

The Life of Elijah

Perseverance in prayer leads to total surrender [humility]

Chapter 206- Emptied of Self

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Chapter 206 – Emptied of Self

Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit.

James 5: 17, 18 {CC 212.1}

Important lessons are presented to us in the experience of Elijah. When upon Mt. Carmel he offered the prayer for rain, his faith was tested, but he persevered in making known his request unto God. . . . Had he given up in discouragement at the sixth time, his prayer would not have been answered, but he persevered till the answer came. ***We have a God whose ear is not closed to our petitions; and if we prove His word, He will honor our faith. He wants us to have all our interests interwoven with His interests, and then He can safely bless us; for we shall not then take glory to self when the blessing is ours, but shall render all the praise to God.*** God does not always answer our prayers the first time we call upon Him; for should He do this, we might take it for granted that we had a right to all the blessings and favors He bestowed upon us. Instead of searching our hearts to see if any evil was entertained by us, any sin indulged, we should become careless, and fail to realize our dependence upon Him, and our need of His help. {CC 212.2}

Elijah humbled himself until he was in a condition where he would not take the glory to himself. This is the condition upon which the Lord hears prayer, for then we shall give the praise to Him. The custom of offering praise to men is one that results in great evil. One praises another, and thus men are led to feel that glory and honor belong to them. When you exalt man, you lay a snare for his soul, and do just as Satan would have you. . . . God alone is worthy to be glorified. {CC 212.3}

As he [Elijah] search his heart, he seemed to be less and less, both in his own estimation and in the sight of God. It seemed to him that he was nothing, and that God was everything; and when he reached the point of renouncing self, while he clung to the Saviour as his only strength and righteousness, the answer came. {CC 212.4}

Chapter 207 - Overwhelmed by Discouragement

And he requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers. 1 Kings 19:4. {CC 213.1}

It would seem that after showing courage so undaunted, after triumphing so completely over king and priests and people, Elijah could never afterward have given way to despondency nor been awed into timidity. *But he who had been blessed with so many evidences of God's loving care was not above the frailties of mankind, and in this dark hour his faith and courage forsook him. ...*

Had he remained where he was, had he made God his refuge and strength, standing steadfast for the truth, he would have been shielded from harm. The Lord would have given him another signal victory by sending His judgments on Jezebel. . . . {CC 213.2}

Into the experience of all there come times of keen disappointment and utter discouragement--days when sorrow is the portion, and it is hard to believe that God is still the kind benefactor of His earthborn children; days when troubles harass the soul, till death seems preferable to life. It is then that many lose their hold on God. . . . Could we at such times discern with spiritual insight the meaning of God's providences we should see angels seeking to save us from ourselves, striving to plant our feet upon a foundation more firm than the everlasting hills, and new faith, new life, would spring into being.... {CC 213.3}

For the disheartened there is a sure remedy--faith, prayer, work. Faith and activity will impart assurance and satisfaction that will increase day by day. . . . In the darkest days, when appearances seem most forbidding, fear not. Have faith in God. He knows your need. He has all power. His infinite love and compassion never weary.... And He will bestow upon His faithful servants the measure of efficiency that their need demands. . . . {CC 213.4}

Did God forsake Elijah in his hour of trial? Oh, no! He loved His servant no less when Elijah felt himself forsaken of God and man than when, in answer to his prayer, fire flashed from heaven and illuminated the mountaintop. {CC 213.5}

Chapter 208 - What Doest Thou Here?

**And he came thither unto a cave, and lodged there; and, behold, the word of the Lord came to him, and he said unto him, What doest thou here, Elijah?
1 Kings 19:9. {CC 214.1}**

Elijah's retreat on Mount Horeb, though hidden from man, was known to God; and **the weary and discouraged prophet was not left to struggle alone with the powers of darkness that were pressing upon him. . . .** {CC 214.2}

God met His tried servant with the inquiry, "What doest thou here, Elijah?" I sent you to the brook Cherith and afterward to the widow of Sarepta. I commissioned you to return to Israel and to stand before the idolatrous priests on Carmel, and I girded you with strength to guide the chariot of the king to the gate of Jezreel. But who sent you on this hasty flight into the wilderness? What errand have you here? . . . {CC 214.3}

Much depends on the unceasing activity of those who are true and loyal, and for this reason **Satan puts forth every possible effort to thwart the divine purpose to be wrought out through the obedient. He causes some to lose sight of their high and holy mission, and to become satisfied with the pleasures of this life. . . . Others he causes to flee in discouragement from duty, because of opposition or persecution. . . . To every child of God whose voice the enemy of souls has succeeded in silencing, the question is addressed, "What doest thou here?" I commissioned you to go into all the world and preach the gospel, to prepare a people for the day of God. Why are you here? . . .** {CC 214}.

