake, or fire, but in the whisper of the still, small Voice.

---

## Wobbly Knees

Arise and eat, because the journey is too great for you. —1 Kings 19:7

Today's Scripture : 1 Kings 19:1-18

Our children grew up accustomed to thanking God for their food and asking Him to bless it. Once, after my husband had prayed, Tina asked, "Daddy, why did you ask God to bless this food to our wobbly knees?"

He had said "bodily needs," not "wobbly knees." Tina's misunderstanding not only reminded us of the necessity of food, but it also encouraged us to ask God for strength when we face life's stresses.

In today's reading, we find Elijah in a "wobbly" condition. After his mountaintop experience (1 Ki. 18), he ended up in the wilderness—tired, discouraged, and hungry. An angel brought him food, and later God Himself ministered to Elijah's discouragement by speaking to him in a still, small voice.

Like Elijah, everyone has "wobbly" moments. If we haven't taken time to care for our physical needs, we need to rest and eat. And if we are feeling weak spiritually, we must take time to be quiet and listen to the still, small voice of God in His Word. This is essential food for our souls.

It's good to pause at mealtime to ask God to use the food to meet our bodily needs. It's even more crucial to read His Word and ask

Him to nourish us spiritually. After all, He alone is the One who can strengthen “wobbly knees.” By: Joanie Yoder

Lord, when we're tired and feeling weak,  
To our faint hearts Your Word will speak;  
Give us our daily bread, we pray,  
To strengthen us along the way.  
—Hess

When life gets you down, take time to look up.

[www.odbm.org/devotionals/devotional-category/](http://www.odbm.org/devotionals/devotional-category/)

## 1 Kings 19:8 So he arose and ate and drank, and went in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights to Horeb, the mountain of God.

KJV 1 Kings 19:8 And he arose, and did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights unto Horeb the mount of God.

BGT 1 Kings 19:8 κα ν στη κα φαγεν κα πιεν κα πορεθη ν τ σχ ι τ ς βρ σεως κε νης τεσσαρ κοντα μ ρας κα τεσσαρ κοντα ν κτας ως ρους Χωρηβ

LXE 1 Kings 19:8 And he arose, and ate and drank, and went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights to mount Choreb.

NET 1 Kings 19:8 So he got up and ate and drank. That meal gave him the strength to travel forty days and forty nights until he reached Horeb, the mountain of God.

CSB 1 Kings 19:8 So he got up, ate, and drank. Then on the strength from that food, he walked 40 days and 40 nights to Horeb, the mountain of God.

ESV 1 Kings 19:8 And he arose and ate and drank, and went in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights to Horeb, the mount of God.

NIV 1 Kings 19:8 So he got up and ate and drank. Strengthened by that food, he traveled forty days and forty nights until he reached Horeb, the mountain of God.

NLT 1 Kings 19:8 So he got up and ate and drank, and the food gave him enough strength to travel forty days and forty nights to Mount Sinai, the mountain of God.

- **in the strength:** Da 1:15 2Co 12:9
- **forty days:** Ex 24:18 Ex 34:28 De 9:9,18 Mt 4:2 Mk 1:13 Lu 4:2
- **Horeb:** Ex 3:1 Ex 19:18 Mal 4:4,5
- [1 Kings 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### Related Passages:

Daniel 1:15 (SUPERNATURAL SUSTENANCE) At the end of ten days their appearance seemed better and they were fatter than all the youths who had been eating the king's choice food.

Exodus 3:1 Now Moses was pasturing the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian; and he led the flock to the west side of the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God.

Exodus 24:18 Moses entered the midst of the cloud as he went up to the mountain; and Moses was on the mountain **forty days and forty nights**.

Exodus 34:28 So he was there with the LORD **forty days and forty nights**; he did not eat bread or drink water. And he wrote on the tablets the words of the covenant, the Ten Commandments.

Matthew 4:2 And after He had fasted **forty days and forty nights**, He then became hungry.

Mark 1:13 And He was in the wilderness **forty days** being tempted by Satan; and He was with the wild beasts, and the angels were ministering to Him.

Luke 4:2 for **forty days**, being tempted by the devil. And He ate nothing during those days, and when they had

ended, He became hungry.

## **ELIJAH TRAVELS 40 DAYS TO MOUNT HOREB**

**So** - Term of conclusion. Elijah obeys the Angel. Note the Angel only commanded arise, eat.

**He arose and ate and drank, and went in the strength of that food** - Elijah would need the energy supplied by that food because he would walk for 40 days! The text says Elijah went but the question is why did he go? Was this Elijah's self-will or did the Angel tell him to go to Horeb? I think it may well be the latter, because in 1Ki 19:7 the Angel says "**because the journey is too great for you.**" So clearly, the angel knew Elijah was going to Horeb and He knew he would travel for 40 days. However, this is still somewhat speculative because there is no clear order like go to Brooke Cherith or to Zarephath. So whether he was in or out of the will of Yahweh, the LORD did prepare him for his journey and He did meet Elijah at the terminus of the journey.

**THOUGHT** - We all have downcast moments so we do well to note Yahweh's treatment of his prophet Elijah -- rest; food and drink; more rest; more food and drink. A good divine prescription!

**Dale Ralph Davis** writes "He tells Elijah to eat and drink again 'for the journey is too much for you' (NIV). Verse 8 indicates that the angel is anticipating the trip to Horeb and not reflecting on the journey taken from Jezreel. If so, then Elijah goes to Horeb with divine authorization." (See [see Paul Apple's Pdf commentary on 1 Kings and scroll down to page 313](#))

**R D Patterson** - God would tenderly nourish and lead his prophet to a place where he would get some much needed instruction (cf. Moses, Ex 2:15–3:22; Paul, Gal 1:15–17). After a forty-day trek, Elijah found that he had been drawn by divine providence to Mount Sinai, the sacred place of God's self-disclosure (v.8). (See [The Expositor's Bible Commentary - Page 50](#))

**Forty days and forty nights to Horeb (Sinai), the mountain of God** (identical phrase in Ex 3:1; Ex 4:27; Ex 24:13; Ezek 28:16) - What a difference a chapter makes - Chapter 18 from Victory on Mount Carmel to Chapter 19 to Despondency on Mount Horeb!

A journey on foot normally would have taken up to 14 days but it takes Elijah 40 days. If one interprets **ate and drank** literally, it appears that Elijah **ate and drank** only at the beginning of his journey and thus he would have fasted for 40 days and forty nights even as did Moses on Mount Horeb (Sinai) (Ex 34:28) and Jesus in the wilderness (Mt 4:2). Putting this all together, it would support that Elijah's 40 days was a supernaturally enabled journey and that he was going to Horeb because that is where he was told to go.

One has to ask why 40 days? It could mirror Israel's 40 years of wandering in the wilderness (Nu 14:33-34) and as such symbolize a time of testing and dependence on God. Another consideration is Moses' 40 days on Mt Horeb (Ex 24:18). This length of time would have given Elijah time to recover emotionally and spiritually and would have shown Elijah that God was able to provide for him supernaturally.

**Peter Pett:** We can compare the forty days and forty nights of the rain at the time of the Flood (Genesis 7:12), and the forty days and forty nights twice spent by Moses in the Mount (Exodus 24:18; Exodus 34:28). Compare also the forty days (morning and evening) during which Israel were challenged by Goliath (1 Samuel 17:16). It was the indication of a crisis point in divine affairs.

---

### **Spurgeon - Morning and Evening —1 Kings 19:8**

All the strength supplied to us by our gracious God is meant for service, not for wantonness or boasting. When the prophet Elijah found the cake baked on the coals, and the cruse of water placed at his head, as he lay under the juniper tree, he was no gentleman to be gratified with dainty fare that he might stretch himself at his ease; far otherwise, he was commissioned to go forty days and forty nights in the strength of it, journeying towards Horeb, the mount of God. When the Master invited the disciples to "Come and dine" with him, after the feast was concluded he said to Peter, "Feed my sheep"; further adding, "Follow me." Even thus it is with us; we eat the bread of heaven, that we may expend our strength in the Master's service. We come to the passover, and eat of the paschal lamb with loins girt, and staff in hand, so as to start off at once when we have satisfied our hunger. Some Christians are for living on Christ, but are not so anxious to live for Christ. Earth should be a preparation for heaven; and heaven is the place where saints feast most and work most. They sit down at the table of our Lord, and they serve him day and night in his temple. They eat of heavenly food and render perfect service. Believer, in the strength you daily gain from Christ labour for him. Some of us have yet to learn much concerning the design of our Lord in giving us his grace. We are not to retain the precious grains of truth as the Egyptian mummy held the wheat for ages, without giving it an opportunity to grow: we must sow it and water it. Why does the Lord send down the rain upon the thirsty earth, and give the genial sunshine? Is it not that these may all help the fruits of the earth to yield food for man? Even so the Lord feeds and refreshes our souls that we may afterwards use our renewed strength in the promotion of his

glory.

---

## **Vance Havner - Forty Days**

Throughout the Bible some very important things happened within periods of forty days. The Flood began with forty days and nights of rain (Genesis 7:12). Moses was on Mount Sinai forty days and nights (Exodus 24:18). When Israel rebelled, Moses fell down before the Lord forty days and nights (Deuteronomy 9:25). Elijah went in the strength of angel food forty days and nights. (1 Kings 19:8). Ezekiel bore in symbolism the iniquity of Israel forty days (Ezekiel 4:6). Jonah declared that Nineveh would be overthrown in forty days (Jonah 3:4). Jesus fasted forty days and nights before His temptation (Matthew 4:2) and was in the wilderness forty days (Mark 1:13).

But most important of all was the forty-day period between His resurrection and His ascension when our Lord was seen by His disciples in His new body with infallible proofs that He had conquered death. We have heard it so long that familiarity with the account has dulled our senses, and what ought to make us shout for joy in church aisles, puts us to sleep in the pews.

Think of it, the Son of God fresh from the grave appearing here and there to a few followers for forty days! And here is a mystery of all mysteries that boggles the minds of us sophisticates nowadays. Why did He not appear before His enemies? What a dramatic scene, if He had stood again before Herod and Pilate! Why did He stay in an obscure Roman province with a whole world dying for salvation? Why not a showing in Rome, Athens, Alexandria? What sort of program is this, just letting the secret out to a few ordinary run-of-the-mill people? It is enough to give the news media a nervous breakdown! Wouldn't it have proven in days what we have tried for centuries to get across? The facts were all firsthand and visible. Those who crucified Him and those who witnessed Calvary were living, and He could easily have been identified. Today a preacher back from the grave would run every other news item off the front pages. And why not? Millions are dying, and we must get the word around. Think of what television could do with that! But had He chosen to show the whole world, our Lord would not have needed all our gadgets. Here were the most amazing forty days of all the centuries, on which all Christianity hangs and the Gospel depends. And when these witnesses started out to tell it, this was the heart of their message. He came back from the grave!

Somehow we have buried the story in all the pagan trappings of Easter, and we have had no small assist from the world, the flesh, and the devil. We have tried to capture it in art, music, and literature. You will search in vain our history books for much about it. Pages record trifling happenings that made no difference but, somehow, these forty days didn't make it. It is the way of the world and part of "the foolishness of God" whose ways are not our ways. God keeps a different calendar. With Him, in whose sight one day is as a thousand years and one year as a day, these forty days may have passed unnoticed in a world oblivious to what God was about. But to us who claim to know there had better be a reshuffling of our scale of values and a rediscovery of those few weeks that spelled the difference in everything for time and eternity.

---

## **Strength for the Journey by Woodrow Kroll Phil 4:13 1 Kings 19:8**

So he arose, and ate and drank; and he went in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights as far as Horeb, the mountain of God.

Strength for the Journey

One New Year's Day in the Tournament of Roses parade, a beautiful float suddenly sputtered and quit. After checking for mechanical problems, the crew discovered that the vehicle pulling the float was simply out of fuel. The whole parade was held up until someone could get a can of gasoline. The most amusing thing about this whole fiasco was that the float represented the Standard Oil Company. With its vast oil resources, its truck ran out of gas!

Elijah had run out of gas as well. He had victoriously confronted the prophets of Baal and revived the people of Israel (1 Kings 18:20-40). He had raced King Ahab back to Jezreel and won (1 Ki 18:46). Then he had fled from the wrath of Queen Jezebel and gone a day's journey into the wilderness (1Ki 19:1-3). Now he was faced with another journey, this time to meet with God on Mount Horeb, but he didn't have the strength to do it on his own. God sent an angel of the Lord, who said to Elijah, "The journey is too great for you" (1Ki 19:7). Then God gave Elijah supernatural strength, and in that strength he traveled for 40 days and 40 nights.

Believers are not able to live the victorious Christian life on their own strength either. God knows that. But He is also able to give us the strength we need. The apostle Paul said, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" (Phil. 4:13). God has unlimited resources, but unless we appropriate them to our lives, they do us no good.

Don't settle for a stalled-out Christian life. While you are inadequate in yourself, God is more than sufficient for all your needs. Call on Him today and you'll experience all the strength you need for the journey.

Be filled with the Spirit and you'll never run out of gas.

---

## WEAPONS—positive and negative 1 Kings 19:8; Luke 4:13–14

### Especially Deadly

George Whitefield, frail in body and weak in lungs, nevertheless had an astounding range in voice. He preached to a crowd in Scotland estimated at one hundred thousand. Ben Franklin claimed to have heard him at a mile's distance. He was perhaps the second greatest open-air preacher ever, specifically endowed by God for the work.

Ward Hill Lamon, Lincoln's friend and marshal of the District of Columbia, almost killed a man with his bare hands when arresting him. Lincoln wrote him, only half-jokingly: "When you have occasion to strike a man, don't hit him with your fist; strike him with a club or crowbar or something that won't kill him."

Our spiritual life exists apart from either the frailty or potency of the body. We always live on two planes of existence, neither essential to or prohibitive of the other. Samson, though strong in body, never developed strength of soul. Jesus' soul burgeoned even as his body shrank after forty days and nights of hunger in the wilderness. From sources deep within him light shone in his eyes like arcs in the night. He met Satan spiritually energized, alert, powerful ... determined to slay the dragon. determined while disadvantaged in all but one way, to utilize that way to overcome!

**1 Kings 19:9 Then he came there to a cave and lodged there; and behold, the word of the LORD came to him, and He said to him, "What are you doing here, Elijah?"**

- **a cave:** Ex 33:21,22 Jer 9:2 Heb 11:38
- **What are you:** 1Ki 19:13 Ge 3:9 16:8 Jer 2:18 Jon 1:3,4
- [1 Kings 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### Related Passage:

Exodus 33:21-23 Then the LORD said (TO MOSES), "**Behold** (pay attention! - [hinneh](#); Lxx - [idou](#)) , there is a place by Me, and you shall stand there on the rock; 22 and it will come about, while My glory is passing by, that **I will put you in the cleft of the rock** and cover you with My hand until I have passed by. 23 "Then I will take My hand away and you shall see My back, but My face shall not be seen."

## FROM A MOUNTAINTOP TO A BROOM TREE TO A CAVE!

**Then he came there to a cave and lodged ([lun](#)) there** - The mountain man is now a caveman! Elijah seeks a place where no one can see him. A cave literally reads "*the cave*," as if it was one that was especially designated (and known) and could parallel with God putting Moses in "*a cleft in the rock*."

**Bob Utley** has an interesting note on "**to a cave**" The "cave" is where Moses received the Law Elijah is so passionate about or possibly where Moses saw God (cf. Exod. 33:22) The NOUN "**cave**" has the DEFINITE ARTICLE (i.e., "*the well known cave*").

**And behold** (pay attention! - [hinneh](#); Lxx - [idou](#)), **the word of the LORD ([Jehovah](#)) came to him** - Of course, the **LORD** can see him and so suddenly (**behold**) breaks the silence of the cave.

**And He said to him, "What are you doing here, Elijah?"** - The omniscient God knows, so the question is for Elijah to stimulate him to ponder why did he has come to this cave. This reminds me of Ge 3:9+ "Then the LORD God called to the man, and said to him, "Where are you?" This question was not for God's benefit, but for Elijah's. "So explain yourself, son. You were my man up there on Mt. Carmel. What are you doing here?"

**David Guzik** - God knew the answer to this question, but it was good for Elijah to speak to the LORD freely and to unburden his heart.

**R D Patterson** points out that Elijah "may have been in a spot more sacred then he realized. The Hebrew text says, "He came there to the cave," possibly the very "cleft of the rock" where God had placed Moses as his glory passed by (Ex 33:21–23). (See [The Expositor's Bible Commentary - Page 50](#))

---



**Lodged** (tarry, abide) ([03885](#)) **lun** is a verb meaning to lodge, to tarry. "It means to rest, to tarry, to stay, often overnight. Persons may spend the night or lodge somewhere (Gen. 19:2; 24:23, 25, 54; 28:11). It is used figuratively of righteousness lodging permanently in Zion (Isa. 1:21); and of evil thoughts taking residence in the city of Jerusalem (Jer. 4:14). It is used of weeping coming to "lodge" in the evening (Ps. 30:5[6]). It describes the secure, peaceful rest of one living close to the Lord (Ps. 91:1). Used with 'ayin (<H5869>, eye) as subject, it has the sense of to set on, to look upon (Job 17:2). Job notes that his error originates and remains in him (Job 19:4). It indicates a wise person's proper existence, abiding among the wise (Prov. 15:31). It takes on the sense of resting or sleeping when one fears the Lord (Prov. 19:23). Something may remain through the night (Ex. 23:18; Lev. 19:13; Jer. 4:14); or stay the night (Job 39:28). It is used of a dead body remaining in a tree overnight (Deut. 21:23). (The Complete Word Study Dictionary – Old Testament)

---

## Room for Silence

After the fire came a gentle whisper. 1 Kings 19:12

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE 1 Kings 19:9–14

If you like peace and quiet, there's a room in Minneapolis, Minnesota, that you'll love. It absorbs 99.99 percent of all sound! The world-famous anechoic (echo-free) chamber of the Orfield Laboratories has been called the "quietest place on earth." People who want to experience this soundless space are required to sit down to avoid getting disoriented by the lack of noise, and no one has ever been able to spend more than forty-five minutes in the room.

Few of us need that much silence. Yet we do sometimes long for a little quiet in a loud and busy world. Even the news we watch and the social media we ingest bring a kind of clamorous "noise" that competes for our attention. So much of it is infused with words and images that stir up negative emotions. Immersing ourselves in it can easily drown out the voice of God.

When the prophet Elijah went to meet God on the mountain of Horeb, he didn't find Him in the loud, destructive wind or in the earthquake or in the fire (1 Kings 19:11–12). It wasn't until Elijah heard a "gentle whisper" that he covered his face and ventured out of the cave to meet with "the Lord God Almighty" (vv. 12–14).

Your spirit may well be craving quiet but—even more so—it may be yearning to hear the voice of God. Find room for silence in your life so you'll never miss God's "gentle whisper" (v. 12).

What are some ways God communes with His children? Why is it vital to regularly communicate with Him?

Loving Father, quiet my heart and mind so I'm ready to meet with You today.

Today's Insights Elijah, whose name means "my God is Yahweh," ministered to the Northern Kingdom of Israel during the twenty-two-year reign of Ahab (874–853 bc). Ahab, together with his Sidonese wife Jezebel, led the Israelites to worship Baal and murdered God's prophets (1 Kings 16:29–34; 18:4). Elijah's prophetic ministry is exemplified when he confronted 450 of Baal's prophets on Mount Carmel, demonstrating that Yahweh is the one true God and calling Israel back to Him (18:16–21). Elijah didn't die but was taken into heaven in a whirlwind (2 Kings 2:1, 11). At the transfiguration of Jesus, he appeared with Moses (Matthew 17:3). Cindy Hess Kasper (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

---

## Daily Light on the Daily Path - "What are you doing here, Elijah?"

"He knows the way that I take."—O Lord, you have searched me and known me! You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from afar. You search out my path and my lying down and are acquainted with all my ways. . . . Where shall I go from your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from your presence? . . . If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there your hand shall lead me, and your right hand shall hold me.

Elijah was a man with a nature like ours.—The fear of man lays a snare, but whoever trusts in the Lord is safe.—Though he fall, he shall not be cast headlong, for the Lord upholds his hand.—The righteous falls seven times and rises again.—Let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up.—"The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."—As a father shows compassion to his children, so the Lord shows compassion to those who fear him.

1 Kings 19:9; Job 23:10; Ps. 139:1–3, 7, 9–10; James 5:17; Prov. 29:25; Ps. 37:24; Prov. 24:16; Gal. 6:9; Matt. 26:41; Ps. 103:13

---

## "What Doest Thou Here?"

Vance Havner



Jezebel had threatened Elijah, his nerves had gone into a tailspin, and under the juniper he imagined himself to be the surviving saint, the last good man. There are three great chapters in the life of this prophet and they might well be titled, Cherith, Carmel, and the Cave. In the cave the Lord asks him, "What doest thou here?"

Not a few of the saints are in a cave today and we would inquire of them, "What doest thou here?"

### **1. For one thing, Elijah was tired.**

It is too much for most of us these days. Never have I preached to so many tired people as now. The human race lives in a nervous breakdown. It is a day of stress, strain and tension, and our very speech is the speech of weariness, the language of languor. We are weary and faint in our minds. Fatigue is filling hospitals, asylums, graves. Men cannot drink it away with whiskey nor play it away at card tables nor laugh it off in a theatre nor sleep it away with sedatives. Our remedies treat only the symptoms and not the disease.

### **2. Elijah was also discouraged and pessimistic.**

He thought he was the last good man, and needed to learn that God had seven thousand who had not bowed to Baal. When we are too tired we easily grow despondent and imagine that everybody is out of step except ourselves.

