

How the Fallen are Restored

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Date: 28 August 2024

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- [0 : 0 0] One of my friends had that passage and how Elijah was depressed and she wrote about it.
- He needed a snack and he needed a nap. And I wrote to her and I said, that's what my husband preached. Snack and a nap. Yep.
- And we're going to kind of continue that idea a little bit. Well, we didn't bring snacks. We didn't bring snacks. No, we should have. That's true. We have been talking about how the mighty have fallen.
- And we talked about Elijah going through this time of depression and discouragement. And on the run from Jezebel and everything. In the first four verses there of chapter 19.
- Today we're switching it up. How the Fallen are Restored. How the Fallen are Restored, if you want a title for it. You know, we've looked at Elijah here and how he's gone through all this despair and everything.
- [1 : 1 0] He's a major prophet. And he's discouraged. And he's depressed. And he's probably thinking after all the things that happened on Mount Carmel, that there's going to be a revival take place.
- And everything's going to change. And instead he's running from Jezebel. So we need to kind of look at where he goes from there. So let's have a word of prayer. And then we'll talk about some more about chapter 19 here.
- Dear Heavenly Father, we just thank you for your grace and your mercy toward us. Lord, as we look at Elijah here, your grace and mercy toward him. He has seen you do outstanding, phenomenal things.
- But yet he's having a moment of depression and despair and discouragement. And Lord, he knows what you can do. He has seen you work. But Lord, he's running on self at the moment.
- And so Lord, help us to learn from his life. There are times in our life when we do the same thing. Help us to understand that we need to get some rest. We need to get some nourishment. We need to allow you to work in order to restore us to what we should be.
- [2 : 1 9] And so Lord, may we learn from his life tonight. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. So Jezebel's after him. He's run away. He's run away from his position as prophet.
- He's run away from his problem, Jezebel. He's run away from the people that he just showed that God can do anything. So he's run away.
- And it's like, what is he going to do? Well, we know part of his problem was that he was tired. Part of his problem was he hadn't had enough nourishment.
- Part of his problem was, we talked last week about pride. Remember in verse 4 there, he talked about the fact that he was not as good as his father's.
- He was not better than his father's. And we talked about the pride factor that came in there. That's one of the biggest problems we have to avoid is the idea of pride in our life. 1 Corinthians 10, 12.

[3 : 17] Wherefore, let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. I mean, you think about what happened on Mount Carmel. It's just phenomenal what happened there.

I'm always amazed by it. Some people think they have to pray long and long, drawn out prayers and things. He prayed a 63-word prayer. And fire came down from heaven.

You know, it's just like, wow, I did that. No, you didn't do that. God did that. You prayed, but God did the work. And so we need to make sure we don't get ourselves too high.

Romans 12, verse 3 says, For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.

God has given us faith. God has given us his hand at work. God has led us. God has shown us what to say. So we need to make sure that we keep God as the important factor here.

[4 : 27] He can use anybody. That's one of the things we've been learning about Elijah. Elijah's an ordinary guy just like us. He can use anybody, and he can use you and I. His perfect will for Elijah would have been for him to stand up against Jezebel.

But, again, he's tired. He's hungry. He's got a little pride factor. And so he takes off and goes away.

God wants to restore him. God still has things for him to do. And so God's going to take him from being the fallen one to show us how we can raise up and restore those that are fallen.

When we were looking at the last section, we looked at the misery of the prophet. We looked at him running. We looked at him retiring. We looked at him rationalizing.

All these different things. Tonight we want to look at the ministry. The ministry of the prophet. What is he going to do? Verses 5-14. Let's look at verses 5-8 to start with.

[5 : 30] Verses 5-8 say, And as he lay and slept under the juniper tree, behold, then an angel touched him and said unto him, Arise and eat. And he looked, and behold, there was a cake baking on the coals and a cruise 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 meal 40 days and 40 nights unto Horeb, the Mount of God.

Stop there. The ministry of the prophet. First, there's a ministry of consideration, a ministry of consideration. He needs to stop and to think about what God is doing in his life.

He needs to consider how God is using him and what God is trying to do for him now. Now, you know, he displayed, you know, self-pity. He's all concerned about, you know, things in his life and got his eyes off of God.

[6 : 35] That's why we keep saying, looking unto Jesus, when you take your eyes off of God, you're going to have problems in your life. God could have just said, look, Elijah, you blew it.

