HOW TO GET YOUR STRENGTH BACK

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1 KINGS 19:7–8 KJV
And the angel of the LORD came again the second time, and touched him, and said, Arise and eat; because the journey is too great for thee. 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.

I want to speak to the person who knows that God still has a purpose for your life, but you are wondering where you will find the strength to live it.

You believe there is more ahead of you. You are just tired of everything it has taken to get this far.
You can still encourage other people. You can still show up and handle your responsibilities. But when everything gets quiet, you realize how much of yourself you have been giving away without being replenished.

We have established that you can be discouraged and still be destined. Now we need to answer another question: How do you get your strength back? Because knowing that you have a future does not mean you feel ready for it.

Elijah helps us here. He had stood boldly for God, but after Jezebel threatened his life, he fled. The prophet who had confronted a nation became overwhelmed by his own circumstances.
God met him in that condition. He gave Elijah food and rest before the journey continued. Later, He addressed Elijah's perspective and gave him direction.

Notice the words of the angel: the journey was too great for him. God acknowledged what Elijah could not carry in his present condition. He did not demand that Elijah pretend otherwise.

QUOTE: “God cares about the person carrying the assignment, not just the completion of the assignment.”

Somebody needs to receive that today. You matter to God when you are producing, and you matter to God when you need to be restored.

Let me give you five things to consider as you recover your strength.

1. ADMIT WHAT YOU HAVE BEEN CARRYING

Some of us have become so skilled at appearing strong that the people closest to us do not know when we are struggling.
We say we are fine because we do not want to explain. We stay busy because slowing down would force us to feel what we have been carrying. But recovery requires honesty.

PSALM 62:8 KJV
Trust in him at all times; ye people, pour out your heart before him: God is a refuge for us. Selah.

The psalmist connects trusting God with pouring out your heart. Trust does not require you to hide your pain from Him. You can tell God that you are disappointed. You can tell Him that the responsibility has become heavy. You can admit that you are still hurt by something you thought you would be over by now. That conversation is not a failure of faith. It is an expression of your dependence on God.

There is a difference between acknowledging your condition and surrendering your identity to it. Saying that you are exhausted is an honest report. Saying that you will never have anything left to give is a conclusion you do not have to accept.

Be specific about what is hurting.
Are you grieving a loss? Are you discouraged by a disappointment? Are you carrying responsibilities that never seem to end? Are you afraid that if you

stop being strong, everything around you will fall apart?

You cannot thoughtfully address a burden you keep refusing to name.

EXAMPLE: A person says, “I am tired of everybody.” After an honest conversation, they realize they have been caring for a loved one without dependable help. Naming the actual burden makes it possible to ask for the help they need.

You do not have to tell everybody everything. But allow God and trustworthy people to meet the real you.

This week, make room for one honest prayer and one honest conversation. Stop requiring yourself to sound victorious before you are allowed to receive care.

2. RECEIVE THE CARE YOU KEEP POSTPONING

Some of you keep saying that you will take care of yourself when everything settles down. But there is always another responsibility. There is always another person who needs something. If recovery only receives whatever time is left over, it may never receive any time at all.

Look at the care God provided for Elijah.

1 KINGS 19:5–6 KJV
And as he lay and slept under a juniper tree, behold, then an angel touched him, and said unto him, Arise and eat. And he looked, and, behold, there was a cake baken on the coals, and a cruse of water at his head. And he did eat and drink, and laid him down again.

God’s provision included things that looked ordinary: food, water, and sleep. Elijah ate, drank, and lay down again. The text gives us no reason to shame him for needing more rest.

Sometimes we overlook practical care because we are expecting every answer to arrive as a dramatic spiritual experience. Yet here, God's care reached the prophet through the needs of his body.

Jesus also recognized the need for rest among those serving with Him.

MARK 6:31 KJV
And he said unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while: for there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat.

The disciples were involved in meaningful work, but the demands had crowded out even the opportunity to eat. Being needed did not make them limitless. You cannot assume that because the work is good, every pace at which you do it is wise.

QUOTE: "You do not have to earn the right to recover by first reaching the point of collapse."

Give your need for rest a place in your schedule. Receive the meal somebody offers. Allow someone dependable to cover a responsibility. Create a period when you are not available to every
request.

One night of sleep will not resolve every kind of discouragement. Elijah's story includes care, honest conversation, renewed perspective, and direction. We should make room for that fuller process in our own lives.

Receive the help you need without apologizing for being human.

3. STOP CARRYING WHAT YOU NEED TO SHARE

Sometimes the problem is not simply that you need more strength. The arrangement itself needs to change. You rest for a little while, then return to

the same pattern of doing everything for everybody. Before long, you are depleted again.

Moses was doing important work when his father-in-law challenged the way he was doing it.

EXODUS 18:17–18 KJV
And Moses' father in law said unto him, The thing that thou doest is not good. Thou wilt surely wear away, both thou, and this people that is with thee: for this thing is too heavy for thee; thou art not able to perform it thyself alone.

