

I Can't Find an Emoji for That – Emotions Sermon Series

Defeating Discouragement

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Background

The enemy wants to bring us to the place of discouragement and despair. The enemy of our soul is an opportunist and takes advantage of any situation we provide him.

By nature, the demonic is lazy and cowardly and wants to use us to do his dirty work for him. When we agree with his dastardly plans, either consciously or subconsciously, we make life much easier for the enemy.

There is always a bigger picture that needs to be considered. God wanted to change the landscape of the leadership and government of Israel, and wanted to use Elijah to do it, but Elijah escaped before it became possible. The battle we are currently fighting is usually not what the real issue is about.

When we look at the story of Elijah and Jezebel; she caused this mighty prophet of God to become so discouraged by releasing a spirit of intimidation against him. Elijah became so distraught that he actually asked God to kill him. Can you imagine such a powerful and anointed man asking God to end his life?

In contrast, God always has a plan and a hope for the future. He is always working to create his perfect preferred future in our lives and in our ministry.

Central Truth

The enemy wants to draw pictures in our minds of gloom and doom that are contrary to the “preferred future” that God has for us, in the hopes that we will believe it and run from our assignment.

1 Kings 19:1-15

Elijah Escapes from Jezebel

¹⁹ And Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, also how he had ^aexecuted all the prophets with the sword. ² Then Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah, saying, ^b“So let the gods do to me, and more also, if I do not make your life as the life of one of them by tomorrow about this time.” ³ And when he saw *that*, he arose and ran for his life, and went to Beersheba, which *belongs* to Judah, and left his servant there.

^a 1 Kings 18:40

^b Ruth 1:17; 1 Kings 20:10; 2 Kings 6:31

⁴ But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness and came and sat down under a ¹broom tree. And he ^cprayed that he might die, and said, "It is enough! Now, Lord, take my life, for I am no better than my fathers!"

⁵ Then as he lay and slept under a broom tree, suddenly an ²angel touched him, and said to him, "Arise and eat." ⁶ Then he looked, and there by his head was a cake baked on ³coals, and a jar of water. So he ate and drank, and lay down again. ⁷ And the ⁴angel of the Lord came back the second time, and touched him, and said, "Arise and eat, because the journey is too great for you." ⁸ So he arose, and ate and drank; and he went in the strength of that food forty days and ^dforty nights as far as ^eHoreb, the mountain of God.

⁹ And there he went into a cave, and spent the night in that place; and behold, the word of the Lord came to him, and He said to him, "What are you doing here, Elijah?"

¹⁰ So he said, ^f"I have been very ^gzealous for the Lord God of hosts; for the children of Israel have forsaken Your covenant, torn down Your altars, and ^hkilled Your prophets with the sword. ⁱI alone am left; and they seek to take my life."

God's Revelation to Elijah

¹¹ Then He said, "Go out, and stand ^jon the mountain before the Lord." And behold, the Lord ^kpassed by, and ^la great and strong wind tore into the mountains and broke the rocks in pieces 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 and after the earthquake a fire, *but* the Lord was not in the fire; and after the fire ⁵a still small voice.

¹³ So it was, when Elijah heard *it*, that ^mhe wrapped his face in his mantle and went out and stood in the entrance of the cave. ⁿSuddenly a voice came to him, and said, "What are you doing here, Elijah?"

¹⁴ ^oAnd he said, "I have been very zealous for the Lord God of hosts; because the children of Israel have forsaken Your covenant, torn down Your altars, and killed Your prophets with the sword. I alone am left; and they seek to take my life."