You went running off. You didn't trust me. You blew it. I'm done with you. But God doesn't do that. I have a sign out there. It's been out there for the last couple weeks.

I'm about to change it. I'm going to head out there. Our God is a God of second chances. Elijah's going to get another chance. He's going to get to do things. See, our thinking is a lot like what I just said.

If you blow it, you blew it. Thank you. He, we look at people and they mess up and we say, we're done.

We don't want anything else to do with you. I've known so many Christians over the years. If you mess up once, they just, they write you off. Not like they haven't messed up in their own lives.

[7 : 37] Think back into Acts chapter 15. You don't have to go there. Acts chapter 15. Paul is deciding to go on another missionary journey.

And Barnabas wants to take John Mark with him. And Paul's like, nope. He was with us on the last one and he left and went home.

Nope, we're not taking him again. So Paul kind of had that, you know, nope, he messed up. We're not doing it. Barnabas takes him and they go out and they have great ministry together. Paul takes Silas and goes his way.

We need to be careful not to write people off. We need to make sure that we can, that they have the opportunity to try again and do things again.

God's going to forgive them. It's always interesting. God forgives people. We have trouble doing that. We have trouble saying, you know what? God can forgive them, so can we.

[8 : 34] We've talked about that a little bit in the last month or so. It can be seen in two ways of things that needed to be done in his life.

First of all, there in 5 and 6, he needed rest. That consideration that God had for him considered the fact that he needed some rest.

It's an involved rest. You know, I said this to you the last couple of weeks. I'll say it once more. Sometimes the most spiritual thing you can do, take a nap. Not right now.

When I'm done, then you can. Not on your way home, though. The other day you said, I'm being spiritual. That's right. Sunday afternoon I went home and I was spiritual. I took an nap.

I gave it a wrap with you. So, you think about all he has done up to this point. He has used a lot of physical energy.

[9 : 34] He has done a lot of different things. I mean, besides what happened on top of Mount Carmel, then he runs to Jezreel. Then he finds out Jezebel wants to get him. Then he runs to Beersheba, which is 125 miles away.

Then he runs another day's journey to get away from somebody maybe finding him there. He has spent a lot of energy. He needs some rest. You know, we should never be guilty of being lazy.

But we should get rest when we need it and make sure that we do it. Remember, I used this verse, I think, last week or maybe the week before. Mark chapter 6, verse 31 says, this is Jesus talking.

He said unto them, to his disciples, 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.

They needed rest because so many people were coming and going, trying to get help from them. And he said, they didn't even have time to eat. They needed to have some nourishment.

[10 : 36] They needed to have some refreshing. He says, get some rest. And along with that, add this one. It involved refreshment. Just like we just said. Twice here, the angel comes and has food ready for him.

When he wakes up, here's some food. You need to nourish yourself. You need to build a bag of... You ever stop and think about this angel? An angel's there.

Who was it? We don't know. The Bible doesn't tell us. Could have been Gabriel. Same one who went to Mary and Joseph and gave them, you know, the information that they needed about Jesus coming.

Other people say, no, it was a... Here's a big word for you. A Christophany. What is that? That's an appearance of Jesus before he was incarnated.

He came and made appearances in the Old Testament at times. Was that him being there? We don't know. But we know that somebody from God came and had refreshments ready for him.

[11 : 42] He was called the angel of the... How's it called? Sometimes you'll see in the Old Testament the angel of the Lord. And they think that's a reference to him.

Because he hadn't been born yet. You know, that's Jesus. Didn't they... In the Bible, doesn't it seem like they're in time that it was Jesus that was in the part with Meshach and Shadrach?

Yes. Yep. Yep. Yep. He would have been. Yep. So, he made appearances at times. You think about...

Here's the prophet. All the things he's going through. And he's getting food directly from the hand of God. Whether it was an angel, angel, whether it was Jesus, whatever.

God is supplying the food to him. Giving him what he needs. Think about the grace involved there. God is there for whatever we need. And whatever is going on in our life.

[12 : 41] He'll take care of it. Remember when Jesus met the disciples after his resurrection? They had gone out fishing. And they came back. They hadn't caught anything.

And he says, you know, throw your nets here and stuff. And then when they come back in, he's got food already ready for them. He's supplying the need. They had a long night. They would have been hungry. Worked hard.

