

Sermon 16: When Godly People Get Burned Out: 1 Kings 19:1-10

Text: 1 Kings 19:1-10 "And Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and withal how he had slain all the prophets with the sword. Then Jezebel sent a messenger unto Elijah, saying, So let the gods do to me, and more also, if I make not thy life as the life of one of them by to morrow about this time. 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. 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 away my life; for I am not better than my fathers. 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. 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. And he came thither unto a cave, and lodged there; and, behold, the word of the LORD came to him, and he said unto him, What doest thou here, Elijah? 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..."

Summary: God does not abandon His servants when they stumble.

Proposition: We must be humbled by our weakness and rejoice in His grace.

Question 1: What was going on?

- **Elijah was one of Israel's greatest prophets.**
- **He was rugged and was an excellent example of faithfulness.**
- **He was coming off a triumphant season.**
 - **1 Kings 18:21** "And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word..."
 - **1 Kings 18:37-39** "Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the LORD God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again. Then the fire of the LORD fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. And

when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The LORD, he is the God; the LORD, he is the God..."

- **He had been living under significant emotional pressure:**
 - He hid for over three years.
 - He lived in isolation in the wilderness.
 - He was sustained by a widow.
 - He embraced a tense confrontation with Ahab
- **He ran from Mount Carmel to Jezreel between 20 and 30 miles.**
- **After Jezebel threatened to kill him, he fled an additional 100-120 miles into the wilderness: 19:2-3** "Then Jezebel sent a messenger unto Elijah, saying, So let the gods do to me, and more also, if I make not thy life as the life of one of them by to morrow about this time. And when he saw that, he arose, and went for his life..."
- **Once he fled from Beersheba into the wilderness, he asked God to take his life: 19:4** "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 away my life; for I am not better than my fathers..."
- **This was a physical and emotional breakdown:**

Question 2: What can we learn about people?

- **There are no invincible people.**
- **All people are frail and if pushed to the limits can have a complete physical and emotional breakdown leading to despair.**
- **Even strong believers can end up like Elijah:**
 - **Moses Numbers 11:14-17** "I am not able to bear all this people alone, because it is too heavy for me. And if thou deal thus with me, kill me, I pray thee, out of hand, if I have found favour in thy sight; and let me not see my wretchedness. And the LORD said unto Moses, Gather unto me seventy men of the elders of Israel...that they may stand there with thee...and I will take of the spirit which is upon thee, and will put it upon them; and they shall bear the burden of the people with thee, that thou bear it not thyself alone..."
 - **David:**
 - **1 Samuel 30:6** "And David was greatly distressed; for the people spake of stoning him, because the soul of all the people was grieved, every man for his sons and for his

daughters: but David encouraged himself in the LORD his God..."

- **Psalms 42:5** "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted in me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance..."
- **Jeremiah: Jeremiah 20:7-15** "O LORD, thou hast deceived me, and I was deceived: thou art stronger than I, and hast prevailed: I am in derision daily, every one mocketh me...Cursed be the day wherein I was born: let not the day wherein my mother bare me be blessed. Cursed be the man who brought tidings to my father, saying, A man child is born unto thee; making him very glad..."
- **Jonah: Jonah 4:1-3** "It displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was very angry. And he prayed unto the LORD...take, I beseech thee, my life from me; for it is better for me to die than to live..."

Question 3: What do we learn about God?

- **Two passages:**

- **Lamentations 3:22** "It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness..."
- **Psalms 103:13-14** "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear him. For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust..."

- **He cares:**

- **He ministered first to the body:**
 - **God sent a servant: 19:5-6** "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
 - **He ministers directly: 19:7-8** "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..."
- **He ministered second to the soul:**

- **He asked a question twice: 19:9, 13** "The word of the LORD came to him, and he said unto him, What doest thou here, Elijah?"
- **He demonstrated His power: 19:11-12** "And he said, 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..."
- **He spoke gently to Him: 9:11-13** "And after the fire a still small voice...behold, there came a voice unto him, and said, What doest thou here, Elijah?"
- **He did not argue with Elijah:**
 - **He gave him a commission: 19:15-16** "And the LORD said unto him, Go, return on thy way to the wilderness of Damascus: and when thou comest, anoint Hazael to be king over Syria...And Jehu the son of Nimshi shalt thou anoint to be king over Israel: and Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abelmeholah shalt thou anoint to be prophet in thy room..."
 - **He gave him a companion: 19:16** "And Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abelmeholah shalt thou anoint to be prophet in thy room..."
 - **He gave Him comfort: 19:18** "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..."

Question 4: How should we apply these truths?

- **Be honest about your personal limitations:**
 - We need to pace ourselves in life.
 - We need to learn to manage our stress levels.
 - We need to realize some situations are unavoidable.
 - We desperately need to rely upon God's grace in our lives.
- **Be honest about how selfish you become when you begin to embrace lies:**
 - **He viewed Himself as a victim:**
 - God was not fair.
 - The people did not care.

- His enemies were triumphing.
- **He viewed himself as a hero:**
 - He was the only person doing what was right.
 - He was God's only hope.
- **His thinking was completely inconsistent with reality:**
 - He was not alone, but he believed he was.
 - He thought he was God's only prophet, but Obadiah had hidden 100 faithful prophets.
 - If he was the only prophet, then why abandon the people now?
 - If God had just demonstrated His power and the prophets of Baal had been killed, then why would that be the time to quit?
 - If he was running for his life, then why would he ask God to kill him?
- **He was done with the people.**
- **Take great comfort in God's kind wisdom:**
 - He goes to us when we are down.
 - He knows exactly how to address us.
 - He speaks the truth to us in the right way.
 - He is good, kind, and wise.
 - The gospel is the foremost example of His attitude toward us.
 - He tells us to get back up.
 - He provides others to shoulder our burdens with us.
- **Reflect his kindness toward others:**
 - When others fall, we need to be there to shoulder their burdens.
 - We need to come alongside them in the same way He does for us.
 - We need to point them to Him.
 - We need to be patient.