

Stories 3.0 (Cameron Carson) The Ways of Despair

1 Kings 19:1-19a

"Life can take you to some dark places. Places where you can feel separated from God. But God is always there, and He will guide you from those places and welcome you back with open arms." ~Cameron Carson

THE WAY TO DESPAIR

📖 1 Kings 19:1–2 (NIV) "Now Ahab told Jezebel everything Elijah had done and how he had killed all the prophets with the sword. ² So Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah to say, "May the gods deal with me, be it ever so severely, if by this time tomorrow I do not make your life like that of one of them."

📖 Ephesians 6:12 (NIV) "For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms."

📖 Deuteronomy 11:11 (NIV) "...the land you are crossing the Jordan to take possession of is a land of mountains and valleys..."

📖 1 Kings 20:28 (ESV) "...a man of God came near and said to the king of Israel, "Thus says the Lord, 'Because the Syrians have said, "The Lord is a god of the hills but He is not a god of the valleys," therefore I will give all this great multitude into your hand, and you shall know that I am the Lord.'

THE WAY OF DESPAIR

📖 1 Kings 19:3–4 (NIV) "Elijah was afraid and ran for his life. When he came to Beersheba in Judah, he left his servant there, ⁴ while he himself went a day's journey into the desert. He came to a broom tree, sat down under it and prayed that he might die. "I have had enough, Lord," he said. "Take my life; I am no better than my ancestors."

1. We **forget what God did.**
2. We **isolate ourselves.**
3. We **don't want to live.**
4. We **discount our worth.**


📖 Psalm 55:6–8 (NIV) "I said, "Oh, that I had the wings of a dove! I would fly away and be at rest— ⁷ I would flee far away and stay in the desert...⁸ I would hurry to my place of shelter, far from the tempest and storm."

📖 Numbers 11:14–15 (NIV) I cannot carry all these people by myself; the burden is too heavy for me. ¹⁵ If this is how you are going to treat me, put me to death right now—if I have found favor in your eyes—and do not let me face my own ruin."


📖 Jeremiah 9:2 (NIV) "Oh, that I had in the desert a lodging place for travelers, so that I might leave my people and go away from them..."

THE WAY OUT OF DESPAIR


1. **Eat well and get some rest.** (vv. 5-8)

 1 Kings 19:5–8 (NIV) “Then he lay down under the tree and fell asleep. All at once an angel touched him and said, “Get up and eat.”⁶ He looked around, and there by his head was a cake of bread baked over hot coals, and a jar of water. He ate and drank and then lay down again.⁷ The angel of the Lord came back a second time and touched him and said, “Get up and eat, for the journey is too much for you.”⁸ So he got up and ate and drank. Strengthened by that food, he traveled forty days and forty nights until he reached Horeb, the mountain of God.”


2. **Share everything with God.** (vv. 9-10)

 1 Kings 19:9–10 (NIV) “There he went into a cave and spent the night. And the word of the Lord came to him: “What are you doing here, Elijah?”¹⁰ He replied, “I have been very zealous for the Lord God Almighty. The Israelites have rejected your covenant, broken down your altars, and put your prophets to death with the sword. I am the only one left, and now they are trying to kill me too.”


3. **Wait for God to speak.** (vv. 11-14)

 1 Kings 19:11–14 (NIV) “The Lord said, “Go out and stand on the mountain in the presence of the Lord, for the Lord is about to pass by.” Then a great and powerful wind tore the mountains apart and shattered the rocks 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 came a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire. And after the fire came a gentle whisper.¹³ When Elijah heard it, he pulled his cloak over his face and went out and stood at the mouth of the cave. Then a voice said to him, “What are you doing here, Elijah?”¹⁴ He replied, “I have been very zealous for the Lord God Almighty. The Israelites have rejected your covenant, broken down your altars, and put your prophets to death with the sword. I am the only one left, and now they are trying to kill me too.”

4. **Invest yourself in others.** (vv. 15-17)

 1 Kings 19:15–17 (NIV) “The Lord said to him, “Go back the way you came, and go to the Desert of Damascus. When you get there, anoint Hazael king over Aram.¹⁶ Also, anoint Jehu son of Nimshi king over Israel, and anoint Elisha son of Shaphat from Abel Meholah to succeed you as prophet. Through these three men, God would complete the purge of Baal worship that Elijah began¹⁷ Jehu will put to death any who escape the sword of Hazael, and Elisha will put to death any who escape the sword of Jehu.”

5. **Know you are not alone.** (v. 18).

 1 Kings 19:18 (NIV) “Yet I reserve seven thousand in Israel—all whose knees have not bowed down to Baal and all whose mouths have not kissed him.”

6. **Move your feet.** (v. 19a)

 1 Kings 19:19a (NIV) “So Elijah went from there...”

Digging Deeper In what ways do you relate to Cameron’s Story? Can you describe the darkest time in your life? What led up to it? What got you out of it? Why do you think it is so easy for us to forget what God has done? What unique method has God used to speak to you? God never wastes an experience.-- Good ones and bad ones, God never wastes one. What does God want to do with what you went through? Would you be willing to share your Story on video?