### **3. Furthermore, Elijah was suffering a reaction from a big and noisy day on Carmel.**

This noise standard shows up in our churches. Some of us think we are not having a good meeting unless there is a lot of hullabaloo. Oh, I know that what some call worship is just the device by which some resters at ease in Zion catch up with their sleep. And what some call reverence and dignity is just spiritual rigor mortis, the Sunday coma of religious dopesters getting their eleven o'clock dose of pulpit cocaine. But the counterfeit implies the truth, and most of us are so feverish and nervous that we cannot hear God's whisper. "Be still and know that I am God." The Lord commanded the multitude to sit down before He fed them.

### **4. [Elijah] was derelict in his duty.**

He had no business under the juniper. He needed to get back on the job. In God's permissive will He took mercy on the prophet and taught him a lesson, but Elijah should not have run from the threat of Jezebel. A man is first a runaway before he is a castaway.

"What doest thou here?" Are you under a juniper? Is the journey too great for you, and are you exhausted, tired on the way, though not tired of the way? Have you grown pessimistic until you imagine yourself the surviving saint? Have you been living on excitement, big days, and big demonstrations, fire and wind and earthquake, until you cannot hear God whisper? Has the threat of Jezebel driven you to the wilderness? Wait on the Lord and renew your strength! As important as it is to be saved and sure and sound and strong, don't forget how much it means to be still!

---

### **James Smith - ELIJAH REBUKED 1 Kings 19:9–16**

"Who can come near to God with a heart not on fire?  
Souls must tire upon earth who in Heaven would rest.  
Is it hard to serve God, timid soul? Hast thou found  
Gloomy forests, dark glens, mountain tops on thy way?  
All the hard would be easy, the tangled unwound,  
Would'st Thou only desire as well as obey."

—FABER.

On the strength of the Heaven-sent meat, Elijah reached "Horeb, the mount of God." "They that wait on the Lord shall ... walk and not faint" (Isa. 40:31). Horeb was pre-eminently the mount of the revelation of God, because here the unconsumed bush was seen ablaze with a divine fire; here the law was given with its terrible accompaniments, and perhaps it was in this very cave that Moses stood while the glory of God's goodness passed by (Exod. 33). It must have been with mingled and solemn feelings that Elijah found himself in the midst of surroundings crowded with such striking and holy memories. Will there be any such manifestation of the divine presence to him? Surely he has come here to meet with God! Will those who seek Him not find Him? If men would go to the "house of God" as Elijah went to the "mount of God" what signs and wonders would be wrought!

I. A Searching Question. "What doest thou here, Elijah?" (1Ki 19:9). By this question was the Lord sternly demanding of the prophet why he was here, instead of encouraging the nation to stand firm for the God who had answered by fire on Carmel, or was it a question full of grace and tenderness seeking to call out the needs and fears of his heart that He might in mercy satisfy and comfort? In any case, it is always God's method to go to the root of the matter and deal with the motives of the life. Throughout the Scriptures divine questions are frequently accompanied by marvellous revelations (Gen. 32:27; Exod. 4:2).

II. An Honest Answer. "I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts; ... I only am left, and they seek my life" (1Ki 19:10). All those who would faithfully serve the Lord will have many heart-searching questions to answer. As a defence, Elijah's reply was a very poor one, but as a confession it was simple and sincere. He had been very jealous for the Lord, now he was afraid of his own life. All Israel had gone astray, he only was left. Perplexed and despondent he had come here partly through fear and partly to hear what God the Lord would speak to his soul. Any one who truly loves the Lord, but who, through unusual temptation and bodily infirmities, has given way to fear, can easily understand the feelings of this man of God at this particular time.

III. A Wonderful Manifestation. There came now the divine call to "Go forth and stand before the Lord" (1Ki 19:11). Is he not reminded by this that through unbelief he had lost his standing (chap. 17:1). Let us keep on the whole armour of God that we may be able to stand (Eph. 6:13). The prophet is now made a witness to the marvellous power of the Lord in a fourfold manner. He sees it in the wind, the earthquake, the fire, and the still small voice. But in the rending wind, the shaking earthquake, or the melting fire there was no message from the Lord for the trembling servant. "The Lord was not in them." The Lord would teach us as well as Elijah that there is something more needed to bring men to Himself than a mere display of natural powers. The strong wind of words, the earthquake of argument, and the fire of enthusiasm may do mighty and terrible things, yet if the still small voice of the Lord, the Spirit, is not in them there is no message from God to the souls of men. It is "not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord" (Zech. 4:6). The mightiest of all the forces that are at work in this world is that "still small voice" of the Holy Spirit that whispers God's Word of truth and life into the listening heart. A voice is something more than a sound or an influence, it is an assurance of the presence of a living PERSONALITY (Song of Sol. 2:8). "My sheep hear My voice" (John 10:27).

IV. A Powerful Effect. "When Elijah heard it he wrapped his face in his mantle and went out" (1Ki 19:13). The terrific effects of the wind, the earthquake, or the fire had evidently driven him back into the depths of the cave (1Ki 19:11); but the sweet wooing voice lured him from his dismal hiding-place, with his face hid in his mantle because it was burning with shame. Men will be all the more likely to be constrained by the sweet voice of love after they have heard the thunderings and felt the burnings of that law which is holy, just, and good. The terrible trumpet of Sinai made men stand "afar off," while the voice of Calvary constrains men to draw nigh with a shame-mantled face.

Here, but in very altered circumstances, the same question is again put, "What doest thou here, Elijah?" And, alas, the very same answer is given. Has he profited nothing by all those revelations of divine resources that he adds no petition for grace or strength to go on overcoming in the Name of Him who doeth wondrously? It would seem as if this repeated question was his last chance of getting fully restored to the power and authority of the prophetic office, but he failed to take advantage of it. He is not allowed to become a castaway, but it would seem that from this time the purposes of God concerning him are changed, and another is chosen to take his place. Has he now become a marred vessel in the hands of the Great Potter? Let us take heed lest we should come short. How shall we escape the same failure if we neglect the great opportunities that God in His infinite mercy brings within our reach?

V. A Humbling Confession. "Go, return, ... and Elisha shalt thou anoint to be prophet in thy room" (1Ki 19:15, 16). When Elijah persisted in saying "I, even I, only am left," it was an evidence that he had climbed down from his walk of faith and was now walking by sight. Was the Lord not rebuking his unbelief when he said to him, "I have left Me seven thousand in Israel which have not bowed unto Baal" (1Ki 19:18). God could easily have made Elijah sufficient to do the work of the three men whom he was now sent to anoint. Who can tell all that the Lord is able to do through one life that has been entirely and continuously yielded to His will? It was surely a self-humbling work to go and call a man to take his own place so soon after accomplishing such a mighty work for God as was witnessed on Mount Carmel. "Let him that standeth take heed lest he fall." "Let no man take thy crown" (Rev. 3:11).

---

## Escaping the Noise

After the fire came a gentle whisper. 1 Kings 19:12

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE 1 Kings 19:9–13

Today's Insights Elijah's meeting with the Lord on "Horeb, the mountain of God" (1 Kings 19:8) was not the first time the Lord met with one of His servants in that place. Centuries earlier the Lord had met Moses there. "Now Moses was tending the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian, and he led the flock to the far side of the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God" (Exodus 3:1). At Horeb the Lord revealed Himself to Moses and commissioned him to bring the children of Israel out of Egypt (vv. 2–12). The mountain we mostly associate Moses with is Mount Sinai (19:18–20). But passages like Deuteronomy 4:10 help us to see that Horeb and Sinai are used synonymously and interchangeably in Scripture. Two of the Lord's chosen servants met Him on that mountain and departed to do His will in His strength.

Today's Devotional

Several years ago, the president of a college suggested that students join her in "powering down" for an evening. Although the

students agreed, it was with great reluctance that they laid aside their cell phones and entered the chapel. For the next hour, they sat quietly in a service of music and prayer. Afterward, one participant described the experience as “a wonderful opportunity to calm down . . . a place to just tune out all of the extra noise.”

Sometimes, it's difficult to escape “extra noise.” The clamor of both our external and internal worlds can be deafening. But when we're willing to “power down,” we begin to understand the psalmist's reminder of the necessity to be still so we can know God (Psalm 46:10). In 1 Kings 19, we discover as well that when the prophet Elijah looked for the Lord, he didn't find Him in the pandemonium of the wind or the earthquake or the fire (vv. 9–13). Instead, Elijah heard God's gentle whisper (v. 12).

Extra noise is practically guaranteed during celebrations. When families and friends come together, it's likely a time of animated conversations, excess food, boisterous laughter, and sweet expressions of love. But when we quietly open our hearts, we find that time with God is even sweeter. Like Elijah, we're more likely to encounter God in the stillness. And sometimes, if we listen, we too will hear that gentle whisper. Cindy Hess Kasper (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

#### Reflect & Pray

What will help you draw close to God in silence and solitude? How can you regularly “power down” both your devices and your busy mind?

It's in the stillness we're most likely to hear God's gentle whisper.

---

#### Who Needs Me?

When you get there, anoint Hazael king over Aram. 1 Kings 19:15

#### TODAY'S SCRIPTURE 1 Kings 19:9–12, 15–18

While on a red-eye flight to Washington, DC, opinion writer Arthur Brooks overheard an elderly woman whisper to her husband, “It's not true that no one needs you anymore.” The man murmured something about wishing he were dead, and his wife replied, “Oh, stop saying that.” When the flight ended, Brooks turned around and immediately recognized the man. He was a world-famous hero. Other passengers shook his hand, and the pilot thanked him for the courage he displayed decades ago. How had this giant sunk into despair?

The prophet Elijah bravely and single-handedly defeated 450 prophets of Baal—or so he thought (1 Kings 18). Yet he hadn't really done it alone; God was there all along! But later, feeling all alone, he asked God to take his life.

God lifted Elijah's spirits by bringing him into His presence and giving him new people to serve. He must go and “anoint Hazael king over Aram,” Jehu “king over Israel,” and Elisha “to succeed you as prophet” (19:15–16). Invigorated with renewed purpose, Elijah found and mentored his successor.

Your great victories may lie in the rearview mirror. You may feel your life has peaked, or that it never did. No matter. Look around. The battles may seem smaller, the stakes less profound, but there are still others who need you. Serve them well for Jesus' sake, and it will count. They're your purpose—the reason you're still here. Mike Wittmer (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

#### Reflect & Pray

Who can you serve today for Christ? Why is it so vital for you to reach out to others with God's love?

Holy Spirit, open my eyes to those I can serve for Jesus' sake.

**Today's Insights** When God tells Elijah that He's reserved seven thousand people in Israel who remain loyal to Him (1 Kings 19:18), He corrects Elijah's misunderstanding that he's the only one left who truly worships God (18:22; 19:10, 14). Some scholars view seven thousand as symbolizing fullness. In spite of the opposition of the wicked Israelite king Ahab and his wife Jezebel, God had preserved a godly remnant. The notion of a remnant preserved by God is seen with Noah's family (Genesis 6–9), with the survivors of military sieges (2 Kings 19:4, 30–31), and within the exile (Isaiah 10:20–22; 11:16; 46:3). For the apostle Paul, Jewish believers in Jesus now constitute a faithful remnant that fulfills the claim of 1 Kings 19:18 (Romans 11:2–5).

**1 Kings 19:10** He said, “I have been very zealous for the LORD, the God of hosts; for the sons of Israel have forsaken Your covenant, torn down Your altars and killed Your prophets with the sword. And I alone am left; and they seek my life, to take

KJV 1 Kings 19:10 And he said, I have been very jealous for the LORD God of hosts: for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away.

BGT 1 Kings 19:10 κα ε πεν Ηλιου ζηλ ν ζλωκα τ κυρ παντοκρ τορι τι γκατ λιπ ν σε ο υ ο Ισραηλ τ θυσιαστ ρι σου κατ σκαψαν κα το ρ προφ τας σου π κτειναν ν ομφα κα πολ λειμμαι γ μον τατος κα ζητο σι τ ν ψυχ ν μου λαβε ν α τ ν

LXE 1 Kings 19:10 And Eliu said, I have been very jealous for the Lord Almighty, because the children of Israel have forsaken thee: they have digged down thine altars, and have slain thy prophets with the sword; and I only am left alone, and they seek my life to take it.

NET 1 Kings 19:10 He answered, "I have been absolutely loyal to the LORD, the sovereign God, even though the Israelites have abandoned the agreement they made with you, torn down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword. I alone am left and now they want to take my life."

CSB 1 Kings 19:10 He replied, "I have been very zealous for the LORD God of Hosts, but the Israelites have abandoned Your covenant, torn down Your altars, and killed Your prophets with the sword. I alone am left, and they are looking for me to take my life."

ESV 1 Kings 19:10 He said, "I have been very jealous for the LORD, the God of hosts. For the people of Israel have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword, and I, even I only, am left, and they seek my life, to take it away."

NIV 1 Kings 19:10 He replied, "I have been very zealous for the LORD God Almighty. The Israelites have rejected your covenant, broken down your altars, and put your prophets to death with the sword. I am the only one left, and now they are trying to kill me too."

NLT 1 Kings 19:10 Elijah replied, "I have zealously served the LORD God Almighty. But the people of Israel have broken their covenant with you, torn down your altars, and killed every one of your prophets. I am the only one left, and now they are trying to kill me, too."

- **very zealous:** Ex 20:5 34:14 Nu 25:11,13 Ps 69:9 119:139 Joh 2:17
- **torn down Your altars:** 1Ki 19:14 18:4,30 Jer 2:30 Ho 5:11 Mic 6:16 7:2
- **And I alone am left:** 1Ki 18:4,20,22 20:13,22,35,41,42 22:8 Ro 11:2-4
- **they seek my life:** 1Ki 19:2 18:10,17
- [1 Kings 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Romans 11:1-5+ I say then, God has not rejected His people, has He? May it never be! For I too am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. 2 God has not rejected His people whom He foreknew. Or do you not know what the Scripture says in the passage about Elijah, how he pleads with God against Israel? 3 “Lord, **THEY HAVE KILLED YOUR PROPHETS, THEY HAVE TORN DOWN YOUR ALTARS, AND I ALONE AM LEFT, AND THEY ARE SEEKING MY LIFE.**” 4 But what is the divine response to him? “I HAVE KEPT for Myself **SEVEN THOUSAND MEN WHO HAVE NOT BOWED THE KNEE TO BAAL.**”

### ELIJAH'S LAMENT FORSAKEN AND HUNTED

He said, “I have been very zealous ([qanah](#); Lxx - [zeloo](#)) for the LORD, the God of hosts (see [Jehovah Sabaoth](#)) - Elijah is not exaggerating nor boasting (in my opinion), because he had single-handedly taken on and defeated Satan's army of false prophets! Elijah is explaining to the LORD why he is in a cave on Mount Horeb. It is because he was zealous or jealous for the LORD's name.

**NET NOTE on very zealous** - The infinitive absolute preceding the finite verb emphasizes the degree of his zeal and allegiance.

[David Guzik](#) - Elijah protested to God, “I have faithfully served You and now look at the danger I am in.” To Elijah – and many servants of God since – it seemed unfair that a faithful servant of God should be made to suffer.

**For** (term of explanation) - explaining why he was so **zealous**.

**The sons of Israel have forsaken** ('[azab](#) - abandoned; Lxx - [egkataleipo](#)) **Your covenant** ([beriyth](#)), **torn down Your altars and killed Your prophets with the sword** - **Sons of Israel** refers primarily to the Northern 10 Tribes. Do you see the natural "declension"? Forsake covenant > tear down altars > kill prophets (when they threw off the restraints of God's covenant, the eventually became murderers of His mouthpieces! cf what happens when there is no king = Jdg 21:25+) They forsook the **covenant** which would refer to the "[Mosaic Covenant](#)" where they (their ancestors) had vowed "*All that the LORD has spoken we will do, and we will be obedient!*" (Ex 24:7+). Note the fact that they had torn down God's **altars** must refer to altars at sites such as Mount Carmel (1Ki 18:30+) (? altars at other "high places"). **Killed your prophets** refers to Jezebel's murderous purge of as many of God's prophets she could get her hands on. It is worth noting that where God and His Word had been jettisoned in the Northern Kingdom, God still had His prophets dispersed to mercifully tell the people His truth. But Jezebel puts an end to that, which is another reason she is one of the most evil women to ever live! Notice that Elijah chooses not to remember (or simply forgets) God's provision of food from the ravens and the woman of Zarephath, not to mention Yahweh's victory over the 450 prophets of Baal. Apparently this failure to "accentuate the positive" is still the "Jezebel effect" which seems to have given Elijah "recent memory loss."

**And I alone am left** - Again we see the recent memory loss, for Elijah forgets the prophet Obadiah (and his mention of 100 more faithful prophets of Yahweh in Israel 1Ki 18:3-15+), but now he "feels" like he is the only one. In short, he chooses to believe an untruth. God will correct him in 1Ki 19:18!

**THOUGHT** - Have you ever been there beloved - feeling all alone? Believing things that are not true? As we've all heard, "Feelings can be deceiving!" Open the Word and listen for His still small voice to speak truth to your heart and soul.

**And they seek my life, to take it away** - **They** refers primarily to Jezebel's threats.

Elijah's words recall Paul's words in Acts 20:24+ "But I do not consider my life of any account as dear to myself, so that (PAUL'S LIFE PURPOSE) I may finish my course and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify solemnly of the gospel of the grace of God."

**Bob Utley** Elijah is having a terrible "woe is me!" party. He does not understand why YHWH has allowed all of this to occur. He feels alone and ineffective!

**Donald Wiseman** - The reasons for Elijah's depression include sadness at Israel's apostasy (cf. 1Ki 18:18), desecration of sacred places and martyrdom of the Lord's prophets (cf. 1Ki 18:13) despite Elijah being zealous. This word (av 'jealous', 'ardent', Heb. qānā' meaning 'to be enthusiastically and exclusively devoted') is used both of God (Ex 20:5) and of man in his disruptive passions (envy, jealousy, 2 Kgs 10:16). ([1 and 2 Kings: An Introduction and Commentary](#))

---

**Zealous** (jealous)([07065](#)) **qanah** from **qin'ah** = zeal, ardor - from color produced in face by deep emotion) means to be jealous, to be envious, to be zealous. The picture is that of intense fervor, passion, and emotion. Zeal is an eagerness and ardent interest in pursuit of something and implies energetic and unflagging pursuit of an aim or devotion to a cause. Jealousy can be righteous or unrighteous - e.g., [Genesis 37:11](#) records that Joseph's "brothers were jealous of him" and here we see the mindset and emotion of their fleshly jealousy led to unrighteous deeds! Contrast Phinehas godly jealousy that motivated righteous deeds!

The Greek verb is [zeloo](#) from [zelos](#) = zeal in turn from **zeo** = boil; source of our English word "zeal") means to be fervent, to "boil" with envy, to be jealous. It can be used in a positive way to refer to a striving for something or showing zeal as in the case of Elijah.

---

**Charles Swindoll** - **COME OUT** Read 1 Kings 19:10–18 [Great Days with the Great Lives: Daily Insight from Great ... - Page 182](#)

God met his servant Elijah in his desperate moment of discouragement and despair. This is mercy at its best, beautifully portrayed by the Master Himself.

First, God allowed Elijah a time of rest and refreshment. No sermon. No rebuke. No blame. No shame. No lightning bolt from heaven, saying, "Look at you! Get up, you worthless ingrate! Get on your feet! Quickly, back on the job!"

Instead, God said, "Take it easy, my son. Relax. You haven't had a good meal in a long time." Then He catered a meal of freshly baked bread and cool, refreshing water. That must have brought back sweet memories of those simple days by the brook at Cherith. How gracious of God!

Fatigue can lead to all sorts of strange imaginations. It'll make you believe a lie. Elijah was believing a lie, partly because he was exhausted. So God gave him rest and refreshment, and afterward Elijah went on for forty days and nights in the strength of it.

Second, God communicated wisely with Elijah. God said, "Elijah! Get up and walk out of this cave. Man, it's dark in here. Go out there and stand in the light. Stand on the mountain before Me. That's the place to be encouraged. Forget Jezebel. I want you to get your eyes on Me. Come on, I'm here for you. I always will be."

God's presence was not in wind or earthquake or fire. His voice came in the gentle breeze. Those sweet zephyrs were like windswept, invisible magnets, drawing Elijah out of the cave. Do you see what God did? He drew Elijah out of the cave of self-pity and depression. And once Elijah was out of that cave, God asked him again, "What are you doing here, Elijah?"

God showed Elijah that he still had a job to do—that there was still a place for him. Disillusioned and exhausted though he was, he was still God's man and God's choice for "such a time as this" (Esther 4:14). And as far as this I'm-all-alone stuff went, "Elijah, let Me set the record straight," said God. "There are seven thousand faithful out there who have not bowed to Baal. You're really not alone. At any given moment, with the snap of My divine fingers, I can bring to the forefront a whole fresh battalion of My troops." What reassurance that brought.

---

**John Blanchard** - The man who had defied hundreds of prophets now ran away from one devil-inspired woman, escaped into the wilderness, lay down under a juniper tree and cried out to God, 'Take my life; I am no better than my ancestors' (1 Kings 19:4). Yet it is precisely this element of weakness in Elijah that makes his story such an encouragement to us. The story of Elijah on the mountain, opposing the prophets of Baal, may make us feel that that is something right outside our kind of experience. If so, then we fail to grasp the point James is making. His concern is not to show Elijah as an extraordinary miracle-worker, but as an ordinary man who knew the humiliation of defeat and who could put his head between his knees and wish himself dead. But why should that encourage us? Because it is this man—this dejected prophet on the brink of suicidal depression—who had such power with God that, in Thomas Manton's words, he 'seemed to have the key to heaven, to open and shut it at pleasure'!

