

# Shadows Of Christ & His Bride

Lesson #40

When Jesus Passes By

October 23, 2024

Look for these in the lesson:

Unrealized Expectations	Unrealistic Expectations	Lose Focus	
Turn to My Own Strategies	Discouragement	Self-pity	Despair
Doubt	Unbelief	Crushed in Spirit	

I Kings 19:3-4 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.<sup>4</sup> But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a broom 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.

Powerful Truth: Fear will commonly hinder our faith and blind us to God's faithfulness.

Matt. 13:22 Jesus said the "worries of this life choke the Word, making it unfruitful."

Powerful Truth: Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in Thee. [Isa. 26:3]

Powerful Reminder: Even though we know about God's faithfulness, fear commonly keeps us from living according to what we know to be true.

- A. 19:1-4 Elijah flees from the world and prophetic ministry
- B. 19:5-9a Elijah's renewal begins
  - instructions for Elijah: "arise and eat"
  - God responds to Elijah's needs with food and water, and a suggestion that he go to Horeb
  - on the strength of the food Elijah travels to Horeb
- C. 19:9b-10 "What are you doing here, Elijah?"
  - "I have been exceedingly zealous . . ."
- D. 19:11a Elijah is told "go out and stand"
- E. 19:11b-12 God passes by

I Kings 19:5-6 And as he lay and slept under a broom tree, Behold, then an angel touched him, and said unto him, Arise and eat. And 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.

This special work of God's grace did not occur on the summit of Mount Carmel, nor when in conflict with the prophets of Baal, nor by the brook where the Lord had sent Elijah, nor when he was in prayer and intimate fellowship. It occurred when he was in the wilderness, when Elijah was out of fellowship. It was when he was depressed and a deserter. What was his best refuge? a scrubby desert bush.

Ps. 46:1 God is our refuge and strength; a very present help in time of trouble.

I Kings 19:7 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.

This was a Theophany or a Christophany--a manifestation of the second person of the Trinity. This was the Savior who came personally to minister to the prophet. God sent not the ravens as before, nor a widow, nor some other natural means, but the preincarnate Christ. Why?

1. To show the prophet His love and grace and perhaps to remind us that it was when we were sinners and alienated from God that He sent His Son for us.

It is also a reminder that the Savior never leaves us no matter how far we drift away. He is personally involved in seeking to restore us.

The Lord was not condoning what Elijah had done or overlooking it, but rather

- He was assuring Elijah he was still the object of His love.
  - He still had a plan and purpose for the prophet just as He does for us when we get out of His plan.
2. This affirmed the power of God. Though the means may be completely lacking to us and all may appear lost and without hope, there is never an end to the degree of God's love and care, nor to the capacity and power at God's disposal to supply any need at any time.

Elijah needed some special instruction from the Lord, but again, he first needed physical strength through nourishment. He was in no condition to listen or take in the Word of God. Twice he is told to eat and drink, and twice he is allowed to sleep.

*The Trip to Horeb, The Mountain of God  
A Spiritual Retreat To Draw Near To God*

I Kings 19:8 And he arose, and did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that meat  
forty days and forty nights unto Horeb the mount of God.

When Elijah awakens, he is told by The Angel of the Lord, "Get up and eat, for the journey is too much for you." The angel literally admitted that this journey was too much for Elijah to handle. What the Lord was calling him to do was TOO MUCH. But the Lord gave him strength. The Lord provided his servant with everything he needed to make the journey.

Key Point: God sends difficult journeys into our lives to accomplish His purpose in us.

- We must be strengthened by the Word of God to survive this journey.
- God promises to equip us to successfully handle these difficult journeys.

Key Point: Elijah's Spiritual Retreat: God created in him a deeper dependence on the Lord. From where Elijah began, a day's journey south of Beersheba, he was not forty days and nights from Horeb. Elijah went from near Beersheba to Horeb. [I Kings 19:3-8]

Deut. 1:2 says Kadesh is an 11-day journey from Horeb.

Beersheba was near Kadesh, both near the south extreme of the promised land.

A straight trip from the broom tree would have required little more than 11 or 12 days.

Did God have him wander about like the children of Israel did for 40 years?

