Elijah’s Successes:
- Spoke directly to King Ahab
- Brought drought by prayer
- Stayed safe from King Ahab
- Survived the famine
- Blessed the Widow of Zarephath with daily food
- Raised the dead
- Commanded King Ahab to assemble Israel and 850 false prophets
- Prayed down fire from God
- Led all Israel to turn back to God
- Rain came by his praying
- Put 850 false prophets to death
- Outran the King’s chariot

From sunshine to black clouds.
- At the close of chapter 18, "the hand of the Lord was on Elijah," as he ran before Ahab's chariot. At the beginning of chapter 19 (vs. 4) he is occupied with self and, asking God to "take away my life."
- In the 17th and 18th chapter of 1 Kings we see the prophet at his best; in 19th chapter we see him at his worst.

Terrorized by a woman’s note!

*1 Kings 19:1 And Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, also how he had executed all the prophets with the sword.*

- She undoubtedly noticed that the drought had ended and that the rain had returned and anxiously awaited a report about the success of her idolatrous prophets over the prophet Elijah.
- But, King Ahab gave a report of “what Elijah had done”.
  - He had mocked her priests
  - He held them up to the scorn of the people
  - How he had put them to confusion by his challenge
  - How, as if by some magic spell, had brought down fire from the sky.
  - How the people became so excited
  - How they had fallen on their faces, saying "Jehovah, He is the God; Jehovah, He is the God."
  - How he had killed all 850 of her idolatrous prophets.
• Queen Jezebel had lost her influence over the entire Kingdom of Israel. If this national reformation were permitted to develop, it would overthrow what she had worked for years to establish.

Vs. 2 Jezebel’s threat to God’s prophet.

*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.”*

• Instead of ordering her officers to slay the Prophet she sent a note by a messenger!
  o She probably considered the public opinion at that time.
  o By not backing the threat with action, she only intended intimidation.
  o Her actions stemmed from her complete failure and total frustration.

Vs. 3 What was Elijah’s reaction?

*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.*

• He ran from a messenger with a woman’s note!
• Elijah saw himself dead like the word of the note said.
  o He believed her report! His mind was occupied with her power and fury, and therefore his heart filled with terror.
  o It is important what you see on the inside.
  o *For as he thinks in his heart, so is he.* Prov. 23:7
  o Going out of faith and into fear was the beginning of Elijah’s downfall.

Lessons from Vs. 2 and 3

1. You must continue to trust in God and not listen to the Devil.

• When Ezekiel was standing in faith he stood boldly before the King, soldiers and the entire Kingdom of Israel as well as slaughtering 850 idolatrous prophets. Now he ran from a woman’s note. What was the difference?
  o Before, he stood in faith in God’s word and God’s power.
    ▪ Faith in God is the only deliverer from carnal fear: “*Behold, God is my salvation: I will trust, and not be afraid.*” “*Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee, because he trusteth in Thee*” (Isaiah 12:2; 26:3),
    ▪ Elijah’s mind was no longer stayed upon Jehovah, and therefore fear took possession of him. He lost sight of the Lord and saw only a furious woman.
    ▪ It was when Peter took his eyes off Jesus and “*saw the wind boisterous*” that “*he was afraid and began to sink*” (Matt. 14:30)
    ▪ Contrast between Elijah here and Moses, who “*by faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king, for he endured as seeing Him who is invisible*” (Hebrews 11:27)
2. Satan worked through Jezebel and he works on you.
   • He will threaten you with the intention of intimidating you.
   • He will tell you all kinds of negative stuff but he can’t bring it upon you, you bring it on yourself.
     o “* will kill you.”
     o “Your marriage won’t work.”
     o “You’re no good.” “You’re a loser.”
     o “Everybody looks down on you.”
   • If you believe the Devil and begin to imagine it, you have stopped depending on God and have entered into fear.
     o You do it to yourself.
     o Satan has no teeth, but if you let him he will gum you to death!

3. You are at your weakest in the middle of your successes.
   • Most people think the opposite.
   • Christians usually seek God most when their back is against the wall and their life is out of control.
   • You need to stay with God as much in the middle of your success as you do in a crisis.
     o Example: Riding in a car going 70 MPH.
       ▪ If you step out of the car, you WILL slow down!
       ▪ It is your position in the car that is taking you 75 MPH.
     o It is your position in Christ that brings you success.
       ▪ If you step out of Christ, you WILL slow down!

