

Flourishing in the Drought

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Bible Study – 1 Kings 17:1-6

“Now Elijah, who was from Tishbe in Gilead, told King Ahab, ‘As surely as the Lord, the God of Israel lives – the God I serve – there will be no dew or rain during the next few years until I give the word!’ Then the Lord said to Elijah, ‘Go to the east and hide by Kerith Brook, near where it enters the Jordan River. Drink from the brook and eat what the ravens bring you, for I have commanded them to bring you food.’ So Elijah did as the Lord told him and camped beside Kerith Brook, east of the Jordan. The ravens brought him bread and meat each morning and evening, and he drank from the brook.” 1 Kings 17: 1-6 (NLT)

The desert is a dry place. Just the word, **DESERT**, evokes images of dry, cracked earth. Unbearable heat. Parched throat and dry lips. Oceans of sand, with miles and miles of unstimulating brown and tan landscape. Tall, looming saguaro cactus. The occasional scruffy shrub. The desert appears to be in a perpetual dry season with no apparent life forms, other than the cacti and shrubs. And maybe the occasional snake or lizard.



Have you ever experienced a dry season in life? A period in your life when it seemed like few things seemed to be going right? A time when your connection with God was beginning to wane? That feeling of being spiritually disconnected and dried out? Maybe you are there right now. Like a literal drought, we can experience spiritual droughts. It may be because of a traumatic event such as loss of a job, relationship problems, medical issues, grief over the loss of a friend or loved one. Sometimes it is the result of not listening carefully to God's will. At these times all we see in our heart is a vast desert. We feel desperately dried out and perhaps abandoned. How can we not just survive, but **flourish** in the dry seasons of our lives?

The prophet Elijah found himself in such circumstances. In 1 Kings 17, Elijah was called to be a prophet during a time of moral and spiritual collapse in Israel.

Read 1 Kings 17:1

(“Now Elijah, who was from Tishbe in Gilead, told King Ahab, ‘As surely as the Lord, the God of Israel, lives – the God I serve – there will be no dew or rain during the next few years until I give the word!’ ”)

Many of the Israelites had ceased to follow God. Some even began “hedging their bets” by worshipping many different Gods, just to cover all the bases. The King of Israel was desperate to appease a variety of gods, so he married off his son to the high priestess of Baal. The nation had turned to gods who claimed to have control over the rain clouds. In the midst of all this, God required Elijah the prophet to be the bearer of bad news to the people: There would be no rain or dew in the land until God’s people turned back to Him.

This horrible drought was not a surprise out of left field. God had been urging His people to follow Him, yet they chose their own path. This literal desert season was a result of their own disobedience.

- **Think of a time when you chose your *own* path, even though you sensed that God was leading you in a different direction. How did that go for you?**
- **At what point did you sense that there would be consequences for your choice?**
- **Did you see the consequences as a punishment? Or as a way for God to open your eyes and shake you back into reality?**



It’s true. Sometimes we bring these desert seasons into our own lives because we aren’t following God. Maybe we find ourselves becoming complacent, just going through the motions. Or, similar to Elijah, we may be surrounded by people who are turning away from God, and we are fighting not to get swept away in despair. It’s during the dry times that we can learn to trust God and not allow negative feelings, discouragement, or temptations to run our lives.

Emotions are powerful things. But our faith can be even more powerful. Ask yourself these questions:

- **How much of my faith is based on emotions? Is this a good or bad thing? Read James 1:6.**

(“But when you ask, you must believe and not doubt, because the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind.”)

It is important to have a firm footing in your faith so that fickle emotions are unable to shake you loose when difficulty arises.

- **What is true about God even when I don’t feel it? Read Romans 5:1 & 2, and Hebrews 13:8**

("Therefore, since we have been made right in God's sight by faith, we have peace with God because of what Jesus Christ our Lord has done for us. Because of our faith, Christ has brought us into this place of undeserved privilege where we now stand, and we confidently and joyfully look forward to sharing God's glory." Rom. 5:1 & 2)

("Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever." Hebrews 13:8)

Sometimes our emotions get the better of us. But God is merciful. Through Elijah, God demonstrated His merciful provision and unmatched ability. God was looking for people who would walk with **faith** and look to Him. Elijah, and everyone else who heard God's message, had exactly two choices: they could put their faith in God to carry them through the dry season, or they could choose not to. The King, Queen, and many Israelites chose to not trust in God, turning to other gods and their own intuition to try and save themselves. Elijah made the right decision by turning to God and relying on Him. He set the example for the nation.

Most of us don't turn to other gods when things are difficult, but I'm not sure we can always say that we truly trust in God 100%. Humans tend to have a knee-jerk reaction to these things.

- **What do you usually do when your spiritual life is going through a dry spell?**

Let's revisit the question from earlier in this study: **How can we not just survive, but flourish in the dry seasons of our lives?**

Elijah knew what to do during this drought, and he came through. We can follow his example by doing these things:

1. **Stay in the Word.** Elijah listened to God. It is especially important that we keep our ears open during dry times. Even when it doesn't appear to be influencing anything in our lives, keep reading God's Word.
2. **Stay Faithful.** We need to follow God even when we feel unenthusiastic or unmotivated. Look back at 1 Kings 17:3. Elijah went to the Kerith Ravine simply because God told him to go. Obedience leads to blessings.
3. **Stay Calm.** We all have times that are dry spiritually. So, don't panic. God has not forgotten about you. Like Elijah, rest in this truth.
4. **Stay Open.** God might have an unusual way of providing for you. Elijah was willing to be fed by ravens! Don't ignore His small blessings and His unlikely resources.
5. **Stay Thankful!** In the midst of the drought, offer praise and thanksgiving to the Lord. Do not let your feelings rob you of the opportunity to praise and thank God even when the



times are hard. It's easy to praise and thank God when things go well, but true women of God praise Him through the trials as well.

Do you feel yourself languishing in a dry season? Is your soul parched and crying out for some living water? Trust in the Lord. He has not left you or forsaken you. He WILL bring you through this drought!

Prayer: Almighty God, you know how much I need you. On my own, I can get caught up just following my feelings and being overwhelmed by my circumstances. Please help me to think clearly and make good decisions. Thank you that you always care about me and you can provide in any spiritual drought. I want to stay receptive to Your solutions, directions, and promptings. I give You the glory in Jesus' name. Amen.