There is a great danger in reading in the Bible of outstanding incidents linked with certain men and women to think that the people involved lived as it were in a different world, breathing different air. But that is not so! They lived in our world. They were ordinary people with all of our human weaknesses, all of our propensity to sin. They were fallen and fallible. It is crucially important that we grasp this.

---

#### **Vance Havner - SURVIVING SAINTS**

I only, am left.... I have left me seven thousand.... 1 Kings 19:10, 18.

Elijah in the cave thought he was the surviving saint, the only good man left. God corrected him for his statistics were all wrong. Seven thousand remained who had not bowed to Baal. The old Straight and Narrow is not crowded, few there be who travel it, but you are not the only pilgrim. Let no Elijah bemoan his solitary state as a lone survivor. God has more faithful left than we think.

---

#### **J R Miller - 1 Kings 19:10**

There is something very pathetic in this verse. Elijah really thought he was alone. He did not know of one other man in all the land, who was loyal to God. This made it all the harder for him. Companionship strengthens us. It is comparatively easy in battle for one to march and fight in the ranks, with others all around him; but to move out alone, old soldiers say, is a sore test of courage. It is easy to be good, faithful, and loyal in duty, diligent in Christian service—when one has companionship. But it tests one's life to have to stand alone, the only Christian in the family, the workshop, the store, the school. But many have to stand just in this way. They are really the only one who is in their place to stand for God. If they fail, God's work there will suffer greatly.

But we see also the value of a single life. For years Elijah was the only one who confessed the Lord and was faithful to him. Yet though utterly alone, and not knowing of any others who even secretly were true, he yet stood firm, and bravely maintained the honor of Jehovah in the face of a whole nation. As we read the story through to the end—we see the outcome of his faithfulness. He alone wrought a great reformation. We sometimes find ourselves alone—the only one to witness for Christ in the place where we stand. If we simply stand and falter not, we shall by and by see the triumph of that for which we stand.

---

**D A Carson** - Borrow [For the Love of God, Volume 1 page 315](#) (Or [For the Love of God, Combined Edition](#))

DOUBTLESS ELIJAH EXPECTED THAT, after the triumphant confrontation on Mount Carmel, Israel would turn back to the living God (1 Kings 19). As he had executed the false prophets, so Queen Jezebel herself would be eliminated—by the popular demand of an outraged populace determined to be faithful and loyal to the covenant. Perhaps even King Ahab would repent and come on board.

It doesn't work out that way. King Ahab reports everything that has happened to Jezebel, and Jezebel lets Elijah know that he is as good as dead (1 Kings 19:2). The people are nowhere to be seen. "Elijah was afraid and ran for his life" (1 Kings 19:3), we are told.

In fact, a textual variant (which may be original) reads “Elijah saw, and ran for his life”—i.e., he now saw the dimensions of the whole problem, and ran. He heads south to Beersheba on the southern edge of the kingdom of Judah, drops off his servant, and keeps on going. Eventually he arrives at Mount Horeb, the site of the giving of the Law. He is so deeply depressed he wants to die (1 Kings 19:4). Worse, he succumbs to not a little self-pity: everybody else has rejected God, all the Israelites have broken the covenant, all the prophets except Elijah have been put to death—“I am the only one left, and now they are trying to kill me too” (1 Kings 19:10).

One can sympathize with Elijah’s despair. In part, it is grounded in unfulfilled expectations. He thought that all that had taken place would trigger massive renewal. Now he feels not only isolated, but betrayed. And yet:

- (1) He has his facts wrong. He knows that at least a hundred of the Lord’s prophets are still alive, even if they are in hiding (1 Kings 18:13).
- (2) He is not in a fit state to judge the hearts of all the Israelites. Some may be loyal to Yahweh, but terrified of Jezebel, and therefore keeping their heads down. After all, isn’t that what he himself is doing?
- (3) God himself assures Elijah that he has “reserved” for himself seven thousand people who have never bowed to Baal and never kissed him (1 Kings 19:18). Here is the beginning of a major biblical theme—the doctrine of the remnant. The covenant community as a whole may become apostate, but God Almighty still “reserves” for himself a faithful remnant—which in the fullness of time will become the nucleus of the fledgling New Testament church.
- (4) God sometimes works and speaks in quiet ways, not in massive confrontation (1 Kings 19:11–13).
- (5) Sooner or later even the strongest leaders, especially the strongest leaders, need a younger apprentice and helper to come alongside, shoulder part of the burden, and finally take over the work (1 Kings 19:19–21).

---

**Tim LaHaye - SPIRITUAL REVIVAL** Go out and stand before me on the mountain. 1 Kings 19:11 [Embracing Eternity: Living Each Day with a Heart Toward Heaven](#)

ELIJAH WAS one of God’s greatest prophets, but he was still human. He still suffered from discouragement and spiritual fatigue. When the pressure built up, he struggled to maintain his strength before God.

It was on the heels of his greatest spiritual victories that he found himself in the pit of despair and confusion. Elijah defeated the prophets of Baal and then summoned a mighty rain from the sea to show God’s power to the evil King Ahab. Jezebel swore to have him killed when she learned what he had done, so he fled. He ended up under a tree in the desert, praying that God would take his life. God’s prophet learned the price of obedience to the Lord. People don’t always like what God has to say, and those who speak for him take the brunt of the world’s wrath.

God understood Elijah’s confusion. He put him into a deep sleep and then sent angels to minister to him. He brought food and water and physical restoration to his prophet. Then he had Elijah travel to Mount Sinai, where he could meet with him face-to-face. “Go out and stand before me on the mountain,” the Lord tells Elijah (1 Kings 19:11).

Have you ever been so beaten and discouraged that all you want to do is lie down and die? Have you ever found yourself saying with the prophet Elijah, “I have had enough, Lord.... Take my life” (1 Kings 19:4)? Have you ever felt so persecuted and weary that you didn’t think you could go on? If so, then maybe you need to meet God on the mountain.

It is often on the heels of our greatest spiritual highs that we find ourselves in the depths of discouragement. Most mountaintops feed directly into valleys, and that’s usually where we find ourselves when we come down. The higher we go, the farther we can fall. The Lord understands this truth, and he is there to prop us up when we need him most. He will refresh our heart and spirit. And he will meet with us to renew our vision. All he needs is for us to go to him.

If you don’t have a mountain, a prayer closet will do just as well. God met with Elijah on the peaks of Sinai, but he’ll meet with you in the depths of your heart. Go to him today, and allow him to revive your body and spirit.

#### REFLECTION

How do you normally deal with spiritual discouragement?

How would God have you handle these times in the future

1 Kings 19:11 So He said, “**Go forth** and stand on the mountain before the LORD.” And **behold**, the LORD was passing by! And a great and strong wind was rending the mountains and breaking in pieces the rocks before the LORD; but the LORD was not in the wind. And after the wind an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake.



- **stand upon the mount:** Ex 19:20 24:12,18 34:2 Mt 17:1-3 2Pe 1:17,18
- **the LORD was passing by:** Ex 33:21-23 Ex 34:6 Hab 3:3-5
- **great and strong wind** Ex 19:16 Ex 20:18 Job 38:1 Ps 50:3 Isa 30:30 Eze 1:4 37:7 Na 1:3,6 Heb 12:18-21 Rev 20:11
- **but the Lord was not in the wind:** Zec 4:6
- **an earthquake:** 1Sa 14:15 Ps 68:8 Na 1:5 Zec 14:5 Mt 24:7 27:51-54 28:2 Heb 12:26 Rev 11:19 16:18
- [1 Kings 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Exodus 33:21-23+ Then the LORD said, "Behold, there is a place by Me, and you shall stand there on the rock; 22 and it will come about, while **My glory is passing by**, that I will put you in the cleft of the rock and cover you with My hand until I have passed by. 23 "Then I will take My hand away and you shall see My back, but My face shall not be seen."

Exodus 34:6+ **Then the LORD passed by in front of him** and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD God, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness and truth;

### YAHWEH BECKONS ELIJAH TO STAND BEFORE HIM

So He said, "**Go forth and stand on the mountain before the LORD (Jehovah).**" And **behold**, (pay attention! - [hinneh](#); Lxx - [idou](#)) **the LORD (Jehovah) was passing by!** - Elijah is on Mount Horeb where Moses centuries before had encountered Yahweh the burning bush (Ex 3:1-2+). Elijah is in need of a fresh vision of how Yahweh works in His world. However note that Elijah does not obey immediately this time! Why do I say that? Look at 1Ki 19:13 where it says "he wrapped his face in the mantle and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave."

**And a great and strong wind was rending the mountains and breaking in pieces the rocks** (Heb "tearing away the mountains and breaking the cliffs") **before the LORD; but the LORD was not in the wind. And after the wind an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake** - The LORD caused these rock breaking, earth shaking events but was not in them. Put yourself for a moment in Elijah's sandals and imagine his feelings of awe and wonder and a bit of trepidation for he was a man just like us (Jas 5:17).

---

#### Henry Blackaby - A Gentle Whisper 1 Kings 19:11–13 [The Experience - Page 55](#)

Sometimes we look for God in the wrong places. We assume there has to be a hundred-voice choir singing before we can hear from God. We look for God in thunder and lightning, trumpets and billowing smoke. That's not always God's way. God can speak through fire or earthquakes or any way he chooses, but he knows we're really listening when we hear him whisper. The hardest thing to do sometimes is to be quiet and listen. We don't like silence. We'd rather be doing something than sitting still, so we immerse ourselves in noise and activity, then we wonder why we don't hear from God. God should not have to shout in order to be heard. He is God; he shouldn't have to compete with the other noises in our lives.

King David, who's known as a man after God's own heart, knew the secret of silence. As a boy, he spent many hours in solitude, listening to God's voice while the sheep grazed in the meadows. His advice? "Be still before the LORD and wait patiently for him" (Psalm 37:7).

We mistakenly assume God is not pleased with us unless we're active, so we're always looking for things we can do for God. We confuse stillness with idleness. Idleness is doing nothing; spending quiet time with God is doing something. If we want to hear from God, we need to stop making so much noise. We must stop our activity long enough to listen for his whisper. If we're quiet, we'll hear it.

---

#### [Listening to His Voice](#)

I'm hard of hearing—"deaf in one ear and can't hear out of the other," as my father used to say. So I wear a set of hearing aids.

Most of the time the devices work well, except in environments where there's a lot of surrounding noise. In those settings, my hearing aids pick up every voice in the room and I cannot hear the person in front of me.

So it is with our culture: a cacophony of sounds can drown out God's quiet voice. "Where shall the Word be found, where will the Word resound?" poet T.S. Eliot asks. "Not here, there is not enough silence."

Fortunately, my hearing aids have a setting that cuts out the surrounding sounds and enables me to hear only the voices I want to hear. In the same way, despite the voices around us, if we quiet our souls and listen, we will hear God's "still small voice" (1 Kings 19:11–12 nkjv).

He speaks to us every day, summoning us in our restlessness and our longing. He calls to us in our deepest sorrow and in the incompleteness and dissatisfaction of our greatest joys.

But primarily God speaks to us in His Word (1 Thessalonians 2:13). As you pick up His book and read it, you too will hear His voice. He loves you more than you can ever know, and He wants you to hear what He has to say.

---

### **Adrian Rogers - People Think That God Reveals His Will in a Cataclysmic Experience**

And don't make this mistake: to think that when God reveals His will to you, He's going to do it in some great cataclysmic experience, some great dramatic happening is going to show the will of God for your life. You remember Elijah the prophet? He got perplexed and frustrated, and got out of the will of God, and got upset a little bit. And so God had to take him to a vacation retreat up in the mountains. And God spoke to him there. In 1 Kings chapter 19, beginning in verse 11, here's what happened. God said to Elijah, "Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the LORD. And behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the LORD; but the LORD was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the LORD was not in the earthquake: and after the earthquake a fire; but the LORD was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice." (1 Kings 19:11–12) And God was in that still small voice.

Don't think that if God speaks to you, it's going to be something radical and dramatic, and that you have to be an earthquaker. You can just be a quaker. You can just let God speak. Don't make the mistake of looking for something radical, something dramatic.

---

### **"THE LORD IS NOT IN IT" - Os Hillman [TGIF: Today God Is First: Daily Workplace Inspiration](#)**

The LORD said, "Go out and stand on the mountain in the presence of the LORD, for the LORD is about to pass by." 1 KINGS 19:11

Elijah was in a crisis in his ministry. God had just corrected his perspective of his situation. If any man needed a touch from God, it was Elijah. He was in such distress that he wanted to die.

The Lord intervened and told Elijah that He was coming to talk to him. But God did not tell Elijah how He was going to reveal Himself. It was up to Elijah to tell whether God was in the situations about to take place:

Then a great and powerful wind tore the mountains apart and shattered the rocks before the LORD, but the LORD was not in the wind. After the wind there was an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake. After the earthquake came a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire. And after the fire came a gentle whisper. When Elijah heard it, he pulled his cloak over his face and went out and stood at the mouth of the cave (1 Kings 19:11-13).

We often think that God is in our grand projects only to discover that He is not. We may also assume that because of the success or visibility of a situation God is in it. And He may actually be in the project. However, God's ways are not always highly visible. In fact, He often shows Himself in subtle ways. Sometimes He chooses to come in a soft, gentle whisper.

We need to be able to discern God's involvement in our situations. Ask Him today for wisdom to know when He is involved.

---

### **Springs in the Valley - Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the LORD. (1 Kings 19:11) [Springs in the Valley: 365 Daily Devotional Readings - Page 38](#)**

A rebuke is often a blessing in disguise. Elijah needed this form of address in order to arouse him to an understanding of his causeless fear. Such a one as he has no right to be fitful and repining. If he will go forth and stand upon the mount before the Lord, instead of hiding away in a cave, he will find new inspiration in a new vision of His power! When we are living on earth's low levels we fail to catch the inspiring visions of God which are the true support of the prophetic life. We must come out into the sunshine and make the ascent of the mountain if we would discern those evidences of God's power which are always available for the re-creation of faith and courage.

The golden-crested wren is one of the tiniest of birds; it is said to weigh only the fifth part of an ounce; and yet, on frailest pinions, it braves hurricanes and crosses northern seas.

It often seems in nature as though Omnipotence works but through frailest organisms; certainly the Omnipotence of grace is seen to the greatest advantage in the trembling but resolute saint.

On the American prairies the butterflies start westward in their migrations and make steady progress though the wind is against them and the sea in front. The delicate butterflies rebuke me.

Step out on the waves  
That would crush you!  
Step out in the storm  
That would hush you!  
And you will find,  
As you touch the crest  
You feared so much,  
And walk on its breast,  
There was One walking there,  
The whole night through,  
Walking, watching,  
Waiting—FOR YOU!

---

**Tim LaHaye - WHEN GOD SPEAKS IN THE EARTHQUAKE** -[Embracing Eternity: Living Each Day with a Heart Toward Heaven](#)

After the wind there was an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake. 1 Kings 19:11

“An earthquake is coming, and it is not symbolic. This passage indicates that everyone, great or small, would rather be crushed to death than to face the one who sits on the throne.” Nicolae, 327

“AFTER THE WIND there was an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake” (1 Kings 19:11). When Elijah went to meet with God on the mountain, a mighty whirlwind passed by, but that’s not how God chose to speak to him. Elijah had done nothing to incur God’s anger and wrath, so he saw no need. After the wind, God sent an earthquake. But again, that’s not how he chose to address his faithful prophet. The mountains shook, but the Lord was not in the earthquake.

That doesn’t mean that God won’t speak through an earthquake. And when he does, you don’t want to be standing idly by.

“For in my jealousy and blazing anger, I promise a mighty shaking in the land of Israel on that day,” the Lord says through his prophet Ezekiel. “All living things ... will quake in terror at my presence. Mountains will be thrown down; cliffs will crumble; walls will fall to the earth.... Thus I will show my greatness and holiness, and I will make myself known to all the nations of the world. Then they will know that I am the Lord!” (38:19–23).

Just as the earthquake followed the whirlwind in front of Elijah, God’s judgment always comes on the heels of his anger. God’s wrath usually leads to discipline. And discipline always comes for the purpose of redemption. When God comes to you in the earthquake, you can be sure that what you are feeling is his hand of discipline on your life. And you can be just as sure that he is doing so in order to restore you to himself.

It is more than a little significant that history’s greatest moment of redemption was accompanied by an earthquake. Jesus had been in the grave for three days, and with the guards standing outside the tomb, God orchestrated his most powerful and final act of restoration. All of creation had been waiting for this moment—the moment when Jesus would rise from the grave and redeem his people once and for all time. “Suddenly there was a great earthquake, because an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and rolled aside the stone and sat on it” (Matthew 28:2).

God shook the very foundations of the earth in judgment in order to usher in a new age of redemption. And with that act, brought ultimate restoration to his people.

#### REFLECTION

How do you respond when God’s hand of discipline comes upon you?

Does it help to know that his purpose is restoration?

---

**1 Kings 19:12 After the earthquake a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire; and after the fire a sound of a gentle blowing.**

---

KJV 1 Kings 19:12 And after the earthquake a fire; but the LORD was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice.

BGT 1 Kings 19:12 κα μετ τ ν συσσεισμ ν π ρ ο κ ν τ πυρ κ ριος κα μετ τ π ρ φων α ρας λεπτ ς κ κε κ ριος

LXE 1 Kings 19:12 and after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire: and after the fire the voice of a gentle breeze.

NET 1 Kings 19:12 After the earthquake, there was a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire. After the fire, there was a soft whisper.

CSB 1 Kings 19:12 After the earthquake there was a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire. And after the fire there was a voice, a soft whisper.

ESV 1 Kings 19:12 And after the earthquake a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire. And after the fire the sound of a low whisper.

NIV 1 Kings 19:12 After the earthquake came a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire. And after the fire came a gentle whisper.

NLT 1 Kings 19:12 And after the earthquake there was a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire. And after the fire there was the sound of a gentle whisper.

- **a fire:** 1Ki 18:38 Ge 15:17 Ex 3:2 De 4:11,12,33 2Ki 1:10 2:11 Heb 12:29
- **a gentle blowing:** Ex 34:6 Job 4:16 33:7 Zec 4:6 Ac 2:2,36,37
- [1 Kings 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## A STILL SMALL VOICE

**After the earthquake a fire, but the LORD(Jehovah) was not in the fire-** While God may choose to speak in these dramatic ways, such was not the case for Elijah. The text does not tell us how the fire was manifest -- lightning? burning bush? etc. The three physical phenomena remind me of an old singing group (in my rocker days) called "Earth, Wind and Fire." These physical phenomena were like inanimate "announcers" of Yahweh's imminent arrival.

**and after the fire a sound of a gentle blowing-** The **gentle blowing** was the fourth manifestation Yahweh had caused. Literally the Hebrew reads "the sound of gentle stillness," "a sound, a thin silence," or "a voice, calm, soft." While the Almighty can shake the earth, he can also move quietly, even imperceptibly in accomplishing His goals. This picture of God in a gentle whisper speaks of His moving behind the scenes, ever controlling the scenes He is behind as the God of providence.

**THOUGHT** - What a good reminder to all of us in Christ. We love incredible, even "miraculous" answers to our prayers, but it is so good to be reminded that the ever moving omnipotent, omnipresent God is also continually moving quietly in the background circumstances of our lives. What a mighty God we serve!

- NKJV, Peshitta "a still small voice"
- NRSV, Josephus, Antiq. 8.13.7 "a sound of sheer silence"
- TEV "the soft whisper of a voice"
- NJB, REB, JPSOA "a light murmuring sound"
- LXX "a sound of a light breeze"

### [Play Hymn](#)

*Be still, my soul: the Lord is on thy side;  
Bear patiently the cross of grief or pain;  
Leave to thy God to order and provide;  
In every change He faithful will remain.*  
—von Schlegel

**Donald Wiseman:** God does not always speak so clearly through these manifestations as he does through his individual word to his prophet. The **'still small voice'** (av) was a gentle whisper (cf. Heb. 'a thin [fine] subdued sound'), rather than 'a low murmuring sound' (neb); 'stillness' is not incompatible with the words for 'sound, voice' ('a sound of sheer silence', nrsv) and the word 'thin' (dāqqâ). The soft voice of God speaking to the conscience, illuminating the mind and stirring resolve in individual and nation may follow and is often preferable to the loud roaring and thunder of cosmic events at Sinai and Carmel. ([1 and 2 Kings: An Introduction and Commentary](#))

**Spurgeon** - This same lesson has to be learned over and over by us all: let us repeat it, 'Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord.' It is to be lamented that the most of professors obstinately cling to the fatal error of looking for displays of power of one kind or another. I hear that a certain church is seeking for a very clever man: she thinks that God is in the wind... That still small voice will be hushed and silent, while the boastings of your wisdom resound like a howling wind or a thunder unaccompanied by rain."

**David Guzik**: Elijah perhaps thought that the dramatic display of power at Mount Carmel would turn the nation around. Or perhaps he thought that the radical display of God's judgment against the priests of Baal following the vindication at Mount Carmel would change the hearts of the nation. Neither of these worked. This example is important for Christian ministers today, especially preachers. It shows that displays of power and preaching God's anger don't necessarily change hearts. Instead, the still small voice of God speaking to the human heart is actually more powerful than outward displays of power or displays of God's judgment.