- The fact this took 40 days tells us Elijah was still weak and depressed.
- He averaged only 5 miles/day. Remember, he outran Ahab's chariots from Mt. Carmel to Jezreel, a distance of 17 miles. Now, he seems to be crawling.
- He is physically and emotionally weak. He needed to lean on and trust God more.

Key Point: Forty days and forty nights is not without symbolical significance.

- The children of Israel had a significant spiritual failure at Kadesh Barnea due to their unbelief and fear. This led to their judgment: wandered 40 years in the wilderness.

Perhaps it was Elijah's unbelief & fear that led to his journey in the desert for 40 days/nights.

A forty day fast is in Scripture multiple times.

Luke 4: After Jesus fasted for 40 days, God empowered Him through the Spirit for His earthly ministry. Then He returned in the Power of the Spirit into Galilee.

Ex. 34:28 Before God gave Moses the law, he fasted for forty days on Mount Sinai.

Moses was sustained only by God while he awaited a new phase of service [Ex. 34:28].

Elijah was to spend 40 days thrown upon God's divine enablement as he was being prepared for a recommissioning by God.

No doubt, God would use Elijah's struggle with depression for the good.

He would draw Elijah to a time of great weakness and dependency on God for 40 days.

Then God would reveal Himself to Elijah in a special way.

Our trials are God drawing us to Himself and making us more into His image. James 1:2-4

Consider it nothing but joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you fall into various trials.

<sup>3</sup> Be assured that the testing of your faith produces endurance [leading to spiritual maturity, and inner peace]. <sup>4</sup> And let endurance have its perfect result *and* do a thorough work, so that you may be perfect and completely developed [in your faith], lacking in nothing. [Amplified]

God's ministries to Elijah in I Kings 18 & 19: A parallel to God's promises in Isaiah 40:31.

For 3 years, the prophet had been hidden by God, during which time he "waited on the Lord."

When the Lord sent him to Mount Carmel, He enabled Elijah to "mount up with wings as eagles" and triumph over the prophets of Baal.

After Elijah prayed and it began to rain, the Lord strengthened him to "run and not be weary."

Now God sustained him for 40 days so he could "walk and not faint."

No doubt, God had allowed Elijah to be especially weak during the journey, so he could learn to rely on God more and gain special strength through Him—not only for the journey, but more importantly, for his ministry after.

This is another indication of the grace of God; even when we are out of fellowship, with our hearts devising our own way, the Lord still works on behalf of His children's needs to lead them back to Himself.

This is also an illustration of how we are so prone to prolong our trek in the wilderness in the pursuit of our own solutions to our pain and misery rather than quickly turn to the Lord. Why? Because we tend to believe so strongly in our solutions. Because of our pride or our sensitive egos. We just do not like to admit we are wrong and pursuing a wrong course. Many suffer the "paralysis of self-analysis." Always focusing on yourself: I don't measure up,

### Horeb, The Mountain of God

Just as Moses was to see the presence of God at Mt. Horeb [Ex. 33:12-23],

so Elijah was to find God, though in a different way than he could ever imagine.

By God's divine grace and providence, he was sustained as Israel was through the forty years, and he was drawn to Horeb, to Sinai, the special place of God's divine revelation of Himself.

God revealed His plan and purpose for the nation of Israel:

Ex. 19:3-6a You have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself. <sup>5</sup> Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: <sup>6</sup> And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation.

Ex. 19:18 And mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire:

& the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly.

Ex. 20:18 And all the people saw the thunders, & the lightnings, & the noise of the trumpet, & the mountain smoking: & when the people saw it, they removed & stood afar off.

### Elijah In The Cave

I Kings 19:9a Then he came to a cave and spent the night there;

The cave which represents another human strategy for refuge was a much better source of refuge than a broom tree. The cave was a substitute for God as his refuge.

His spiritual condition was still in shambles.

C. 19:9b-10 "What are you doing here, Elijah?"

➤ "I have been exceedingly zealous . . ."

D. 19:11a Elijah is told "go out and stand"

I Kings 19:9b and, behold, the Word of the Lord came to him, and He said unto him, What are you doing here, Elijah?

Behold: "Why are you here Elijah?" is a soul-searching question. He wanted Elijah to consider the motives in his heart. Often during times of trial and pursuing God, God exposes the sins in our hearts and begins to work on them—exposing insecurities and wrong views about ourselves, God, and others.

