

How the Mighty are Fallen Part 2

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- [0 : 00] Why are you turning there? I had a different result this week. I was planning to go see Mike on Tuesday. His dad contacted me on Monday and told me he got transferred.
- Jared was off Monday, so he got transferred. So he's down in Wyndham now at Main Correctional Center. So be praying for him. He's got about six or seven months down there.
- 1 Kings chapter 19. Follow along again tonight. Beginning of verse 1. And Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and withal how he had slain all the prophets with a sword.
- Then Jezebel sent a message 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 tomorrow 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.
- [1 : 02] 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 me, take away my life, for I am not better than my fathers. We were talking about this passage last week. We began talking about how he had gone through so many different things.
- But we were reminded again, in James chapter 5, verse 17, James writes that he was a man subject to like passions as we are. He was an ordinary guy, just like us, going through the same things.
- We look at all the great things that Elijah did, but here comes a time when he has a battle with depression. And we have those same battles. Sometimes we pointed out the fact that Winston Churchill, Abraham Lincoln, Charles Spurgeon, all had battles with depression.
- I can read you some quotes from these guys. I'm still amazed by the one of Spurgeon. He's known as the Prince of Preachers. And yet there were times he had depression so bad that his deacons had to go take him from his home, carry him to the church, so he would preach.
- [2 : 14] So it can be a devastating thing. And we looked at some of the statistics about what depression can do and how it affects us here in the United States economically and things.
- So then we began looking at the fact that here's Elijah. He's in misery right now. And we looked to see the first thing he did was we saw Elijah running.
- He runs. He goes to Beersheba, which is about 125 miles south of Jezreel. And it is actually not in Israel. It's in Judah.
- And so he had gotten out of the country. And then he leaves his servant there and he goes another day's journey out into the wilderness and finds himself underneath this juniper tree.
- We talked about Jezebel and what she was like. We talked about Ahab and what he was like. Especially Ahab and the fact that he had been on top of Mount Carmel. He had seen the fire come down from heaven.

[3 : 13] He had seen everything that had taken place. He had heard what Elijah had said when he did his prayer. And yet, he still doesn't give God credit. He tells Jezebel, it was Elijah that did all these things.

He doesn't say that God did them. So, she, being who she was, decided to let him know that she planned to make sure he was dead before the next day was over.

So he went running. Second thing, tonight, we see Elijah retiring. Retiring. And I don't mean retiring in the sense that we mean it.

He wasn't getting done his job. Well, he kind of wanted to. We'll talk about that in a second. Let's have a word prayer. Heavenly Father, we just thank you for this passage of Scripture.

We thank you for all these things we've been learning about Elijah and how you used him and the things you did with him. And Lord, now we see him as an ordinary human being. Having his struggles.

[4 : 15] And Lord, I pray that you would help us to learn from what he did and learn how to combat those things and learn how to follow you in the midst of anything that's taking place in our life.

Lord, just minister tonight through this passage in Jesus' name. Amen. So Elijah's going to be retiring. He leaves his servant, I said, in Beersheba. And he keeps going on.

And he's basically hit rock bottom. He is like so down, so depressed in the way things have been going. And he displays characteristics that are common to people who are depressed.

So this is not going to be a real encouraging message tonight. I will give you some at the end to help, but I want you to see some of the things that he went through and some of the things that we can look at in our life and kind of be ready for when we see these things happening.

First thing he did was he cut himself off from all those who were close to him. He cut himself off from all those who were close to him. Here he is.

[5 : 20] He's out here in this wilderness. He's underneath this juniper tree sitting all alone away from everybody else. I'm, you know, poor me.

Here I am. I'm all alone. Nobody understands. Nobody cares. Nobody... Look down at verse 18. Down at verse 18. God says...

Chapter 19. Okay, that's what I... Verse 18 says... Yet I have left me 7,000 in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth that hath not kissed him.

God says, You're not alone, Elijah. There are 7,000 others in Israel who have not bowed to Baal. They still believe in me.

They still trust in me. They still will come to me. Elijah never asked if there was anybody else. He just kind of assumed he was it. Because he's the forefront. He's the spokesman.

