

# Elijah under the Juniper Tree

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[ 0 : 00 ] Welcome to our service and as we come together around the Word of God, let us seek his blessing upon his word. Let us pray.

Amen.

Into the very throne room of God and lay out petitions before thee, acknowledging, O Lord, that thou art the one who out of the riches of thy grace can help us at our point of need.

We come before thee, O Lord, as empty vessels and seek that it may please thee to fill us up, to encourage us and to strengthen our faith.

To encourage us in our witness and in our walk in the world. And to strengthen us in our faith. That we indeed may go forth in the strength of our Lord.

[ 1 : 32 ] Lord, we give thee thanks for the work of thy Spirit in the hearts of sinners such as we are. That it transforms the lives of people.

That it brings us to realise our great need. And that it brings us to see the sufficiency of Christ as God's provision of grace for sinners.

And that thou doth through thy Spirit enable us to embrace that provision by faith. That thou through thy Spirit brings us to salvation.

And to the joy of that salvation. And as we go out, O Lord, with the Gospel, we pray that the power and demonstration of thine own Spirit may accompany the Gospel.

For we acknowledge that we are dependent upon thee. That without thee we can do nothing. That thy Spirit would take the word and apply to the hearts of sinners such as we are.

[ 2 : 46 ] We pray, O Lord, that we may see the plummet in the hand of our Zerubbabel. That our meditation upon thy word this morning may indeed be a strength to us.

O who art thou, O great mountain. Before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain. Where our Zerubbabel has begun the good work.

He shall bring that work to completion. Yes, the headstone shall be laid down. And the people will shout, Grace, grace unto it.

O we give thee thanks for thy grace. We give thee thanks that thou art a compassionate God. That thou art a God who delighteth in mercy.

And for whom judgment is a strange work. We pray that thou will come and work in our communities.

[ 3 : 49 ] O bring days of awakening and revival among us. May thy church be revived, O Lord, in the midst of the years. O may thou come and may thou add to thy church.

May thou stir up thy people. May we come, O Lord, to that place where we seek the goodness and the health of thy kingdom.

May we come, O Lord, to that place where we seek the goodness and the health of thy people. May we come to know thy presence once again among us. In blessing.

In awakening. In revival. May we come, O Lord, to that place where we seek the goodness and the Lord.

And we pray, O Lord, to that place where we seek the goodness and the Lord. And we pray, O Lord, that in thy mercy, in thy grace and thy love, that thou would meet with them at their point of need.

[ 4 : 53 ] We pray, O Lord, for those who are ill. And pray that the bed of affliction may be a bed of blessing for them. We pray for those who mourn.

And pray that thy own comfort would be their portion. We pray for our young people and our children. So many things to entice them away from the gospel.

So many things to blind their minds from the truth. O Lord, we pray that thou would pluck the veil from their hearts. That thou would draw them to thyself.

That thou would raise up a generation that would fear thy name. We pray, O Lord, that thou would turn the rebellious heart to be a heart that would be one for thee.

A heart that would be devoted to thee. A heart that would work for the Lord. We pray, O Lord, that thou would bless all nations of the earth.

[ 5 : 58 ] Remember thy servants who proclaim thy word. And pray that the unction of thine own spirit would be upon them. Remember our communities. Remember our nation.

O Lord, that thou would turn us again to thyself. That thou would turn us to honour thy statutes and thy law. That thou would turn us, O Lord, to be a land of the gospel.

We pray, O Lord, that thou would bless us now as we come to wait upon thee. That it will please thee, O Lord, to presence thyself among us through thy spirit.

That wherever we are, that thy spirit would be there. In our own homes. That thy spirit would be there. O Lord, we pray that thou would bless thy redeemed people.

Bless their witness, O Lord, in the world. That they may be as shining lights in this world. That by their conversation they would compel others.