Of families, as of individuals, the question is asked, "What doest thou here?" In many churches there are families well instructed in the truths of God's word, who might widen the sphere of their influence by moving to places in need of the ministry they are capable of giving. God calls for Christian families to go into the dark places of the earth and work wisely and perseveringly for those who are enshrouded in spiritual gloom. . . . **For the sake of worldly advantage, for the sake of acquiring scientific knowledge, men are willing to venture into pestilential regions and to endure hardship and privation. Where are those who are willing to do as much for the sake of telling others of the Saviour?** {CC 214.5}

Chapter 209 – Elijah’s Needed Today

Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him. 1 Kings 19:18. {CC 215.1}

Elijah had thought that he alone in Israel was a worshiper of the true God. But He who reads the hearts of all revealed to the prophet that there were many others who, through the long years of apostasy, had remained true to Him. . . . {CC 215.2}

From Elijah's experience during those days of discouragement and apparent defeat there are many lessons to be drawn, lessons invaluable to the servants of God in this age, marked as it is by general departure from right. **The apostasy prevailing today is similar to that which in the prophet's day overspread Israel. In the exaltation of the human above the divine, in the praise of popular leaders, in the worship of mammon, and in the placing of the teachings of science above the truths of revelation, multitudes today are following after Baal.** Doubt and unbelief are exercising their baleful influence over mind and heart, and many are substituting for the oracles of God the theories of men. It is publicly taught that we have reached a time when human reason should be exalted above the teachings of the Word. The law of God, the divine standard of righteousness, is declared to be of no effect. The enemy of all truth is working with deceptive power to cause men and women to place human institutions where God should be, and to forget that which was ordained for the happiness and salvation of mankind. {CC 215.3}

Yet this apostasy, widespread as it has come to be, is not universal. Not all in the world are lawless and sinful; not all have taken sides with the enemy. God has many . . . who are hoping against hope that Jesus will come soon to end the reign of sin and death . . . These need the personal help of those who have learned to know God and the power of His word. . . . As those who have an understanding of Bible truth try to seek out the men and women who are longing for light, *angels of God will attend them* . . . Many will cease to pay homage to man-made institutions and will take their stand fearlessly on the side of God and His law. {CC 215.4}

Chapter 210 - In Moments of Weakness

And he said, I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts: because the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away. 1 Kings 19:14. {CC 216.1}

If, under trying circumstances, men of spiritual power, pressed beyond measure, become discouraged and desponding, if at times they see nothing desirable in life, that they should choose it, this is nothing strange or new. Let all such remember that one of the mightiest of the prophets fled for his life before the rage of an infuriated woman.... Those who, while spending their life energies in self-sacrificing labor, are tempted to give way to despondency and distrust, may **gather courage from the experience of Elijah. . . . {CC 216.2}**

It is the time of greatest weakness that Satan assails the soul with the fiercest temptations. . . . He who had maintained his trust in Jehovah during the years of drought and famine, he who had stood undaunted before Ahab, he who throughout that trying day on Carmel had stood before the whole nation of Israel the sole witness to the true God, **in a moment of weariness allowed the fear of death to overcome his faith in God. . . . {CC 216.3}**

When we are encompassed with doubt, perplexed by circumstances, or afflicted by poverty or distress, **Satan seeks to shake our confidence in Jehovah. . . . But God understands, and He still pities and loves.** He reads the motives and the purposes of the heart. To wait patiently, to trust when everything looks dark, is the lesson that the leaders in God's work need to learn. Heaven will not fail them in their day of adversity. **Nothing is apparently more helpless, yet really more invincible, than the soul that feels its nothingness and relies wholly on God. {CC 216.4}**

Not alone for men in positions of large responsibility is the lesson of Elijah's experience in learning anew how to trust God in the hour of trial. He who was Elijah's strength is strong to uphold every struggling child of His, no matter how weak. **Of everyone He expects loyalty, and to everyone He grants power according to the need. {CC 216.5}**

[NOTE: God's expectation of you is not based on your performance, but on your loyalty. Your job is to stay connected to Him. His job is everything else.]

Jehoshaphat: Another Example of Trusting God When Things Look Bleak

Chapter 211 - The Battle is the Lord's

O our God, wilt thou not judge them? for we have no might against this great company that cometh against us; neither know we what to do: but our eyes are upon thee. 2 Chron. 20:12. {CC 217.1}

Toward the close of Jehoshaphat's reign the kingdom of Judah was invaded by an army before whose approach the inhabitants of the land had reason to tremble. . . . Jehoshaphat was a man of courage and valor. For years he had been strengthening his armies and his fortified cities. **He was well prepared to meet almost any foe; yet in this crisis he put not his trust in the arm of flesh.** Not by disciplined armies and fenced cities, but by a living faith in the God of Israel, could he hope to gain the victory over these heathen who boasted of their power to humble Judah in the eyes of the nations. {CC 217.2}