[6 : 20] He's, you know, the prophet. So he thinks, you know, I'm the only one there. But God's pointing out to him, No, there's more out there than just this. But, you know, when we get depressed and stuff, we think we're all alone.

It's me against the world. We can't let that happen. It is never me against the world. Dr. Bob Jones Sr., I went to Bob Jones University, and he used to say, You and God make a majority.

So never assume that you're all alone. If you've got God on your side, he says, You've got a majority. I think that's the sound of the question of trying to get by yourself.

I've never been on that procedure. You can do yourself all by yourself. Yep. All the things you want to do. Yep. And they try to get by yourself because nobody understands me.

I don't fit in. All that sort of stuff. Remember what the Bible says in Hebrews 10, 25?
Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together.

[7 : 24] Why is that so important? We need others to be around us. We need the encouragement that they can give, the comfort they can give, the words of wisdom that they can give, any of those type of things.

We need to have other people around us. We cannot just go off by ourselves. Second thing he did, he took his eyes off the Lord and focused on his own circumstances. He's out there in the middle of nowhere.

Why? Because he took his eyes off God and what God was doing. I mean, you think of all the different things that he has seen God do. And yet, when Jezebel makes this declaration, he takes off.

He has seen God work time and time and time and time again. Just a day or two before, he's on top of Mount Carmel praying, asking God to send fire down and fire comes down.

So why didn't he just say, you know that fire you sent the other day, send it to her. Why didn't you do something like that? You know, but no, he's afraid and he runs.

[8 : 32] That's what happens when we take our eyes off of God. We need to keep our eyes on him. Most famous passage for that, Matthew chapter 14. Actually, go there with me.

Matthew 14. Keep your finger there in 1 Kings. Matthew chapter 14. Look at verse, beginning of verse 28. Matthew 14, beginning of verse 28.

And Peter answered and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water. Because when we take our eyes off the Lord and focus on our circumstances, we're going to be in trouble.

The third thing he did, he stopped interceding for others and started requesting for himself. Look at back there in 1 Kings 19.

Look at verse 4. And he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness and came and sat down under the juniper tree and he requested for himself that he might die.

[9 : 38] He requested for himself. Any other time you read about Elijah up to this point, he's always praying for others. He's always praying that God's going to do something that affects others. This is the first time you ever hear him say he wanted something for himself.

When we get our eyes off of Christ and we get going the other way, we stop interceding for other people. We need to always be interceding for others. We need to always keep others in our forethought, making requests for them, asking God to bless them, take care of them, teach them, whatever he needs to do.

It's the first time he prayed for himself. When we get to the place where we're praying and a lot of it's for me, me, me, me, stop and take a look.

Say, okay, yes, we do need to pray for things. There are things that we need and things that we, but we need to make sure we don't forget others. There's a song in our book, I've mentioned this before, but someday I'm going to, I keep saying someday I'm going to teach it to you.

It says, it's called Others. It's Others, Lord, yes, others, let this my motto be, help me to live for others that I might live like thee. That's the chorus of the song.

[10 : 53] We need to focus on others. He also had an attitude that said, life is hopeless. Life is hopeless.

I've had it, I quit. Again there in verse four. After it talks about the fact that he requested that he might die, he said, it is enough. Now, oh Lord, take away my life for I am not better than my father's.

It is enough. I've done. I've quit. I'm, it's, I'm through. And again, you think about how many times he's seen God work and how many things God has done.

But yet he still comes to the point where he's like, you know what, we're human. And we only have so much to give sometimes. And when we do, we need to get to the point where we take some time to recharge and do things.

I'm going to talk about that some more in a minute. We need to remember that God is in control. We need to remember that God has the power to do whatever he wants to do. Again, hold your finger there in 1 Kings.

[12 : 02] Go with me over to Romans. Romans chapter 8. You say, oh, I know that verse. Yes, but I'm going to look in a couple verses there. So go to Romans chapter 8. The guy I've been working with, Mike, he and I have talked about this verse often.

Romans chapter 8, verse 28. And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the call according to his purpose. Mike, it's not good that you're in jail.

It doesn't say everything that we do is going to be good, but it says all things work together for good. I said, Mike, you're here. You've now accepted the Lord as your Savior. That's a good thing.

