

Elijah: Man of God: Depressed

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 land for three years and six months. James 5:17

- Who was Ahab?
- He was a king who acted as if it had been a light thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, he took for his wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal king of the Sidonians, and went and served Baal and worshiped him.
- **32 He erected an altar for Baal in the house of Baal, which he built in Samaria.**
- **33 And Ahab made an Asherah. Ahab did more to provoke the LORD, the God of Israel, to anger than all the kings of Israel who were before him.**
- I Kings 16:31-33

Who is Elijah? A Man of God - A normal person, says James.

He was a man with a mission. We only know of his mission by what he tells King Ahab.

Now Elijah the Tishbite, of Tishbe in Gilead, said to Ahab, "As the LORD, the God of Israel, lives, before whom I stand, there shall be neither dew nor rain these years, except by my word.

I Kings 17:1

This announcement seems very abrupt.

But it would be based on this -

16 Take care lest your heart be deceived, and you turn aside and serve other gods and worship them;
17 then the anger of the LORD will be kindled against you, and he will shut up the heavens, so that there will be no rain, and the land will yield no fruit, and you will perish quickly off the good land that the LORD is giving you. Deuteronomy 11:16,17

God cares about the spiritual condition of His people.

God can go to unusual lengths to bring His people back to Him.

It is not up to us to evaluate victory or success.

God cares about the spiritual condition of His people.
 God can go to unusual lengths to bring His people back to Him.
 It is not up to us to evaluate victory or success.

I Kings 19: 1 ¶ **Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and how he had killed all the prophets with the sword.**
2 Then Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah, saying, "So may the gods do to me and more also, if I do not make your life as the life of one of them by this time tomorrow."

- Elijah believes his whole mission failed
 - The man of God becomes a man of fear.
 - Why did God not 'take care of' Jezebel?
 - Often God's grace reaches much further than ours does. God allows/permits Jezebel to function. Elijah cannot understand that.
 What happens when our anticipated outcome is different from God's?

In Elijah's situation, and in his experience, he is overcome with fear and depression.

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.

He runs for his life. He runs, (in one day?) over a hundred miles and leaves his servant in Beersheba.

He goes another day ...

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."

And he lay down and slept under a broom tree.
 4, 5a

But God cares.

And behold, an angel touched him and said to him, "Arise and eat."

6 And he looked, and behold, there was at his head a cake baked on hot stones and a jar of water. And he ate and drank and lay down again.

But God cares.

**And behold, an angel touched him and said to him, "Arise and eat."
 6 And he looked, and behold, there was at his head a cake baked on hot stones and a jar of water. And he ate and drank and lay down again.
 7 And the angel of the LORD came again a second time and touched him and said, "Arise and eat, for the journey is too great for you."
 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.**

Elijah is given some direction.

Prior to this, he had no real direction. It was just 'away'. The angel is pointing out that he was not just running away from Jezebel. In doing this thing, he was already away from God. When we respond and react in fear ... we are not near God. We also need direction. Come back to God.

Elijah goes to the mountain of God. It is a 40 day trip. No food. God is calling him back.

The trip back is hard.

God wants us to have 'mountain top experiences'. It is called 'Getting close to God'.

'Getting close to God'.

And behold, the word of the LORD came to him, and he said to him, "What are you doing here, Elijah?"

Note, God meets Elijah: half-way.

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."

God listens to us. 11-13

11 And he said, "Go out and stand on the mount before the LORD." And behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind tore the mountains and broke 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. 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.

13 And when Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his cloak and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave. And behold, there came a voice to him and said, "What are you doing here, Elijah?"

13 And when Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his cloak and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave. And behold, there came a voice to him and said, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" God takes steps to be real in our lives.

14 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."

God listens ... but will not leave us to wallow in our self-pity.

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.

16 And Jehu the son of Nimshi you shall anoint to be king over Israel, and Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abel-meholah you shall anoint to be prophet in your place.

17 And the one who escapes from the sword of Hazael shall Jehu put to death, and the one who escapes from the sword of Jehu shall Elisha put to death.

18 Yet I will leave seven thousand in Israel, all the knees that have not bowed to Baal, and every mouth that has not kissed him."

God listens and corrects our faulty thinking, and restores. He says, I've got this.

19a So he departed from there and found Elisha

19a So he departed from there and found Elisha

(We skip over chapter 20. It is about Syria attacking Israel. A prophet, not Elijah, assures King Ahab that God will bring victory. It comes true. The prophet warns of a second attack coming in the spring. Israel has tremendous victory again... but Ahab falls short of obeying the prophets instructions. This will prove to be fatal for him, and the prophet tells him so. Ahab is sullen. Ahab negotiates with a neighbour for a plot he wanted to buy to plant a garden. (This turns very bad)

God gives Elijah a message for Ahab :

19 "You shall speak to him, saying, 'Thus says the LORD: "Have you murdered and also taken possession?"

And you shall speak to him, saying, 'Thus says the LORD: "In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth, dogs shall lick your blood, even yours."

Elijah approaches Naboth's vineyard.

20 Ahab said to Elijah, "Have you found me, O my enemy?" He answered, "I have found you, because you have sold yourself to do what is evil in the sight of the LORD.

21 Behold, I will bring disaster upon you. I will utterly burn you up, and will cut off from Ahab every male, bond or free, in Israel.

22 And I will make your house like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and like the house of Baasha the son of Ahijah, for the anger to which you have provoked me, and because you have made Israel to sin. I Kings 21:20-24

23 And of Jezebel the LORD also said, 'The dogs shall eat Jezebel within the walls of Jezreel.'

24 Anyone belonging to Ahab who dies in the city the dogs shall eat, and anyone of his who dies in the open country the birds of the heavens shall eat."