This illustrates the Word reproofing and exposing us to our failures, our false belief systems, and to God's grace.

Heb. 4:11-12 Let us labor therefore to enter into that [God's] rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief. <sup>12</sup> For the Word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

When we hear God's Word preached and taught, when we read and study His Word, we are hearing the voice of God that effectually works in those who believe. [I Thess. 2:13].

Did Elijah understand he was there because of his faulty thinking and his wrong focus?  
Did he understand that though he had been running from the Lord, it was God who had led him to this very special place to instruct and restore him?

God was going to expose and root wrong things out of Elijah during this time, so he could strengthen him for his future mission.

Recall: When Joshua was brokenhearted because of Israel's defeat at Ai,  
he spent a day on his face before God,

Joshua 7:6 And Joshua rent his clothes and fell to the earth upon his face before the ark of the Lord until the eventide, he and the elders of Israel, and put dust upon their heads.

<sup>7</sup> And Joshua said, Alas, O Lord God, wherefore hast thou at all brought this people over Jordan, to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites, to destroy us?

would to God we had been content and dwelt on the other side Jordan!

<sup>8</sup> O Lord, what shall I say, when Israel turns their backs before their enemies!

<sup>9</sup> For the Canaanites and all the inhabitants of the land shall hear of it, and shall environ us round, and cut off our name from the earth: and what wilt thou do unto thy great name?

<sup>10</sup> Get up! Why are you lying there face down? Israel has sinned; they have violated my covenantal commandment! The Israelites are unable to stand before their enemies; they retreat because they have become subject to annihilation. I will no longer be with you, unless you destroy what has contaminated you. <sup>13</sup> Get up! Ritually consecrate the people and tell them this: 'Ritually consecrate yourselves for tomorrow, because this is what the Lord God of Israel has said, "You are contaminated, O Israel! You will not be able to stand before your enemies until you remove what is contaminating you."

#### Elijah's Response

I Kings 19:10 And he said, I have been very zealous for the Lord God of hosts: for the children of Israel have forsaken Thy covenant, 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.

His answer shows us he had not grasped the issues. He was filled with his own importance, and angry over the lack of response and help from others including the Lord. He was somewhat bitter because he had served the Lord so earnestly and spectacularly and still, he had experienced only rejection and exile.

It seems that Elijah had hoped that the miraculous occurrence at Mount Carmel would lead to the reform of the nation. But on the contrary, it seemed to have no effect whatsoever on the political situation. Jezebel remained on the throne and now she had ordered his death. In a moment of temporary amnesia, Elijah forgets the Lord's Word. The word of Jezebel drowns out the Word of the Lord. Fear of a person replaced fear of the Almighty God. Like Elijah, we will always battle between hearing God's word more clearly than hearing a human's word. We so easily fear people instead of fearing God alone.

Prov. 29:25 The fear of man lays a snare, but whoever trusts in the Lord is safe.

I Kings 19:11a And he said, Go forth, and stand upon the mountain before the Lord.

E. 19:11b-12 God Passes By

I Kings 19:11b And, behold, the Lord passed by,

➤ Behold: important event--the Lord passing by the cave on the mountain.

All Elijah needed to be renewed for service was a fresh vision of the power and glory of God.

Note: Before Elijah comes out of the cave, four events occur, three of them spectacular.

1. and a great and strong wind rent the mountains,

and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind:

Surely such a spectacular event such as this would announce the presence of the Lord and illustrate how He would work in the future. But no, the Lord was not in the wind.

2. and after the wind an earthquake; [shaking even the foundations under his feet]

but the Lord was not in the earthquake:

3. And after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire:

Even this did not announce the presence nor the activity of the Lord.

Note: All these physical phenomena were known to be precursors of God's coming or presence.

They represent the grand and powerful events that capture our attention.

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[Ex. 19:16, 18; Jud. 4:4-5; II Sam. 22:8-16; Ps. 18:7-15; 68:8; Heb. 12:18].

Mount Horeb was the holy mountain where God first revealed Himself to Moses in the burning bush. At Mt. Horeb God spoke the 10 commandments with thunders and lightnings and a thick cloud [Ex. 19:16]. On the top of Mount Horeb, the appearance of the glory of the Lord had been like a devouring fire [Ex. 24:17].