**Brian Bell** - God appears to Elijah in a still small voice - (lit. the sound of thinnest silence) a delicate whispering voice. Literally, the tone of a gentle blowing (K&D). The sound....of silence! Huh, that sounds like an old Simon & Garfunkel song...Hello darkness my old friend, I've come to talk with you again, Because a vision softly creeping, Left its seeds while I was sleeping, And the vision that was planted in my brain. Still remains. Within the sound of silence. When you're trying to hear God's voice/will for your life...what are you listening for? Thinnest silence? Delicate whisper?[not always big/noisy] God shows He's not only more powerful than Baal, but more importantly, in His essence He was a being who was totally other (transcendent) than the deity worshipped on Mount Carmel. Nature is often times in Scripture the vehicle of God's voice. But here the reminder, not the storm of Sinai, but the whisper of Calvary is what touches & opens hearts. We all need to get alone with God; are Carmels must be followed by our Horebs. Then we receive fresh commissions; and there God teaches us to inspire others purposes with which He has filled our own hearts. Meyers

---

**Adrian Rogers - After the fire there was a voice, a soft whisper.** - Another misunderstanding about God's will is the "Miracle Myth"—implying that you must have something dramatic happen in order for you to obtain His guidance and direction. Many people want to be "earthquakers" when it comes to discerning God's will. They want a cyclone, a forest fire, an inferno. But if you want to find out generally the will of God for your life, there's a still, small voice. There's a path "like the light of dawn, shining brighter and brighter until midday" (Prov. 4:18). First it's dark, then it's gray dawn, then you see colors and shadows, then high noon.

---

## Be Still and Listen

In Directions, James Hamilton writes:

Before refrigerators, people used ice houses to preserve their food. Ice houses had thick walls, no windows, and a tightly fitted door. In winter, when streams and lakes were frozen, large blocks of ice were cut, hauled to the ice houses, and covered with sawdust. Often the ice would last well into the summer.

One man lost a valuable watch while working in an ice house. He searched diligently for it, carefully raking through the sawdust, but didn't find it. His fellow workers also looked, but their efforts, too, proved futile. A small boy who heard about the fruitless search slipped into the ice house during the noon hour and soon emerged with the watch.

Amazed, the men asked him how he found it.

"I closed the door," the boy replied, "lay down in the sawdust, and kept very still. Soon I heard the watch ticking."

Often the question is not whether God is speaking, but whether we are being still enough, and quiet enough, to hear.

—Phillip Gunter in Fresh Illustrations for Preaching & Teaching (Baker), from the editors of Leadership.

---

## Vance Havner - The Lesson of the Cave: God's Presence [Day by Day - Page 5](#)

And after the fire a still small voice. I Kings 19:12.

It was the day after Carmel. The day after the big day can be a very bad day. From His baptism our Lord went to meet the devil. After the third heaven, Paul came to his thorn in the flesh.

But Elijah learned at the cave what he never learned on Carmel. We make so much these days of wind, fire, and earthquake, of the sensational and spectacular, of the dramatic demonstration on Carmel. We measure everything by "How big?" and "How loud?" God's voice in the cave was still and small. He does indeed speak in wind, fire, and quake, but those are occasional. Woe unto us if we are so deafened by the whirlwind that we cannot hear the whisper!

We are in great danger of going from one Carmel to another, living on excitement, mass meetings, and amazing demonstrations, that we need a session in the cave. Let us not deafen our ears to the quiet moving of God's Spirit in hundreds of humble hearts whose work of faith and labor of love will outlast anything on Carmel.

---

## **Tim LaHaye - WHEN GOD SPEAKS IN THE FIRE** [Embracing Eternity: Living Each Day with a Heart Toward Heaven](#)

After the earthquake there was a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire. 1 Kings 19:12

ELIJAH STOOD on Mount Sinai waiting for the Lord to come and speak to him. As he waited, a whirlwind passed by, but God was not in the whirlwind. When the winds died down, God sent an earthquake, but he was not in the earthquake. "After the earthquake there was a fire," Scripture records, "but the Lord was not in the fire" (1 Kings 19:12).

God had spoken before from a fire. When Moses stood on this same mountain many years earlier, he saw a bush engulfed in flames. When he went to see what was happening, the Lord spoke to him from the fire. " 'Do not come any closer,' God told him. 'Take off your sandals, for you are standing on holy ground' " (Exodus 3:5).

Fire represents the holiness of God. It symbolizes his power and purity among an impure people. When God speaks to us from his holy fire, he is showing us the very essence of his character and glory. Like the fire, God is intense and dynamic and powerful. His holiness cannot be touched or approached without fear and trepidation.

"Be very careful never to forget what you have seen the Lord do for you," Moses says to the Israelites. "Do not let these things escape from your mind as long as you live! And be sure to pass them on to your children and grandchildren. Tell them especially about the day when you stood before the Lord your God at Mount Sinai.... You came near and stood at the foot of the mountain ... and the Lord spoke to you from the fire" (Deuteronomy 4:9–12).

God's holiness is not something to take lightly. When you've seen God in all his glory, you don't easily forget the encounter. God didn't speak to Elijah in the fire, but Elijah may have expected him to. This is how he spoke to Moses and to the Israelites. God led Elijah to the same mountain, maybe even to the same spot. Yet as the fire passed, God's voice didn't come. He had something greater in mind for Elijah. Something that was perhaps a foreshadowing of what was to come. Something that you and I can readily relate to.

God spoke to Elijah in a gentle whisper. Some translations call it a "still, small voice." He spoke to Elijah as one friend to another.

### **REFLECTION**

Have you ever felt the holiness of God around you during times of worship or prayer? How do you react when in the presence of God's glory?

How should we react?

---

## **Listening for the Big Noise** [The Zondervan 2017 Pastor's Annual: An Idea and Resource Book](#)

Text: "And after the earthquake a fire; but the LORD was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice" (1 Kings 19:12).

Scripture Reading: 1 Kings 19:1–18

### **Introduction**

Discouragement is one of the most sinister and damaging states into which a Christian can fall. It carries its own kind of paralysis; it lays us low and takes away the song in our hearts and the joy from our souls. At least momentarily it takes us out of the race and puts us on the sidelines. What do we do when the crisis of discouragement arises? Does God provide resources and strength whereby we can overcome this spiritual malady?

The biblical event we will study to illustrate this crisis involves a man whose personality and record of achievement as a prophet of God leads one to say, "Discouraged? Surely not this man!" His very name is synonymous with strength and victory. Elijah! He was the prophet-giant of the Old Testament, the fiery and relentless voice of God's judgment, the hero of the Hebrews! Yet James describes him as a man "subject to like passions as we are" (James 5:17).

#### **I. In Our Text Story We Discover Elijah Riding Perhaps the Highest Crest of Victory in His Life**

Elijah had stood fearlessly before King Ahab, confronting him with the idolatry of God's people. He called for a showdown, and the king ordered all the people and the prophets of Baal to assemble on Mount Carmel. Elijah's call to the people was, "How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him" (1 Kings 18:21). The contest was begun, the Baal prophets prepared their sacrifice, and all day they called on their god to send fire and consume it, but no fire came.



Elijah's turn came, and following a quiet, simple prayer to God, the fire fell and consumed the sacrifice. A national revival broke out in Israel, and the story of this victory closes with this declaration: "And the hand of the LORD was on Elijah" (1 Kings 18:46).

## II. Then We Find Our Prophet Walking the Dark Valley of Discouragement

"But [Elijah] ... requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life" (1 Kings 19:4). Why did this giant of God come to this point of exasperation while the taste of Carmel's victory was still in his mouth and the people's cries of repentance were still ringing in his ears? How could Jezebel, a mere woman, strike such fear in Elijah's heart? Perhaps Elijah forgot that in the aftermath of victory there comes the moment when we are most vulnerable to temptation. While we celebrate our victories, we must not forget to keep in touch with the God who made them possible.

Elijah, in his own mind, did not allow God to keep his rightful place in this situation. He decided that the victory was a farce, and he gave way to fear. Cowardice whiplashed him down to the wilderness, where he dropped, physically and spiritually spent, under a juniper tree.

Elijah not only lost faith in himself, but in others as well. He decided that there was not a God-fearing person left in Israel. So, with his faith in God shaken, his faith in himself and in his people gone, what was left for him but to ask to die?

## III. The Story Doesn't End on That Sad Note: Elijah Was Yet to Find the Solid Rock of Faith

How did God cure Elijah's discouragement? First, he put him to sleep; he taught him how to "be still." God has many ways of making us "stop," causing us to be still and know that we are his sheep and he is our God. David said, "He maketh me to lie down in green pastures" (Ps. 23:2).

Second, God showed Elijah his sin and brought him to repentance. He instructed the prophet to go into the mountain, where a strong wind came that split the mountain and broke the rocks. There followed an earthquake and a blinding fire—and Elijah was awed by this fantastic display of power! But after all the noise and bluster were gone, there was "a still small voice," with which God spoke clearly and plainly to Elijah. Elijah listened, and the discouragement drained out of him. He was ready to be God's man again.

**Conclusion** Are you discouraged? Do you feel like giving up? Are you waiting for some "big noise," some spectacular thing to happen to catapult you into some mountain-peak experience? Perhaps God wants you to be still and let him speak. Stop waiting for the big noise. When God speaks, "the sound of his voice is so sweet, the birds hush their singing." God will sustain his people through the valleys as well as on the mountaintops.

---

**STILL, SMALL NUDGES** Charles Swindoll - [Wisdom for the Way: Wise Words for Busy People - Page 173](#)

For the LORD corrects those he loves, just as a father corrects a child in whom he delights. PROVERBS 3:12

What brings wisdom into our lives? Accepting God's reproofs.

Reproof is from a Hebrew term that means "to correct . . . to convince." I often think of reproofs as God's proddings, those unmistakable nudges, His "still small voice" (1 Kings 19:12 KJV). They are inner promptings designed to correct our ways. They alert us to the fact that we are off course. They communicate, in effect, "My child, that's wrong; change direction!"

These God-given reproofs sometimes appear in Scripture. . . . On other occasions the reproofs come verbally from those who love us.

All of us have sagging character qualities that need attention. To ignore them is to open the gate that leads to disobedience. - Living Beyond the Daily Grind

---

**Charles Stanley - Are You Ready to Listen?** [On Holy Ground: A Daily Devotional - Page 320](#)

SCRIPTURE READING: 1 Kings 19:1–18

KEY VERSE: 1 Kings 19:12 After the earthquake a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire; and after the fire a still small voice.

The prophet Elijah was exhausted physically, emotionally, and spiritually. Is this what happens to a man who obeys God? Elijah must have wondered.

He was depressed to the point of desiring death, on the run, and desperately wanted to hear from God. Where should he go? What hope was there for a future? Through an angel, God fed him to restore his physical strength, but Elijah still wasn't ready to hear what God had to say.

For forty days and nights, Elijah traveled to Mount Horeb (Sinai), moving slowly in his despair. He cried out to God once more: "I alone am left; and they seek my life, to take it away" (1 Kings 19:10 NASB).

How did God answer his plea? Not in the way that Elijah expected. Elijah stood on the mountain waiting. The sudden, violent wind



did not bring God's answer. God was not in the rock-shattering earthquake either. The sudden inferno did not contain His answer. After the great commotion, Elijah heard a gentle blowing, and then God spoke to give him direction for his future.

God wanted Elijah to have the right heart attitude to receive His words. Elijah needed to be thoroughly emptied of himself, of self-reliance, of the need to control. When Elijah gained a proper perspective of God's tender sustenance and sovereign power, he was ready to really hear what God had to say. Is your heart ready to listen?

Dear Lord, I want to hear Your voice. Empty my reservoir of self-reliance, and give me a proper perspective of Your sovereign power. Make me ready to listen.

---

#### **How God Dealt with a Nervous Breakdown** [The Zondervan 2017 Pastor's Annual: An Idea and Resource Book](#)

Are you discouraged? Do you feel like giving up? Are you waiting for some "big noise," some spectacular thing to happen to catapult you into some mountain-peak experience? Perhaps God wants you to be still and let him speak. Stop waiting for the big noise. When God speaks, "the sound of his voice is so sweet, the birds hush their singing." God will sustain his people through the valleys as well as on the mountaintops.

At the very apex of his career, the prophet Elijah suffered something akin to a nervous breakdown. It is very instructive to see how God dealt with this malady in 1 Kings 19. The Lord's treatment program contained the following elements:

- God prescribed sleep and nourishment.—1 Kings 19:5–8
- Angelic assistance was dispatched.—verses 5–8
- Elijah was allowed to verbalize his frustrations honestly and openly.—verses 9–11
- God reminded Elijah of His power.—verses 11–12
- The Still, Small Voice of God was needed.—verse 12
- There was a recommissioning, a renewal of purpose was given.—verses 15–17
- Where God is concerned, Elijah learned, things are never as bad as they may appear.—verse 18
- A good friend was assigned to provide companionship.—verse 19

---

#### **Vance Havner - Carmel and Horeb** [Day by Day - Page 18](#)

Then the fire of the Lord fell... 1 Kings 18:38.

But the Lord was not in the fire: and after the fire a still, small voice. 1 Kings 19:12.

God was in the fire at Carmel; He was not in the fire at Horeb. We are not to gather from the still, small voice that God is never in wind, earthquake, and fire. He often is. He came at Pentecost with a sound as of a rushing mighty wind. He came in an earthquake in the Philippian jail.

God works in nature in the cataclysmic, in flood and tornado; and He works in the gradual, quiet process of the seasons. He works in mighty mass movements in revival with a Whitefield or a Moody. But He also moves in quiet gatherings in the day-by-day work of faith and labor of love among the churches.

And into our hearts He sometimes breaks in sudden and tempestuous ways, in mountain-top raptures and third-heaven experiences. But He also works in daily growth in the knowledge of Christ, the quiet walk by His sufficient grace.

You cannot live at Carmel all the time. Carmel happens only once in a while. God is at Horeb too—if you have ears to hear.

---

#### **LIFELONG FAITH** [Discovering God's Daily Agenda: 365 Devotions to Live in ... - Page 14](#) - Henry Blackaby

I your servant have feared the LORD from my youth. 1 Kings 18 : 12

So declares the faithful prophet Elijah. We find in 1 Kings tips for living a life of faith just as he did.

- If we don't diligently follow God's commands, we—like Ahab—can too easily trivialize sin, become comfortable with it, and no longer see it as offensive to God (1Ki 16:31).
- A lifetime of following God prepares you for times of crisis and uncertainty. Though you may not always understand your situation, experience tells you God is trustworthy. You can find comfort in a proven relationship with your God even when, like Elijah's, your faith is shaken (1Ki 19:1–18).
- The world gives its counsel, and the Bible states its truth. We must choose between the two. We can't live in two worlds, as the people of Israel tried to do when they worshiped Baal as well as God. If we truly believe Jesus is Lord, our lives will verify our faith.

- Often we expect God to visit us in spectacular ways. We must learn to also recognize God when He speaks in a still, small voice (1Kin 19:12). God's word is no less powerful when He whispers.

As you walk with your Lord, listen, trust, and obey.

---

### Are You Listening? [Quiet Reflections of Hope: 120 Devotions to Start Your Day - Page 157](#)

Samuel was asleep in the temple of the LORD where the ark of God was kept. Then the LORD called Samuel.  
"Here I am," Samuel responded. 1 Samuel 3:3–4

Daytime is often filled with noises and distractions. It is the time to go, accomplish, and check off the to-do list. But nighttime and its coveted hours meant for rest can be hampered with the replaying of these noises and distractions. Sometimes we're so busy replaying the day that we miss listening for "the quiet, whispering voice" of the Lord (1 Kings 19:12).

In 1 Samuel, the importance of an attitude of listening is revealed in an interaction between God and Samuel, a boy given by his mother Hannah to serve God at the tabernacle. One night, Samuel thought he heard someone call his name. Assuming it was Eli, he hurried to the priest's side. This happened three times. After Eli determined that God was calling Samuel, Eli suggested a humble response: "Speak, Lord. I'm listening" (1 Samuel 3:9).

How would you respond if the Lord called your name? Is your life so busy that you wouldn't be able to hear the Lord if He called you? Or would you recognize His voice like an infant recognizes her mother's soft inflection and touch?

God speaks through His Word, through the Holy Spirit, and through the wise counsel of others. His voice is like the quiet voice of a radio host tuned to the frequency of our hearts. Are you listening?

---

**DO YOU NEED A HEARING AID OR DOES GOD NEED A MEGAPHONE?** If you're not listening to God's Word, don't be surprised if his "gentle whisper" (1 Kings 19:12) becomes loud and painfully clear through some out-of-the-ordinary circumstance. But even then, there's no guarantee you'll get the message. As Abraham warned the rich man in Luke 16:31, "They will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead." It's dangerous to grow "hard of hearing" toward the things of God. What does it take for you to hear—and heed—God's Word?

---

### Oswald Chambers - "Do Not Quench the Spirit"

"Do not quench the Spirit" (1 Thessalonians 5:19).

The voice of the Spirit of God is as gentle as a summer breeze—so gentle that unless you are living in complete fellowship and oneness with God, you will never hear it. The sense of warning and restraint that the Spirit gives comes to us in the most amazingly gentle ways. And if you are not sensitive enough to detect His voice, you will quench it, and your spiritual life will be impaired. **This sense of restraint will always come as a "still small voice" (1 Kings 19:12), so faint that no one except a saint of God will notice it.**

Beware if in sharing your personal testimony you continually have to look back, saying, "Once, a number of years ago, I was saved." If you have put your "hand to the plow" and are walking in the light, there is no "looking back"—the past is instilled into the present wonder of fellowship and oneness with God (Luke 9:62; also see 1 John 1:6–7). If you get out of the light, you become a sentimental Christian, and live only on your memories, and your testimony will have a hard metallic ring to it. Beware of trying to cover up your present refusal to "walk in the light" by recalling your past experiences when you did "walk in the light" (1 John 1:7). Whenever the Spirit gives you that sense of restraint, call a halt and make things right, or else you will go on quenching and grieving Him without even knowing it.

Suppose God brings you to a crisis and you almost endure it, but not completely. He will engineer the crisis again, but this time some of the intensity will be lost. You will have less discernment and more humiliation at having disobeyed. If you continue to grieve His Spirit, there will come a time when that crisis cannot be repeated, because you have totally quenched Him. But if you will go on through the crisis, your life will become a hymn of praise to God. Never become attached to anything that continues to hurt God. For you to be free of it, God must be allowed to hurt whatever it may be.

---

### Martin Manser - Waiting for the whispers

Be still before the LORD and wait patiently for him. (Psalm 37:7)

One of the things that probably most of us find hard to do is to wait. Waiting is not easy at the best of times; but after a time of great

activity or excitement, it can almost be unbearable. That's how Elijah felt after the exciting demonstrations of God's power in the contest with the prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel. He was now completely exhausted—so exhausted that when Queen Jezebel merely threatened him, he simply ran. What he needed to experience right now was not God's power, but God's presence.

In fact, that's exactly what God brought him. As Elijah stood on the mountain, a great wind came, followed by an earthquake and fire. These were all traditional ways in which God had manifested his power; but, no doubt to his surprise, God appeared in none of them, but rather in 'the sound of a gentle whisper' (1 Kings 19:12, NLT). What Elijah needed to do was to simply stop and listen; and as he did so, he heard God's whisper.

The Bible invites all of us to be still before the Lord—not because stillness is somehow more holy than noise (in fact, the Bible has far more to say about vibrant, expressive worship than silent worship!); but because being still gives us the opportunity to experience what we might otherwise miss. Being still allows us to 'know that I am God' (Psalm 46:10) and to hear God speak, like Elijah did that day. Being still is a challenge to us westerners with our busy lifestyles; but being still and waiting carries a promise with it, that 'they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint' (Isaiah 40:31, KJV).

If you have been busy recently, running through life at full pelt, God invites you to stop today, to wait for his whispers, and to be ready to hear his voice, just as he promised.

But as for me, I will look to the LORD, I will wait for the God of my salvation; my God will hear me. (Micah 7:7, NRSV)

---

### **God's Conscious Presence Revealed** [Daily With The King - Page 9](#) W. Glyn Evans

God's tender care for Elijah extended to more than the body, even though ministry to his body was the first necessity. God also ministered to his spirit. The voice of the Lord, that "still small voice," came to him to assure him of God's continued presence with him. One of the results of an emotional breakdown in God's servants is a feeling of isolation from God. It seems as if the spirit is unable to apprehend God's presence, even though He is just as close as always. The cause is a defect in the spirit's function, like a clock whose mainspring is broken.

The remedy is an extra amount of attention from God, who makes His presence more peculiarly evident to His people in such distressing times. So He came to Elijah several times and made His "word" and His "voice" known to Him (1 Kings 19:9, 12, 13, 15). God knew that Elijah needed more than water and bread; he needed the conscious presence of the One he loved most. So God came, and Elijah was comforted.

There was one other aspect of God's care for Elijah, and that was in reference to his vocation. Was God finished with him? Did his breakdown mean the end of his ministry? Could he ever function again as a prophet? After a period of rest and refreshing, God's word came again to His servant, "Go, return ... and ... anoint Hazael king over Syria; and Jehu ... king over Israel" (vv. 15–16). His ministry was to continue as his strength returned. He was still of great value to the Most High. What a comfort that must have been to Elijah after his bitter bout with nerves!

How assuring it is to me to see God's minute, individual care for one of His tired prophets! I serve a Master who is infinite in heart as in mind, and I rest in the center of both.

"The Lord is my strength and my shield; my heart trusts in Him, and I am helped; therefore my heart exults, and with my song I shall thank Him" (Psalm 28:7).