He and Jezebel will get their due reward.

23 And of Jezebel the LORD also said, 'The dogs shall eat Jezebel within the walls of Jezreel.'

24 Anyone belonging to Ahab who dies in the city the dogs shall eat, and anyone of his who dies in the open country the birds of the heavens shall eat."

He and Jezebel will get their due reward.

Three years pass by. Israel is into another war, once again with Syria. Has Ahab remembered the prediction .. dogs are going to lick up his blood?

But a certain man drew his bow at random and struck the king of Israel between the scale armor and the breastplate. Therefore he said to the driver of his chariot, "Turn around and carry me out of the battle, for I am wounded." 22:34

A random shot?

37 So the king died, and was brought to Samaria. And they buried the king in Samaria.
38 And they washed the chariot by the pool of Samaria, and the dogs licked up his blood, and the prostitutes washed themselves in it, according to the word of the LORD that he had spoken.

God keeps his promises.

Ahab's son, the new King of Samaria, has an accident. He sends a group of messengers to ask a priest of Baal if he would recover or not. They meet Elijah on the road.

Elijah tells them that the king will not recover.

God's ministry for 'depressed Elijah' continues to expand.

Ahab's son, the new King of Samaria, has an accident. He sends a group of messengers to ask a priest of Baal if he would recover or not. They meet Elijah on the road. Elijah tells them that the king will not recover.

God's ministry for 'depressed Elijah' continues to expand.

We can pick this up in 2 Kings 1:5-8

5 The messengers returned to the king, and he said to them, "Why have you returned?"

6 And they said to him, "There came a man to meet us, and said to us, 'Go back to the king who sent you, and say to him, Thus says the LORD, Is it because there is no God in Israel that you are sending to inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron? Therefore you shall not come down from the bed to which you have gone up, but you shall surely die.'"

7 He said to them, "What kind of man was he who came to meet you and told you these things?"

8 They answered him, "He wore a garment of hair, with a belt of leather about his waist." And he said, "It is Elijah the Tishbite."

8 They answered him, "He wore a garment of hair, with a belt of leather about his waist." And he said, "It is Elijah the Tishbite."

This King wants Elijah arrested.

8 They answered him, "He wore a garment of hair, with a belt of leather about his waist." And he said, "It is Elijah the Tishbite."

This King wants Elijah arrested.

9 ¶ Then the king sent to him a captain of fifty men with his fifty. He went up to Elijah, who was sitting on the top of a hill, and said to him, "O man of God, the king says, 'Come down.'"

10 But Elijah answered the captain of fifty, "If I am a man of God, let fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty." Then fire came down from heaven and consumed him and his fifty.

10 But Elijah answered the captain of fifty, "If I am a man of God, let fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty." Then fire came down from heaven and consumed him and his fifty.

11 Again the king sent to him another captain of fifty men with his fifty. And he answered and said to him, "O man of God, this is the king's order, 'Come down quickly!'"

10 But Elijah answered the captain of fifty, "If I am a man of God, let fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty." Then fire came down from heaven and consumed him and his fifty.

11 Again the king sent to him another captain of fifty men with his fifty. And he answered and said to him, "O man of God, this is the king's order, 'Come down quickly!'"

12 But Elijah answered them, "If I am a man of God, let fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty." Then the fire of God came down from heaven and consumed him and his fifty.

13 Again the king sent the captain of a third fifty with his fifty.

What is happening here?

13 Again the king sent the captain of a third fifty with his fifty.

What is happening here?

13b And the third captain of fifty went up and came and fell on his knees before Elijah and entreated him, "O man of God, please let my life, and the life of these fifty servants of yours, be precious in your sight.

Elijah spares his life. As predicted, Ahab's son dies.

Elijah spares his life. As predicted, Ahab's son dies.

Elijah: Man of God: Is back in action

Elijah spares his life. As predicted, Ahab's son dies.

Elijah: Man of God: Is back in action

The story isn't over. What about Jezebel?

Elijah spares his life. As predicted, Ahab's son dies.

Elijah: Man of God: Is back in action

The story isn't over. What about Jezebel?

Jehu, another man of God, comes to the capital city, Jezreel. Jezebel heard he was coming. 2 Kings 9:30,

Elijah spares his life. As predicted, Ahab's son dies.

Elijah: Man of God: Is back in action

The story isn't over. What about Jezebel?

Jehu, another man of God, comes to the capital city, Jezreel. Jezebel heard he was coming.
2 Kings 9:30,

When Jehu came to Jezreel, Jezebel heard of it. And she painted her eyes and adorned her head and looked out of the window. ---

34 Then he went in and ate and drank. And he said, "See now to this cursed woman and bury her, for she is a king's daughter."

35 But when they went to bury her, they found no more of her than the skull and the feet and the palms of her hands.

36 When they came back and told him, he said, "This is the word of the LORD, which he spoke by his servant Elijah the Tishbite: 'In the territory of Jezreel the dogs shall eat the flesh of Jezebel,

Elijah - man of God - depressed.

Restored.

Back in Action.

Many other stories in the Bible that show God to be a merciful restoring God. God will meet you where you are ... but when you listen to Him and submit to Him, He will not leave you where you are. He will not leave you depressed, discouraged, despairing, or disillusioned. These things come on us when things did not go the way we wanted ... nor the way that we prayed for.

His plans for you may not be your plans for you. Like Elijah, accept his plan for you and see depression replaced by rejoicing.