

# Elijah, Bread and Water

Often when I read Jesus Calling or my Bible verse of the day, I choose to follow up by reading the verse in context. I want to mine all the goodies.

So yesterday, after reading **1 Kings 9:12**, I went to the passage to see what was going on.

## **1 Kings 19:4-8 (NIV)**

*“While he himself {Elijah} went a day’s journey into the wilderness. He came to a broom bush, 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.’ Then he lay down under the bush and fell asleep.*

*“All at once an angel touched him and said, ‘Get up and eat.’ He looked around, and there by his head was some bread baked over hot coals, and a jar of water. He ate and drank and then lay down again.*

*“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.’ 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.*

Now, I had also just read the K-Love verse of the day, **John 6:35**.

*Then Jesus declared, “I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.”*

With that verse lingering in my head, I made a connection.

I saw the story of a weary follower. Exhausted by his calling, by his life. He just wanted to give up. I think we can all relate to that feeling. So he just goes to sleep, depressed and empty.

And what did God do? God sent an angel to give him bread and water. The angel says, “Get up and eat, for the journey is too much for you.” Jesus is the bread of life, the living water. The journey will be too much for us unless we feed ourselves. This gift strengthened Elijah so that he could travel into the presence of God himself.

## **1 Kings 19:11-13**

*“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. After the earthquake came a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire. And after the fire came a gentle whisper. 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?’”*

Through Elijah’s hopelessness, we can be reminded that sometimes the next step is just basic. Get up and eat. And also spiritual—receive the sustenance of relationship with God through Christ. But we can still learn more.

After coming to God and bemoaning the state of things, God tells Elijah to go out to be in the presence of the Lord—at which point there is an unbelievably powerful wind, followed by an earthquake and then a fire. But Elijah did not feel the Lord’s presence in any of those. No, it was a gentle whisper that stirred Elijah to stand.

God may or may not express himself in astonishing ways when we call to him, but anytime we do, we are guaranteed a profound experience.

When we are tired, we need to eat. When we are weary, we need to listen to the gentle whisper of the Lord’s presence.