---

**Charles Swindoll** - The following excerpt is from the chapter "**Silence and Solitude**" - [So, You Want To Be Like Christ?: Eight Essentials](#)

### **LISTEN**

In truth, some of you reading this are on the ragged edge because you are continually in motion, constantly in the presence of needs and people and demands, expectations, children pulling at you, spouse needing support, friends wanting help, groups looking for a volunteer, schedules, making plans, attending events. You can't remember the last time you were absolutely alone, sitting—or better, kneeling—in silence. You've lost perspective and you're going to come apart. Believe me, I know.

When I was young and foolish, I used to say along with my equally foolish seminary friends, "I'd rather burn out than rust out!" How incredibly stupid. Either way, you're "out"!

Since then, I've read missionary biographies—glowing, sentimental tributes to an all-out, short-lived career in ministry—and wondered, Why didn't these people take better care of themselves? They pushed themselves beyond exhaustion and frequently died

of curable or treatable diseases. Short, brilliant careers that affected a lot fewer people than if they had lived longer. Why would anybody desire either to burn out or rust out? Both options are bad. Not much ministry gets done from a pine box.

And since when is burning out so impressive? Fizzling is worse than rusting. Near the end you're tense, angry, needy, self-absorbed, demanding, resentful, and—big surprise—doing more harm than good in the cause of Christ. If Jesus Himself refused to rush on, if Jesus took time to be alone, if Jesus pulled His men away for times of solitude way back then, why do we think it's any less important for us to do the same today?

Solitude doesn't require much effort or time. And seclusion with God doesn't have to be a superspiritual setting, either. Sometime it's a motorcycle ride for me. Or a drive along the back roads in my pickup. Other times, a long and quiet walk all alone with my thoughts is best. For you, time alone with God can take any form you like, so long as you're deliberately away from other people. Now, I can almost hear the questions.

What do I do once I'm alone?

Simple answer: listen. You'll hear things that you may have been missing.

One of my favorite questions to ask people who live up in the mountains is, "Do you hear the wind whistling through the trees?" They'll typically return a blank look, and then pause for a moment. "Oh, yeah. How about that?" Obviously, though they live in that quasi-pristine setting, they haven't listened for a long time.

Just standing on a mountain slope won't necessarily help you hear the wind in the trees, though. You have to listen for it. What will I hear?

In a word, clarity.

Give it some time. Your mind will flood with silly cares and useless observations. Usually the longer it's been and the busier you are, the longer it will take for your mind to calm down and grow quiet. Don't fight it. Don't rush it. And don't feel guilty. It's normal. Just let your mind run. Eventually, without trying and before you know it, your mind is still. Not empty; just quiet. And the things you have studied, the lessons you have learned, the Scripture you have read or memorized, the prayers you have begun to pray will start to mingle and finally jell. The silly will be displaced by the significant. Confusion and chaos will be displaced by meaningful thoughts. Shallow will disappear as depth finds its way in.

Some like to call what they hear "a still, small voice." The phrase comes from a story about Elijah in 1 Kings 19. The tough, old prophet had just defeated the prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel and on foot had outrun the royal chariot to the palace. Enraged, the evil queen Jezebel threatened to have him killed. Elijah ran for his life, far away. Exhausted and depressed, he fell down under a tree in the wilderness and wept. "O LORD, take my life, for I am not better than my fathers" (1 Kings 19:4).

As he rested and ate, he listened for the voice of God. A whirlwind. An earthquake. A raging fire. Elijah trained his ear on each, but he heard no voice. Finally he heard what many translations call a gentle wind; the old King James Version renders it poetically "a still small voice" (v. 12).

Wind, earthquake and fire manifested themselves in succession, but God is said not to have been in any of these. Then a different phenomenon followed. The translations a gentle whisper and "a still small voice" (RSV) do not do full justice to the enigmatic Hebrew expression, which may be better rendered "a brief sound of silence."<sup>11</sup>

The Hebrew word is usually found in poetic writing. "Several times in the Psalms this verb is used of being still before the Lord in quiet meditation."<sup>12</sup> In other words God spoke audibly to Elijah out of silence as the prophet waited all alone. It was in that place of solitude that God connected with His servant. Elijah heard with his ears, not his spirit. He literally heard God's message.

We will hear from God, though not in the same way. We are not prophets relaying new information from God to His people. We have available to us all the information we need. As I mentioned earlier, it's all there between the covers of our Bible. And we have the indwelling Holy Spirit to teach us using our experiences, the advice of godly counselors, and the information handed down via the prophets and apostles. Nevertheless, we must listen . . . in quietness. As we find solitude, the still, small voice we hope to hear will be a sense of clarity as we allow the Holy Spirit to transform our thinking.

---

**Chris Tiegreen** [The One Year Experiencing God's Presence Devotional: 365 ... - Page 9](#)

And after the fire there was the sound of a gentle whisper. 1 Kings 19:12

Elijah had gone to Mount Sinai, back to the place where Moses had received the law against which all of Israel had recently been rebelling. After a fierce windstorm, a violent earthquake, and a raging fire, God spoke to the prophet in the stillness, as quietly as a whisper. Why?

"I speak in the quiet. People want Me to write My words to them in the sky or thunder them from heaven or send an angel with a

message, but that doesn't measure hunger or desire. It dictates My will. I'm not a dictator; I'm a wooer. I draw you, and only those who respond can come. That's how it works.

*"Sometimes in history I've been more aggressive with My voice. Moses needed to be startled, for example, and so did Gideon. But normally I speak faintly enough that only the hungry and thirsty will risk failure and follow. They are desperate enough. Those who shrug off My voice as a whisper will often miss Me. Those who assume that every voice they think they hear is a whisper from Me will be wrong sometimes, but they won't miss Me. Sometimes they will be right, and over time I will fine-tune their hearing so they will know the difference between My real whispers and their own inner voices. But their desire to hear Me, even knowing they could be wrong, pleases Me. Moses and Paul expressed My heart when they wished everyone could prophesy. I want My voice to be heard by all who have ears to hear."*

Father, I want to hear You at all costs. I'm willing to risk failure to step out on a limb and believe that I've heard. Help me discern which whispers are Yours and which are not. But let me never be so "discerning" that I deny Your voice along with others. Please, Lord, give me ears to hear.

---

#### **Charles Stanley - KNOWING THE VOICE OF GOD** [Pathways to His Presence: A Daily Devotional - Page 13](#)

SCRIPTURE READING: 1 KINGS 19:1–18

KEY VERSE: 1 KINGS 19:12 ... and after the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire; and after the fire a still small voice.

The most potent hearing aid known to man is the Holy Bible. It is the standard of truth against which you can test every message that comes your way.

Making a decision on an issue important to you can be extremely difficult. Sometimes it may seem as if you are hearing two or more voices, all of which make seemingly good points but also tug you in different directions. It is important that in these times you learn to discern the voice of God.

There are several principles you can apply to what you're hearing to gauge whether it is of God, but the most basic is whether the message conflicts with Scripture. God won't tell you to do something that counters what He already has recorded for all mankind. Therefore, the best way to know God's voice is to get to know Him. Spend time in His Word and soak in His truths. You must know God's Word before you can differentiate God's instructions from the messages Satan or your flesh is sending you.

Do you know how investigators are trained to recognize counterfeit money? They don't spend all of their time trying to keep up with the latest technological advances in creating false money. Instead, they first and foremost diligently study the original, the real thing. Then, held against the standard, the counterfeit stuff stands out.

Help me to discern Your voice, dear Lord. I want to differentiate Your message from all others.

---

#### **A W Tozer - Commotion, Not Devotion** [Tozer on Christian Leadership: A 366-Day Devotional - Page 7](#)

And after the earthquake a fire; but the LORD was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice. —1 Kings 19:12

The accent in the Church today," says Leonard Ravenhill, the English evangelist, "is not on devotion, but on commotion." Religious extroversion has been carried to such an extreme in evangelical circles that hardly anyone has the desire, to say nothing of the courage, to question the soundness of it. Externalism has taken over. God now speaks by the wind and the earthquake only; the still small voice can be heard no more. The whole religious machine has become a noisemaker. The adolescent taste which loves the loud horn and the thundering exhaust has gotten into the activities of modern Christians. The old question, "What is the chief end of man?" is now answered, "To dash about the world and add to the din thereof."...

We must begin the needed reform by challenging the spiritual validity of externalism. What a man is must be shown to be more important than what he does. While the moral quality of any act is imparted by the condition of the heart, there may be a world of religious activity which arises not from within but from without and which would seem to have little or no moral content. Such religious conduct is imitative or reflex. It stems from the current cult of commotion and possesses no sound inner life.

---

#### **C H Spurgeon - A STILL SMALL VOICE.** 1 Kings 19:12

In our religious services, we too often rely on carnal force and energy. We hope that if we make enough noise, create enough excitement, and stir and agitate, we will be identified with the power of God.

How does God touch our hearts? Our heavenly Father generally uses a soft, tender, gentle, quiet, calm, and peaceful—still, small—voice. Softly and gently, the Holy Spirit works like the breath of spring dissolving icebergs and melting glaciers. After winter has taken every stream by the throat and held it fast, spring sets it free. No hammer or file is heard as the icy bonds fall off; only the soft south wind blows, and all is life and liberty.

So it is with the work of the Holy Spirit when He comes into the soul. He can be a mighty rushing wind (Acts 2:2), for He comes according to His own sovereign pleasure. Yet when He brings the peace of God, He usually descends as the dove (Matt. 3:16) or as the dew from heaven—all peace, all gentle, and all quiet.

Satan can set the soul on fire with agony, doubt, fear, and terror. Then the Spirit comes in tender love and reveals Christ the Gentle One. He sets up the Savior's cross and speaks peace, pardon, and salvation. This is what we want and need: the work of the Spirit of God coming in His own manner of living love.

---

God is said to speak to men in "a still, small voice" (1 Kings 19:12), which may partially explain why we find it hard to hear him when he speaks. It's much like receiving a phone call in a house with the T.V. going, the stereo blaring, and a house full of people chatting with one another. To understand the caller, it requires asking the friends to be quiet and turning down the stereo and T.V. So it is with hearing God. It may well require removing those distractions, those areas of sin that deafen our ears to the voice of the Lord.

---

### **Sit Still by Woodrow Kroll**

American culture is built around the oft-quoted phrase, "Don't just stand there, do something!" As a result, our lives are filled with busyness. We rush from meeting to meeting. We chauffeur our children from hockey practice to tennis lessons to shopping at the mall. We pull in to the nearest fast-food drive-through, place a quick order, and then we're off again. It's no wonder we can identify with Blaise Pascal, who said, "All the troubles of life come upon us because we refuse to sit quietly."

Naomi knew better. Her advice? sit still, stay quiet? was filled with the wisdom of experience. Ruth had come to Naomi and told her all that took place at the threshing floor. It was obvious to Naomi that God was at work. How things were going to turn out, however, she didn't know. But she did know that this was not the time to rush here and there to find the answer. Instead, it was the time to sit quietly and listen intently for the Lord's response. At the right time, God would bring everything to pass.

When much is at stake, do you have difficulty sitting still? If you will remember to wait patiently, you will see a number of positive things happen. In stillness you'll discover God in new and deeper ways (Ps. 46:10). You'll also be able to hear God when He speaks to you in a still, small voice (1 Kings 19:12). Furthermore, you'll have the wisdom and strength to act when the time is right (Isa. 30:15).

Sit still and let God work in your life. Trust Him to accomplish what is best for you in His own timing. Listen quietly and you will hear His answer.

While you rest, God will work.

---

### **He Can Lead You Out Of It**

After the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire; and after the fire a still small voice. —1 Kings 19:12

Today's Scripture : 1 Kings 19:1-12

Almost everyone will at some time in their life be affected by depression, either their own or someone else's. Some common signs and symptoms of depression include feelings of hopelessness, pessimism, worthlessness, and helplessness. Although we cannot say for certain that characters in the Bible experienced depression, we can say that some did exhibit a deep sense of despondency, discouragement, and sadness that is linked to personal powerlessness and loss of meaning and enthusiasm for life.

Elijah is one biblical character who fits this description. After defeating the prophets of Baal, he received a death threat from Jezebel. His hope was shattered, and despondency set in. He wanted to die! God helped Elijah deal with his despondency in several ways. The Lord did not rebuke him for his feelings but sent an angel to provide for his physical needs. Then, the Lord revealed Himself and reminded Elijah that He was quietly working among His people. Next, He renewed Elijah's mission by giving him new orders. Finally, God reminded Elijah that he wasn't alone.

In our times of discouragement, let us remember that God loves us and desires to lead us to a place of a renewed vision of Himself!  
By: Marvin Williams (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)



The weak, the helpless, and the discouraged  
are in the Shepherd's special care.

---

## Quiet, Please

After the earthquake a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire; and after the fire a still small voice. —1 Kings  
19:12

Today's Scripture : 1 Kings 19:1-12

In recent years, the spread of personal digital music players has resulted in concerns about hearing loss. The design of the music players and their earphones has been the target of complaints and lawsuits. Long-term exposure to music at a high volume has been shown to cause serious hearing impairment. In a sense, too much hearing can result in an inability to hear.

We live in a world filled with noise—noises designed to sell, plead, seduce, and deceive. In the midst of this cacophony of sound, it's easy to miss the one voice that matters most.

Elijah had listened to Jezebel's threats and the voice of his own fear, so he fled to a cave to hide. In the cave he was confronted with the overwhelming noise of wind, an earthquake, and fire (1 Kings 19:11-12). Then the cave grew silent and the voice of the Lord—the only sound that mattered—broke through as "a still small voice" (v.12).

If we are to hear God speaking to our hearts through His Word, we need to pull away from the noise of the crowd. Only when we learn to be quiet can we really understand what it means to commune with the God who cares for us.

In our "quiet time" today, let's make an effort to listen for the voice of God. By: Bill Crowder (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Speak, Lord, in the stillness  
While I wait on Thee;  
Hushed my heart to listen  
In expectancy.  
—Grimes

To hear God's voice,  
turn down the world's volume.

---

## Streams in the Desert - 1 Kings 19:12

A SOUL, who made rapid progress in her understanding of the Lord, was once asked the secret of her easy advancement. She replied tersely, "Mind the checks." And the reason that many of us do not know and better understand Him is, we do not give heed to His gentle checks, His delicate restraints and constraints. His is a still, small voice. A still voice can hardly be heard. It must be felt. A steady, gentle pressure upon the heart and mind like the touch of a morning zephyr to your face. A small voice, quietly, almost timidly spoken in your heart, but if heeded growing noiselessly clearer to your inner ear. His voice is for the ear of love, and love is intent upon hearing even faintest whispers. There comes a time also when love ceases to speak if not responded to, or believed in. He is love, and if you would know Him and His voice, give constant ear to His gentle touches. In conversation, when about to utter some word, give heed to that gentle voice, mind the check and refrain from speech. When about to pursue some course that seems all clear and right and there comes quietly to your spirit a suggestion that has in it the force almost of a conviction, give heed, even if changed plans seem highest folly from standpoint of human wisdom. Learn also to wait on God for the unfolding of His will. Let God form your plans about everything in your mind and heart and then let Him execute them. Do not possess any wisdom of your own. For many times His execution will seem so contradictory to the plan He gave. He will seem to work against Himself. Simply listen, obey and trust God even when it seems highest folly so to do. He will in the end make "all things work together," but so many times in the first appearance of the outworking of His plans,

"In His own world He is content  
To play a losing game."

So if you would know His voice, never consider results or possible effects. Obey even when He asks you to move in the dark. He Himself will be gloriously light in you. And there will spring up rapidly in your heart an acquaintanceship and a fellowship with God which will be overpowering in itself to hold you and Him together, even in severest testings and under most terrible pressures.—Way of Faith.

---



Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her. (Luke 10:42+)

The story of Martha the worker and Mary the worshiper (Luke 10:38–42) illustrates an important spiritual principle: We please our Lord most when we learn to sit at His feet in adoration and worship before trying to serve Him in our own strength. Sitting implies our humble dependence upon Him and a sense of quietness of soul that indicates our willingness to hear. We can become so busy with life's pursuits, even worthy Christian activities, that we do not hear the still small voice of God. Or sometimes we pursue God in spiritual spectaculars. But like the story of Elijah on Mount Horeb (1 Kings 19:11, 12), the Lord does not always reveal Himself in the wind, fire, or earthquake, but sometimes in the stillness of the small voice.

Speak, Lord, in the stillness while I wait on Thee;  
Hushed my heart to listen in expectancy.  
Speak, Thy servant heareth! Be not silent, Lord;  
Waits my soul upon Thee for the quick'ning word!  
—E. May Grimes

Learning to listen to God's voice is one of the important factors in our spiritual growth. When we are silent before Him in the enjoyment of His presence and His Word, we gain His wisdom, insights, and the renewal of our strength for daily living. May the people who see and know us say of us even as it was said of the early disciples—"they took note that these men had been with Jesus" (Acts 4:13).

[Play the song](#) -

Sitting at the feet of Jesus, O what words I hear Him say! Happy place—so near, so precious! May it find me there each day! Sitting at the feet of Jesus, I would look upon the past, for His love has been so gracious—It has won my heart at last.

Sitting at the feet of Jesus, where can mortal be more blest? There I lay my sins and sorrows, and, when weary, find sweet rest. Sitting at the feet of Jesus, there I love to weep and pray, while I from His fullness gather grace and comfort ev'ry day.

Bless me, O my Savior, bless me, as I sit low at Thy feet! O look down in love upon me, let me see Thy face so sweet! Give me, Lord, the mind of Jesus; make me holy as He is; may I prove I've been with Jesus, who is all my righteousness.

For Today: 2 Kings 22:19; Psalm 130:5; Isaiah 30:15; 57:15; Matthew 11:29; 2 Corinthians 4:16

Be especially sensitive to God's still small voice in your life. Let this awareness of His presence and concern encourage and empower you. Use this hymn to help—

---

**Spurgeon Study Bible** - 1Ki 19:12 "And after the fire there was a voice, a soft whisper." God here teaches Elijah that although he does use the wind, the earthquake, and the fire when he pleases, these are not his most effective instruments. He does not do his mightiest works by them but in another way—by a soft voice. Thus the Lord practically said to Elijah, "Gentler means must be tried with these rebellious people. My glory will be promoted among them by other methods than you have as yet used, or than I have used by you as my servant. I have let them see that I am Lord and Master of the terrible forces of nature. I have convinced them that I am a great God who can strike them as much as I please, but I have not thereby won their hearts—other methods must be used. The soft voice must be tried." To all of us who preach the Word, or who try to teach it in any way, God seems to say, "Do not trust in great displays of force, in tremendous demonstrations of power; trust rather in the soft influences of the distilling dew of God's Spirit and the gentle rain of the gospel. Preach the Word to the sons and daughters of Adam." A temptation assails all of us who preach to want to do some great thing. We fancy that if we could preach such a famous sermon as Jonathan Edwards delivered when he spoke of sinners in the hands of an angry God, then we should have lived to some purpose. But the preaching of Jesus Christ and him crucified never loses its power. The telling over and over again of "the old, old story of Jesus and his love" never becomes a mere repetition if with warm heart and loving spirit we still cry to our hearers, "Here is the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" (Jn 1:29). There may be no excitement in our congregation; no sensation may be created by our preaching. But the Lord will be in it. He always has been in such preaching as that, and he always will be.

---

**Spurgeon** - [The Still Small Voice \(full sermon\)](#) 1 Kings 19:12–13

At one time Christian people thought very little of the bodily system: they called their physical frame a vile body, as indeed it is in some sense, but not in every sense. If they had any doubts, fears, and tremblings our good fathers laid them all on the back of the

devil, or ascribed them to their own unbelief, when frequently their depressions arose from lack of food or fresh air, or from a torpid liver, or a weak stomach. A thousand things can cast us down, and we ought not to despise the body through which they act upon us. Rather should we attend to natural laws and look to the God of those laws to help us. God, who made the body, and who gave it such a close affinity to the mind, observes how dependent the soul is upon the body, and often begins his restoring work by healing our diseases. We who dwell in houses of clay are often cribbed, cabined, and confined from loftier things by reason of the dust to which our soul cleaves. The Lord who heals his people began in Elijah's case by refreshing his languid frame. He restored him by sleep and by food. If any of you are depressed and in mental trouble, I would invite you to look to your health, and not to blame yourselves till first you have seen whether your sadness arises from sickness or from sin, from a feeble body or a rebellious mind. Do not think it unspiritual to remember that you have a body, for you certainly have one and ought not to ignore its existence. If your heavenly Father thinks of your physical frame, he gives you a hint to do the same. If the Lord in his wisdom began with the high-spirited Elijah by feeding and refreshing his mortal body, we ought to count it wisdom to look to our outward parts: it is of heretics that we read that they promote 'neglecting of the body': wise men value it as 'the temple of the Holy Ghost'.

---

## **Charles Stanley - KNOWING THE VOICE OF GOD** [Pathways to His Presence: A Daily Devotional - Page 13](#)

SCRIPTURE READING: 1 KINGS 19:1–18

KEY VERSE: 1 KINGS 19:12 ... and after the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire; and after the fire a still small voice.

The most potent hearing aid known to man is the Holy Bible. It is the standard of truth against which you can test every message that comes your way.

Making a decision on an issue important to you can be extremely difficult. Sometimes it may seem as if you are hearing two or more voices, all of which make seemingly good points but also tug you in different directions. It is important that in these times you learn to discern the voice of God.

There are several principles you can apply to what you're hearing to gauge whether it is of God, but the most basic is whether the message conflicts with Scripture. God won't tell you to do something that counters what He already has recorded for all mankind. Therefore, the best way to know God's voice is to get to know Him. Spend time in His Word and soak in His truths. You must know God's Word before you can differentiate God's instructions from the messages Satan or your flesh is sending you.

