

I have had enough, Lord. 1 Kings 19v1-18. 18 May 2003

The process of collapse.

At Mount Carmel, Elijah seems to have become one of the Bible's 'all stars' He seemed to have nerves of steel. In fact he was just like us – he knew power and fear (James 5v17). So what may have caused the collapse of 1Kings 19?

Reasons for collapse in the Christian life.

- i. Anger. Surrounded by evil, righteous anger can be replaced but anger against people and a bitter root can spring up.
- ii. Pride. Move from God focus to self-consciousness. What if...?
- iii. Physical exhaustion.
- iv. Disappointment. All our hard work and now.... What's the point? Anger, bitterness, self-pity can take root.
- v. Delay. Proverbs 13v12. Waiting endlessly. If only I knew the reason. Perplexity saps strength.
- vi. Busyness. Beware the barrenness of a busy life.

Elijah wanted to be alone – sent the servant away. All purpose was lost. I might as well be dead. He felt worthless and of no use. Many feel this at some time.

Broken believers aren't made redundant. God doesn't give up or ignore.

The process of restoration.

We are restored by grace not a frenzy of our activity. Should we pray louder and longer, fast and read my bible? These are good if we are there to receive from God, not impress him.

God remembers Elijah's humanity. He allows him to sleep. He receives food from an angel (not a raven – God's provision is gracious). Then God gives him time – 40 days before the next step.

Elijah returns to Horeb, the place of the covenant the foundation of his faith. There God meets with him.

- i. **Identity and accountability.** Why are you here? Elijah felt worthless and a nobody. But he was god's servant, not a nobody. Elijah faced reality and accountability. Why are you running away?
- ii. **Intimacy.** God did not come in power and judgement with a punishment for failure but with a whisper. *You stoop down to make me great.* Ps.18v35. God loves you but not because of your service for him. He delights in you.
- iii. **Commission.** Elijah is given a specific commission. Furthermore God tells him his ministry is worth reproducing.

In John 11v43 Jesus confronts a dead body – but he speaks identity. Lazarus, come out! Despite the rottenness, Jesus feelings haven't changed. Leave the tomb of despondency, self-pity and uselessness. Take up your new commission.