Moses' calling was real. His method still needed correction. Notice that the warning concerned both Moses and the people. An arrangement that wears out the person providing help can eventually hurt the people depending on that help.

This is why sharing responsibility is an act of wisdom.
Look honestly at your commitments. Which responsibilities belong to you? Which can be shared? Which have you accepted because you are uncomfortable disappointing someone?
Some things are yours to do. Some things are yours to organize.
Some things belong to another adult who needs to take responsibility for their own decisions.

You can love people without becoming responsible for every outcome in their lives.

EXAMPLE: If one person handles every part of caring for an aging parent, the answer may include a family schedule, specific assignments, and dependable outside support. Another speech about
being strong will not replace the help that person needs.

Ask for something concrete. "Please help me sometime" is easy to misunderstand. "Can you handle this responsibility on Tuesday?" gives someone a clear way to respond. And when you share responsibility, allow people to contribute without insisting that every detail be done exactly your way.

Sometimes receiving help requires releasing control.

You are still valuable when somebody else can do a task. Your worth was never supposed to depend on being impossible to replace.

4. LET GOD CORRECT YOUR DISCOURAGED CONCLUSIONS

When Elijah reached the cave, he described his situation to God.

1 KINGS 19:10 KJV
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.

Elijah had faced real danger. His pain was not imaginary. But he also believed that he was the only faithful person left. Then God gave him information he did not have.

1 KINGS 19:18 KJV
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.

Elijah's view of the situation was incomplete. God had preserved people Elijah was not accounting for. This does not mean every difficult thought you have is false. It means
discouragement should not be allowed to close the investigation before all the truth has been considered.
Something painful happened. But does that mean nothing good remains?

One person failed you. But does that mean nobody can be trusted?
An opportunity did not work out. But does that mean you have nothing left to contribute?

QUOTE: "Your pain deserves compassion, and your

conclusions still need examination."

Be careful with words like always, never, nobody, and nothing. Sometimes those words turn one painful experience into a sentence over your entire future.
Separate what happened from what you have decided it means.

"I did not get this opportunity" describes an event. "I will never be wanted anywhere" adds a conclusion that the event does not prove.

Let Scripture, honest reflection, and wise counsel help you examine the story you are telling yourself.
You do not have to call everything wonderful. You can acknowledge that something is painful while remaining open to what God has not yet shown you.
There may be help you have not asked for, options you have not explored, and people whose faithfulness you have not yet discovered.

5. ALLOW PEOPLE TO HELP YOU MOVE FORWARD

The chapter does not end with Elijah alone in a cave. It moves toward his meeting with Elisha, who would become his prophetic successor.

After responding to Elijah's call, Elisha began to serve alongside him.

1 KINGS 19:21 KJV
And he returned back from him, and took a yoke of oxen, and slew them, and boiled their flesh with the instruments of the oxen, and gave unto the people, and they did eat. Then he arose, and went after Elijah, and ministered unto him.

The man who had spoken as though he was all alone now had someone ministering to him.
Elisha had his own calling, and his presence also brought companionship and service into Elijah's life.

Some of you have learned to give support, but you have never become comfortable receiving it. You know how to be everybody's encourager, but you do not know how to let somebody encourage
you.

ECCLESIASTES 4:9–10 KJV
Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour. For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up.

The value of companionship becomes especially clear when someone needs help getting up.
Choose people who can listen without turning your pain into a performance. Look for people who respect your limits, tell you the truth, and help in practical ways.

You do not need a crowd to begin. Start with one trustworthy connection. Then take a manageable step toward the responsibilities and relationships that matter. Returning does not require immediately resuming every demand at the old pace.

You can begin again with better boundaries. You can serve with a team. You can tell someone when you are reaching your limit.
Recovery should teach you something about how to live when your strength returns. I want to leave you with the care of the Shepherd.

PSALM 23:3 KJV
He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

The Shepherd restores and leads. You can trust Him with your present need for care and your next step forward.

You do not have to prove that you are the strongest person in the room. You are allowed to be someone God is restoring.

Perhaps today's step is an honest conversation. Perhaps it is sharing a

responsibility. Perhaps it is finally receiving the support you have been recommending to everybody else.
Whatever the next wise step is, give yourself permission to take it. Your need for restoration does not make your life a disappointment to God.

Father, thank You for seeing the person beneath the responsibilities.
Thank You for meeting us when we are weary and for caring about the places we have learned to hide.
Help us tell the truth about what we are carrying. Give us wisdom to receive care, share responsibilities, and change patterns that keep exhausting us.
Correct the conclusions that pain has taught us to accept. Bring trustworthy people into our lives, and help us recognize and receive their support.
Restore our strength at a pace we can sustain. Renew our joy in Your presence. Lead us into the next faithful step with the assurance that we do not have to take it alone. In Jesus' name, amen.