

Elijah God's Provision & presence -tenderness & intimacy

1 Kings 19 v 1-18

Intro

High point of Israel, David and Solomon. Solomon allowed idolatry in via foreign wives, led to decline of Israel. God's judgment - Split kingdom.

Elijah lived in a nation in decay.

King Ahab, 58 years post divided kingdom. Reigned 874 – 853 BC. King of Israel. Things were getting worse. Ahab's wife, Queen Jezebel, wanted to stop worship of Yahweh.

Ahab was weak and allowed Jezebel to introduce worship of caananite God Baal.

Baal was the most popular Caananite god as god of fertility.

1/Elijah, great struggle after great victory. - Elijah appeared and called down drought. Jezebel killing off prophets.

Mt Carmel - **slide** Elijah reappears and took on 450 prophets of Baal, in calling down fire to cook sacrifice. Jez then committed to killing him

1K 19 2 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." and he fled in fear

3 Elijah was afraid[a] and ran for his life. ...4 ...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."

Application - Fear, TEAM has just released a theology of risk as we consider where we send our workers and when we should pull them out.

Rs in Sri Lanka - **slide** First with Tamils (v Sinhalese). Then recent crisis.

Me - **slide** seen G at work in amazing ways but can still become anxious and fearful in certain situations - Immigration officer at Merauke.

2/ God's provision - He was gracious and tender 1 Kings 19v4. He knows our needs and meets our needs - **slide - youtube**

clip <https://youtu.be/fjJACryRAOA>

Provided basic needs food rest. stepped in when he had nothing. He was terrified, burnt out, wanted to die.

Earlier, in 1 K 17 2-6 God instructed Elijah to hide after announcing the drought and God sent him ravens with bread and meat twice a day, and had him near a brook with fresh water.

After fleeing post Mt Carmel - an angel brought him bread baked over hot coals and water - fresh bread supplied by angels, twice 1K 19 - 6,7

Illustration -

Chicken soup - not the soup, but the heart behind it.

Victor Hugo - Go to sleep in peace. God is awake. - French romantic writer and politician in the 1800s

MK in M - lost dad to covid. He just wanted to talk about his dad. Lisa just sat and listened

Application - We sometimes feel we need to work it all out, that we are on our own, that we can't show our emotion. God wants to comfort you lovingly and tenderly.

Isaiah 66:13 - As one whom a mother comforts, so I will comfort you –

We can go to Him in prayer. We can let Him know what troubles us. We can be still before Him and let Him comfort us.

3/God's presence - He revealed himself - showed Himself both powerful and intimate.

- Elijah traveled 40 days to Horeb, the mountain of God. Also called Mt Sinai, where God gave the 10 commandments to Moses.

God asked what are you doing here? V9 v.10- Elijah is dejected says he's done God's will but all God's prophets have been killed by the sword. and now they want to kill him.

God then reveals himself v11,12 - not in the wind, not in the earthquake, not in the fire, but in a still small voice. This is a contrast to God doing the spectacular at Mt Carmel and wind, earthquake & fire. He is both powerful and intimate.

Paul Maxwell - Rest isn't measured in hours or minutes but in proximity (to God)

We find true rest in God's presence. Elijah needed to be in the presence of God and God spoke to Him.

He again asks what Elijah is doing there v13.

God gives him fresh direction v 15-18 - including a successor.

Quote - Albert Einstein - A ship is safe in the harbor, but that's not what it's designed for. God recognizes his need for rest, provides it but then recommissions him.

Later he takes Elijah up to heaven. Along with Enoch, the only human not to die.

Application - we need to come into his presence.

Best practice model of member/pastoral care - slide Target with Master Care in the middle. It starts with our relationship with God. If you are struggling, or helping someone else who is, that is the starting point. Then self care/mutual care and specialist care.

M MK - very sad that he was forgetting his dad's face. We can come before G but often forget to or choose not to. Intimacy with Him is so special and so necessary.

Conclusion - As we reflect back on challenges of the past year and realize there will be challenges in the year ahead, we need to look to God's power and God's presence.

May we direct ourselves to Him and point others to Him in 2023