

Session 4: A Storm On The Horizon

Now Ahab told Jezebel everything Elijah had done and how he had killed all the prophets with the sword. So Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah to say, “May the gods deal with me, be it ever so severely, if by this time tomorrow I do not make your life like that of one of them.” Elijah was afraid and ran for his life. When he came to Beersheba in Judah, he left his servant there, while he himself went a day’s journey into the wilderness. He came to a broom bush, sat down under it and prayed that he might die. “I have had enough, LORD,” he said.

“Take my life; I am no better than my ancestors.”

1 Kings 19:1-4



CONNECT

What kind of weather event or natural disaster do you find most concerning for your community? Why?

What is your go-to comfort food when you are feeling sad or disappointed?



WATCH

Watch the video for this session, Below is an outline of the key points covered during the teaching. Record any key concepts that stand out to you.

OUTLINE

I. The Lord told Elijah that the three-year drought in Israel was coming to an end.

- A. The revival that broke out after the showdown on Mount Carmel led to an end to the drought.
- B. God has set a time limit on how long his people’s predicament would last.
- C. Elijah told Ahab that he could hear “the sound of heavy rain” (1 Kings 18:41)
- D. Elijah’s faith allowed him to view the Lord’s promise as though it had already been fulfilled.

II. When the rain poured down, everyone in Israel rejoiced - except Queen Jezebel

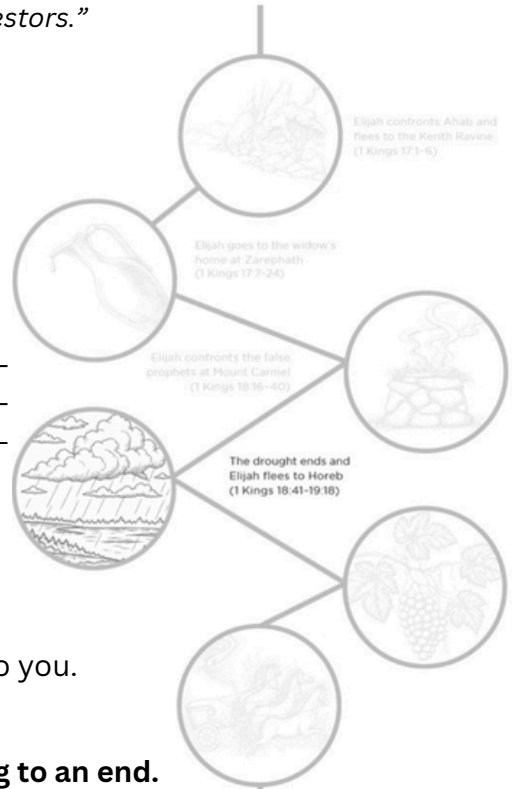
- A. Jezebel made another threat against Elijah in what had been a series of threats
- B. We would expect Elijah to react with unbreakable courage ... but he ran.
- C. He ran more than a hundred miles away and collapsed under a broom bush.
- D. Elijah despaired even of the strength to take another step.

III. What could cause our fearless hero to experience such a total collapse

- A. Elijah was physically exhausted. Everything that he had experienced (including a marathon- level run to go get ahead of Ahab) had left him physically worn out.
- B. Jezebel’s threat was a morale buster. Elijah thought he had finally won after years of enduring her threats , but now she was after him even harder than before.

IV. God responded to Elijah with a critical prescription: nourishment and rest

- A. The episode reveals that seasons of sadness come to even the most steadfast and faithful of saints.
- B. Refreshed by God, he traveled forty days and nights until he reached Horeb.
- C. There God offered him encouragement and told him not everyone in Israel had bowed to Baal.
- D. God will likewise refresh us, encourage us, and equip us to do the work we were made to do.





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Discuss

Discuss what you just watched by answering the following questions.

1. God allowed the drought that devastated Israel to occur, but he also set a time limit on its duration. Both acts demonstrated his sovereignty. How would you explain the concept of God's sovereignty in your own words? What does it mean for us today?

2. Ask someone to read 1 Kings 18:41-46, Elijah had demonstrated incredible courage in the face of adversity and prevailed. He could have allowed the victory to go to his head. Instead, what does he do in the passage? What does this say about his character?

3. What else did Elijah do in this passage that reveals his steadfast faith? What does this story emphasize to you about the importance of persisting in prayer?

4. Now ask someone to read 1 Kings 19:1-10. What contrasts do you see between Elijah's actions here and those in the previous chapter? What are the two reasons (presented in the teaching) as to why Elijah might have responded to Jezebel's message in this way?

5. When Elijah came to the end of his rope, God gave him a season of nourishment, rest and encouragement? How did it change your outlook on the situation you were facing?



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Respond

We can be thankful that failure is a prominent theme in the Bible. Many of God’s servants failed him and failed themselves on many occasions—just like we do. Peter the disciple is a great example. This man, who typically acted before thinking, covered himself with shame on the night that Jesus was betrayed and arrested. After following the soldiers to the place where Jesus was interrogated before the high priest, three people accused Peter of being one of the Savior's disciples. Three times, Peter denied his Lord. It was a terrible failure that must have stuck with him like the smell of rotting fish. Even so, Peter would not be defined by his failure:

15 When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, “Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?” “Yes, Lord,” he said, “you know that I love you.” Jesus said, “Feed my lambs.” 16 Again Jesus said, “Simon son of John, do you love me?” He answered, “Yes, Lord, you know that I love you.” Jesus said, “Take care of my sheep.” 17 The third time he said to him, “Simon son of John, do you love me?” Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, “Do you love me?” He said, “Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you.” Jesus said, “Feed my sheep.” John 21:15–17

What similarities do you see between the way that Jesus dealt with Peter’s failure in this passage and the way that God dealt with Elijah’s failure in 1 Kings 19:9-18

Elijah’s failure was in succumbing to fear and not trusting God. Peter’s failure was in denying that he even knew Christ. We all fail God in different ways. When you recognize that you have failed, how should you respond? What are the appropriate next steps to take?



Pray

When the time comes to close this session, talk with God about the many ways he has prepared and equipped you to be servants in his kingdom—including seasons of solitude. Express gratitude for those seasons and for the ways God has preserved you and provided for you in the midst of them. Commit to actively making time for God to fill you each day so you have something to give at home, at work, and beyond. Use the space below to write down any requests so you and your group members can pray about them in the week ahead.