[ 7 : 09 ] Lovingly persuading them to embrace the gospel of Jesus Christ. To embrace Jesus who is the gospel. We pray, O Lord, that thou would bless thy word to us as we come to read it and to meditate upon it.

Bless, we pray thee, our governments. We pray, O Lord, that they may be granted wisdom. Bless the Queen and the Royal Household and with all their concerns at this time.

We pray, O Lord, that they may come to understand and to know that they can lay their burdens before thee. Knowing that thou art the all-sufficient one to meet with our needs.

Know that we ask with the forgiveness of our many sins and for all our shortcomings. It's in the name of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Amen.

We shall now read the word of God as we find it in 1 Kings and chapter 18. And beginning our reading at verse 30.

[ 8 : 18 ] And we'll continue on into chapter 19. 1 Kings 18 at verse 30. And Elijah said unto all the people, Come near unto me. And all the people came near unto him, and he repaired the altar of the Lord that was broken down.

And Elijah took twelve stones according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, unto whom the word of the Lord came, saying, Israel shall be thy name. And with the stones he built an altar in the name of the Lord, and he made a trench about the altar, as great as would contain two measures of seed.

And he put the wood in order, and cut the bullock in pieces, and laid him on the wood, and said, Fill four barrels with water, and pour it on the burnt sacrifice, and on the wood.

And he said, Do it a second time, and they did it a second time, and he said, Do it a third time, and they did it a third time. And the water ran round about the altar, and he filled the trench also with water.

And it came to pass at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near, and said, Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known on this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word.

[ 9 : 34 ] 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. And 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. And Elijah said unto them, Take the prophets of Baal, let not one of them escape.

And they took them, and Elijah brought them down to the brook cushion, and slew them there. And Elijah said unto Ahab, Get thee up, eat, and drink, for there is the sound of abundance of rain.

So Ahab went up to eat and to drink, and Elijah went up to the top of Carmel. And he cast himself down upon the earth, and put his face between his knees, and said to his servant, Go up now, look out the sea.

And he went up and looked, and said, There is nothing. And he said, Go again seven times. And it came to pass at the seventh time, that he said, Behold, there ariseth a little cloud out of the sea like a man's hand.

[ 10 : 43 ] And he said, Go up, say unto Ahab, Prepare thy chariot, and get thee down, and that the rain stop not thee not. And it came to pass in the meanwhile, that the heaven was black with clouds, and wind, and there was a great rain.

And Ahab rode and went to Jezreel. And the hand of the Lord was on Elijah, and he girded up his loins, and ran before Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel. 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 into 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 put on a good 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 father's. And as he lay and slept under a juniper tree, behold, then the angel touched him and said unto him, Arise and eat.

[ 11 : 58 ] And he looked, and behold, there was a cake baked, baking on the coals, and a cruise of water at his head. And he did eat and drink, and lay 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 unto eat and drink, and went in the strength of that meat, forty days and forty nights, into Horeb, the mount of God.

So on, may the Lord bless unto us the reading of that portion of his word. May we read again in chapter 19, and from verse 2.

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 tomorrow about this time.

And when he saw that he arose, and went for his life, he 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.

[ 13 : 10 ] 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 baking on the coals, and a cruise of water at his head. And it 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.

After Carmel, Elijah's mission was not complete. Elijah had a lot more work to do after the fire had come down, and after the prophets of Baal had been slain.

He still must pray for rain. There is no doubt, if we have come to learn anything about this man Elijah, it is that he was a praying man.

Prayer is a spiritual activity that is so important if we are going to receive the blessings of God. When we look behind the great movements of the Spirit of God within our own island, we will always find earnest prayer.

[ 14 : 34 ] Now, prayer is not easy. It can be quite difficult. We can spend a lot of time enjoying fellowship, sharing life's problems, talking about politics, doing this and that.

But when it comes to prayer or attending the weekly prayer meeting of God's covenant people, very often it will be the first thing to go, the first thing to go during a busy working week.

