

Title: Running on Empty

Passage: 1 Kings 19:1-8

Introduction:

Life can be hard and difficult. It is wise to turn to the one sovereign God who holds the whole world in His hands.

Isaiah 46:9-10

for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me, declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done, saying, "My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all My purpose"

- when we feel tired and running on empty, we can find renewed strength in God. As Elijah did...

Passage: 1 Kings 19:1-8

Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and how he had killed all the prophets with the sword. Then Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah, saying, "So may the gods do to me and more also, if I do not make your life as the life of one of them by this time tomorrow." Then he was afraid, and he arose and ran for his life and came to Beersheba, which belongs to Judah, and left his servant there. But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness and came and sat down under a broom tree. And he asked that he might die, saying, "It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life, for I am no better than my fathers." And he lay down and slept under a broom tree. And behold, an angel touched him and said to him, "Arise and eat." And he looked, and behold, there was at his head a cake baked on hot stones and a jar of water. And he ate and drank and lay down again. And the angel of the Lord came again a second time and touched him and said, "Arise and eat, for the journey is too great for you." And he arose and ate and drank, and went in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights to Horeb, the mount of God.

Context:

- Elijah had a great victory over Baal prophets on Mt Carmel where fire came down heaven to consume Elijah's sacrifice over the Baal prophets.
- But he was threatened and fled. Elijah fell into depression.

Symptoms of Running on Empty, Spiritually

I. Overcome by Fear

1 Kings 19:2

Then Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah, saying, "So may the gods do to me and more also, if I do not make your life as the life of one of them by this time tomorrow."

- Elijah is threatened by Queen Jezebel who brought real danger (she killed God's prophets, 1 Kings 18)
- He lost sight of the greater God who can overcome his fears.

II. Exhaustion

1 Kings 19:4-5a

But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness and came and sat down under a broom tree. And he asked that he might die, saying, "It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life, for I am no better than my fathers." And he lay down and slept under a broom tree.

- Elijah journeyed for a long time and was at the point of physical exhaustion.

III. Loneliness

1 Kings 19:3

Then he was afraid, and he arose and ran for his life and came to Beersheba, which belongs to Judah, *and left his servant there.*

- Elijah was alone
- We need partners in every aspect of God.
- God has said “it is not good to be alone” (this is a human need)

IV. Meaningless of Life

1 Kings 19:4b

And he asked that he might die, saying, “It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life, for I am no better than my fathers.”

- Elijah had a horizontal perspective and thought things were hopeless and his ministry was fruitless
- But God does not assess your ministry on human terms. It is always by God’s grace. He evaluated by your faithfulness to your call.

Remedies

I. Get Rest

1 Kings 19:5

And he lay down and slept under a broom tree. And behold, an angel touched him and said to him, “Arise and eat.”

- Elijah was allowed to sleep well.
- Don’t overbook your schedule. Allow margin in your life for God to speak and renew you.
 - Find your rest in Jesus Christ

Matthew 11:28

Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

Colossians 3:15

And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful.

II. Renew

1 Kings 19:6

And he looked, and behold, there was at his head a cake baked on hot stones and a jar of water. And he ate and drank and lay down again.

- Elijah was renewed through a balanced diet, meal.

John 6:51

I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh.”

- Be renewed by Jesus, the Living Bread. We can find refreshment through His Word.

III. Remember God's character/attributes

1 Kings 19:8

And he arose and ate and drank, and went in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights to Horeb, the mount of God.

- Elijah was focused on his efforts and what he did. Self-focus.
- Elijah was then directed to go see God face-to-face where he saw God afresh/anew.

- When we see God, we find a new perspective on our circumstances.
- Be reminded of who God is and what He has done for you.
 - God is always good and always faithful. Good meaning we are refined in character to reflect Jesus.

IV. Run

1 Kings 19:8

And he arose and ate and drank, and went in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights to Horeb, the mount of God.

- At Mt. Horeb, Elijah still had something to do (God called him to anoint three kings)

1 Kings 19:15-16

And the Lord said to him, "Go, return on your way to the wilderness of Damascus. And when you arrive, you shall anoint Hazael to be king over Syria. And Jehu the son of Nimshi you shall anoint to be king over Israel, and Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abel-meholah you shall anoint to be prophet in your place.

We can find renewed strength and vision through God

Hebrews 12:1-3

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted.

Hebrews 4:14-16

Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Isaiah 40:28-31

Have you not known? Have you not heard?

The Lord is the everlasting God,
the Creator of the ends of the earth.

He does not faint or grow weary;
his understanding is unsearchable.

He gives power to the faint,
and to him who has no might he increases strength.
Even youths shall faint and be weary,

and young men shall fall exhausted;
but they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength;
they shall mount up with wings like eagles;
they shall run and not be weary;
they shall walk and not faint.

Other Bible verses shared in service:

Romans 15:13

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.

1 Peter 1:3-9

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! According to his great mercy, he has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, who by God's power are being guarded through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials, so that the tested genuineness of your faith—more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.