"Jehoshaphat feared, and set himself to seek the Lord, and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah. And Judah gathered themselves together, to ask help of the Lord: even out of all the cities of Judah they came to seek the Lord." Standing in the temple court before his people, **Jehoshaphat poured out his soul in prayer, pleading God's promises, with confession of Israel's helplessness.** . . . {CC 217.3}

With confidence Jehoshaphat could say to the Lord, "Our eyes are upon Thee." For years he had taught the people to trust in the One who in past ages had so often interposed to save His chosen ones from utter destruction; and now, when the kingdom was in peril, Jehoshaphat did not stand alone; "all Judah stood before the Lord, with their little ones, their wives, and their children." **Unitedly they fasted and prayed; unitedly they besought the Lord to put their enemies to confusion, that the name of Jehovah might be glorified.** . . . {CC 217.4} [*NOTE: they were praying for preservation, but more importantly they were praying, "that the name of Jehovah might be glorified."*]

God was the strength of Judah in this crisis, and **He is the strength of His people today. We are not to trust in princes, or to set men in the place of God.** We are to remember that human beings are fallible and erring, and that He who has all power is our strong tower of defense. **In every emergency we are to feel that the battle is His.** His resources are limitless, and apparent impossibilities will make the victory all the greater. {CC 217.5}

Chapter 212 - The Battle Song

And when he had consulted with the people, he appointed singers unto the Lord, and that should praise the beauty of holiness, as they went out before the army, and to say, Praise the Lord; for his mercy endureth for ever. 2 Chron. 20:21. {CC 218.1}

It was a singular way of going to battle against the enemy's army--praising the Lord with singing, and exalting the God of Israel. This was their battle song. They possessed the beauty of holiness. **If more praising of God were engaged in now, hope and courage and faith would steadily increase.** And would not this strengthen the hands of the valiant soldiers who today are standing in defense of truth? {CC 218.2}

They praised God for the victory, and four days thereafter the army returned to Jerusalem, laden with the spoils of their enemies, singing praise for the victory won. {CC 218.3}

When we have a deeper appreciation of the mercy and loving-kindness of God, we shall praise Him, instead of complaining. We shall talk of the loving watch care of the Lord, of the tender compassion of the Good Shepherd. The language of the heart will not be selfish murmuring and repining. Praise, like a clear, flowing stream, will come from God's truly believing ones. . . . {CC 218.4}

Why not awake the voice of spiritual song in the days of our pilgrimage? . . . **We need to study God's Word, to meditate and pray. Then we shall have spiritual eyesight** to discern the inner courts of the celestial temple. We shall catch the notes of thanksgiving sung by the heavenly choir around the throne. When Zion shall arise and shine, her light will be most penetrating, and songs of praise and thanksgiving will be heard in the assembly of the saints. **Little disappointments and difficulties will be lost sight of.** {CC 218.5}

NOTE: The Lord is our helper. . . . No one ever trusted God in vain. He never disappoints those who put their dependence on Him. If we would only do the work that the Lord would have us do, walking in the footsteps of Jesus, our hearts would become sacred harps, every chord of which would send forth praise and thanksgiving to the One sent by God to take away the sin of the world.

Chapter 217 - Elijah's Successor

Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.

1 Cor. 15:51, 52. {CC 223.1}

In the desert, in loneliness and discouragement, Elijah had said that he had had enough of life and had prayed that he might die. But the Lord in His mercy had not taken him at his word. There was yet a great work for Elijah to do; and when his work was done, he was not to perish in discouragement and solitude. Not for him the descent into the tomb, but the ascent with God's angels to the presence of His glory.
{CC 223.2}

"And Elisha saw it, and he cried, My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof. And he saw him no more: and he took hold of his own clothes, and rent them in two pieces. He took up also the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and went back, and stood by the bank of Jordan; and he took the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and smote the waters, and said, Where is the Lord God of Elijah? and when he also had smitten the waters, they parted hither and thither: and Elisha went over. And when the sons of the prophets which were to view at Jericho saw him, they said, The Spirit of Elijah doth rest on Elisha. And they came to meet him, and bowed themselves to the ground before him." {CC 223.3}

When the Lord in His providence sees fit to remove from His work those to whom He has given wisdom, He helps and strengthens their successors, if they will look to Him for aid and will walk in His ways. They may be even wiser than their predecessors; for they may profit by their experience and learn wisdom from their mistakes. {CC 223.4}

Elijah, the man of power, had been God's instrument for the overthrow of gigantic evils. . . . As successor to Elijah was needed one who by careful, patient instruction could guide Israel in safe paths. For this work Elisha's early training under God's direction had prepared him. . . . {CC 223.5}

Every act of life is a revelation of character, and he only who in small duties proves himself "a workman that needeth not to be ashamed," will be honored by God with weightier trusts. {CC 223.6}