But here what we see is that after Carmel, after the sacrifice being accepted, Elijah continues in prayer.

And there is something here which is especially important for us to remember, that when we come together to worship and to hear the preaching of the Word of God, while preparation before the service is important, we not only need to pray before the service, but we also need to pray after the service.

What we do after the service can be just as important. What we do after we hear the preaching of the Word of God can be just as important.

[ 15 : 47 ] Read the words of the prophet to King Ahab. And Elijah said unto Ahab, Get thee up, eat and drink, for there is a sound of abundance of rain.

So Ahab went up to eat and to drink. A.W. Pink writes that Elijah knew well the man he was dealing with. Because the events of Carmel made no impression whatsoever upon Ahab.

All he was interested in was to satisfy his fleshly passions. Of course, this should not surprise us, for we have noted before that when he sent out Obadiah, his words were, Go into the land and to all the fountains of water and to all brooks.

Peradventure we may find grass to save the horses and mules alive that we lose not all the beasts. So they divided the land between them to pass throughout it.

Ahab went one way by himself and Obadiah went another way by himself. As A.W. Pink writes, Fountains, brooks and grass were all that occupied Ahab's thoughts.

[ 17 : 01 ] Relief from the divine affliction was all he cared about. No word then and no word now. After he had experienced Carmel about confession of sin and repentance.

He had been warned by God. He saw and experienced that God is faithful to his word. He had seen and experienced God proving himself at Carmel.

Hundreds of his priests of Baal to whom he paid homage had died and yet his thoughts were taken up with the banquet that awaited him. surely this points out to us the hardness of man's heart.

How people respond to the preaching of the gospel will give evidence of where their interest truly lies. how often we find people and the talk after it's been in the hearing of the word of God after the church services are about sports or the latest gossip points.

If there is any national or international football game on TV they are eager to get home to watch it. The word of God does not penetrate their hearts.

[ 18 : 16 ] They are not interested in those in the preaching of the gospel. They are more interested in those passions that belong to worldly pursuits.

Maybe tonight you recall times in the past when you got so excited about spiritual things that even eating and drinking and other recreational pursuits took a back seat and your whole being was taken up with spiritual things.

You came away from the preaching of the word talking enthusiastically about it perhaps outside the church building on the way home in the home longing to get into fellowship to discuss the word of God more and more.

But tonight you may be crying out my leanness my leanness as regards spiritual things. It has become so easy perhaps a normal routine after hearing the word of God after that church service to go home and immerse yourself in other things.

Maybe tonight once the service is over you will switch it off and your mind will be taken up with other things. You know maybe the spirit of Ahab is nearer to us than we think for our spiritual condition can be gauged by what meetings that can get us more enthused that can get us more stirred up that can get us more motivated.

[ 20 : 01 ] But it was so different with Elijah and Elijah went up to the top of Carmel and he cast himself down upon the earth and put his face between his knees.

Last week we saw 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 we noted that among other things that fire in the Bible is a symbolism of acceptance.

The fire consuming the sacrifice was a sign that the sacrifice had been accepted by God and this gave Elijah the confidence and boldness to approach God in prayer at the top of Carmel.

He approached God on the same basis as we are exhorted to approach the Lord. We know as Elijah knew that the only approach to a holy God is through sacrifice through an atoning sacrifice.

Therefore he came to God at the time of the evening sacrifice and the Lord accepted the sacrifice and Elijah continued in prayer. Our approach to God is upon the accepted atoning sacrifice of the Lamb of God Jesus Christ.

[ 21 : 22 ] There was no sense for Elijah to pray for rain before he received the fire of acceptance to consume the sacrifice. We pray and conclude our petition always in the name of Jesus.

Now that is not just a customary conclusion to prayer. It is rather a solemn recognition that the only reason we can even pray to God is that Jesus has died for our sins.