The pagan nations saw these great sights & worshipped the powers of nature, but when the Jews saw them, they worshipped the God who created nature. [Judg. 5:4-5, Ps. 18:16-18]

Side Note: These same demonstrations of the awesome presence and power of God will be seen in the last days before Jesus returns to earth to establish His kingdom. The Old Testament prophets called this period "the day of the Lord." [Joel 2:28—3:16, Isa. 13:9-10, Matt. 24:29, Rev. 6—16] Perhaps the Lord was saying to Elijah, "You feel like you've failed to judge the sin in Israel, but one day I will judge it, and My judgment is final and complete."

Consider: The fact God was not in any of them with Elijah was tremendously significant.

Ps. 148 God was reminding His servant that everything in nature was obedient to Him:

the wind, the foundations of the earth, the fire.

God doesn't lack for a variety of tools to get His work done.

- If Elijah wanted to resign from his divine calling, God had someone else to take his place.

Powerful Reminder: All of us occupy an interim position. God's work lives on.

4. and after the fire a still small voice. [faint whisper, quiet, hushed and low]

- God did not always operate in the realm of the spectacular!"

In this day of mammoth meetings, loud music, and high-pressure promotion, it's difficult for some people to understand that God rarely works by means of the dramatic and the colossal. When He wanted to start the Jewish nation, He sent a baby—Isaac. When He wanted to deliver that nation from bondage, He sent another baby—Moses. He sent a teenager named David to kill the Philistine giant. David used a sling and a stone to do it. When God wanted to save a world, He sent His Son as a weak and helpless baby. Today, God seeks to reach that world through the ministry of "earthen vessels" [II Cor. 4:7]. Dr. J. Sanders states that "the whispers from Calvary are infinitely more potent than the thunder of Sinai in bringing men to repentance."

Why did God allow a windstorm, earthquake, and fire to come by the mountain, though he wasn't in them and then reveal himself in a whisper?

- Elijah had become dependent on God revealing himself in the miraculous and expected God to do so during Elijah's troubling circumstance.
- God had moved in Elijah's life through many miracles—stopping and starting the rain in response to his prayers, providing food through ravens and angels, resurrecting the dead, and bringing fire from heaven.
- Maybe Elijah was so depressed because he expected God to move miraculously again when Jezebel promised to kill him or that she would have repented.

Powerful Reminder: God's sovereign hand over the events of life doesn't always guide circumstances as we would want or pray it would. Sometimes, God's will is the difficult path instead of the easy path or the one we think is best.

Essentially, God was challenging Elijah with, "Would he be content if God only provided His presence and His Word—not the miracle Elijah desired?"

Consider: How does God's way of doing things challenge me? Is God's presence and His Word enough, even if the circumstances aren't changed? He may not change our circumstance, but He promises to be with us during our circumstance which is enough.

II Cor. 12:9 God told Paul, who struggled with a thorn in the flesh,

"My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness."

Heb 13:5-6 Let your character [your moral essence, your inner nature] be free from the love of money [shun greed—be financially ethical], being content with what you have; for He has said, "I will never [under any circumstances] desert you [nor give you up nor leave you without support, nor will I in any degree leave you helpless], nor will I forsake or let you down or relax My hold on you [assuredly not]!" <sup>6</sup> So we take comfort *and* are encouraged *and* confidently say, "The Lord is my Helper and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.

- When we truly accept that, it can deliver us from fear and depression.

- D<sup>1</sup>. 19:13a Elijah goes out and stands
- C<sup>1</sup>. 19:13b-14 "What are you doing here, Elijah?"
  - "I have been exceedingly zealous . . ."

<sup>13</sup>And it was so, when Elijah heard it, that he wrapped his face in his mantle, and went out, and stood in the entrance of the cave.

- Sign of reverence and humility before God. His response shows a deep sense of respect and awe, as he covers his face to indicate his unworthiness in the presence of the divine.
- God's presence and revelation can be found in unexpected ways.

This verse challenges us to develop spiritual discernment. Seek God's presence not just in the extraordinary, but in the ordinary moments of life. This requires humility, patience, and a willingness to listen for God's voice in the quietness of our hearts.

