

07

1 KINGS 19:9-18

GOD'S SOFT WHISPER

THIS WEEK'S **focus**

Life can be hard—we can all agree on that. It would be really nice if doing the right thing equaled an easier life, but it often doesn't. In fact, Jesus promised His disciples, "You will have suffering in this world" (John 16:33). He didn't say this to discourage them, of course, but to prepare them to face the challenges of the world. Jesus wanted His disciples to have peace, so He told them to remember that He had conquered the world and to be courageous (John 16:33). Jesus was a man, but He was also God, so He was able to offer a unique perspective. Just as Elijah will discover in today's lesson, Jesus knew that when we focus on God, He turns despair into hope.



CENTRAL **truth**

When we focus on God and His purposes, He turns our despair into hope.



EXPLORE

scripture

1 KINGS 19:9-18

1 KINGS 19:9-10

9 He entered a cave there and spent the night. Suddenly, the word of the LORD came to him, and he said to him, “What are you doing here, Elijah?” **10** He replied, “I have been very zealous for the LORD

God of Armies, but the Israelites have abandoned your covenant, torn down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword. I alone am left, and they are looking for me to take my life.”

1 KINGS 19:11-14

11 Then he said, “Go out and stand on the mountain in the LORD’s presence.” At that moment, the LORD passed by. A great and mighty wind was tearing at the mountains and was shattering cliffs before the LORD, but the LORD was not in the wind. After the wind there was an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake. **12** After the earthquake there was a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire. And after the fire there was a voice, a soft whisper. **13** When Elijah

heard it, he wrapped his face in his mantle and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave. Suddenly, a voice came to him and said, “What are you doing here, Elijah?” **14** “I have been very zealous for the LORD God of Armies,” he replied, “but the Israelites have abandoned your covenant, torn down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword. I alone am left, and they’re looking for me to take my life.”

1 KINGS 19:15-18

15 Then the LORD said to him, “Go and return by the way you came to the Wilderness of Damascus. When you arrive, you are to anoint Hazael as king over Aram. **16** You are to anoint Jehu son of Nimshi as king over Israel and Elisha son of Shaphat from Abel-meholah as prophet in your place. **17** Then Jehu will put to death

whoever escapes the sword of Hazael, and Elisha will put to death whoever escapes the sword of Jehu. **18** But I will leave seven thousand in Israel — every knee that has not bowed to Baal and every mouth that has not kissed him.” team. Elijah walked by him and threw his mantle over him.

DAILY devotions

MEMORIZE PSALM 42:5

7 ARROWS FOR BIBLE READING



What does this passage say?



What does this passage tell us about God?



What did this passage mean to its original audience?



How does this passage change the way I relate to people?



What does this passage tell us about man?



How does this passage prompt me to pray?



What does this passage demand of me?

day 1

1 KINGS 19:1-8a

DWELL



Why was Elijah so discouraged? What did God provide in response?



What does the angel's provision teach you about the importance of pausing to rest when you are weary?

Elijah was running for his life. Queen Jezebel had sworn to kill him, and he was feeling isolated and alone. He was depressed and exhausted, and didn't know what to do next. So he wandered out into the wilderness, slept beneath a tree, and prayed that God would just end his misery. He had done great works for the Lord, but now he didn't know how to keep going. In the middle of his exhaustion, though, God sent an angel to care for him. God gave His servant food, water, rest, and comfort. When we are at the end of our rope, we can turn to God and trust Him to restore us if we rest in Him.

MEMORIZE

Print out Psalm 42:5 and read it slowly, highlighting key words and phrases that stand out to you. Review this printout throughout the week.

PRAY

Pray that God would restore your strength when you are weary and give you the encouragement you need to keep going.

day 2

1 KINGS 19:8b-13

DWELL

Horeb was the region where Moses had received the Ten Commandments and God's covenant. After resting, Elijah took the long journey to this same place. Perhaps he was hoping that God would speak to him and restore his faith in the same powerful, mighty way He had done with Moses. But even though God displayed His power to Elijah in wind, fire, and an earthquake, He did not speak through any of these. Instead, He spoke with a gentle, quiet voice—not exactly the dramatic conversation Elijah probably had in mind. God doesn't always speak the way we want Him to, but He always speaks in exactly the way He needs us to hear from Him.

← Why might Elijah have wanted to hear from God in the same way that He had spoken to Moses?

→ How can you have patience and wait on God when He doesn't answer you the way you wish He would?

MEMORIZE

Split Psalm 42:5 into 4–5 sections, and write each section on a different note card. Try to memorize a different note card each day.

PRAY

Thank God that He speaks to us in both mighty miracles and in quiet whispers, and pray that He would help you listen to both.

day 3

1 KINGS 19:14-18

DWELL

God asked Elijah, "What are you doing here?" Elijah still had work to do, but instead he had come to Horeb—not as an act of worship, but as an act of frustration. As he laid out his complaints to God, perhaps he was hoping that God would take away some of his burden. But God had other plans for Elijah, and His orders were direct and to-the-point: *Go back the way you came. Get back to work and enlist some help, because there's still a lot of work to be done.*

↓ How do you think Elijah felt about God's instructions and the way He spoke to him? How would you have reacted?

↔ Who has God brought into your life to help you accomplish the things He asks you to do?

MEMORIZE

Add reminders to your phone, computer, or calendar to read Psalm 42:5 every morning and night this week.

PRAY

Ask God to show you who the other believers are in your life who He wants you to learn from and serve alongside with.

day 4

PSALM 42:1-8

DWELL

When we are deeply discouraged, our first reaction isn't usually to praise God. Usually we complain, and we pray for Him to just take away our pain. But the psalmist's example offers us a different strategy. When we are in pain, we can remember the goodness of God and all the ways He has provided for us in the past. We can have confidence that even when we are hurting, God can be a deep source of comfort and satisfaction. His promises will never fail and we can trust that He will provide the same "living water" He promised the woman at the well (John 4:10).

↑ How does remembering God bring the psalmist comfort?

↪ How can this psalm inspire your own prayers when you need comfort and strength?

MEMORIZE

Write Psalm 42:5 on a sticky note and post it somewhere you will see it often, like a bathroom mirror or notebook. Read it to yourself each time you see it.

PRAY

Thank God that He is a deep well of comfort and strength for His people in times of trouble.

day 5

MATTHEW 11:28-30

DWELL

When we're exhausted or discouraged, it can be hard to make wise choices. Our emotions may be running high; we may not have the strength to think things through. We might turn to junk food, television, or "retail therapy" to comfort us. But when we are weary, Jesus tells us that we can come to Him and rest in His wisdom. Instead of just being a distraction from our troubles, He can sustain us and give us the rest we actually need, as well as the guidance we need to move forward.

↪ How would Jesus's words have been comforting to a people who were oppressed and hoping for a Savior?

↪ What might it look like to turn to Jesus next time you are worn out and discouraged?

MEMORIZE

Write Psalm 42:5 on the center of a piece of paper, then add drawings or doodles around the edges that relate to the Scripture.

PRAY

Thank Jesus for the easy yoke of His wisdom, and pray that He would draw near to you when you need rest.