

1 Kings 19: 1-20 NASB95

[1] Now Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and how he had killed all the prophets with the sword.

[2] Then Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah, saying, "So may the gods do to me and even more, if I do not make your life as the life of one of them by tomorrow about this time."

[3] And he was afraid and arose and ran for his life and came to Beersheba, which belongs to Judah, and left his servant there.

[4] 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 my life, for I am not better than my fathers."

[5] He lay down and slept under a juniper tree; and behold, there was an angel touching him, and he said to him, "Arise, eat."

[6] Then he looked and behold, there was at his head a bread cake baked on hot stones, and a jar of water. So he ate and drank and lay down again.

[7] The angel of the LORD came again a second time and touched him and said, "Arise, eat, because the journey is too great for you."

[8] So he arose and ate and drank, and went in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights to Horeb, the mountain of God.

[9] Then he came there to a cave and lodged there; and behold, the word of the LORD came to him, and He said to him, "What are you doing here, Elijah?"

[10] He said, "I have been very zealous for the LORD, the God of hosts; for the sons of Israel have forsaken Your covenant, torn down Your altars and killed Your prophets with the sword. And I alone am left; and they seek my life, to take it away."

[11] So He said, "Go forth and stand on the mountain before the LORD." And behold, the LORD was passing by! And a great and strong wind was rending the mountains and breaking 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.

[12] After the earthquake a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire; and after the fire a sound of a gentle blowing.

[13] When Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his mantle and went out and stood in the entrance of the cave. And behold, a voice came to him and said, "What are you doing here, Elijah?"

[14] Then he said, "I have been very zealous for the LORD, the God of hosts; for the sons of Israel have forsaken Your covenant, torn down Your altars and killed Your prophets with the sword. And I alone am left; and they seek my life, to take it away."

[15] The LORD said to him, "Go, return on your way to the wilderness of Damascus, and when you have arrived, you shall anoint Hazael king over Aram;

[16] and Jehu the son of Nimshi you shall anoint king over Israel; and Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abel-meholah you shall anoint as prophet in your place.

[17] It shall come about, the one who escapes from the sword of Hazael, Jehu shall put to death, and the one who escapes from the sword of Jehu, Elisha shall put to death.

[18] Yet I will leave 7,000 in Israel, all the knees that have not bowed to Baal and every mouth that has not kissed him."

[19] So he departed from there and found Elisha the son of Shaphat, while he was plowing with twelve pairs of oxen before him, and he with the twelfth. And Elijah passed over to him and threw his mantle on him.

[20] He left the oxen and ran after Elijah and said, "Please let me kiss my father and my mother, then I will follow you." And he said to him, "Go back again, for what have I done to you?" So he returned from following him, and took the pair of oxen and sacrificed them and boiled their flesh with the implements of the oxen, and gave it to the people and they ate. Then he arose and followed Elijah and ministered unto him.

INTRODUCTION

Elijah experienced the depths of fatigue and discouragement just after his two great spiritual victories:

- **the defeat of the prophets of Baal.**
- **the answered prayer for rain.**

He expected Jezebel to surrender but when she did not yield, he became a discouraged man.

Often discouragement sets in after great spiritual experiences, especially those requiring physical effort or involving great emotion.

Then he prayed: **"take my life." (v4)**

Since the Israelites believed that suicide was an affront to the Lord, it was not an option. So Elijah asked the Lord for death because he viewed the situation as hopeless.

To lead him out of depression, God first let Elijah rest and eat. Then God confronted him with the need to return to his mission - to speak God's words in Israel. Therefore, his battles were not over. He still had work to do.

When we feel let down after a great spiritual experience, remember that **God's purpose for our life is not yet over.**

THE RISE OF THE
FALLEN

Outline:

1. The Stations and Their Significance

2. The Still, Small Voice

3. The Spirit and Anointing

Elijah was afraid. He was shattered, he fled as a prophet, broken by Jezebel's threats: her unrepentant Baalism, and her continuing power over Israel.

I. THE STATIONS AND THEIR SIGNIFICANCE.

[v5] *“He lay down and slept under a juniper tree;...”*

I. The Juniper Tree



The plant identified as the "**juniper**" in the King James Version (KJV) is typically the white broom (**Retama raetam**), a desert shrub that grows 8 to 12 feet tall and provides much-needed shade in the arid wilderness. It had slender branches featuring small leaves and fragrant blossoms.



Other translations =
"broom tree" or the **"broom bush."**

Significance of the Juniper Tree:

➤ The Juniper tree as a **FUGE**.

"Fuge" – something that repels or drives away.

Elijah needed something to repel or drive away the heat so he sought **shelter** and rested under a broom tree.

"Rithmah," one location where the Israelites made camp.

Rithmah means **"the place of the broom"**.

➤ The Juniper tree as **FUEL**.