That Jesus has died as an atoning sacrifice. We come with boldness not presenting a new sacrifice but we pray on the basis of the once for all atonement of Jesus Christ as a true sacrifice for sin.

Then Elijah said to his servant go up now look to the sea and he went up and looked and said there is nothing and he said go again seven times.

Here is persistent prayer. prayer. How much we lose because of the lack of persistent prayer. We do not get what we ask for immediately so we give up.

[ 22 : 39 ] It is a sign that we were not really earnest about it in the first place. But persistent prayer is a prayer of faith. He earnestly prayed within the promises of God.

James in his book informs us that Elijah that he prayed earnestly that it might not rain and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months and he prayed again and the heaven gave rain and the earth brought forth her fruit.

And notice what Elijah said to King Ahab. He says to him get thee up eat and drink for there is a sound of abundance of rain.

Verse 41 of chapter 18. Although Elijah could not get see the rain he could as it well hear it with the ears of faith.

And it was not simply that it would rain but that there would be abundance of rain. There in verse 45 we read that it came to pass in the wind while that the heaven was black with clouds and wind and there was a great rain abundance of rain.

[ 24 : 04 ] Now what we see here is that Elijah gave himself to prayer and he prayed diligently and persistently until God's promise of rain was fulfilled.

He continued to pray even though the assurance of rain had already been given and even though the answer to his prayer was delayed he still continued to pray.

You see the delay was not a denial. The Bible encourages us to pray within the promises of God.

The promises of God does not make prayer unnecessary. In fact they make prayer monetary. the promises should inspire us to prayer.

It was because God had promised rain that Elijah prayed for rain. A.W. Pink writes so far from God's promises being designed to exempt us from making application to the throne of grace for the blessing guaranteed.

[ 25 : 12 ] They are designed to instruct us what things to ask for and to encourage us to ask for them believingly that we may have their fulfilment to ourselves.

Prayer of faith never gives up. Go up now look out the sea and he went up and looked and said there is nothing and he said go again seven times.

Six times Elijah said and went and looked out the sea and he came back with the news there is nothing not even a cloud in the sky. But Elijah did not despair.

He did not abandon his trust in God's promise. He watched and prayed until God answered. And it came to pass at the seventh time that he said behold there arise a little cloud out of the sea like a man's hand.

And he said go up say to air prepare thy chariot and get thee down that the rain stop thee not. The road been dusty and dry would not take long for the rain to make everything just a sea of mud.

[ 26 : 22 ] So Ahab got into his chariot and he made for Israel. A.W. Pink goes on and he writes Ahab had no doubt now that the rain was about to fall.

He was satisfied that he who answered Elijah with fire was on the point of answering him now with water. Nevertheless his heart remained hard against God as ever.

Oh how solemn is the picture here presented. Ahab was convinced but he was not converted. And Pink goes on and he says how many like him there are in the churches today who have religion in the head but not in the heart.

Convinced that the gospel is true yet rejecting it. Assured that Christ is mighty to save yet not surrendering to him.

Is that a picture of yourself tonight? Well Elijah also hurried for Jezreel but he did not go by chariot instead he ran the 18 miles and arrived ahead of Ahab on his chariot.

[ 27 : 38 ] We read and the hand of the Lord was on Elijah and he girded up his loins and ran before Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel. The phrase hand of the Lord is often used in the Bible to speak of God's power and blessing.

God's power and blessing was on Elijah. And when Ahab arrived back home at Jezreel he met up with his wife Jezebel and Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done and with all how he had slain all the prophets with the sword.

What a misleading and distorted report of the day's event. on Carmel. We see here that Ahab's emphasis was on Elijah's killing of the prophets.

It was not on the fact that God had proved himself to be the true and living God and that it was now reigning after Elijah prayed for rain.

Ahab had witnessed such a tremendous demonstration on Mount Carmel which gave overwhelming proof that the God of Elijah that Jehovah was a true and living God but it never affected his heart.