4. Pride goes before destruction.

Vs. 3 “He arose and ran for his life”
   • He ran—not for God, nor for the good of His people, but because he thought only of self.
     o After all his successes, he must have thought he was something special and he took his eyes off God and onto himself.
     o He thought only of self when the people needed him most. Their convictions needed to be strengthened and the work of reformation needed to be encouraged and firmly established.
     o Prov. 16:18, Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.
     o Jeremiah 10:32, O Lord, I know the way of man is not in himself; It is not in man who walks to direct his own steps.
     o God made man to work in unison with Him. We are “joint heirs with Christ” (Rom. 8:17). It is a cooperation. We work with the Lord as a team.
     o Jesus said in John 15:5, for without me you can do nothing.
     o Many have been blessed and successful and began to think they are doing it.
• The spirit and courage, that Elijah had previously manifested, were of the Lord, and not himself.

• If you are beginning to depend on yourself more and more and on God less and less, you can learn a valuable lesson at Elijah’s expense instead of at your own expense.

**In the wilderness**

Vs. 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!”

• The last thing mentioned in Chapter 3 was *the hand of the Lord came upon Elijah* and he ran to Jezreel.
  o Why did he not stay there and wait upon the Lord for directions?
  o All pleasure had gone out of life and the joy of the Lord was no longer his strength.

Lesson: When we quit waiting upon the Lord and no longer trust Him, we will find ourselves in the wilderness!

• He went 80 miles from Jezreel in Israel to Beersheba at the most southern point in Judah—the beginning of nowhere. That was not enough; he left his servant there and went a day’s journey into the wilderness.

• He then gave up.
  o He said, "*I have had enough! LORD, take my life..."*

• He also said, "*I am no better than my fathers* (ancestors).”
  o He was looking only to himself. Without trusting God He was no better than others.

Lesson: Without God, without Christ, without the leading of the Holy Spirit, we are empty, fearful and come to a point that we can’t take it any more.

**Refreshed (Vs. 5-8)**

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.

Elijah had given up on God, but God had not given up on him.

• Most people think that God is ready to give them a thrashing at the least violation.
Lesson: God deals with us in love and mercy.

- He is the God of all grace. (1 Peter 5:10)
  o Grace takes no account of our worthiness or unworthiness, of our deservedness or undeservedness.
  o It is easy to think that God loves us when we are at Cherith and Carmel doing His will, but, it is not easy when we find ourselves in the wilderness, running from God.

- God sent a meal from Heaven’s kitchen. He sent a celestial being to do lowly tasks like baking a cake over a campfire and supplying a canteen of water!
  o God didn’t give up on Elijah after the first attempt to revive and refresh him. The angel came a second time and encouraged him to take nourishment and be strengthened for what lay ahead of him.

Lesson: God knows what lies ahead of us and will supply us our needs.

- We sing John Mark McMillan’s song “Oh, how He loves us so.” And He does!
  o Psa 91:11 For He shall give His angels charge over you, to keep you in all your ways.
  o Heb. 1:14 Angels are ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation?
  o Psalms 103:13 As a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD has compassion on those who fear Him.

Lesson: When we choose our own journey, it becomes too much for us.

Vs.7b The journey is too great for you.

- What journey?
  o He had not been directed to take any journey.
  o His self directed journey was away from duty.
  o It had led only to weakness, starvation, and depression.

Lesson: When we accept God’s help it gives us supernatural advantages. (Vs. 8)

- Elijah became an endurance runner and a mountain climber. He traveled for 40 days and nights and covered 200 miles.
  o How did one meal sustain him so long? How does one meal provide energy for one day?
  o The same God that makes a meal energize us for 40 minutes can make it energize for 40 days when He so pleases!

Elijah wasn’t “there” where God left him

Vs. 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?”
God asked him, “**What are you doing here?**”

- What are you doing here.
  - He was not “there” where God had left him. He had left his post.
  - God had left him “there” where Israel needed his light. “Here” he was hiding in a dark cave.

- **What** are you doing here?
  - Are you doing good or evil?

- What are you doing here?
  - Something for yourself, for the Lord, or doing nothing?
  - Are you doing your own desires or His desires for you?