Do you know how investigators are trained to recognize counterfeit money? They don't spend all of their time trying to keep up with the latest technological advances in creating false money. Instead, they first and foremost diligently study the original, the real thing. Then, held against the standard, the counterfeit stuff stands out.

Help me to discern Your voice, dear Lord. I want to differentiate Your message from all others.

---

### **Still Small Voice**

Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth! — Psalm 46:10

Today's Scripture : 1 Kings 19:11-18

When God spoke to Elijah on Mount Horeb, He could have done so in the wind, earthquake, or fire. But He didn't. He spoke with a "still small voice" (1 Kings 19:12). God asked, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" (v.13), as he hid from Jezebel who had threatened to kill him.

Elijah's reply revealed what God already knew—the depth of his fear and discouragement. He said, in effect, "Lord, I have been most zealous when others have forsaken You. What do I get for being the only one standing up for You?" (see v.14).

Was Elijah really the only one serving God? No. God had "seven thousand in Israel . . . whose knees have not bowed to Baal" (v.18).

In the depths of our fear or despair, we too may think we're the only one serving God. That may happen right after the height of a success, as it did for Elijah. Psalm 46:10 reminds us to "be still, and know" that He is God. The sooner we focus on Him and His power, the quicker we will see relief from our fear and self-pity.

Both the clashing cymbals of our failures and the loud trumpeting of our successes can drown out God's still small voice. It's time for us to quiet our hearts to listen for Him as we meditate on His Word. By: Albert Lee (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Keep listening for the "still small voice" If you are weary on life's road; The Lord will make your heart rejoice If you will let Him take

your load. —Hess

To tune in to God's voice we must tune out this world's noise.

**1 Kings 19:13 When Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his mantle and went out and stood in the entrance of the cave. And behold, a voice came to him and said, "What are you doing here, Elijah?"**

- **he wrapped his face:** 1Ki 18:42 Ex 3:5,6 33:23 Isa 6:2,5
- **What are you doing here** 1Ki 19:9 Ge 16:8 Joh 21:15-17
- [1 Kings 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## ELIJAH REVERENT BEFORE THE QUIET WIND

**When Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his mantle** ([addereth](#)) - This he did to signify his reverence, for covering the face was a token of respect among the Asiatics, as uncovering the head is among Europeans.

**Bob Utley** - "he wrapped his face in his mantle" This hairy, shepherds mantle was the characteristic dress of a prophet. This mantle or cloak (BDB 12) can be understood as (1) a hairy shepherd's garment, Gen. 25:25, (2) a hairy man with a leather cloak, 2 Kgs. 1:8 and possibly Heb. 11:37 (3) a prophet's characteristic attire, Zech. 13:4, (4) a camel hair cloak with

**Spurgeon** - He first wrapped his mantle about his face – he became subdued and awe-stricken – full of reverence. Oh! it is a great thing when a sinner is willing to wrap his face when he is confounded, and say, 'I cannot defend my course; I am guilty.' We know that if at our judgment-seat a man pleads guilty, he is punished; but at the judgment-seat of the gospel whoever pleads guilty is forgiven. Wrap your face.

**and went out and stood in the entrance of the cave-** Note that apparently during the wind, earthquake, fire he had remained inside the cave, in disobedience to the LORD's order to come out.

**And behold** (pay attention! - [hinneh](#); Lxx - [idou](#)), **a voice came to him and said, "What are you doing here, Elijah?"**- The still small voice repeats His question. The omniscient God knows but He wants Elijah to ponder this question.

Elijah was downcast, beat down by recent events and in dire need of a fresh vision from God. God saw his heart and need and He provided as He always does.

**THOUGHT** - How about your spiritual journey beloved? Have you experienced some wonderful movings of the Almighty, but now you find yourself like "Christian" in the "[Slough of Despond](#)," the deep, muddy swamp of despair? Even as "Christian" was helped out of the slough by "[Evangelist](#)," so too we are helped by being reminded of the great Gospel of our salvation (Eph 1:13+) giving us victory over sin (Ro 6:14+, 1Co 15:57+, Ro 8:37+) and the world (1Jn 5:4-5+, Gal 6:14+, Jn 16:33+) and giving us a sure future and hope (not hope so, but hope sure!). (Jer 29:11, Ro 15:13+, Pr 23:18, 1Pe 1:3+) If you are in the slough of despond, run into His Word for relief and rest. Proverbs 30:5 promises "Every word of God is tested; He is a shield to those who take **refuge** in Him." (Ps 18:2) May He be your **Refuge** in the storm of despond. Amen.

**ROD MATTOON** has an additional **THOUGHT** - The Holy Spirit continues to quietly speak to the Christian today, especially when he or she is out of position. He is asking, "What are you doing here?" When they are in a place of wickedness He asks, "What are you doing here?" Is the Holy Spirit speaking to you about your life or are you going so fast and making so much noise that you cannot hear Him?"

---

**Mantle (0155) addereth** from adar = wide (Adar - this root connotes that which is superior to something else, and, therefore, that which is majestic). Esau's hairy garment (Ge 25:25). Prophet's hairy garment (Zech 13:4). A beautiful robe (Josh 7:21, 24) Used 5 times of Elijah's mantle (1Ki. 19:13; 1Ki. 19:19; 2Ki. 2:8; 2Ki. 2:13; 2Ki. 2:14). **Gilbrant** - "Most of the occurrences of 'addereth, are in references to the famous "mantle" or "cloak" which belonged to Elijah. The mantle of Elijah was equivalent to the staff of Moses. Elijah hid his face in this piece of clothing when he heard the "still small voice" of God (1 Ki. 19:13). Elijah called Elisha to follow him by placing the mantle on his shoulders. Before Elijah was carried away by a chariot of fire, he parted the waters of the Jordan by striking it with his mantle. After Elijah was transported to heaven, Elisha picked up the mantle and struck the Jordan in the same

manner to cross back over. In this way it was made known that Elisha had taken up where Elijah left off (2 Kings 2). An unusual meaning of 'addereth is found in Ezek. 17:8. Apparently, the idea of magnificence or adornment is the connection between a garment and the "splendid," "magnificent" or "noble" vine in Ezekiel's parable. This association is also seen in Zech. 11:3. In this parable, which uses shepherds as characters, the KJV states their "glory" is destroyed. The NIV says their "rich" pastures are destroyed." ([Complete Biblical Library](#))

**ADDERETH** - 12X/12V - arment(1), glory(1), mantle(7), robe(2), splendid(1). Gen. 25:25; Jos. 7:21; Jos. 7:24; 1Ki. 19:13; 1Ki. 19:19; 2Ki. 2:8; 2Ki. 2:13; 2Ki. 2:14; Ezek. 17:8; Jon. 3:6; Zech. 11:3; Zech. 13:4

**Easton's Dictionary** - Heb. 'addereth, a large over-garment. This word is used of Elijah's mantle (1 Kings 19:13, 19; 2 Kings 2:8, 13, etc.), which was probably a sheepskin. It appears to have been his only garment, a strip of skin or leather binding it to his loins. 'Addereth twice occurs with the epithet "hairy" (Gen. 25:25; Zech. 13:4, R.V.). It is the word denoting the "goodly Babylonish garment" which Achan coveted (Josh. 7:21).

---

### **Tony Evans - Out of a Whirlwind** [A Moment for Your Soul: Devotions to Lift You Up](#)

When Elijah heard [a gentle wind], he wrapped his face in his mantle and went out and stood in the entrance of the cave. 1 Ki 19:13

Huddled in a cave and miles away from his home, Elijah tried to warm himself and remember how he got to this place. Queen Jezebel and her violent threats against him came rushing back to his mind, crowding out the memory of the miracle God had done on Mount Carmel and the spiritual victory that had been gained there. Now he hid in fear.

Many of us have had similar experiences. God breaks into our lives through answered prayer, and we are left speechless. Then trouble appears on the horizon, and we are shaken. Instead of sleeping soundly at night, we toss and turn and wonder if God will help us.

As Elijah waited in the cave, God began to demonstrate His mighty ability to His prophet. First, He sent a strong wind that tore at the mountain, then an earthquake, and finally a mighty fire. God's presence, however, was not in any of those. Then the prophet heard a gentle wind blowing around him, and he knew he was standing in the presence of God.

Perhaps as He did with Elijah, God will gain your full attention by allowing the storm to blow a little longer. If this is the case, let the wind, earthquake, and fire come, knowing that you have a loving heavenly Father whose only desire is to draw you nearer to Himself.

Take time to worship Him and tell Him that you are listening for His voice.

---

### **Charles Stanley - Back on Course** [Into His Presence: An In Touch Devotional - Page 224](#)

SCRIPTURE READING: 1 Kings 19:9–15

KEY VERSE: 1 Kings 19:13 So it was, when Elijah heard it, that he wrapped his face in his mantle and went out and stood in the entrance of the cave. Suddenly a voice came to him, and said, "What are you doing here, Elijah?"

Elijah had just come away from a tremendous spiritual victory. In fact, the victory won on Mount Carmel was the highlight of his career as a prophet of God. However, immediately following the victory came a time of serious testing.

Elijah had stood firm in his faith, and God had destroyed all of the prophets of Baal, reaffirming the fact that He was Jehovah God. In a horrific fit of anger, Queen Jezebel sent a message to Elijah stating, "So let the gods do to me, and more also, if I do not make your life as the life of one of them [a prophet of Baal]" (1 Kings 19:2). In other words, Jezebel planned to kill Elijah. Filled with fear, Elijah fled.

Finally, at Mount Horeb he collapsed. That was where God spoke to him: "What are you doing here, Elijah?" It was a reasonable question to ask. Elijah was accustomed to living in the shadow of God's greatness and power. Why was he hiding out like a common criminal?

Maybe God is asking you the same question: "What are you doing here? Why are you running? Why are you fearful?" God did not let go of His prophet. Instead, He instructed Elijah to get back into the thick of things. And this is His word to you. If you have gotten off course, don't give up. Tell the Lord what you are struggling with, and He will send His encouragement and hope to you.

Lord, I am struggling, running, and fearful. Help me get back on course with You. Strengthen me with Your Word.

**1 Kings 19:14** Then he said, "I have been very zealous for the LORD, the God of hosts; for the sons of Israel have forsaken Your covenant, torn down Your altars and killed Your prophets with the sword. And I alone am left; and they seek my life, to take it away."

- **I have been:** 1Ki 19:9,10 Isa 62:1,6,7
- **forsaken:** De 29:25 31:20 Ps 78:37 Isa 1:4 Jer 22:9 Da 11:30 Ho 6:7 Heb 8:9
- [1 Kings 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Romans 11:1-5+ I say then, God has not rejected His people, has He? May it never be! For I too am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. 2 God has not rejected His people whom He foreknew. Or do you not know what the Scripture says in the passage about Elijah, how he pleads with God against Israel? 3 "Lord, **THEY HAVE KILLED YOUR PROPHETS, THEY HAVE TORN DOWN YOUR ALTARS, AND I ALONE AM LEFT, AND THEY ARE SEEKING MY LIFE.**" 4 But what is the divine response to him? "I HAVE KEPT for Myself **SEVEN THOUSAND MEN WHO HAVE NOT BOWED THE KNEE TO BAAL.**"

### SAME QUESTION SAME ANSWER

Then he said, "I have been very zealous ([qanah](#); Lxx - [zeloo](#)) for the LORD ([Jehovah](#)), the God of hosts (see [Jehovah Sabaoth](#)); for the sons of Israel have forsaken (['azab](#) - abandoned; Lxx - [egkataleipo](#)) Your covenant ([beriyth](#)), torn down Your altars and killed Your prophets with the sword. And I alone am left; and they seek my life, to take it away." - See [comments](#) on 1Ki 19:10. The Lord's second question was the same as His first one (1Ki 19:9). And so was Elijah's response. We see no outward evidence of any inward change. It appears that God's powerful demonstration on the mountain made little impact on Elijah.

**Warren Wiersbe** asks "if he was a faithful servant, what was he doing hiding in a cave located hundreds of miles from his appointed place of ministry?" ([Bible Exposition Commentary](#))

**George Williams** comments: Had his heart not been occupied with self, he would have learned that tempests, earthquakes and fires cannot accomplish what the gentle voice of love can. He should have recognized that there was no difference between his heart and that of the nation; and, that as coercion (EARTHQUAKES, ETC) failed to make him leave his cave, so it failed, and must fail, to compel men to leave their sins. (Borrow [The Students Commentary on the Holy Scriptures, page 196](#))

**William Barnes** has an interesting analysis of the similarity of Moses to Elijah asking "Was Elijah a second Moses? Commentators are not reluctant to make such a comparison, especially in their discussions of the present passage of 1 Kings. Both Elijah and Moses were considered, of course, prophets par excellence, and both were singled out, for example, by the prophet Malachi at the end of the Minor Prophets scroll as particularly relevant in the last days (see Mal 4:4-6). But the similarities between Moses and Elijah in the present chapter of Kings are particularly impressive (cf. Cogan 2001:456-457; also Dillard 1999:54-55):

1. Both Moses and Elijah escaped into the wilderness, fleeing from non-Israelite rulers who were actively seeking their death, after each had brought about the death of subordinate(s) of that ruler (see 18:40; 19:1-8; Exod 2:11-15).
2. Both Moses and Elijah at one point expressed their wish to die (see the first note on 19:4 for details).
3. For both of these "prophets," significant references are given to a period of "forty days and forty nights" (19:8; Exod 24:18; 34:28).
4. Moses took no food or water during his second stay on Mount Sinai (Exod 34:28); Elijah made his long trek to the mountain sustained only by the food he had eaten in the wilderness near Beersheba (19:8).
5. Elijah came to a cave on Mount Sinai (19:9), and was told to "stand before" Yahweh on the mountain as the deity "passed by" (19:11), just as Moses had stood "in the crevice of the rock" until Yahweh had "passed by" (Exod 33:22).
6. As Yahweh passed by, Elijah wrapped his face in his cloak (19:13); Moses was covered by Yahweh's hand, and thus protected while Yahweh passed by (Exod 33:22).
7. The fire and thunder of Yahweh at Sinai (Exod 19:18; cf. Exod 3:2) were reenacted for Elijah (19:11-12 of the present passage), although in Elijah's case, those signs did not serve adequately to represent the deity (they certainly did serve in that capacity, however, in the previous chapter of 1 Kings!). As Seow (1999:144) puts it, "The point is made quite deliberately that God is not locked into any one mode of appearing."
8. Less immediate, but nonetheless quite compelling, is the parallel between Moses and Elijah, both fierce servants of God who

were not allowed to see the final fruit of their labors. Moses was eventually forbidden to enter the Promised Land, and Elijah did not personally experience the final triumph of Yahwism over Baalism in his lifetime; both had to trust that their successors (Joshua and Elisha, respectively) would meet with greater success.

---

## A Martyr at the Stake

“Slain Thy prophets.”—1 Kings 19:14

On Huss firmly refusing to retract his opinions unless they were proved from the word of God to be erroneous, he was at length, with horrible solemnity, doomed to perish by fire as an obstinate heretic. On July 6th, 1415, sentence was formally pronounced upon him; and, after being stripped of his priestly garments, and subjected to various dreadful indignities, he was handed over to the secular arm for execution. A paper crown, painted over with figures of devils, and bearing the inscription “heresiarch,” was put upon his head. “We thus devote thee to the infernal devils!” the prelates piously exclaimed; whereupon the martyr replied, “I am glad to wear this crown of ignominy, for the love of Him who wore a crown of thorns.” He marched to the stake with wonderful composure, as if his heart were glad. A Roman historian who witnessed the scene says that he looked like a man going to a grand banquet. Arriving at the place of execution, Huss fell down on his knees and prayed aloud. Many of the people who heard him said to one another, “What this man has done before we know not; but now he has offered up most excellent prayers to God.” When he had been tied to the stake, the faggots, piled up all round him, were kindled; and in less than a quarter of an hour John Huss expired amidst smoke and flame, with his last breath committing his soul to the LORD Jesus Christ, who had redeemed him. The ashes of his body were hastily gathered up by the executioners, and cast into the Rhine; but a good portion of the earth on which he was consumed, containing at least some of his remains, was conveyed to his native Bohemia, where to this day he is held in the highest veneration. The name of John Huss is as dear to the Bohemians as the name of William Tell is to the Swiss, or the names of William Wallace and John Knox are to the people of Scotland.

---

**Henry Blackaby** -1 Kings 19:14 - [Experiencing God Day by Day: Daily Devotional - Page 302](#)

Kingdom work can be challenging! You can give everything you have to God's service and come away exhausted. This is what happened to Elijah. God had just used Elijah to call down fire from heaven in a spectacular display of divine power. But Elijah's exhilaration was soon replaced by strenuous work followed by death threats, causing him to flee for his life. Now he was alone, exhausted, and discouraged.

Again, God came to Elijah. This time, He came not in fire or in a loud, spectacular way, but in a still, small voice. God's servant was tired, and God brought him comfort. Elijah's focus had shifted from God to God's enemies. He had allowed his circumstances to overwhelm him, leaving him disoriented to God and feeling alone. So God encouraged him. God provided Elisha for him as a helper, friend, and companion.

God removed Elijah from the activity for a time, so that he could rest and spend time with God. When the nation next saw Elijah, he was rejuvenated and refocused on God and His assignment.

If you are overwhelmed by kingdom work so that your focus is no longer on God but on all that there is to do, let Him comfort you. Listen to His gentle voice. He will encourage you and provide exactly what you need to prepare you for what comes next. If He needs to remove you from your work for a time, He will. He may place a friend or collaborator beside you to help carry the load. God knows exactly how to encourage you. Let Him do so.

---

**1 KINGS 19:14 - Cornelius Plantinga** [Beyond Doubt: A Devotional Response to Questions of Faith - Page 109](#)

Even children know what an epitaph is. It's the bit of writing you find on tombstones. Some epitaphs are sad. Many are thoughtful. A few are disgruntled: “I told you I was sick!” “Here lies John Alfred Crane. My surgeon was Dr. Anthony Wendell.”

For centuries unbelievers have been ready to write the church's epitaph. On some monument, perhaps at Rome, the world would write: “Outdated!” “Irrelevant!” “Outclassed!” “Finished.”

Oddly enough, even some believers have been ready at times to follow suit. Here is Elijah, in our text, feeling lonesome and sorry for himself. He is complaining about the decline of the church. He wishes to point out that he has worked himself to the bone for the Lord, but everybody else has been tearing down what he has built. He has tried to lead, but nobody would follow. All the old breed are gone: “I alone am left.” Everybody in the parade is out of step but me.

It's worth noting, as one modern preacher has said, that God gives Elijah not a pat on the head but a vigorous nudge. The management gives not a soothing word but a work order: Go, anoint two kings and one prophet to serve in your place.



In your place. The torch is handed on. In every generation our Lord renews his church with fresh prophets, priests, and kings. And every Sunday Jesus Christ arises in his body and moves out into the world.

So often the resurrection of the church comes by way of the command to get busy. Don't sit there feeling sorry for yourself and hankering for the good old days. Get to work! Preach the Gospel! Give your money away! Raise up a nursing home and two mental hospitals! Start a mission! Apply some pressure against political tyranny! Teach some children the truth!

In so many ways a renewed church can renew the world around it. Meanwhile, perhaps we will uncover at least seven thousand who never did bow the knee to Baal.

---

**LONELINESS—our despair** [Speaker's Sourcebook of New Illustrations](#): Virgil Hurley

1 Kings 19:14; Luke 22:28

The Despair of Loneliness

Henry Ford II ruled an automobile company, spent princely sums on whatever he fancied, and had the attention of everyone he met. Yet this often lonely man would regularly turn to his younger daughter, even awakening her from sleep to talk. Sometimes he was sad; sometimes he was happy. But, she noticed, he always seemed lonely, with no one to share his deepest thoughts. Numerous studies prove the disadvantages of living alone or being lonely: sickness comes more often and stays longer, and suicides and automobile accidents are more prevalent.

Yet, as one young adult explained, "It isn't easy to find meaningful fellowship." In melancholy eloquence he stated the problem about the single's bar scene. "Your work keeps you busy," he said, "but it also keeps you from seeing anyone. You go to a bar for fellowship, but find the lights so dim you can't see anyone. You drink with companions only to find that what you drink keeps you from understanding each other. And the noise in the bars keeps you from hearing each other." Their cure for loneliness only adds to their feeling of isolation.

God made us communal creatures to live within a fellowship of others like ourselves. From the Trinity's eternal, joyous fellowship we derive all our yearnings for fellowship. Only by associating with God, and those called to him through Christ, do we find an end to the loneliness that otherwise haunts and harms us.

**1 Kings 19:15 The LORD said to him, "Go, return on your way to the wilderness of Damascus, and when you have arrived, you shall anoint Hazael king over Aram;**

NET 1 Kings 19:15 The LORD said to him, "Go back the way you came and then head for the Desert of Damascus. Go and anoint Hazael king over Syria.

CSB 1 Kings 19:15 Then the LORD said to him, "Go and return by the way you came to the Wilderness of Damascus. When you arrive, you are to anoint Hazael as king over Aram.

ESV 1 Kings 19:15 And the LORD said to him, "Go, return on your way to the wilderness of Damascus. And when you arrive, you shall anoint Hazael to be king over Syria.

NIV 1 Kings 19:15 The LORD said to him, "Go back the way you came, and go to the Desert of Damascus. When you get there, anoint Hazael king over Aram.