And he agrees with me. And even when he was at his hearing, before his hearing, we had talked. What if you don't get out today, Mike? All things work together for good to them that love God.

So if you have to go a little bit longer, all things work together for good. And you got it, Mike. You'll understand. So, all things work together for good.

[13 : 12] It's not hopeless. Look at verse, back up to verse 18. There in Romans 8. Romans 8, verse 18. It says, For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

there are times we go through some hard times. There's some things that we face. And we're like, ugh. And he says, look at what God's going to do. Look at how he's going to use it.

Look at how he's going to make a difference in your life or someone else's life by what's going on. Be willing to go through and let him do his work. Second Corinthians, you don't have to turn there.

Let me do that one real quick. On your way back to 1 Kings, you can stop at Job, though. So if you start heading back, look at Job. But in 2 Kings, chapter 4, I mean, 2 Corinthians, chapter 4, verse 17, it says, For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh forth a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

The things that we go through, they seem hard. They're challenging. But he says, it's a light affliction when you compare to what's going to happen for the glory of God. You stick with God.

[14 : 35] You keep your eyes on God. You don't let it be hopeless. Song we sing, My Hope is Jesus. You keep your eyes focused there. Let him do his work.

And then I said, stop at Job, chapter 23, on your way back through. We all know all the things that Job went through and all the things that he faced.

Job chapter 23, look at verse 10. But he knoweth the way that I take. When he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold.

God knows all about it. He knows the way that we take. He knows everything that's going on in our life. He says, When he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold. He's helping us to get rid of stuff in our life that doesn't need to be there.

He's helping us to get things into our life that needs to be there. And he's getting us ready to be used of him and to be valuable to him so that we can do the things that he has for us.

[15 : 34] Elijah was ready to give up on life, on his ministry. He was ready to give up on God. But, God wasn't done with him yet.

A fifth thing, Elijah claimed he wanted to die. He wanted to die. Notice, did he really?

Back there in 1 Kings chapter 19, verse 4, the end of the, it is enough now. Oh, Lord, take away my life.

I want to die. I just want to go and have this all over with. Did he really want that? Did he really want that? Hmm? He just wanted his promise.

He wanted what was happening. He didn't really want to die. You know how I know that? Because Jezebel said, by tomorrow at this time, I'm going to make sure you're dead. He made sure he was more than days away, distance away from her.

[16 : 43] If he really wanted to die, just stay in Jezreel. She'll take care of it for you. He didn't really want to die. He's trying to get away from that. See, sometimes we get caught up in things and we just, I just wish it all be over.

Yes, that's true. We all want it to be over, but we don't want to die. But when we get depressed, lethargy, disturbed sleep and stuff, feelings of guilt, lack of concentration, exhaustion, you know, there's all kinds of things that we can get caught up in and things that, but we need to keep our eyes on God.

There is always hope no matter what. Keep your eyes on Him. Now, I was hoping I was going to finish this tonight, but I kind of knew I wasn't going to.

But let me give you one positive thing. We've got all this negative stuff going on in his life. Let me give you a positive one. When you get past verse 4, he lays down to go to sleep.

When he wakes up, he has a meal all prepared for him. The Bible tells us an angel had prepared a meal. Then he goes back to sleep again. And then the angel prepares him another meal.

[18 : 01] And God will give us what we need. I had a pastor, I heard one time, he said, sometimes the most spiritual thing you can do is take a nap.

And he's right. Sometimes we just need to rest. Elijah's getting some rest here and he's got these meals that are being fixed by this angel for him. And look at verse 8.

And he arose and did eat and drink and went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights. Some sleep, a meal, some more sleep, a meal, and he's good to go for the next forty days.

Sometimes we just need to take some rest and relax and allow God to work and do what he wants to do and then we're good to go. We're ready to keep going and do what he asks us to.

Do what? Right. That's what usually, well usually people do it in a different order on Sunday morning. usually they eat and then come here and sleep.

[19 : 08] You know. But, yes. All right. So. If we meet just as a child and say we are all adults. That's right.

So. All right. We'll continue on. Everybody knows it comes through the door once. We get down to the end. All right. Come on.

Dead.