

**BOOK OF 1 KINGS**  
**FACTORS OF ELIJAH'S DEPRESSION**  
**1 KINGS 19:4**

**Introduction**

Last time we saw how that the Prophet Elijah tumbled from faith to fear and depression.

*WE SAW THE REPORT TO JEZEBEL FROM AHAB! (19:1)*

*WE SEE JEZEBEL'S THE RESPONSE TO THE REPORT! (19:2)*

*WE SEE ELIJAH'S RESPONSE TO JEZEBEL'S MESSAGE! (19:3)*

*WE SEE ELIJAH'S REQUEST TO THE LORD TO LET HIM DIE! (19:4)*

It is interesting that Elijah's point of greatest strength in chapter 18, his faith, became his most vulnerable point in chapter 19. Elijah had won the battle on Mt. Carmel by faith, but then he lost his peace by fear!

But the question is why? How did Elijah get to this point? What are some of that factors that may have led to Elijah's depression? Let's look and see:

**I. ONE POSSIBLE FACTOR WAS FATIGUE.**

**(i.e. Elijah was drained physically!)**

Think about it! Elijah went through the activities of the Mt.Carmel showdown and then ran twenty miles, and probably had little, if any, food intake.

Then, after being threatened by Jezebel, he fled for his life on another approximately 120 mile journey (which would have taken anywhere from 5-8 days) to Beersheba where he dropped off his servant and then went another days journey into the wilderness!

Just traveling a few hours journey in a car wears me out, I can only imagine what traveling by foot or by camel or donkey for days might do to you!

Listen, when we are tired (or even weak or sick), it is easier for us to become depressed. We can become very vulnerable.

Remember how Satan tempted Jesus after a forty-day fast (Matthew 4). Lack of rest can create a physical imbalance which can lead to emotional depression.

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That is why God established the Sabbath day—So that man and beast alike can rest every seventh day. **“Sabbath”** comes from a Hebrew word that means **“to cease”** or more specifically **“to rest from labor”**. Exodus 23:12 *“Six days thou shalt do thy work, and on the seventh day thou shalt rest: that thine ox and thine ass may rest, and the son of thy handmaid, and the stranger, may be refreshed.”*

*Deuteronomy 5:14 “But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thine ox, nor thine ass, nor any of thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates; that thy manservant and thy maidservant may rest as well as thou.”*

If we violate this principle of rest, it can begin to catch up with us. (e.g. I personally experienced this when I worked as a tax accountant during the last few weeks of tax season every year.)

**Jesus said:**

*Mark 2:27 “...The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath.”*

Working is important. But so is resting. We must be careful about having too many irons in the fire. Even Jesus called His disciples to rest:

*Mark 6:31 “And he said unto them, Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest a while: for there were many coming and going, and they had no leisure so much as to eat.”*

**SO,**  
**II. ONE POSSIBLE FACTOR WAS FATIGUE.**  
**ANOTHER POSSIBLE FACTOR WAS FLOUNDERING FEELINGS. (i.e. Elijah was drained emotionally!)**

**Understand that extreme emotional highs can also lead to deep emotional lows when they are over!**

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Have you ever had a situation where you were able to keep going, and going, and going because your body's adrenaline was helping you get through a very busy time and you were able to get a lot done and you look back and were amazed that you were even able to do that!

Then all of a sudden you got to the end of your body's adrenaline rush and you crashed emotionally! It can happen!

From the time that the LORD told Elijah to go show himself to Ahab until this point, he was like the "*Energizer Bunny!*" But listen, there comes a point that even the "*Energizer Bunny*" is going to have to have his batteries replaced!

Elijah was able to keep going and going and going at one point with the emotional highs and the busyness of the situation and then after those emotional highs were over it appears here that he "*crashed and burned*" emotionally—he was let down, run down and broken down!

We need to be prepared for the emotional lows which may come our way after some emotional highs!

**Be sure to get proper rest and nutrition so you don't become either physically or emotionally drained or both!**

This was a time when Elijah needed some quiet time with the LORD. Instead of coming to the LORD looking for help in this emotionally draining time, Elijah just wanted the LORD to end it all for him!

But we will see, the LORD gave Elijah what he **NEEDED**, **NOT** what he asked for! Because he didn't know it, but the LORD wasn't done with him yet! He may have thought that the LORD was done with him and his time was done, but that wasn't the case!

He may have felt like he had been "*running on fumes*" and that even the fumes were gone at this point, but no matter how empty the tank, the LORD can fill us up and get us back to where we need to be!

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*FATIGUE, FLOUNDERING FEELINGS,...*

**III. ANOTHER POSSIBLE FACTOR WAS HIS FOCUS ON TRIALS AND TROUBLES!**

Had Elijah forgotten about how the LORD got him to this point? Had he forgotten the direction, the protection, the provision, and the power of the LORD he had experienced up to this point?

Unfortunately here, Elijah did not dwell upon the LORD as he should have, but rather upon the threats of Jezebel to kill him.

When a severe crisis comes our way, most of us have a tendency to magnify our problems and lose sight of the Lord and His care.

We can feel overwhelmed and we can sink into the quicksands of our dire circumstances that Satan wants to use to swallow us up!

Remember when Peter walked on the water in Matthew 14:22-33? The disciples saw Jesus walking on the water toward their ship. Peter wanted to walk on the water. The Lord told him to come on out and he did! He was walking toward Jesus and then when he got his eyes off of Jesus and began to focus on the wind and the storm, he began to sink and the Lord reached out and saved him from sinking!

If we are not careful, our present problems can get us down and we will forget all about the LORD! Because any time we take your eyes off the LORD, our Source of courage, we begin to lose it.

Remember what Paul said in Philippians.  
*Philippians 4:4—“Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice.”*

Do you remember where Paul said this? It was from a prison cell. Paul rejoiced in the Lord even though his immediate circumstances were dire and things were not going his way. Just like the LORD was in the fire with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, the LORD was in the prison with Paul!

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As Believers, we are to trust the Lord with our all!

*Proverbs 3:5-6 – “Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.”*

**IV. ANOTHER POSSIBLE FACTOR WAS THAT HIS FELLOWSHIP WITH OTHERS WAS LACKING!**

Depression can feed on loneliness! I can't explain it, but it just does!

In fact, Elijah here gets to the point that he believes he is all alone in his service for the LORD and that there is nobody else enduring hardship because of their faith and service of the LORD! (*Vs 10, 14*)

Was that true? No! (*Vs 18*)

But listen, Elijah made his situation worse here by leaving his servant behind!

This should remind us of the importance of the local Church. It plays an important role of fellowship! We need one another! If you are going through some things alone, you don't have to be!

*Ecclesiastes 4:9-12—Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labor. [10] For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up. [11] Again, if two lie together, then they have heat: but how can one be warm alone? [12] And if one prevail against him, two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken.*

Unfortunately, when we get depressed, the tendency is for us to evade people. We just want to be left all alone to suffer in silence. That is NOT a good thing! When we are down is when we need others the most.

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**Conclusion**

So, if you are dealing with depression right now:

1. Make sure you are getting enough rest.
2. Evaluate your priorities. Are they in line with the LORD's priorities for you?
3. Don't neglect your walk with the LORD! Walk with Him in both the Word and prayer!
4. Invest your life in others!  
We are going to see that Elisha needed Elijah to help prepare him for what the LORD was going to do in his life!
5. Keep your focus upon the LORD and not your problems!
6. Commit your goals, life, and expectations to the Lord.

Prepare for those times of vulnerability, especially after a victory.