NLT 1 Kings 19:15 Then the LORD told him, "Go back the same way you came, and travel to the wilderness of Damascus. When you arrive there, anoint Hazael to be king of Aram.

- **wilderness of Damascus:** Ge 14:15 2Ki 8:7 Ac 9:2,3
- **anoint:** Isa 45:1 Jer 1:10 27:2-22
- **Hazael:** 2Ki 8:8-15,28 9:14 Am 1:4
- [1 Kings 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

2 Kings 8:12 Hazael said (SPEAKING TO ELISHA), "Why does my lord weep?" Then he answered, "Because I know the evil that you will do to the sons of Israel: their strongholds you will set on fire, and their young men you will kill with the sword, and their little ones you will dash in pieces, and their women with child you will rip



up.”

## ELIJAH TO ANOINT HAZAEK KING OF ARAM

**The LORD said to him, “Go, return on your way to the wilderness of Damascus-** The LORD does not specifically respond to Elijah's repeat answer in v14, but simply responds with commands to "Get moving!" giving Elijah his next job assignment. He says "Go back the way you came" (NET)

**THOUGHT** - Perhaps you have spiritually veered off track of the race God has set before you (Heb 12:1+). Then take heart from God's merciful and gracious dealings with downcast, broken Elijah. God's treatment of Elijah reminds me of Paul's advice "Not that I have already obtained it or have already become perfect, but I press on so that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus. Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but **one thing I do: forgetting** what lies behind and **reaching** forward to what lies ahead. **I press on** toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus." (Php 3:12-14+) Beloved, perhaps you too need to forget what "lies behind," focus on what "lies ahead" and press on in the power of God's Spirit. Let it be so for any derailed, downcast soul who reads these words, and do it all for Thy glory in Christ. Amen.

There is no widely recognized region called "**the wilderness of Damascus**" in ancient or modern geography. The "wilderness" likely refers to the arid or desert regions surrounding Damascus. Damascus is about 150 miles north of Mount Horeb (Sinai) and 50 miles northeast of Israel's northern border. The route from Horeb to Damascus would have taken Elijah through the Negev desert, up through Israel, and into Syria.

**Spurgeon** - Then the Lord did what perhaps was best of all for Elijah, *he gave him some more work to do*. He sent him off about his Master's business again; and I warrant you that, when Elijah went back over that road, it was with a very different step from that which brought him down to Beersheba. He had come along terrified and distressed; but now he goes back with the majesty that belongs to the Tishbite, he is afraid of no Jezebel now."

**William Barnes**: In other words, it was time to get back to work. The servant of God is not to worry about the Jezebels on life's journey. (See [1-2 Kings - Page 164](#))

**John Schultz**: God tells him that he is "in the wrong desert." He is told to "go back the way you came, and go to the Desert of Damascus."

**R. D. Patterson**: God again dealt graciously with his prophet. He was to go back to the northern kingdom (v. 15), the place where he had veered off the track with God in his spiritual life (cf. Abram, Ge 13:3-4; John Mark, Acts 15:39). Elijah still had work to accomplish for God. (See [The Expositor's Bible Commentary - Page 532](#))

**and when you have arrived, you shall anoint Hazael king over Aram** - Elijah's assignment is to anoint Hazael as King of Aram, who would later become a tool of God's judgment against Israel (2Ki 8:7-15). Although Hazael was a Gentile, the point is clear that the LORD is in control of rulers whether Gentile or Jew. Israel had refused to respond to God's great miracles at Mount Carmel, so now He will bring judgment on the leaders and the land. God commissions Elijah to commission three other men who will be God's ministers of judgment! It is notable that Elijah did not personally anoint either Hazael or Jehu, but both were anointed by Elisha (2Ki 8:7-15 and 2Ki 9:1-10). However, from God's viewpoint it was by Elijah's authority that both these kings were anointed.

**Wiersbe**: God was calling Elijah to stop weeping over the past and running away from the present. It was time for him to start preparing others for the future. When God is in command, there is always hope.

**Gene Getz** - The Lord broadened Elijah's perspective even more by telling him that he never expected him to bear Israel's problems all by himself. There were other men who would help him— Hazael, Jehu, and a man who was to have a very special place in Elijah's life: his successor, Elisha (vv. 15-17).

**August Konkell**: The commission of Elijah is the pledge that conflict with Baal will end in victory over the house of Ahab (19:15–18). Anointing the kings of Aram and Israel is the harbinger of judgment on the nation for its political compromise and a purge of the Baal cult within Israel. The Arameans will eventually control all the territory on the east side of the Jordan, from the Arnon at the Dead Sea northward, all of Gilead and Bashan (2 Kings 10:32–33). Jehu, the successor to the Omride dynasty, carries out a total purge of the Baal cult and is rewarded with a dynasty of four generations, even though he does not institute pure Yahweh worship (10:30–31). The anointing of Elisha assures Elijah that the prophetic challenge will not end with him. (See [1 and 2 Kings - Page 303](#))

**Iain Provan**: A new order is to succeed the old, and it is this order that will bring about the final victory over Baal-worship. Victory will

come, in other words, as a result of political process—not through obviously spectacular demonstrations of divine power. It will arrive, not as a result of Elijah's efforts, but through the efforts of others. Elijah's role in the overall strategy is now clear. It is partly to fight, and he has done that well. But it is also partly (and now more importantly) to prepare the way for others. The Carmel event is only one event in a series that will stretch beyond his lifetime (cf. 2 Kgs. 8:7–15; 9–10). God has other ways of working—some of which make Elijah's God seem almost as nonexistent as Baal (a still small "voice" being only marginally noisier than no "voice" at all, cf. Hb. qôl in 18:26, 29). The Lord also has servants other than Elijah (not least the seven thousand in Israel who have not bowed down to Baal or kissed him in veneration, v. 18; cf. Rom. 11:1–6). If the spectacular has not produced final victory, that is no reason for despair. For the overall strategy was always more long term and more subtly conceived than Elijah imagined. From the beginning it had involved the gentle but devastating whisper as well as the all-consuming fire, the quiet ways of God's normal providence as well as the noisier ways of miraculous intervention. Elijah must be content with being part of the plan and not the plan itself (See [1 & 2 Kings - Page 8](#))

**1 Kings 19:16 and Jehu the son of Nimshi you shall anoint king over Israel; and Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abel-meholah you shall anoint as prophet in your place.**

- **Jehu:** 2Ki 9:1-3,6-14
- **Elisha the son of Shaphat:** 1Ki 19:19-21 Lu 4:27, Eliseus
- **Abel-meholah:** 1Ki 4:12 Jdg 7:22
- [1 Kings 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## ELIJAH TO ANOINT JEHU AND ELISHA

**and Jehu the son of Nimshi you shall anoint king over Israel; and Elisha the son of Shaphat of [Abel-meholah](#) you shall anoint as prophet in your place** - Elisha means "God is salvation." Elijah should have been encouraged by this word, for it would put an end to Ahab and Jezebel which he had fought for on Mount Carmel and it would also guarantee him a successor to carry on his ministry.

**[Bob Utley](#)** - "anoint as prophet" Usually this symbolic act of YHWH's call and equipping His servants is limited for kings and priests, but here is a rare example of a prophetic anointing (cf. Isa. 61:1).

---

**ABEL-MEHOLAH** [[ISBE](#)] - a'-bel-me-ho'-lah ('abhel meholah, "meadow of dancing"): The residence of Elisha the prophet (1 Ki 19:16). When Gideon and his 300 broke their pitchers in the camp of Midian, the Midianites in their first panic fled down the valley of Jezreel and the Jordan "toward Zererah" (Jdg 7:22). Zererah (Zeredah) is Zarethan (2 Ch 4:17; compare 1 Ki 7:46), separated from Succoth by the clay ground where Solomon made castings for the temple. The wing of the Midianites whom Gideon pursued crossed the Jordan at Succoth (Jdg 8:4 ff). This would indicate that Abel-meholah was thought of as a tract of country with a "border," West of the Jordan, some miles South of Beth-shean, in the territory either of Issachar or West Manasseh. Abel-meholah is also mentioned in connection with the jurisdiction of Baana, one of Solomon's twelve commissary officers (1 Ki 4:12) as below Jezreel, with Beth-shean and Zarethan in the same list. Jerome and Eusebius speak of Abel-meholah as a tract of country and a town in the Jordan valley, about ten Roman miles South of Beth-shean. At just that point the name seems to be perpetuated in that of the Wady Malib, and Abel-meholah is commonly located near where that Wady, or the neighboring Wady Helweh, comes down into the Jordan valley. Presumably Adriel the Meholahite (1 Sam 18:19; 2 Sam 21:8) was a resident of Abel-meholah. -- Willis J. Beecher

---

### James Smith - THE CALL OF ELISHA 1 Kings 19:16–21

“Jesus calls us from the worship  
Of the vain world's golden store;  
From each idol that would keep us,  
Saying, ‘Christian, love ME more.’ ”  
—C. F. ALEXANDER.

There is a self-evident vein of irony in these words of C. Kingsley:

“I was not good enough for man,  
And so was given to God.”

How ready we are to think and act as if the prime of our days was too valuable for us to be given to God, and that the fag end of our life is best suited for surrendering to the will of God. Where in all the Bible do we find any one called of God to do service for Him when infirm with age? Were not the Levites disqualified for the work of God at the age of fifty? (Num. 8:25). Are there not now comparatively few being saved beyond that age? Elisha was undoubtedly a young man, whom Elijah, at the bidding of God, came without a murmur to anoint him as prophet "in his own room." Observe the—

I. Significance of his Name. Elisha means God is Salvation. This was a name well suited for the man who was to take the lead at this time of national crisis. While in a despondent mood Elijah said, "I, even I, only am left," but the Lord rebuked his pessimism by saying, "I have left Me seven thousand," and Elisha was one of them. The after life of Elisha shows him to be strong where Elijah was inclined to be weak—in being faithful and careful down to the smallest events in life. Elijah's faith was mighty in Mount Carmel, but it failed him under the juniper tree. The man who knows that the presence of God is Salvation will surely be steadfast and immovable in the work of the Lord.

II. Time of his Call. It was while he was "ploughing" (1Ki 19:19). He was only a ploughman. Yes, but who can tell what depth of soul exercise and heart agony he may have had over backsliding Israel while following the oxen across the fields. There was One who did know, and who answered the secret longings of his heart by calling him out as a witness for Himself. The Lord knows where and when to lay "His hand on that hidden one who has in secret been prepared for a more honoured place in His service." The divine call came to Moses while he kept the flock of Jethro (Exod. 3:1); to Gideon while he thrashed wheat (Judges 6:11); to David when in the sheepfold (Psa. 78:70); to Amos while a herdman (chap. 7:14). All Christ's disciples were called from very common occupations. He found Bunyan among the pots and pans. "If any man hear My voice" (Rev. 3:20).

III. Manner of his Call. "Elijah passed by him, and cast his mantle upon him" (1Ki 19:19). It came suddenly, although Elisha's preparation may have been going on for several years. It came unmistakably. The mantle or spirit of the prophet had now fallen UPON HIM. This was to him an holy anointing from the Lord (v. 16). The mantle of Elijah was the symbol of the Spirit of power. Elisha could do no mighty works for God without this definite baptism. No more can we. "Tarry until ye be endued with power from on high" (Luke 24:49). The sudden encircling of the prophetic mantle about him was an experience he could not possibly forget or ignore (Acts 19:1).

IV. Effects of this Call. It was followed by—

1. AN INSTANT RESPONSE. "He left his oxen and ran after Elijah" (1Ki 19:20). He did not wait for a more convenient season, or he too might have been startled some day with the question, "What doest thou here, Elisha?" His call, like ours, is a passing one. The prophetic power will not abide with him unless he follows and keeps, as it were, in touch with that mantle which, in grace, had fallen upon him. So if we would abide in the power of His anointing we must be willing and ready to be led by the Spirit, and to walk in Him and with Him. An instant recognition of God's call, by the coming upon us of the Holy Spirit, should be made. "Set thine heart upon all that I shall show thee" (Ezek. 40:4).

2. A REVELATION OF FILIAL TENDERNESS. "Let me, I pray thee, kiss my father and my mother, and then I will follow thee" (1Ki 19:20). These words, we think, do not in any way betray the spirit of that man who said, "Suffer me first to go and bury my father" (Matt. 8:21). The call came to Elisha in the form of an offer instead of a command. An offer which he instantly accepted. Perhaps his love for his father and mother was one of the chief evidences of his righteousness with God and fitness for service. Those who would feel it no sacrifice whatever to leave home, even for the service of God, are not likely to be sent by Him (Matt. 19:27–29).

3. A WILLING AND DEFINITE TESTIMONY. "He took a yoke of oxen and slew them ... and gave unto the people" (1Ki 19:21). What would the people think of such an act? Killing the useful oxen and making a fire of the agricultural instruments! It was an indication to them that he was now done with this business, as he had deliberately accepted the gracious offer of the prophetic office at the hand of Elijah. All that Elijah said to him was, "Go back again, for what have I done to thee?" As much as to say, If there is no correspondence in your heart to this outward call then go back. But there was, and he fearlessly obeyed.

4. A PERSONAL SEPARATION AND SERVICE. "Then he arose and went after Elijah, and ministered unto him" (1Ki 19:21). As a vessel he has been cleansed, and made meet for the Master's use. He forsook all and followed Him. He began his great life's work in a very humble fashion, by "pouring water in the hands of Elijah" (2 Kings 3:11). He sought not great things for himself, but only to please and help his Master. Oh, that the words of our gracious Master might be true in our lips when face to face with the needs of men! "I am among you as he that serveth." "Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it" (John 2:5).

**ANSWER** - Before his reign as king, Jehu functioned as a commander in the army of Ahab (2 Kings 9:5, 25) in the northern kingdom of Israel. Jehu was the son of Jehoshaphat, although he is more commonly mentioned as son of Nimshi, his grandfather, perhaps because Nimshi was more well-known. Jehu's name, meaning "Yahweh is he," portrays well his future, God-given task: to obliterate the house of Ahab along with the worship of Baal that pervaded Israel at the time.

Jehu was a reformer of sorts who was used by God to clean up the mess that Ahab had made. Of King Ahab it is recorded that he "did more evil in the eyes of the Lord than any of those before him" (1 Kings 16:30). Marrying Jezebel, daughter of the king of the Sidonians, Ahab was seduced into her idolatrous worship of [Baal](#) and [Ashtoreth](#). Although God was patient for a time with Ahab, his many sins eventually brought God's judgment upon his family line (1 Kings 21:20–22). This judgment first lands upon Ahab's own head, as he is shot and killed in a battle against the Arameans (1 Kings 22:34–38).

**God chose Jehu as one of three men who would enact His judgment upon Ahab's family.** God told the prophet Elijah, "Anoint **Hazael** king over Aram. Also, anoint **Jehu** son of Nimshi king over Israel, and anoint **Elisha** son of Shaphat from Abel Meholah to succeed you as prophet. Jehu will put to death any who escape the sword of Hazael, and Elisha will put to death any who escape the sword of Jehu" (1 Kings 19:15–17). One way or another, Ahab's dynasty would be destroyed.

God also chose Jehu to be the king of Israel. After he was anointed king, Jehu immediately took steps to secure the throne. Knowing that Joram, son of Ahab, had recently gone to Jezreel to recover from wounds in a battle against the Arameans, Jehu ordered his men to seal the city so that no one could alert Joram of Jehu's anointing (2 Kings 9:1–16). Jehu made haste to Jezreel and killed two of Ahab's progeny—Joram, king of northern Israel; and Ahaziah, king of Judah (2 Kings 9:14–29). Jehu then proceeded to Jezebel's palace in Jezreel, where the queen stood watching for him at her window. At Jehu's command, eunuchs surrounding Jezebel threw her down from the window. Jezebel's blood splattered over the pavement, and her body was eaten by dogs (2 Kings 9:30–37).

Jehu left no man standing who was in alliance with King Ahab, as God had commanded long before through Elijah. Entering the temple of Baal, Jehu slaughtered all the priests of Baal and destroyed the temple and its sacred stone, thus [eradicating Baal worship](#) in Israel (2 Kings 10:23–28).

The Lord blessed Jehu for his obedience, granting him a dynasty that would last to the fourth generation (2 Kings 10:30). However, because Jehu continued to hold on to the idolatrous worship of King Jeroboam (2 Kings 10:29, 31; 12:26–30), God began to reduce the size of Israel, gradually giving them over to the power of even Hazael of Syria (2 Kings 10:32–33). Jehu reigned over Israel a total of twenty-eight years and was succeeded by his son Jehoahaz (2 Kings 10:35–36).

*Where does your allegiance lie?*

(ED: ARE YOU CLUTCHING ANY IDOLS?)

Through Jehu we can learn that, although it is true that God blesses and grants success to those who seek to obey Him, God also can and will pull away His blessing from one who willfully chooses to live in sin. As Jesus says in Matthew 6:24, "No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other." We cannot serve God while continuing to hold on to false gods. As Joshua said, we must "choose for [ourselves] this day whom [we] will serve" (Joshua 24:15). Where does your allegiance lie?

**1 Kings 19:17 "It shall come about, the one who escapes from the sword of Hazael, Jehu shall put to death, and the one who escapes from the sword of Jehu, Elisha shall put to death."**

- **the one who escapes from the sword of Hazael;** Isa 24:17, 18 Am 2:14 5:19
- **the sword of Hazael:** 2Ki 8:12 10:32 13:3, 22
- **the sword of Jehu:** 2Ki 9:14–26 10:6–11
- **Elisha :** 2Ki 2:23, 24 Isa 11:4 Jer 1:10 Ho 6:5 Rev 19:21
- [1 Kings 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### **Related Passages:**

2 Kings 9:24 And Jehu drew his bow with his full strength and shot Joram **(AHAB'S SON WHO REIGNED AS KING)** between his arms; and the arrow went through his heart and he sank in his chariot.

2 Kings 9:33–35 **(JEZEBEL TO BE EATEN BY DOGS)** He said, "Throw her down." So they threw her down, and some of her blood was sprinkled on the wall and on the horses, and he trampled her under foot. 34 When he came in, he ate and drank; and he said, "See now to this cursed woman and bury her, for she is a king's

daughter.” 35 They went to bury her, but they found nothing more of her than the skull and the feet and the palms of her hands.

2 Kings 10:11 So Jehu killed **all who remained of the house of Ahab in Jezreel**, and all his great men and his acquaintances and his priests, until **he left him without a survivor**.

## YAHWEH PROPHECIES DEATH TO AHAB'S LINE

**It shall come about, the one who escapes from the sword of Hazael, Jehu shall put to death, and the one who escapes from the sword of Jehu, Elisha shall put to death** - The prophetic judgment of Yahweh was that the wicked reign of Ahab would come to a complete end.

[David Guzik](#) - This was another source of encouragement to Elijah. With this promise he knew that ultimately justice would be done, and God would not allow the institutionalized persecution and promotion of idolatry to go unpunished.

[Bob Utley](#) - The temporal consequences of idolatry will surely come to pass. YHWH used contemporary events and persons for His purposes!

**1 Kings 19:18 “Yet I will leave 7,000 in Israel, all the knees that have not bowed to Baal and every mouth that has not kissed him.”**

- **Yet I will leave 7,000 in Israel**, Isa 1:9 10:20-22 Ro 11:4-5
- **the knees**: Ex 20:5 Isa 49:23 Ro 14:10-12 Php 2:9-11
- **every mouth**: Job 31:27 Ps 2:12 Ho 13:2
- [1 Kings 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

### Related Passages:

Romans 11:1-5 I say then, God has not rejected His people, has He? May it never be! For I too am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. 2 God has not rejected His people whom He foreknew. Or do you not know what the Scripture says in the passage about Elijah, how he pleads with God against Israel? 3 “Lord, **THEY HAVE KILLED YOUR PROPHETS, THEY HAVE TORN DOWN YOUR ALTARS, AND I ALONE AM LEFT, AND THEY ARE SEEKING MY LIFE.**” 4 But what is the divine response to him? “I HAVE KEPT for Myself **SEVEN THOUSAND MEN WHO HAVE NOT BOWED THE KNEE TO BAAL.**” 5 In the same way then, there has also come to be at the present time a remnant according to God’s gracious choice.

Philippians 2:9-11 For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, 10 so that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Hosea 13:2 And now they sin more and more, And make for themselves molten images, Idols skillfully made from their silver, All of them the work of craftsmen. They say of them, “**Let the men who sacrifice kiss the calves!**”

Psalms 95:6 “Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the LORD our Maker.”

Psalms 103:13-14 As a father pities his children, So the Lord pities those who fear Him. For He knows our frame (or, understands our constitution; how weak we are); He remembers that we are dust.

## GOD'S FAITHFUL REMNANT

**Yet I will leave 7,000 in Israel, all the knees that have not bowed to Baal**—This has to be somewhat of a rebuke for Elijah had claimed he was the only one left. And so Yahweh addresses Elijah's false perception **I alone am left**. Not only were there 100 prophets in caves, there was a **faithful remnant** of 7000 in Israel who refused to worship Baal. Bowing of course was an act of worship and those who did not bow to Baal indicates they did not demonstrate reverence or allegiance to this false god. The irony is

that all those who did bow to the false god Baal will one day bow to the true God, Jesus Christ the Lord of lords!

**THOUGHT** - Beloved believer in Jesus Christ, let this verse encourage your heart. You may be the only believer in your family, your city, your tribe, etc, but you can be confident that you are not alone. While most of America will turn away from Jesus, God will always preserve a faithful remnant to be His witness to the lost.

**David Guzik** - This was a final encouragement to Elijah. He repeatedly bemoaned that he was alone among the true followers of God (1 Kings 18:22, 19:10, and 19:14). This both assured Elijah that he was not alone and that his work as a prophet had indeed been fruitful.