Having roots and branches that burn hot, the broom tree was a source of fuel and high-quality charcoal during biblical times. **Psalm 120:4** likens the judgment of God to *"a warrior's sharp arrows, with burning coals of the broom brush."*

The angel that visited Elijah made "some bread baked over hot coals".

➤ The broom tree as **FOOD**.

The thick root of the broom tree was good fuel for fire, and in awful circumstances it could also be eaten.

Job speaks of men who, in extreme conditions, resorted to eating broom tree roots: *"Haggard from want and hunger, they roamed at the parched land in desolate wastelands at night. In the brush they gathered salt herbs, and their food was the root of the broom bush"* **(Job 30:3–4)**.

Under the juniper tree God provided Elijah **bread and water**.

[v6] "Then he looked and behold, there was at his head a bread cake baked on hot stones, and a jar of water."

The prophet Elijah fled into the wilderness and sat under a juniper tree, praying for death out of deep discouragement. He dealt with him the same way as He did earlier, providing him with food and protection during his distress and surrounding famine. An angel came to him twice to minister to his physical needs, saying, **"Arise, eat."**

God sent an angel to provide him with food and water, turning the tree into a site of spiritual and physical restoration.

The Hebrew word for bread here is **'uggah'**
- an ashcake. A cake baken (**KJV**)

Ephrem the Syrian: Allegorically the bread baked in the ashes, which the angel offers to Elijah, has two different meanings: on the one side, it immediately shows ***the toils of penitence*** which the ashes symbolize perfectly, since they are a ***figure of mourning and of a contrite heart***; the unleavened bread soaked in ashes and the water are also the ***food of the poor and the miserable***. But we can say, with greater accuracy, that ***they are figures of all the righteous***, for whom the providence of the Creator has established a course of life in the paths of adversity.

Therefore he leads them through much suffering, privation of food and a severe fast in order to purify them completely from all the filth of earthly things. Then he guides them to the mountain, which is the perfection and the accomplishment of the saints.

II.

the Journey



[v8] "So he arose and ate and drank, and went in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights to Horeb, the mountain of God."

When Elijah fled to Mt. Horeb, he was returning to the sacred place where God had met Moses and the people of Israel. God gave Elijah special strength to travel the distance of over 400km without additional food and water for 40 days.

The "FORTY DAYS"

The period had symbolic meaning as well as showing literal time.

As the people of Israel had a notable spiritual failure and so wandered 40 years in the wilderness, so a discouraged Elijah was to spend 40 days in the desert.

As **Moses** had spent 40 days on the mountain without bread and water, sustained only by God as he awaited a new phase of service, so Elijah was to spend 40 days in the wilderness depending on God's enablement as he prepared for a new commission from God. The journey in the wilderness is the walk of preparation to meet God.

Application: There is a reason why God allowed us to go through a crushing experience a decade ago. He actually wanted us to rest to prepare us to meet Him. And now we are in this journey. And we are doing it. We rested and we journeyed through fasting because our purpose is to meet God.

III. The Mt. of God, Horeb



The discouraged prophet Elijah had travelled to Horeb. He was there under very different circumstances.

When God spoke to Moses, the whole nation was gathered at the mountain, waiting for Moses to tell them how to obey God. For Elijah, he was the only one waiting to hear from God because the royalty of Israel had seen God's power, but instead of listening, they were attacking God's prophets.

God appeared to Elijah in a different way than he appeared to Moses.

- God used a wind to drive back the Red Sea for Moses and the Israelites (**Exodus 14:21**) - but he did not speak to Elijah in the wind.
- When God gave the Ten Commandments to Moses at Mount Sinai, the mountain trembled and billowed with smoke (**Exodus 19:18**) - but God did not speak to Elijah in an earthquake.

- God had recently revealed his power to Elijah and the Baal worshippers by sending fire on Mount Carmel **(1 Kings 18:38)** — but on this mountain God did not speak to Elijah with fire. Instead, he spoke to Elijah in a gentle whisper.

II. THE STILL, SMALL VOICE.

Many times God works silently.

[v11–12] says, "*not in the wind ... not in the earthquake ... not in the fire.*"

The emphasis on Mount Carmel had been on God's spectacular ways, particularly his use of fire. The emphasis here is on God's quiet ways. He is not to be found in the spectacular elements of the storm outside the cave but instead in a low whisper.

The Hebrew is literally "*a voice/sound, a thin silence*" (qol demamah daqqah) in v12, the same "*voice*" (Heb. qol) that speaks to Elijah in v. 13.

God reveals himself in quietness.

"What are you doing here, Elijah?" God asked.

Here Elijah needed a renewed perspective on life. The word of the LORD came to him, asking a question to get his attention and to change his perspective. The Lord twice asked, What are you doing here, Elijah?

God is also asking us the same question. What are you doing here?

In despair, Elijah concluded that his zeal for the Lord was futile. All he could think about was that, of all the prophets, he alone was left, and his life was in jeopardy.