<sup>13b</sup> And, behold, there came a voice unto him, and said, What are you doing here, Elijah?]<sup>2<sup>nd</sup>x</sup>

- The Lord ignored Elijah's self-justification & reason for being on the mountain.

This simple yet profound question cuts to the heart of Elijah's despair and sense of abandonment. It forces Elijah to confront the reasons for his flight and his feelings of isolation and hopelessness. Elijah is challenged to examine his purpose and calling as a prophet of God.

What brought Elijah to this point? FEAR & DOUBTING.

Every decision Elijah had made up until now was motivated by a direct call from the Lord.

BUT, The Lord had not commanded Elijah to run from Jezreel to Beersheba.

I Kings 19:14 And he said, I have been very zealous for the Lord God of hosts: because the children of Israel have forsaken Thy covenant, 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.

Key Point: How slow we are to learn and how deep-seated our feelings of rejection and hurt become established. We keep clinging to them as our way of escape and defense.

Key Point: Depression that is not caused by physical problems is one of our methods of escape. It is a human strategy for dealing with pain and disappointment. The irony is we seem to be more willing to depend on it as a solution than we are to trust the Lord



Elijah still did not get it. He still wanted the Lord to bring immediate judgment on Israel. Elijah may have gone to ask God to judge Jezebel and Ahab. Elijah wanted a speedy judgment on the nation. He wanted God to be in the wind, the earthquake, or the fire. He wanted God to be quick to anger. But instead, God appeared in a gentle whisper, a still small voice.

Spurgeon: That which effectually wins human hearts to God and to his Christ is not an extraordinary display of power. Men can be made to tremble when God sends pestilence and famine, and fire, and others of his terrible judgments; but these things end usually in the hardening of men's hearts, and not in the winning of them. He leaves the wind, he leaves the earthquake and the fire, and he speaks to men in the silence of their souls by a voice which, though it be as "silence audible," yet it is the power of God unto salvation. The voice which is not heard without is omnipotent within.

B<sup>1</sup>. 19:15-18 Elijah's renewal is completed

- instructions for Elijah: "go and return"
- God responds to Elijah's needs with a new commission and reassurance
- God tells Elijah to leave Horeb

I Kings 19:15-18 The Lord said to him, "Go back the way you came and then head for the wilderness of Damascus. Go and anoint Hazael king over Syria. <sup>16</sup> You must anoint Jehu son of Nimshi king over Israel, and Elisha son of Shaphat from Abel Meholah to take your place as prophet. <sup>17</sup> Jehu will kill anyone who escapes Hazael's sword, and Elisha will kill anyone who escapes Jehu's sword.

God reveals Himself to Elijah and gives him renewed purpose by giving him 3 instructions. He assured Elijah that justice in fact *would* take place...not immediately, but soon.

Anoint 3 men who would bring God's judgment down upon Ahab and the nation of Israel.

- The foreign king Hazael would inflict serious losses upon the army of Israel.
- Jehu would wipe out Ahab's line.
- Elisha would predict a 7-year famine upon the land.

The anointing of Jehu and Elisha represents the passing of authority and the continuation of God's plan for Israel.

Elisha, as Elijah's successor, played a crucial role in preserving the faithful remnant and continuing the prophetic ministry in Israel.

I Kings 19:18 Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel,

all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him.

Guzik: Elijah's powerful victory at Mt. Carmel faded quickly and made him think his whole life and ministry had been a waste and that he had made no real impact on God's people.

He looked at the facts through the "gray-colored" glasses of unbelief.

He allowed his imagination to hold more power than the facts before him.

The call of Elisha and the 7,000 who had not bowed to Baal showed Elijah that his ministry had not been in vain. God's Word does not return void no matter how things may look to us. The nation would not be totally exterminated and there were those who would carry on the work of the Lord.

A<sup>1</sup> 19:19-21 Elijah returns to the world and to prophetic ministry

Consider: Why are you downcast; Why are you in despair; Why are you depressed?

You answer the question for yourself—and apply the proper remedy

Ps. 42:5 Why are you in despair, O my soul? And why have you become restless and disturbed within me? Hope in God and wait expectantly for Him, for I shall again praise Him for the help of His presence.