**Spurgeon** - This showed Elijah that his *quiet ministry* over the years actually bore more fruit than the *spectacular ministry* at Mount Carmel. "Yet, all the while that vile idolatry was spreading in Israel, the worship of the true God was being retained by seven thousand faithful souls, though Elijah did not know that there was even one beside himself. How were they won to Jehovah? Certainly not by Elijah's impressive demonstration on the top of Carmel, for they were loyal to the Lord before that... The still small voice had been doing for Israel what Elijah could not do"

**and every mouth that has not kissed him** People kissed statues or altars of Baal as a sign of loyalty to him (Hosea 13:2). Idolaters often kissed their hand in honour of their idols; and hence the origin of **adoration** (from **ad** = to/toward + **orare** = to speak from **os/oris** = the mouth). In Roman culture, *adoratio* referred to a physical act of reverence, such as bowing or blowing a kiss toward a deity or ruler. Cicero mentions a statue of Hercules, the chin and lips of which were considerably worn by the kissing of his worshippers.

#### **O Come All Ye Faithful**

O come, let us adore Him,  
O come, let us adore Him,  
O come, let us adore Him,  
Christ the Lord!

---

#### **Robert Morgan - 1 Kings 19:18 (NKJV)** [All to Jesus: A Year of Devotions - Page 73](#)

The rugged Elijah, man of prayer and passion, collapsed under the strain of work and asked the Lord to take his life. "I have been very zealous for the Lord God of Hosts," he prayed, "but the Israelites have... killed Your prophets with the sword. I alone am left, and they're looking for me to take my life" (1 Kings 19:14). In his dejection and self-pity, Elijah thought he was the last man standing, the final prophet in Israel.

Patiently the Lord gave Elijah a new set of instructions, speaking to him in still, small tones. He told Elijah to return by the way he came and to resume his work with renewed power. He also gave him a human friend, a young man named Elisha.

"Oh, yes, by the way," the Lord added (my paraphrase). "This business about your being the last prophet standing? Well, for your information I have seven thousand in Israel, all whose knees have not bowed to Baal and whose mouths have not kissed him." Elijah was seven thousand times more pessimistic than he should have been, and the Lord was seven thousand times more powerful than Elijah thought.

The lesson for us: Sometimes things seem to be going badly, and sometimes we collapse in discouragement and exhaustion. But remember—where God is concerned, things are never as bad as they seem. He has resources of which we know nothing.

---

#### **Converts**

1 Kings 19:18; John 12:23–26

It took Ellis Deibler fifteen years to translate the New Testament for the Guhuku people of Papua New Guinea. After all that time the evidence of church growth was not encouraging. He was aware of only one or two people who were believers, and they didn't seem very committed.

His friends back home couldn't understand why he had invested so much time in the Guhukus. All that work! All those years! Only two believers? Yet Ellis felt he had been obedient to what God had called him to do.

When he finished the Guhuku New Testament, he moved to Ukarumpa, the translation center, to help other translators with their work. Meanwhile, every Saturday he drove the sixty miles back to the Guhuku market town to try to sell the copies of the Scriptures. At times he was tempted to be discouraged because he found there were few buyers and very little interest.

One Saturday, a Guhuku woman stopped Ellis in the market and asked, "Are you Ellis Deibler?"

"Yes."

"I've been wanting to find you for a long time and thank you for translating the New Testament into my language."



She told him she was a schoolteacher from another area. She related, "One day, I was in a bookstore and picked up a book. I was shocked that it was written in my language. I had never seen anything written in my language before." It was the Guhuku New Testament. She said she started reading it and couldn't put it down. "While I read it, the Spirit of God came over me, and I knew I was different."

She showed Ellis her New Testament. She had nearly worn it out with use. She told Ellis how she began reading it to others, and the Spirit came over them too! Later Ellis asked, "How many people became believers because of this?"

"There must be at least two hundred," she said.

---

### **J R Miller - him." 1 Kings 19:18**

Things were not so bad as Elijah had thought. He supposed he was the only one left; but there were seven thousand more, scattered here and there through the land, who were still loyal to God. God's cause in this world is never hopeless. He has others, where we think we are the only one.

There is an experience of Luther's which is suggestive: "At one time," he says, "I was sorely vexed and tried by my own sinfulness, by the wickedness of the world, and by the dangers that beset the church. One morning I saw my wife dressed in mourning. Surprised, I asked her who had died. 'Do you not know?' she replied; 'GOD is dead.' 'How can you talk such nonsense?' I said. 'How can God die?' 'Is that really true?' she asked. 'Of course,' I said, not perceiving her aim.' How can you doubt it?' 'Yet,' she said, 'though you do not doubt that—yet you are so helpless and discouraged.' "

---

### **Vance Havner - RALLYING THE REMNANT**

Yet 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. 1 Kings 19:18.

It is easy to get under the juniper and fancy, "I am the sole surviving saint." But God has His faithful remnant and our biggest business is to rally it. There are more than seven thousand who do not bow to Baal. God keeps the books and knows them that are His. Here is the real witness today. We cannot organize it, but we can challenge and revive it and out of this kindling wood start a fire.

---

### **You're Not Alone**

[God] has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." --Hebrews 13:5

If you're in a situation where you feel that you're the only one standing true to God, take heart! There's encouragement in the story of Elijah.

The prophet had experienced the Lord's protection and miraculous provision, and he had just won a great victory over those who had led God's people astray (1 Kings 17-18). But then we find Elijah running for his life and sinking into despair, convinced that he was the only one of God's prophets who hadn't been destroyed by the enemy (1 Kings 19). After having exhibited great courage, he suddenly was overcome with fear.

We may have a similar reaction. It may occur in the early stages of an unknown venture or after a great success. Suddenly we feel isolated, vulnerable, alone, afraid.

God came to Elijah in his darkest moment and gave the fearful prophet a word of encouragement. The Lord told him, "I have reserved seven thousand in Israel, all whose knees have not bowed to Baal" (1 Kings 19:18).

Seven thousand! God has His people everywhere. In your job, neighborhood, dormitory, or barracks, you may feel that you're the only one standing for Christ. Take courage! Other believers are in the same situation. And most important, God will not leave you. You are not alone. --D C McCasland (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Though all around me is darkness  
And earthly joys are flown,  
My Savior whispers His promise--  
Never to leave me alone.  
--Anon.

---

**1 Kings 19:19 So he departed from there and found Elisha the son of Shaphat, while he was plowing with twelve pairs of**



oxen before him, and he with the twelfth. And Elijah passed over to him and threw his mantle on him.

- **Elisha:** 1Ki 19:16
- **while he was plowing with twelve pairs:** Ex 3:1 Jdg 6:11 Ps 78:70-72 Am 7:14 Zec 13:5 Mt 4:18,19
- **his mantle:** 1Ki 19:13 1Sa 28:14 2Ki 2:8,13,14
- [1 Kings 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Elijah Anoints Elisha As His Cattle Look On!

## THE PASSING OF THE MANTLE

**So** - Term of conclusion. No questions. No grumbling. No hesitation. Elijah concludes that God has commanded him and that settles it. His feelings of "woe is me" must have quickly faded away!

**He departed from there** - Elijah backtracks about 150 miles from one wilderness to another as he goes to God's destination in the Damascus Wilderness.

**And found Elisha the son of Shaphat, while he was plowing with twelve pairs of oxen before him, and he with the twelfth-**  
**Twelve pairs of oxen** indicates he was from a wealthy family. Elijah finds one of the 7000 faithful that God had mentioned.

**THOUGHT** - One of the best ways to get out of depression or discouragement is to get busy and set new goals. Don't spend time alone. Fellowship with others. God knew that Elijah needed Elisha's fellowship. You need fellowship too! Are you backslidden? Get back on track! Listen for God's still, small voice in the quiet times and do what He says. (Rod Mattoon)

**Bob Utley** - (Elisha) had no prophetic background or orientation. This highlights YHWH's choice of him.

**E. H. Garrett** - The more God empties your hands from other work, the more you may know that He has special work to give them.

**And Elijah passed over to him and threw his mantle (addereth) on him** - This passing of the mantle reminds us of Paul's passing the baton to Timothy (2Ti 2:2+). There is no evidence that Elijah spoke but he simply carried out the act of throwing his mantle on Elisha. Elijah anoints Elisha not with oil but with his mantle. It is interesting that not far away was a school of prophets (2Ki 2:3), but clearly guided by the Holy Spirit Elijah did not go to the school, but to a young man ploughing in the field. How different are God's ways than our ways (Isa 55:8-9)! God will choose a herdsman like Amos (Amos 7:14), a persecutor like Paul (Acts 9:1-2), an uneducated man like Moody (often called "God's anointed uneducated man" or "the unlearned evangelist") and a plowman like Elisha for His work.

**THOUGHT** - Does this truth not encourage you beloved? Perhaps you are sensing a call to preach the Gospel and yet you say "I've never been to seminary," or some other excuse. The truth is that God used many men who never attended seminary, including the "Prince of Preachers," C H Spurgeon (cf A W Tozer, Leonard Ravenhill, Billy Sunday, William Booth, George Muller, John Bunyan, etc). You've heard the aphorism that God looks for "**F.A.T.**" men, Faithful, Available, and Teachable. Many of the most powerful preachers in history were self-taught, Spirit-led, and deeply committed to God's Word. Do you qualify?

*God does not call the qualified.*

*He qualifies the called.*

---

**Charles Swindoll - LOOK UP** Read 1 Kings 19:10-21

Thanks to God's kind and gentle dealing, Elijah crawled out of the cave. "He departed from there" (1 Kings 19:19). God graciously nurtured him through rest and refreshment, gave him some wise counsel, and made him feel significant again. Talk about compassion!

Then God allowed Elijah to pass his mantle to Elisha, his successor. But God did more than that, abundantly more. For Elisha "arose and followed Elijah and ministered to him" (v. 21). God not only gave Elijah a successor; He also raised up a close, personal friend—someone who loved Elijah and understood him well enough to help and encourage him.

God has not designed us to live like hermits in a cave. He has designed us to live in friendship, fellowship, and community with others. That's why the church, the body of Christ, is so very important, for it is there that we are drawn together in love and mutual encouragement. We're meant to be a part of one another's lives. Otherwise, we pull back, focusing on ourselves—thinking how hard we have it or how unfair others are.

Elijah reminds us to look up.

Let's look up after the Lord graciously delivers us from depression.

Let's look up when He allows us rest and refreshment following an exhausting schedule that has taken its toll on us.

Let's look up and thank Him when He gently and patiently speaks to us from His Word after we've climbed out of a pit of self-pity.

Let's look up and praise Him when He faithfully provides the companionship and affirmation of a friend who understands and encourages us.

Let's look up and acknowledge the Giver more than the gift.

Let's say, "Thank You, Lord, for telling us all about Elijah," who is an unforgettable example that there is nowhere to look but up.

---

## Continuing with Christ

Whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. Matthew 16:25

### TODAY'S SCRIPTURE 1 Kings 19:19-21

As a child, my favorite week of the summer was the one I spent at a Christian youth camp. At the end of the week, I'd sit elbow-to-elbow with friends in front of an enormous bonfire. There, we would share what we had learned about God and the Bible and sing. One song I still remember focused on deciding to follow Jesus. The chorus contained an important phrase: "no turning back."

When Elisha decided to follow the prophet Elijah, Elisha did something incredible that made it difficult, impossible really, for him to return to his prior occupation of farming. After going home and having a farewell banquet, Elisha "took a yoke of oxen and slaughtered them" (1 Kings 19:21). Leaving his way of life, he burned up his plowing equipment. He roasted the freshly butchered meat over the blaze and fed everyone present. Then "[Elisha] arose and followed Elijah, and became his servant" (v. 21).

Giving ourselves to God, who deserves our devotion, often comes with a price. At times, it means making difficult decisions about relationships, finances, and living arrangements. However, nothing compares with what we gain when we continue on with Christ. Jesus said, "Whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it" (Matt. 16:25). Jennifer Benson Schultdt (Reprinted by permission from [Our Daily Bread Ministries](#). Please do not repost the full devotional without their permission.)

Father, help me to see if there's something You want me to leave behind to follow You completely.

Jesus is looking for fulltime followers.

**INSIGHT** - It is often difficult to understand the significance of some events in Scripture without a knowledge of the cultural context. Today's story of Elijah and Elisha is an example of this. Two elements that carry significance are the placing of the cloak on Elisha (19:19 niv) and the slaughtering of the oxen to feed the people (v. 21). The placing of the cloak represented a significant calling. A person could not simply choose to be Elijah's apprentice; that person was chosen and it was a great honor. The slaughtering of the oxen, the burning of the plowing equipment, and the feeding of the people signified a deliberate leaving of Elisha's former life to follow Elijah. It was a public statement of Elisha's new identity. J.R. Hudberg

**1 Kings 19:20 He left the oxen and ran after Elijah and said, "Please let me kiss my father and my mother, then I will follow you." And he said to him, "Go back again, for what have I done to you?"**

NET 1 Kings 19:20 He left the oxen, ran after Elijah, and said, "Please let me kiss my father and mother goodbye, then I will follow you." Elijah said to him, "Go back! Indeed, what have I done to you?"

CSB 1 Kings 19:20 Elisha left the oxen, ran to follow Elijah, and said, "Please let me kiss my father and

mother, and then I will follow you." "Go on back," he replied, "for what have I done to you?"

ESV 1 Kings 19:20 And he left the oxen and ran after Elijah and said, "Let me kiss my father and my mother, and then I will follow you." And he said to him, "Go back again, for what have I done to you?"

NIV 1 Kings 19:20 Elisha then left his oxen and ran after Elijah. "Let me kiss my father and mother good-bye," he said, "and then I will come with you." "Go back," Elijah replied. "What have I done to you?"

NLT 1 Kings 19:20 Elisha left the oxen standing there, ran after Elijah, and said to him, "First let me go and kiss my father and mother good-bye, and then I will go with you!" Elijah replied, "Go on back, but think about what I have done to you."

NRS 1 Kings 19:20 He left the oxen, ran after Elijah, and said, "Let me kiss my father and my mother, and then I will follow you." Then Elijah said to him, "Go back again; for what have I done to you?"

- **he left:** Mt 4:20,22 9:9 19:27
- **Please let me kiss my father** Mt 8:21-22 Lu 9:61-62 Ac 20:37
- [1 Kings 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

#### Related Passages:

Matthew 8:21-22 Another of the disciples said to Him, "Lord, permit me first to go and bury my father." 22 But Jesus \*said to him, "Follow Me, and allow the dead to bury their own dead."

Luke 9:61-62 Another also said, "I will follow You, Lord; but first permit me to say good-bye to those at home." 62 But Jesus said to him, "No one, after putting his hand to the plow and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."

### ELISHA'S REQUEST TO KISS PARENTS

**He left the oxen and ran after Elijah** - Elisha understood that he had been anointed.

**and said, "Please let me kiss my father and my mother, then I will follow you** - What is the difference between Elisha's request and the one in Lk 9:61-62+? Clearly Jesus saw the heart of the man and knew it was in essence a delaying tactic and/or an excuse. As sudd

**And he said to him, "Go back again, for what have I done to you? - NLT** ="Go on back, but think about what I have done to you."

---

#### THE SPIRITUAL LIFE IS CAUGHT, NOT TAUGHT - Os Hillman [TGIF: Today God Is First: Daily Workplace Inspiration](#)

Elisha then left his oxen and ran after Elijah. 1 KINGS 19:20

There is a man in my life that I consider my mentor. He came into my life during a crisis period and helped me understand my situation. I have learned a great deal from him. I have rarely spent more than a few hours in his presence at any one time. However, I did not learn from him through a formal arrangement. I mostly caught what I have learned. He never took me through a Bible study. He never sent me articles or things to read. I learned by being around him.

One day a crisis situation arose in my life. In the midst of my own predicament, I remembered what my mentor did in a crisis in his life and, amazingly, I appropriated faith, just as my mentor had, to my crisis. This is what I mean by catching the faith of another. Spiritual truth is learned through the atmosphere that surrounds us, not through intellectual reasoning.

In the Bible, when Elijah handpicked Elisha as his successor, Elisha immediately killed his 12 oxen and ran after Elijah just to be with him. No doubt he knew what a great privilege it was to be selected by the great prophet. However, it was not enough for Elisha to be handpicked. He also wanted to spend time with Elijah so that he could receive a double portion of Elijah's anointing. If you read the whole story of Elijah and Elisha in 1 Kings, you'll find that it appears that God answered this prayer.

If you want to grow in your Christian life, ask God to lead you to a man or woman who is far ahead of you spiritually, and start hanging out with them. As you walk alongside them you will begin to catch what they have. You will begin appropriating the anointing that is on their lives, and with God's grace, it will mix perfectly with your unique gifting and talents.

We need more people today who are willing to run after their "Elijahs."

**1 Kings 19:21 So he returned from following him, and took the pair of oxen and sacrificed them and boiled their flesh with the implements of the oxen, and gave it to the people and they ate. Then he arose and followed Elijah and ministered to him.**

NET 1 Kings 19:21 Elisha went back and took his pair of oxen and slaughtered them. He cooked the meat over a fire that he made by burning the harness and yoke. He gave the people meat and they ate. Then he got up and followed Elijah and became his assistant.

CSB 1 Kings 19:21 So he turned back from following him, took the team of oxen, and slaughtered them. With the oxen's wooden yoke and plow, he cooked the meat and gave it to the people, and they ate. Then he left, followed Elijah, and served him.

ESV 1 Kings 19:21 And he returned from following him and took the yoke of oxen and sacrificed them and boiled their flesh with the yokes of the oxen and gave it to the people, and they ate. Then he arose and went after Elijah and assisted him.

NIV 1 Kings 19:21 So Elisha left him and went back. He took his yoke of oxen and slaughtered them. He burned the plowing equipment to cook the meat and gave it to the people, and they ate. Then he set out to follow Elijah and became his attendant.

NLT 1 Kings 19:21 So Elisha returned to his oxen and slaughtered them. He used the wood from the plow to build a fire to roast their flesh. He passed around the meat to the townspeople, and they all ate. Then he went with Elijah as his assistant.

- **boiled their flesh:** 2Sa 24:22
- **gave:** Lu 5:28,29
- **ministered:** 1Ki 18:43 Ex 24:13 Nu 27:18-20 2Ki 2:3 3:11 Ac 13:5 2Ti 4:11 Philemon 1:13
- [1 Kings 19 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

## **ELISHA'S COMPLETE COMMITMENT TO FOLLOW ELIJAH**

**So** - Term of conclusion. Elijah apparently acquiesced to Elisha's request.

**he returned from following him, and took the pair of oxen and sacrificed them and boiled their flesh with the implements of the oxen, and gave it to the people and they ate** - "He cooked the meat over a fire that he made by burning the harness and yoke." (NET) In short in killing the oxen and burning the oxen yoke Elisha symbolized he was burning the bridges and there was now no turning back from his prophetic call.

**Adam Clarke** - "Elisha must have had a considerable estate, when he kept *two* yoke of oxen to till the ground. If, therefore, he obeyed the prophetic call, he did it to considerable secular loss."

**Then he arose and followed Elijah and ministered to him** - "Then he got up and followed Elijah and became his assistant." (NET)

---

**Rod Mattoon** - Elisha will spend ten years under the tutelage of Elijah. Elisha will serve the Lord at least 64 years.

- He was anointed five years before Ahab dies.
- He serves through Ahaziah's 2- year reign. (1 Kings 22:51)
- He serves through Jehoram's 12-year reign. (2 Kings 3:1)
- He serves through Jehu's 28- year reign. (2 Kings 10:36)
- He serves through Jehoahaz 17- year reign. (2 Kings 13:1)
- He serves through Joash 16- years. He dies during the reign of Joash. (2 Kings 13:9-20)

---

**ILLUSTRATION OF BURNING THE BRIDGES** - One of the men I discipled became so zealous for the Word of God that he felt led by the Spirit to sell his successful home inspection business in Austin, Texas in preparation for going to Africa, with no plans for he and his wife to ever return to America. They literally sold everything they owned and departed to Africa to teach hungry souls how to study the Bible inductively. That was almost 10 years ago and the stories I get from him about the reception for of hungry souls for the pure milk of the Word are absolutely amazing and challenging to my faith.

---

“So Elisha turned back from him, and took a yoke of oxen and slaughtered them. ... Then he arose and followed Elijah, and became his servant.” (1 Kings 19:21)

When Elijah threw his mantle, or his outer garment, on Elisha, it was a symbolic gesture that said, “I’m passing on my calling to you.” From the account we find in 1 Kings 19, we discover a few things about Elisha. First, we know that he was a relatively wealthy man and came from an affluent home. How do we know that? Because the Bible says that he had twelve yoke of oxen. Back in those days, owning one pair of oxen meant that you were pretty well off. To have twelve would mean that you had a considerable acreage. So, for Elisha to follow Elijah was not an easy life.

Elijah’s invitation was not to a leisurely life on easy street. Elijah’s life was a hard one. He had many enemies. He had people that hated him, most notably, Queen Jezebel. For Elisha to follow Elijah would mean that he would have the same enemies. The same people that hated Elijah would now hate him.

Many people are surprised to find that the Christian life is not a playground, but a battleground. The day that you decide to follow Jesus Christ, you begin to face opposition from the devil. He doesn’t want you to grow spiritually. He doesn’t to you to move forward. So, he will use every trick up his sleeve to try and pull you back.

We must recognize that to follow Christ means there is a price to pay. We may lose some friends. We may have to give up a few things. It may be difficult at times. But certainly, it is worth it.