¹⁵ Then the Lord said to him: "Go, return on your way to the Wilderness of Damascus; ^pand when you arrive, anoint Hazael as king over Syria. ¹⁶ Also you shall anoint ^qJehu the son of Nimshi as king over Israel. And

¹ juniper

^c Numbers 11:15; Jeremiah 20:14–18; Jon. 4:3, 8

² Or *Angel*

³ hot stones

⁴ Or *Angel*

^d Exodus 24:18; 34:28; Deuteronomy 9:9–11, 18; Matthew 4:2

^e Exodus 3:1; 4:27

^f Romans 11:3

^g Numbers 25:11, 13; Psalms 69:9

^h 1 Kings 18:4

ⁱ 1 Kings 18:22; Romans 11:3

^j Exodus 19:20; 24:12, 18

^k Exodus 33:21, 22

^l Ezekiel 1:4; 37:7

⁵ a delicate whispering voice

^m Exodus 3:6; Is. 6:2

ⁿ 1 Kings 19:9

^o 1 Kings 19:10

^p 2 Kings 8:8–15

^q 2 Kings 9:1–10

^rElisha the son of Shaphat of Abel Meholah you shall anoint as prophet in your place. ¹⁷^sIt shall be *that* whoever escapes the sword of Hazael, Jehu will ^tkill; and whoever escapes the sword of Jehu, ^uElisha will kill. ¹⁸^vYet I have reserved seven thousand in Israel, all whose knees have not bowed to Baal, ^wand every mouth that has not kissed him.”¹

Sequential Order - The Flow of Events

- Jezebel threatens to kill Elijah through a messenger
- Elijah believes what he sees and becomes intimidated
- Elijah prays to die and when that does not happen, he runs for his life
- Discouragement overtakes Elijah.

MAIN POINTS

1. **Consider the source of all messages** - Jezebel sent a messenger with a threat to kill Elijah and to intimidate him - **the enemy will send messengers to intimidate us because he wants to discourage us**
 - a. 2 Corinthians 12:7 even though I have received such wonderful revelations from God. So to keep me from becoming proud, I was given a thorn in my flesh, a messenger from Satan to torment me and keep me from becoming proud. (NLT)
 - i. The messenger draws a picture in Elijah's mind - he saw the picture
 - ii. When Elijah **saw** the picture, he ran for his life
 - iii. Elijah **believed** what he saw and heard - he empowered it.
2. **Discouragement always leads to isolation** - Elijah ran away all by himself and hid - intimidation causes us to run away and hide
 - a. He left his servant behind - Intimidation leads to isolation and negative confessions
 - i. Job 3:25 For the thing I greatly feared has come upon me, and what I dreaded has happened to me. (NKJV)
 - b. He prayed that God would kill him - intimidation leads us to pray death over ourselves
 - c. Intimidation leads us to self-deprivation or takes us to the place where we say, “It is useless to serve God.”
 - d. Intimidation leads us to quit

^r 1 Kings 19:19–21; 2 Kings 2:9–15

^s 2 Kings 8:12; 13:3, 22

^t 2 Kings 9:14–10:28

^u [Hosea 6:5]

^v Romans 11:4

^w Hosea 13:2

¹ [The New King James Version](#). (1982). (1 Kings 19:1–18). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

- e. When we come off a major God-victory (public) the enemy will come after us - we are susceptible to the enemy
- f. If we run, our assignment will be over, delayed and our destiny disrupted
 - i. Malachi 3:14: You have said, 'It is useless to serve God; What profit is it that we have kept His ordinance, and that we have walked as mourners before the Lord of hosts?' (NKJV)
 - ii. **Signs that we are under the influence of intimidation**
 - Fear
 - Isolation
 - Desire to quit - "I have had enough"
 - Prayers - that focus on - "take me out"
 - Flight - run away.

3. **God always has a plan and a remnant**

Timeless Truths from This Story

- Threats against our soul are meant to intimidate us
- If we believe it - we will empower it because the devil is an opportunist
- We will pray death over ourselves
- We take flight - away from battle and confrontation
- Discouragement will quickly come upon us
- Our geography is often determined by our state of mind. God asked Elijah, *"What are you doing here?"*

Group questions and discussion

1. What negative pictures does the enemy attempt to draw in your mind?
2. What is the "truth" that God wants to convey to you?
3. Describe a time that you were intimidated. How did it impact you?
4. Why did Elijah run and give up after such a powerful victory? Can this happen to us as well?
5. Why did Jezebel have such influence over Elijah?
6. Why was God only in the "still small voice"? What does that look like today?
7. Does the term "remnant" still apply to us today? What does it mean? Does God still have a remnant of people?