[ 28 : 57 ] It shows us the hardness of man's heart. No evidence will ever convince them. No argument will persuade them.

man. We read in the Bible in Exodus chapter 8 that the Lord brought a plague of frogs upon Egypt and that Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron and said, Entreat the Lord that he may take away the frogs from me and from my people and I will let the people go that they may do sacrifice unto the Lord.

And Moses and Aaron went out from Pharaoh and Moses cried unto the Lord because of the frogs which he had brought against Pharaoh. And the Lord did according to the word of Moses and the frogs died out of the houses out of the villages and out of the fields.

But when Pharaoh saw that there was respite he hardened his heart and hardened not unto them as the Lord had said. So it was with Ahab.

Ahab kept rejecting truth and finally he could not believe even though the evidence was so overwhelmed in his presence on Carmel yet his heart was so hard that he could not believe.

[ 30 : 15 ] A most solemn judgment we read of in Exodus chapter 9. And the Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh and he hearkened not unto them as the Lord had spoken to Moses.

Notice the order. Pharaoh hardened his heart we are told in chapter 8. And then in chapter 9 we're told that the Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart. Now the explanation of this is found in the New Testament in the book of Romans chapter 1 where we read and even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge God gave them over to our appropriate mind to do things which are not convenient.

In other words they kept rejecting truth and God gave them over to their own ways. And that is what exactly happened to Ahab. Happened to Pharaoh happened to Ahab.

God gave them over to their own heart. A heart of persistent rebellion against God. You see the longer a person rejects the Lord Jesus Christ the less likely that person will be saved.

Now we know that God can save to the uttermost and that whosoever will come to Jesus for salvation he will in no wise cast that person away. But the longer a person stays in unbelief the harder the heart grows and the more a person's resistance to the gospel grows.

[ 31 : 40 ] Oh let King Ahab be a warning begun to us all. Now this report stirred up and infuriated and enraged Jezebel so much that she wanted Elijah dead like the prophets of Baal.

We read then Jezebel sent a message into 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.

It is not clear why Jezebel did not have Elijah killed there and then. Maybe her approach was to scare Elijah off. when you bring together the deeds of this man from the time he marched from Gilead to Samaria and approached King Ahab to give him a message from God as the Lord God of Israel liveth before whom I stand.

There shall not be June or rain these years but according to my word. Then how he trusted God's providence and went in obedience and hit by the brook fed by ravens and drinking from the brook.

And when the brook died he waited upon the Lord and again in obedience to God's word he went to Saraphath and lodged there with a widow and her son. In the home where God sustained them all with a barrel of meal that wasted not but a cruise of oil that never failed which was according to the word of God which he spoke by Elijah.

[ 33 : 14 ] Then when sorrow came to the home and the widder's son died Elijah prayed believing that God could raise the child from the dead and who received the child alive and presented the child to his mother.

The man who identified King Ahab as a troubler of Israel and after his experience upon Mount Carmel one is filled with such shock for his action when he received the message from Jezebel and when he saw that he arose and went for his life and came to Beersheba which belonged to Judah and left his servant there.

The man who ran the 18 miles from Carmel to Jezebel is now running for his life from Jezebel the 90 miles or so from Jezebel to Beersheba.

What we find out Beersheba is a man who is downcast and despondent and eventually we come to see the depth of his despondency. Some people will criticise Elijah for leaving Jezebel and running away from Jezebel that he should have waited like other times for a word from the Lord.

But Elijah had received a real threat on his life. He did not need a special revelation from the Lord to protect himself. There is no need for a special word from the Lord for every action in our life because the Lord has already given to us in his word precepts and principles to guide our life.

[ 34 : 48 ] Yes, Elijah needed a special word from the Lord to go to Carithan to Saraphat and for the proceedings on Mount Carmel. But when his life was threatened he needed no special revelation to protect himself but to act on the precepts and principles already contained in the word of God.

