

1 Kings 19:1-12 *And Ahab told Jezebel¹ all that Elijah had done, and withal how [and details of how] he had slain all the prophets with the sword. ²Then 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" [saying that by this time tomorrow you will be dead just like the prophets of Baal you killed]. ³And when he saw² that, he arose, and went for his life, and came to Beersheba, which belongeth to Judah³, and left his servant there. ⁴But 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 [I cannot bear a greater stress than those that came before me]. ⁵And as he lay and slept under a juniper tree, behold, then an angel touched him, and said unto him, Arise and eat. ⁶And 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. ⁷And 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 [because you will go on a long journey soon]. ⁸And he arose, and did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that meat [food] forty days and forty nights unto Horeb the mount of God. ⁹And he came thither unto a cave [he arrived at 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? ¹⁰And he said, I have been very jealous for the LORD God of hosts: for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant [have turned their backs on You], 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 [and they're trying to kill me, too]. ¹¹And he [God] 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 [wind tore 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: ¹²And after the earthquake a fire; but the LORD was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice.⁴*

¹ Ahab and Jezebel were the king and queen of the northern Kingdom of Israel. They are infamous for the evil they did (1 Kings 16:30 - 33). Ahab allowed Jezebel to murder a man to get his vineyard (1 Kings 21:1 - 21). Jezebel had God's prophets killed (1 Kings 18:4) and allowed the prophets of the idol Baal to eat with her routinely (1 Kings 18:19). Ahab allowed idol worship and sacrifice to further his economic and political alliances with neighboring Gentile nations.

² Elijah heard the threat from Jezebel, but he saw the situation only from his own limited perspective. Elijah did not see this threat as empty because he lost his view of God's perspective. God already had a way to protect him, as God had protected King David often, but Elijah was tired, exhausted, and not thinking clearly.

³ Beersheba was considerably south of Samaria, where Ahab and Jezebel first had their palace (1 Kings 16:24). Elijah was distancing himself from Jezebel's threat on his life.

⁴ "...but the LORD was not in..." the wind, or the earthquake, or the fire. But the LORD was in the small voice, and subsequent verses (1 Kings 19:13-18) tell Elijah what he is to do.

1. Introduction:

- a. Preparations for a party
 - i. Occasion? Why are we having this party?
 - ii. Guests? Who's invited?
 - iii. Entertainment? What are we going to do at this party?
- b. Background: Elijah's ministry up this point in his life
 - i. A place of scolding: Judgement on Ahab for the evil way he was ruling the Kingdom of Israel: No rain for 3½ years – 1 Kings 17:1
 - ii. A place of separation: Elijah went to live in the wilderness, the brook Cherith, east of the Jordan River – 1 Kings 17:2-3
 - iii. A place of sanctification: He then went to live with a widow & her son [Gentiles] in Zarephath in Phoenicia (current day Lebanon) – 1 Kings 17:10
 - iv. A place of showdown: Mount Carmel showdown with prophets of Baal – 1 Kings 18. This is where Elijah slays these 450 false prophets.
 - v. A place of supplication: Elijah prays for rain to end the drought – 1 Kings 18: 1, 45)
 - vi. A place of swiftness: He finally leaves Mt Carmel & runs 18 miles to Jezreel [Ahab had moved his palace from Samaria to Jezreel after Jezebel murdered Naboth to take his vineyard (which was in Jezreel)] – 1 Kings 18:46
- c. God used Elijah as His spokesman: Up to this point, the "word of the Lord came to Elijah each time – 1 Kings 17:2, 17:8-9, 17:14, 18:1, 18:46
- d. Following are 3 elements of Elijah's pity party

2. Element 1: Reasons for the Occasion

- a. Elijah's wrong expectations: Elijah expected Jezebel to fear the LORD who gave such a victory over these false prophets. She did just the opposite and threatened his life.
 - i. He lost God's perspective, which made him lean on his own understanding (Proverbs 3:5)
 - He saw a threat to his life coming from Queen Jezebel
 - He got up & ran for his life from her
 - He did not ask for any word from the Lord in his decision

- ii. His perspective was for his pleasure: Elijah expected Jezebel to repent because Baal had been shown to be a false god.

James 5:17 Elias [Elijah] was a man subject to like passions as we are [a man no different than we are], and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months [it didn't rain for 3½ years].

- iii. Due to his pride: Elijah thought he deserved better than to be persecuted after this great victory from God. His disappointment was due to human reasoning and not divine revelation.

*Psalms 62:5 - 6 My soul, wait thou **only** upon God; for my expectation [hope] is from him. ⁶He only is my rock and my salvation: he is my defense; I shall not be moved [I am convinced this is true].*

b. Physical exhaustion from

- i. Elijah was physically drained from his Mount Carmel confrontation – “burned out” from lack of sleep, psychological stress, and focus on self.
- ii. He went on an 80-mile trip running for his life
 - He first went to Beesheba inside Judah where he left his servant (no godly fellowship)
 - He then went into the Judean wilderness (isolated from any human contact)
 - His depression so deep he wanted to die (focus only on his problems and no thought about God’s faithfulness)

3. Element 2: Elijah’s Guests

- a. Pity party exclusive guests – me, myself, & I
- b. Party decorations
 - i. Decorate walls of defensive spirit
 - ii. Balloons of anger ready to pop
 - iii. Streamers of self-righteousness

4. Element 3: Entertainment

- a. Elijah’s game of Hide & Seek
- b. Who was he hiding from?
 - i. Jezebel? Probably in the beginning, but Beersheba was far enough away from her to protect him.
 - ii. God? God seems to still be working in Elijah’s life to build his faith. God sends angels to care for Elijah. God seems to be waiting for Elijah to get past his focus on himself.

iii. Himself

- Running from the truth about himself
- His own fears, thinking he is not good enough to do anything for God.
- His own failures
 - His surrender to Jezebel's threats
 - His failure to remember the great victories he had already won: the drought, the Mt. Carmel victory, and the situation with the Widow of Zarephath

5. God interrupted & stepped into Elijah's party

a. God ministered first to his needs with His love

- i. God's provision: Food & Water
- ii. Elijah needed to rest, reflect, revive, & refresh himself

James 1:17 Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above [heaven], and cometh down from the Father of lights [God], with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning [whom no change can be seen no matter what perspective He is viewed from].

b. Elijah felt alone, but God continued with him

- i. Elijah wandered further south to a cave on Mount Horeb (in Sinai Peninsula)
- ii. Word of the Lord came again to Elijah
- iii. God meets him in his hiding place and asks him, "where are you?"
- iv. Elijah doesn't answer that question, but changes the subject to, "this is what I'm doing for You"
- v. God three times gave him a demonstration of His power: Strong Wind, Earthquake, and Fire
- vi. God finally spoke to him in a still, small voice

6. Conclusion

- a. God's promise to take care of our needs
- b. God speaks to our hearts in small, still voice