There in a cave the LORD dealt with him.

In a *self-righteous spirit*, Elijah protested his own faithfulness and denounced the children of Israel.

The violent storms must have reminded Elijah of his harsh, critical spirit, but none of them brought him out of the cave. Finally, after the fire the prophet heard a still, small voice. It was this gracious voice of the Lord which brought him to the entrance of the cave.

Elijah knew that the sound of a gentle whisper was God's voice. He realized that God doesn't reveal himself only in spectacular ways.

APPLICATION: To look for God only in something big (a rally, a church, a conference, a highly visible leader) may be to miss him because he is often found gently whispering in the quietness of a humbled heart. He can be found in the quietness of our knees in prayer and willingness of heart. Are you listening to God? Step back from the noise and activity of your busy life and listen humbly and quietly for his guidance. It may come when you least expect it.

III. THE SPIRIT AND ANOINTING.

God told him to ***"go, return on your way."*** God told him to go back to what He was told to do and he came down the mountain with the spirit of God.

"The LORD said to him, "Go, return on your way to the wilderness of Damascus, and when you have arrived, you shall anoint Hazael king over Aram; and Jehu the son of Nimshi you shall anoint king over Israel; and Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abel-meholah you shall anoint as prophet in your place." (v15,17)

God told Elijah to anoint three different people.

- The first was Hazael, as king of Aram. Elijah was told to **anoint an enemy king** because God was going to use Aram as his instrument to punish Israel for their sin. Aram brought Israel's external punishment.
- Israel's internal punishment came from Jehu, the next man Elijah was to anoint. As **king of Israel**, Jehu would destroy those who worshiped the false god Baal (**2 Kings 9–10**).

- The third person Elijah was told to anoint was Elisha, the **prophet who would succeed him** (next generation). Elisha's job was to work in Israel, the northern kingdom, to help point the people back to God. At this time, the southern kingdom was ruled by Jehoshaphat, a king devoted to God.

The Spirit and Anointing is for **Commissioning**.

The Lord instructed Elijah to anoint Hazael, Jehu, and Elisha for the purpose of commissioning them to destroy Baal worship in Israel. Through these 3 men, the Lord completed the execution of Baal worshipers that Elijah had begun. Elijah had the Spirit and anointing because he met God and was commissioned by God.

The Spirit and Anointing **can go down to the next generation**.

Elijah did so much in his time but because Elisha received the spirit of Elijah, he did much more.

The next generation, who receives the anointing, will accomplish much more when the older generation passes on them the spirit and anointing.

It is the anointing from the Spirit of God that enables the next generation to do more. The Spirit and Anointing will give this generation a new purpose, greater courage and authority as they are commissioned by the Higher Commissioner – **Jesus.**

What has eclipsed your vision? What has stopped you from rising? What has caused us to fall? It could be sin, it could be fear, it could be discouragements or it could be weariness.

Elijah rested under the juniper tree and that was the beginning of his rise from being fallen. It was there that God provided bread and water for him twice. And the food He ate gave him strength in his journey in the desert.

Like Elijah, we need to find rest under the Juniper Tree.
We need the **"Juniper Tree."**

The Juniper tree in the Old Testament is a picture of the Cross, the suffering and death of Jesus. So that we can find rest, Jesus suffered exhaustion carrying Cross to Mt. Calvary. He identifies with our weariness and took it for us so that we can find rest.

God provided bread and water for Elijah and Jesus identifies with our needs when He experienced deprivation of food and severe thirst on the cross until He said, **"I thirst"**, to sustain us and give us the spirit and strength to rise again. Our rising again is confirmed and assured because just as Jesus rose from the dead, we will rise with Him.

The juniper tree was mentioned twice. The bread and water were provided twice. It is a confirmation of God's sustenance in every station of life. It enabled Elijah to journey in the desert until he reached the mountain of God. And it will enable anyone who comes to Christ to rise from being fallen and move to a higher ground.

Jesus said, *"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."* (**Matthew 11: 28- 30**)

"I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty," (**John 6: 35**)

And He gives the Living water - the Holy Spirit, who gives the anointing.

On the last and greatest day of the festival, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, "Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them." By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified. (John 7: 37- 39)

CONCLUSION:

We experience let downs but God's purpose is not over yet for you.

The fallen will rise again when they learn to Rest in the presence of God, when God's provision is present and when the power of God is manifest in their lives.

Listen to His still, small voice, receive His anointing by the Holy Spirit.

God is preparing us for a great task: To ***"go, and return on your way..."*** because we have a new purpose, greater courage and authority as we are commissioned by the Higher Commissioner – Jesus.

We need to come down from the mountain (Mt. Horeb) to bring God's message to our **"Hazael, Jehu and Elisha"** in the Spirit and anointing of God.

It is not by might, nor by power, but My Spirit, says the Lord.

