



Resilience amid Doubt and Depression

By Rev. Euthman Wray

Please read: 1 Kings 19: 1 – 15

“What are you doing here, Elijah?” This was the question asked of the prophet in 1 Kings 19, as he found himself in a particular “place”, literally on the run, in a desert, being clearly doubtful, desolate, depressed, and even inviting death. In verse 4, we hear the extent of his pain, “I have had enough, Lord. Take my life,” and rolled over to die.

Elijah wasn't always “here”. This was the person through whom many miracles were wrought, as seen between chapters 17 and 18 of 1 Kings: no rains for over three years (17:2 & 18: 41); the miraculous increase in the small provisions of a widow and her son (17: 16); the resurrection of the widow's son (17: 7 – 24); culminating with the miraculous calling down of fire from heaven as proof of the true God (18: 16 – 39).

He was “there” in the know, the active, the victories, the fulfillment of purposeful life and witness. But now, alone, leaving his servant behind intentionally, preferring to be by himself, he embarked on a 40-day journey into his wilderness of deep doubt and depression. So, from “there”, “here” he was. Yet, the troubling question, “What are you doing here, Elijah?”

What was this “here” for him? For one, this could be speaking of the physical location to which he had withdrawn, the intentional relocation of being far away from it or all of them. Yet even more assuredly, this could also refer to his mental/emotional and spiritual dislocation, characterized by his depression, doubt, and a death wish. A sense of failure, brokenness, and loss of desire to continue, achieve and live. He was alone and lonely. Elijah experienced a spiritual crisis of faith.

What aspect(s) of Elijah's “here” might be yours at this time? Life is unpredictable, uncertain, cruel at times, and challenges within family and personal life; with phases, stages, ills, and situations, the curve balls and boomerangs. All glorious and accomplishing, then suddenly painful and uncertain?

Yet this was not the end of Elijah. His story beyond this culminated in his choosing a successor and being caught up to heaven in a whirlwind. Yet how did he get through this, arising from that place? I submit three suggestions and two directives.

Based on the text, Elijah was reminded of three realities:

1. First, is the perpetual presence of God. Even though he had journeyed thus far, God showed up each time (V. 5, 7, 9, 13). The Psalmist echoes, “whither shall I go from thy presence?” (Ps. 139: 7?). Paul reassures us, “What can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus?” (Romans 8:). God's consoling presence never leaves us. He often uses various media to remind us of this truth, including memories of experiences, His word as now being spoken, and His scripture.

2. Second, is the providential power of the Lord. Twice along the journey, God miraculously provided food to strengthen Elijah (vs. 7 & 8) and later supplied more than enough resources (V. 15 – 18) as critical support for the continuation of life and fulfillment of purpose. The God who provided food for the widow and fire from heaven hasn't lost His power. He specializes in making the impossible possible and provides a way when there seems none, being eternally resourceful.

3. Third, is the peaceful whisper of God's reassurance and directives. Having gotten used to hearing and seeing God in the dramatic, spectacular, and dynamic, Elijah needed to understand the comforting, consoling, and reassuring God he served and the new ways he would be learning to relate with God. In addition, he was to realize that life would not only continue but much more needed to be achieved and accomplished through him. It isn't always easy to hear God's whispering tone. Yet it is sometimes in the salient and quiet moments of being still that He often speaks. Or rather than we can hear Him.

Two notable directives were given to Elijah:

- i) “Get up and eat” (v. 5 & 7) and
- ii) “Go back and...anoint...” (v. 15).

i. The first directive invited him and us to do the mundane, the usual, the regular. It is what O.C. Chambers refers to as “the initiative against depression”. Doubt and depression often dislocate us to the point of feeling inadequate to carry on, accomplish, or be productive. Here, we see the encouragement

to initiate the return by doing something simple, the mundane, the ordinary; get up, shower up, groom yourself, eat up. Isn't so that sometimes the ordinary things of life usher in the extraordinary, the sometimes unimaginable? These might not be what seem willing or even easy to do, yet it is the reminder of who God has been and will be which makes this ultimate difference.

ii. The later directive indicates Elijah's imminent return to normalcy of life and his calling, and the continued fulfillment of role and purpose. It just wasn't the end of the road. There was much more to accomplish. The present proverbial "rut in the road" or even the "valley of the shadow of death" isn't the end. We are constantly reminded that we might be in it, yet the better concept is that we are going through it. And "... He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus" (Philippians 1: 6).

Not only those in doubt and depression, despair, and dislocation, but we all are invited to never forget to remember that God's perpetual nearness provides comfort and reassurance. God's providential power provides, even miraculously, God offers us, in the stillness, consoling, comforting words of reassurance. It is in these moments we engage even in the mundane, knowing that a better and brighter day approaches.



By Rev. Dr. Yvette Noble-Bloomfield

The Cayman Islands Women's Fellowship held its Annual Retreat on Saturday, June 11, 2022, at the Elmslie Memorial Church.



'For Such a Time as This' was the theme for the Retreat. The RDGS provided the Reflection on the theme, based on Esther 4:1-17.



Three workshops which focused on Mental Health, Women's Health and Stress were held during the Retreat. The workshops were presented by Dr Alexandria Bodden, Dr Rhonda Reeves and Dr Julie Goodman, respectively.



The Chair of Council, Rev Rohan Forrester, provided a Reflection to end the Retreat, and he co-celebrated the Sacrament of Holy Communion with Rev L Christopher Mason, the Vice-Chair of Discipleship.

Ms Brenda Dawkins was the Chairperson for the Retreat, and Mr Denver Bloomfield provided the music. It was a time of praise, inspiration, information sharing and fellowship.

The Women's Fellowship expresses its thanks to the Elmslie Memorial Church, Staff and Rev Mason for graciously hosting the Retreat.



Ministry in Action

by Ms. Camile Watt



On Saturday, June 11, 2022, the Youth Discipleship Group of the Savannah United Church visited a new community development in the Savannah area and gave out tract, book markers and candy bags to welcome families to the neighborhood and to invite them out to church. This activity was part of their quarterly mission/evangelistic efforts.





Remember in your prayers

All those God has placed on your heart and those brought to your attention in some way. Offer praise, give thanks, and intercede. Consider how you can become an answer to prayer in a practical way.

Please also include in your prayers Rev. Godfrey Meghoo, who is unwell.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

June 16 (Thursday)

Lay Leaders Certificate Course Training– 6:00 pm-8:00 pm via Zoom

June 19 (Sunday) 2nd Sunday after Pentecost

FATHER'S DAY



on Radio Cayman 89.9
every Sunday at 7:45 am

June 19, 2022
Rev. Euthman Wray

*Cayman
Church Sports
Outreach
C.C.S.O*

FCA Cayman Sports Symposium



Are you a **COACH** who is motivated to take your athletes to another level? Are you a **PASTOR**, a Youth leader, Ministry leader, longing to see eternal change in your communities?

This event is for you! See you there!

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EVERY Family
EVERY Community

GO
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Date: June 25

Time: 4pm. - 6pm.

Cost: FREE

Location: First Assembly of God
195 Old Crewe Road

George Town, Grand Cayman

Contact: Yolanda Whitaker
ywhitaker@360globalsport.com
345-917-4832



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