If you are on the road and a car veers towards you, you do not wait for a special revelation from the Lord to take evasive action. You will act immediately to protect yourself.

And on this occasion a special revelation would have been required for Elijah to have stayed in Jesterfield when his life was being threatened. But he was in no need of any special revelation to protect his life.

He was to act in accordance with the word of God already given to him. He was to act with the precepts and principles already contained in the word of God.

Elijah left Jesterfield for his life. He was afraid and what we find is a man full of fear. It is not the fact that he left Jesterfield in fear but the extremities to which his fear took him that is out great concern.

[ 36 : 11 ] For he came to Bethesha which belonged 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 father's.

Here is a man running for his life under a juniper tree asking the Lord to take his life. His request to the Lord makes extraordinary little sense.



It is a complete contradiction. If he wanted to die then he should have stayed in Jezebel and Jezebel would have caught up with him and killed him. And the ironic thing is here is a man deciding death and at the end he is one of the two men who would not die.

Himself along with Enoch would not see death. But the depth to which the spirit of despondency has led this man of God is here brought before us.

And there may be many reasons that has caused the spirit of despondency to invade his life. There was a problem of physical fatigue.

[ 37 : 29 ] Elijah must have been exhausted by the events of Mount Carmel. then spending time in prayer and running the 18 miles to Jezreel and then 90 to 100 miles to Beersheba and a day's journey into the wilderness.

There can be no doubt that he was on the verge of physical collapse. We hear a lot nowadays about the burnout experience. And Elijah is a prime example for us of someone who is facing a burnt out experience.

He is physically exhausted, perhaps a lot more than he knows himself. But besides exhaustion, there was also the inevitability of what I would call the valley experience.

You see, Elijah just experienced the ultimate, what we would call the mountaintop experience, where he experienced the mighty acts of God and fire and abundance of rain. It was indeed a spiritual high point.

but now so soon he was down the valley, brought down to earth to face hard times and relentless persecution by Jezebel. It is also quite possible that his expectation among the people from the events of Carmel was discouraging and disheartening.

[ 38 : 45 ] Maybe he was thinking there would be an immediate awakening and revival of the people of Israel, and that did not come to pass. He felt isolated.

He just separated himself from his servant and he was all alone. A feeling of loneliness can have a great impact upon our spiritual life.

We are called to fellowship. We are told that when a sheep isolates from the rest of the flock, that the sheep is not in a healthy condition. Well, I do not know much about sheep, but I do know that when a covenant child suffers from fellowship with the rest of the covenant children, it is not a good sign of spiritual health.

When a Christian would rather be alone than being under the preaching of the word or in a prayer meeting, sure, making many excuses can be brought forward, but it is truly a sign of an unhealthy spiritual condition.

And these are things that can have a great impact upon our spiritual well-being, fatigue, mixed emotions, discouragement, disappointments, dashed expectation, and isolation.

[ 40 : 04 ] And we find them all here in the experience of God's servant, Elijah. Elijah. You know, Elijah's experience under the Juniper tree challenges us to a true and a right understanding of Christianity.

Some have this view of Christianity and salvation that when a person trusts in Jesus that the problems of life goes away. But my friend, salvation in Jesus does not exempt us from life's troubles.

In fact, it may be just the beginning of trouble. Christians do have problems. They have beset in sins. They get hurt. They get discouraged.

They get depressed. And there are moments in their life when they feel it's enough and they want to give up. James reminds us that Elijah was a man just like me and you.

Elijah under the Juniper tree shows us what a man of God amounts to under his own strength. O Lord, take away my life for I am not better than my fathers.

[ 41 : 15 ] Elijah's accomplishments for God were many and mighty but his despondency and depression led him to make this kind of evaluation of things.

Elijah needed help. If he was going to survive this attack of despondency and lapse in his spiritual life he needed help and at the hour of his greatest need he received help.

For we read as he lay and slept under at Juniper tree, behold there 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.

