

Elijah

“A man with a nature like ours”
James 5:17-18

Introduction: What do you think of Elijah? Do you think of a man with a powerful prayer life; staggering faith; whole-hearted devotion to God; dauntless courage? Do you think of him as a man of God being carried into heaven (2 Kings 2:11)? Yet, James says Elijah was a man with a nature like ours (Jas. 5:17-18).

James is telling us that Elijah’s nature was no different than ours. Though he did great things and much by the power of God, he was subject to the same difficulties in life. Our lesson will focus on his feelings of worthlessness.

I. A man subject to discouragement.

A. We begin our study by finding Elijah in utter despair under a juniper tree (1 Kings 19:1-4).

1. He just ran from Carmel to Jezreel some 30 miles (1 Kings 18:42, 46).
2. He fled an additional 100 miles for his life (1 Kings 19:3).
3. He traveled a day’s journey more where we find him (1 Kings 19:4).
4. He’s tired, lonely and in fear for his life.

B. It is at times like this that we are spiritually vulnerable.

1. Some people allow bitterness over their situation to enter the picture (Heb. 12:12, 15). Bitterness can happen to anyone.

2. Elijah seems to have taken root in his bitterness (1 Kings 19:5-10).

II. No matter how bad it gets in life; we are not alone (Rom. 11:2-5).

A. God illustrates this to Elijah (1 Kings 19:11-12). No matter what happened, Elijah didn’t suffer harm. God knows how to protect his own.

B. God is always with us even when we think we are alone (Heb. 13:5).

C. Trials are not a reason to give up (1 Pet. 4:12-19). It’s all about a proper perspective.

III. No matter how difficult things get; our labor is not in vain (1 Cor. 15:58).

A. We must continue to do good (Luke 6:35).

B. We must continue to reach out to others (Mark 16:15-16).

Conclusion: The remedy to discouragement is not to sit and dwell upon despair. Get yourself up and get about living your life (1 Kings 19:13-15a). Solomon put it this way, “*I returned and saw under the sun that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, nor bread to the wise, nor riches to men of understanding, nor favor to men of skill; but time and chance happen to them all*” (Eccl. 9:11). Elijah is more like us than we think.