

PASTOR'S NOTE

13 AUGUST 2017

The great prophet Elijah is worthy of our focus and attention. In our opening scripture today (1 Kings 19: 4-13) we see Elijah down and out. He's discouraged because the wicked Queen Jezebel is out to get him.

Nothing is going well for him. All his works and efforts seem to be going down the gurgler. He wandered through the desert, physically and psychologically exhausted and sits under the broom tree. He's depressed, despairing and asks God to end his life.

He's a desperate prophet.

In our lives his anxiety and insecurity can be found at times.

Don't we all at times get down and want to opt out?

We lament the endless and unresolvable wars on our planet, the number of people homeless in our city, the high suicide statistics especially among the young in our country. We note the crime and violence that is fed on a daily basis to us. Illness, especially mental illness, is so prevalent. The lack of truth and integrity in politicians and leaders, and within our own hearts so often we feel the pain of our failures, the hurt of broken relationships, the loneliness of just where we are at.

Just like Elijah – we can despair, we are overwhelmed and we want to give up.

Our personal lives can force us to fume and brood under the broom tree. There is so much to drive us there.- the loss of a child or spouse through death. The loss from divorce, the loss of job, the loss of virtue. Betrayals, disappointments, addictions and spiritual emptiness. We all have Elijah moments.

Elijah comes to solitude, he's forced by what has happened to him to be still.

Exhausted under the tree he comes to silence to recover, he comes to listen to the Lord.

The well that is Elijah's life is empty. Now, by stopping and being silent, he can begin to recharge and fill the well once again.

The scripture tells us that when Elijah woke up he sees a small cake and some water. Where did this come from? Possibly it was there all the time, but he never noticed. He was so down he didn't expect anything. This story tells us to be alert to the little things.

So often we become overwhelmed by life's burdens – we are exhausted – and we fail to fill our wells and stop noticing the significant things staring us in the face.

Our culture is compelled with being busy. We think being busy will impress.

If there is one thing our society and our personal lives need, it is solitude and silence. Without that we end up running on empty. Being busy is the false god of our time. Too many of us worship this false god.

Under the tree full of despair Elijah, in silence and stillness, finds a new direction in life.

We can all learn so much from our experience of Elijah.

Let Elijah challenge us to create space in our lives for silence, stillness and solitude.

What a world of difference that will make!

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