Here, I've got stuff for you. Already prepared. You know, when we go through times of discouragement and depression, doubt, we need to stop and look and see what God is doing.

He will take care of the needs that we have. He will meet them. We don't know often what we need at times. We're going through those times. I don't know what I need. I know I need something.

I just don't know what. And God will be there ready to help us out. You know, sometimes he deals with the symptoms before he deals with the problems.

[13 : 39] Why would he do that? Think about that for a second. Why would he deal with the symptoms before he deals with the problem? You're hungry. You're tired.

Are you listening to what he has for you? Isn't that the basis like the community, other places? They provide food and shelter and then to give them the work.

Yep. They take care of the thing. You know, I'm hungry. I'm tired. I need some help. I'm not listening to what you're saying while I'm in this condition.

So they will take care of the condition and then preach the message to them. They still have a problem. What causes that?

Why are they in the condition they're in? So you think of, like she said, you know, the Pacific Garden Mission or something like that. Why are they in that? Why are they tired?

[14 : 40] Why are they hungry? Why are they? Because the alcohol has overtaken them and stuff. So we've got to get them fed so now they will listen to what we have to tell them. Elijah's exhausted.

He's hungry. Nothing's going to get accomplished until those things are taken care of. So God takes care of those things for you. It's a ministry of compassion as well.

A ministry of consideration. A ministry of compassion. He makes sure Elijah is fed. He makes sure he's rested. He makes sure he's ready.

But again, God understands he's discouraged. He's depressed. He needs to see the compassion of the Lord in his life. He needs to see God's hand at work.

How do you do that? Gentleness. Did you notice verses 5 and 6 and 7 there? The Lord comes to Elijah. And what does he do?

[15 : 38] He gives him food. Gives him water. Allows him to sleep. No lectures. No sermons. No reprimands.

No rebuke. This is what you need. What kind of cake was it? Huh? What kind of cake was it? I have no idea. And he touched him.

And he reached over and touched him. He didn't kick him and say, wake up. What are you doing, you sluggard? No, he touched him. He said, hey, I got some food for you.

See, God will do that for us too. It's a matter of he knows what we need when we need it. And he will give it to us. There's no, he gets the food and stuff.

There's no repentance for the past. You know, I know I shouldn't have taken off. No, he just, there's no, I don't see any thank yous there for what he's given.

[16 : 41] He thinks, but God meets the need, takes care of him. He'll get to those other things. But for right now, he just needed to know that somebody cared. He's desperate for a personal revival.

See, that's the thing. He's been giving and giving and giving and giving. He needs a personal revival. He needs to have that energy back in him, the spirit working in him, because he's given out, given out, and given out.

He needs to have that taken care of. You know, too many of God's children have the idea that God is standing over them with a baseball bat, ready to, you know, get busy and get doing this.

Whap, whap, whap. That is not our God. Look what he does here. He's gentle with him, helping him. He is going to chastise us if we continue down the road.

Hebrews chapter 12, you don't have to go there, but Hebrews 12, 6 through 11 talks about the chastisement. But let me give you something else that's true about God. He's going to chastise us if we continue down those roads.

[17 : 57] But Exodus 34, 6. The Lord passed by before him and proclaimed, The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth.

God passed by Moses. Let him see the glory, remember? And he says, God is merciful and gracious, long-suffering, abundant in goodness and truth.

Numbers 14, 18. The Lord is long-suffering of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression, by no means clearing the guilty, visiting iniquity of the fathers upon the children of the third and fourth generation.

But he's long-suffering. He is going to give the second chances. He is going to give you the opportunity to see his hand at work in your life. Jared's been doing Bible study on Daniel with the men.

And we had a good one Monday night. And in Daniel chapters 2 through 4, there's a story about Nebuchadnezzar. God gave Nebuchadnezzar chance after chance after chance to know him.

[19 : 10] And using Daniel, using Meshach, Shadrach, and Abednego, seeing the fourth one walking around in the fire, he had a lot of chances.

But he didn't take them. He kept thinking, I'm the king, I'm the greatest, I'm, you know, all these things. So finally he winds up having a time of seven years where he is just out of his mind.

Cannot function. But at the end of that time, again, God says, okay, Nebuchadnezzar. Nebuchadnezzar understood. Nebuchadnezzar repented.

Nebuchadnezzar understood what God was doing and trusted him. And we're going to stop there because it's already almost quarter past. So we'll continue next week.