- What are **you** doing here?
  - Who are you?
  - You are a servant of the Lord. *For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s.* 1 Cor. 6:20

**Elijah lost sight of the big picture.**

Vs. 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.”*

- He justified himself, *been very zealous*, and blamed Israel.
- Most of what he said was the truth.
- His despair was not for a lack of zeal for Israel’s reform, but for a fear of failure.
- King Ahab was unaffected. Queen Jezebel was threatening his life. He had lost sight of Israel’s revival.
- He felt that he was all alone, had done all he could, and that the responsibility of turning the nation back to God was his alone.
- That he was a complete failure, and that he was about to be killed.
- He thought only of himself.
  - 1 Kings 18:22 Elijah said “**I alone am left a prophet of the Lord.**” and in 19:14 he told the Lord, “**I alone am left: and they seek to take my life.**”
  - He knew better. Just the day before the showdown on Mt. Carmel Obadiah had told him that he had save 100 prophets in caves (18:4).
  - The Lord reminded him, later, (vs18) that there were 7,000 in Israel that were still faithful to Him.

**Lesson:** When we get depressed, we focus only on self and lose sight of God and the big picture.

**We can get addicted to the spectacular.**

Vs 11-14 *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; and after the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire; and after the fire a still small voice. 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?”

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.”

God chose to speak to Elijah in a still quiet voice, not in dramatic, earth shaking events. God chose to make known his mind to Elijah in whispers soft, not in those dreadful power! Elijah had heard God’s voice concerning Israel’s idolatrous ways and God’s intent to send a drought. That’s what started this whole thing. But when God did the spectacular, Elijah no longer heard God’s gentle whispers.

Here at Mt. Horeb Elijah saw the spectacular wind, earthquake and fire, but, the Lord was not in them. He spoke to him in a still small voice.

- Different translations render this:
  - a gentle breeze
  - a quiet whispering voice
  - a soft whisper

- Elijah had to learn to again hear God’s small voice, rather than hearing from Him in the spectacular.

- God asked him a second time, “What are you doing here, Elijah?”
  - I think Elijah should have sensed that his first answer must have not been right.
  - But, instead of repenting and saying he was sorry for being irresponsible; he gave the same excuse, again.

Lessons:

1. When we have spiritual victories, it’s easy to lose sight of God’s part.
   - Take our blessings for granted.
   - Not give much thought to it.

2. We can expect the spectacular miracles of God and miss the small everyday ways God blesses and protects us.

3. God communicates to us in many ways, some without speech or words.
   - Psa. 19:1-2 The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky proclaims the work of His hands. Day after day they pour out speech; night after night they communicate knowledge. HCSB
   - Romans 1:20 For ever since the world was created, people have seen the earth and sky. Through everything God made, they can clearly see his invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature. So they have no excuse for not knowing God. NKJV
• Another way is through daily fellowship with God, thinking about His Word, and sensing His will in His gentle mental nudges.

4. If God gives you a test, and you fail, expect to have to take the test again until you learn.
• When things start going wrong, don’t just keep on following your feelings instead of the truths that God has revealed to you. Stop, and ask God what is wrong.

5. This says a lot about God.
• Here is Elijah, hiding out instead of being in Samaria spearheading this great revival. An entire nation had turned to God, and the one God ordained to run it was gone.
• God could have turned him into a pile of ashes if He wanted to.
  o Instead, God sent angels to minister to him.
  o And then appeared to him on Mt. Horeb and ask him “What are you doing here?”
    ▪ He answered him wrong.
    ▪ Instead of yelling at him or slapping him down, God gave him another chance.
    ▪ Instead of repenting, Elijah answered him wrong again.
  o God did deal with him and it changed Elijah’s ministry, but God was merciful.
• This shows that God doesn’t bless you just when you do everything right.

Elijah disobeys God on his next assignment yet, bypasses death.

Vs. 15-19 *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. 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. It shall be that whoever escapes the sword of Hazael, Jehu will kill; and whoever escapes the sword of Jehu, Elisha will kill. Yet I have reserved seven thousand in Israel, all whose knees have not bowed to Baal, and every mouth that has not kissed him.”* So he departed from there, and found Elisha the son of Shaphat, who was plowing with twelve yoke of oxen before him, and he was with the twelfth. Then Elijah passed by him and threw his mantle on him.

• Elijah told three things to do.
  o Anoint Hazael as king over Syria.
  o Anoint Jehu as king over Israel.
  o Anoint Elisha as a prophet in your place.
• Elijah half way did the last thing first and 13 years later Elisha anointed Hazael as king over Syria and anointed Jehu as king over Israel (2 Kings 8 and 9)
• Elijah really messed up here, but he is one of only two who did not taste death, and went directly to Heaven.