Elijah needed rest and the Lord allowed him to sleep. This was one of the promises that we have in the book of Psalms in Psalm 127. It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrow, for so he giveth his beloved sleep.

We are told obviously after a lapse of time that an angel touched him and said unto him, arise and eat. For the third time in three and a half years, Elijah is sustained by a divine miracle regarding his supply of food.

[ 42 : 40 ] First the ravens brought him food and then it was the widow with that barrel of meal and cruise of oil. And now it's an angel that provides the food. It shows us that God's care and love for Elijah is no less as he sleeps under the juniper tree in a spirit of despondency than it was when he stood on Mount Carmel in victory.

The words of Psalm 103 bring so much comfort to the Lord's people. Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. The Lord watches over Elijah as he sleeps under the juniper tree.

Again the words of Psalm 103. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits, who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases. Who redeemeth thy life from destruction, who crowneth thee with loving kindness and tender mercies.

Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things, so that thy youth is renewed like the eagles. Elijah's mission was not over, as the Lord prepared him for more work.

The Lord's provision for Elijah was a gracious provision. In his grace, God provided his servant with sleep and food in preparation for the journey that he was about to take.

[ 44 : 02 ] The Lord knows our needs, and out of his grace he always provides for us. Paul could write, but my God shall supply all your need according to his riches and glory by Christ Jesus.

When we may be discouraged and despondent and feel like giving up, when we may be saying, it is enough.

When we may be tired and weary in the way. When we may feel lonely and isolated in the way.

When we may be down in the valley after a spiritual high-bound experience. What is the cure?

well, Peter said to Jesus on one occasion when Jesus asked the disciples, will you also go away? Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou has the words of eternal life, and we believe and are sure that thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.

[ 45 : 14 ] We must come to Jesus, who will graciously meet with all our needs, not once or twice, but at all times. the angel touched Elijah not once but twice.

And the angel of the Lord came again the second time and touched him and he said, arise and eat. The Lord in grace provided the food, but Elijah was still instructed to put forth the effort to eat it.

He had to put forth his hand and partake of the food himself. the Lord provided the food in his grace, but it was Elijah's responsibility to eat of it.

And that is true for us all, believers and unbelievers. God in his grace has provided true food in Jesus Christ, who said, I am the bread of life.

He that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst. He has the same grace for me and you that he had for Elijah under the Juniper tree.

[ 46 : 22 ] Jesus offers this grace to us through his own life, through his suffering, through his death on the cross and his resurrection from the grave. It is yours tonight.

It is yours today. It is yours now. As he says to you, arise and eat. This was God's grace for Elijah, and it is God's grace in his son for me and you tonight.

We need daily to feed upon Jesus through his word, to be strengthened, to continue your journey. Arise and eat, because the journey is too great for thee.

May the Lord bless our thoughts upon his word. Let us pray. eternal and ever blessed Lord.

We have seen at this hour how our circumstances and situations can change so quickly. How we can be taken from the feeling of victory to the feeling of despondency.

[ 47 : 36 ] How easy it is for us to be discouraged. How easy it is to feel so lonely. To feel and say it is enough.

But oh Lord we pray that we would be brought to see that in Jesus there is sufficient grace. And even in our moments of despondency and in the moments when we feel discouraged and lonely that we would apply ourselves to him who said I am the bread of life.

He that cometh to me shall never hunger and he that believeth on me shall never thirst. That we would arise and partake of the provision that thou in thy grace in Jesus Christ has given to us so that we may be strengthened that we may rise up.

That we would be strengthened in the inner man because the journey is too great for us. We need thy help.

We need thine own sustaining grace. We need thine own grace at all times to sustain us, to help us, to encourage us in the way. We pray oh Lord that the lessons learned from Elijah would be applied to us through thy spirit.

[ 49 : 02 ] We pray oh Lord that thou would continue with us during the coming days and may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all now and forevermore.

Amen.