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Binding up the broken hearted

1 Kings 19:1-16

"1 And Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, also how he had executed all the prophets with the sword.

2 Then Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah, saying, "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.

4 But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a broom tree. And he prayed 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 angel touched him, and said to him, "Arise and eat."

6 Then he looked, and there by his head was a cake baked on coals, and a jar of water. So he ate and drank, and lay down again.

7 And the angel 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 forty nights as far as Horeb, 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, "I have been very zealous for the LORD God of hosts; for 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."

11 Then He said, "Go out, and stand on the mountain before the LORD." And behold, the LORD passed by, and a 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 a still small voice.

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

14 And 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; and when you arrive, anoint Hazael as king over Syria.

16 "Also you shall anoint Jehu the son of Nimshi as king over Israel. And Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abel Meholah you shall anoint as prophet in your place."

I made reference to something this morning and I did not do it glibly

I thought it through earnestly and sincerely.

I said that:

I personally no longer hold that depression by and large is chemical.

I believe there are seasons and times in a persons life when there maybe a chemical imbalance – for example a woman after pregnancy a man or a woman in the middle of mid-life changes.

But by and large I believe that depression is situation, circumstantial, individual and spiritual and I believe is largely self induced.

About 25% of people will at one stage or another in any given year suffer from some form of mental illness, mental struggle or depressive state.

And this brings me to my first thought for this evening:

1. Depression is not logical

The moment of his greatest victory is the moment of his biggest crash

2. v13 Depression is self indulgent

Elijah refused to move beyond his 'pain' he refused to be encouraged in the Lord and get beyond his feelings.

God tried to get his attention beyond what he felt or what Jezebel had said but he refused to move

My family has suffered depression for years.

It destroyed my parents marriage, it played havoc on my childhood

All because people refuse to see anything else beyond themselves

3. v5, v 7 v11, v13

Elijah refused to see God in the midst of his circumstances, he kept on coming back time and again to his problem, he did not see the solution

It isn't your situation that's causing you to feel depressed.

What depresses you is the attention you give to that situation.

Your life may indeed be filled with circumstances you don't want, but that isn't the real source of your depression.

Negative circumstances can only induce depression when you focus your attention on them. If you withhold your attention, your circumstances are powerless to affect you, regardless of how bad they seem.

Elijah spent his time looking at the threat of Jezebel, he could no longer see the God who had just ordained and orchestrated a great victory.

Consider a simple example. Suppose you're deep in debt with no end in sight, and you hate being in debt. The debt is only depressing when you think about it. If you think about something else that makes you happy, something good about your life, then at least temporarily, you won't be depressed.

So it's not the existence of the debt that depresses you. It's only your noticing the debt and not wanting it that depresses you.

Another example: Suppose you're feeling lonely.

You notice you don't have an intimate relationship, and that makes you feel lonely.

But is it the absence of the relationship that makes you feel lonely? Or do you only feel lonely when you pay attention to the fact that you don't have the relationship you desire?

When you're engrossed in a really good movie or a compelling book, you completely forget that you're lonely, don't you?

But if you stick your head up and notice you're all alone, or if you notice a happy couple and contrast it with your own situation, then your loneliness quickly returns.

I know this sounds overly simplistic and perhaps even useless, but just humor me for a moment.

I think you can agree that you only feel depressed while you pay attention to negative circumstances, such as your lack of money, lack of a relationship, or lack of good health.

But here's the key point: Your circumstances are NOT the true source of your depression. The true source of your depression is your attention... specifically your habit of putting your attention on what you don't want.

Elijah did not want the attention of Jezebel, he had spent his entire ministry fighting her and Ahab.

4. v 16 Depression will rob you your destiny

Elijah did not enter into the fullness of what God had for him, it was taken off him and given to another because he refused to see God in the midst of his circumstance.

Over coming depression

1. Jesus is the answer

Luke 4:18, 19

“18 “The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed;

19 To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD.””

There is a part of it all where you need that supernatural encounter with Christ

All things start with Him

You have to allow Him, by His word and spirit to bind up the brokenhearted

To bind up – to make whole what was once shattered

But after that initial touch, I believe we have a responsibility

2. Withdraw your attention from what depresses you

Elijah was looking at Jezebel and not at God.

But how do you stop looking at something?

Have you ever found yourself talking to someone with a pimple on the end of their nose?

And all you are trying to do is not look at the pimple

And all you see is the pimple?

3. Remember you are a spirit inside a body and you have a soul

The first thing that God led Elijah to do was to eat and sleep.

There is a difference between the sleep cycle of a depressant and the need for sleep by someone facing depression.

You have to do things in the natural in order to put things in order in the mental and I believe spiritual.

- Read your bible
 - Get rest
 - Get physical exercise
- Serotonin: the chemical that makes you feel good.
Anti Depressants are the chemical.

The mid-life changes that affect women and men both are the drop in estrogen and testosterone that affects the body. These are offset by:

Healthy eating
Regular exercise
Sleep
Physical and mental stress

- Watch what you wear and what you do
- What you say

4. Allow yourself to be encouraged

God will send people to you

He will speak to you from the word

These things have to be your focus

They have to form a new reality

5. Allow others to speak into your situation

Who have you got that will both encourage and pull your chain if it needs pulling.

Someone to help with a reality check

6. Make a disaster list

What is the worst thing that can happen if the worst thing happens?

7. Get a vision bigger than you