

DESPERATE FOR GOD TO MOVE

Today, we're going to talk about being "Desperate for God When I Feel Exhausted." Do you ever feel like you have nothing left to give? That you can't handle one more bad thing happening? That you can hardly breathe because the trials of life have made you feel like you're drowning? This message is for you. Today's study centers on Elijah, a prophet who faced significant trials despite obeying God. Our passage highlights Elijah's journey through droughts, threats from powerful enemies, and moments of deep despair. As we look at Elijah's life, we'll see the importance of obedience, rest, and communion with God. Through Elijah's highs and lows, we'll discover some critical lessons about handling exhaustion.

Key Passage: 1 Kings 17

Discussion Questions:

1. What role does obedience play in Elijah's story? How does Elijah's obedience relate to God's provision?

Obedience is central to Elijah's journey. Each time Elijah obeys God, whether telling King Ahab about the drought or going to Cherith, God provides for him in miraculous ways, such as being fed by ravens or through the widow's oil and flour. This demonstrates that God's provision follows obedience to His commands.

2. How does the story of Elijah challenge the notion that following God guarantees an easy life?

The challenges Elijah faced remind us that obedience to God doesn't shield us from difficulty but rather reminds us that obedience requires faith in the trial. Elijah's life, full of obedience and faithfulness, was still marked by severe trials, including death threats, exhaustion, and despair. This challenges the notion that following God leads to ease or comfort. Instead, it teaches that trials are a part of the Christian journey, but God's presence and provision remain.

3. What significance does rest have in Elijah's story, and how does it relate to modern life?

After Elijah's triumph on Mount Carmel, he became exhausted. God provided rest and food for Elijah, teaching that rest is essential for both physical and spiritual renewal. It's a reminder to us that rest is crucial to avoid burnout, even in service to God.

4. How does Elijah's experience with depression after Mount Carmel challenge common assumptions about faith and emotional struggle?

Elijah's deep depression after a significant spiritual victory challenges the assumption that strong faith prevents emotional struggles. Despite his victories, Elijah was still human and susceptible to despair. This shows that faith doesn't exempt one from emotional lows, but God provides help and restoration.

5. Why do you think Elijah felt such despair after experiencing God's power so clearly on Mount Carmel?

Elijah's despair likely came from physical exhaustion, emotional depletion, and the psychological impact of Jezebel's threats. It illustrates that even great spiritual leaders are vulnerable to fear and discouragement after periods of intense effort, and it underscores the importance of rest and reliance on God during such times.

6. What does the contrast between God's presence in the quiet whisper and the dramatic events (wind, earthquake, fire) teach us about hearing from God?

God often speaks in subtle, quiet ways rather than through dramatic displays. This reminder encourages us to seek communion with God in stillness and intentional listening rather than expecting to hear from Him in extraordinary moments. Luke 5:16 is a great reminder for us regarding solitude and communion with God. Luke says this about Jesus, "But he would withdraw to desolate places and pray." Similarly, Mark tells us, "Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed" (Mark 1:35).

7. How can we apply the idea of intentional communion with God in our daily lives?

We can apply intentional communion with God by setting aside time each day for prayer, reflection, and seeking His guidance. Just as Elijah needed to hear from God in the quietness of Mount Horeb, we too, need quiet moments in our busy lives to hear God's whisper and direction.

8. What lessons can we learn from the widow's obedience to Elijah despite her desperate circumstances?

The widow's obedience, even when facing starvation, teaches the lesson of faith in God's provision. Her willingness to serve Elijah, trusting in God's promise, resulted in a miraculous supply of food. This highlights that faith, even in desperate circumstances, invites God's miraculous intervention.

9. Why is it important for Christians to recognize their human limitations, as seen in Elijah's story?

Elijah's collapse after Mount Carmel shows the importance of recognizing human limitations. Even a great prophet like Elijah needed rest, food, and spiritual renewal. This reminds Christians that they are not superhuman and must care for their physical, emotional, and spiritual health to sustain long-term faithfulness to God's calling.

10. What about this study has challenged you most? What's your biggest takeaway?