

Occasionally, I was in a very bad situation that I said “I have had enough!” Have you ever been in that situation before? Sometimes multiple bad events happening concurrently can cause you be overstressed and make you feel like to give up: Give up hope on the situation or even give up life. Even very faithful person can be in that situation occasionally such as Elijah, and we are going to learn about him today as it is found in I & II Kings.

Book of I Kings and II Kings were used to be one book. These books describe the history of the people called Israelites. I Kings begins with King Solomon and ends with description on the acts of prophet Elijah. II Kings begins with the rest of the actions taken by Elijah (around 850 BC), and continues the history on the divided kingdom (northern kingdom of Israel and southern kingdom of Judah). Most of the kings in the northern and southern kingdom had turned away from God and worshiped idols. The nation of Assyria invaded Israel around 722 BC, and the Babylon invaded Judah and finally destroyed Jerusalem around 586 BC. We only concentrate on prophet Elijah today (I Kings 17-22 & II Kings 1-2).

1) Do what is right persistently

There were bad kings at that time and they worshipped idols like Baal. Prophet Elijah was very persistent to try to get the message to those kings to repent and go back to worship the true God. Prophet Elijah warned King Ahab in I Kings chapter 18, and King Ahaziah in II Kings chapter 1. We should follow God and do what is right persistently like what Elijah did.

2) Fear and sometimes feel helpless is normal

I Kings 19:3-5 described prophet Elijah was afraid. He ran for his life. He was then very tired. He prayed that he might die. “I have had enough, Lord,” he said. “Take my life; ...” Even a faithful person like prophet Elijah had time where he was afraid and felt overly burdened. We can be in that same situation sometimes. It is normal for us occasionally having fear and being overwhelmed. The end of verse 5 described Elijah lay down under the bush and fell asleep. It is important when we are in fear and under stress to relax and get some rest. You can be assured that God is watching over you (Psm. 121:8).

We have fear once a while but we shouldn't live in fear. God is with us (Deut. 31:8). The following verses help us to remember God is with us and helps us: Psm 23:4, Isaiah 35:4, Psm 29:11 and 41:10.

3) Obey God

To obey God, we must know God's heart first. Elijah is very close to God. God delivered His messages and directions to Elijah. For the case of Elijah's obedience to God in II Kings 1:15-17, the result was positive. However, obey God and follow God does not always end up smooth or trouble free in your life. Elijah fled from the chase of his enemy as the situation described in I Kings chapter 19. Obedience is really about doing what God wants (His will be done). Jesus nailed on the cross is a great example (Rom. 5:19).

4) God's providence

We talked earlier about the time when Elijah have had enough, the following verses described the rescue, "Then he lay down under the bush and fell asleep. All at once an angel touched him and said that get up and eat ... He ate and drank and then lay down again". In two other cases, God provided Elijah's need. One was through ravens and another was through a widow at Zarephath (I Kings 17:2-16). Psm 145:15-16, Phil. 4:19 and Matt 6:25-34 help us to remember God provides the needs for His children.

5) Do your part and leave the result to God

Elijah did what God told him to do. The result was up to God. In some cases, the result was as expected. In the case where Elisha asked for double portion, it is not certain that Elijah knew the outcome. He replied "You have asked a difficult thing, yet if you see me when I am taken from you, it will be yours- otherwise, it will not". The result really depends on God's will. In the same way we also should have trust in God and not be anxious about the result.

In summary, we might sometimes find ourselves overwhelmed, fear or tired when we do the right thing according to God's will and teaching. God knows us very well and understands our situation. He provides our needs and gives us peace when we truly seek Him and walk with Him. Elijah was later encouraged and rewarded by God, and we will be also.