

Elijah's Forty Days

1 Kings 17 - 19.

The "Forty Days" of Scripture.

Sixteen Addresses.

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CHAPTER 7 — ELIJAH'S FORTY DAYS.

DEJECTION AND SUPPORT; OR, A FAILING SERVANT AND A FAITHFUL MASTER.

The history of Elijah the Tishbite is exceedingly interesting; and there are, in the details that God gives us of this remarkable man, some very precious and blessed lessons for all of us, if we are only willing to learn. Saints, sinners, and servants may each learn from what God has told us of him.

The passage that I have read gives the moment when he comes out first of all in public. But there had been a preparation in Elijah's soul long before this. That we discover in the New Testament. Had we not the testimony of the New Testament Scripture we might not have known that, save from the fact that God always prepares His servants before He uses them. Let me say in passing, what a wonderful thing it is to be God's servant. It is a wonderful thing to be God's man in a world like this. I grant you things were in an awful state in Elijah's day. Idolatry was rampant in Israel, "And Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the Lord above all that were before him" (1 Kings 16: 30).

There never had been such a moment of declension and departure from the truth as the moment when Elijah comes in view, and it is then that the widow of Zarephath says, "Now by this I know that thou art *a man of God*" (1 Kings 17: 24). It is a fine thing when the widows round about you recognise you as a man of God. I think to be God's man in the devil's world is an unspeakable privilege. Fellow-Christian, you may be that, and I may be that, through grace. I find the same term used in the New Testament regarding Timothy: "But thou, *O man of God*, flee these things" (1 Tim. 6: 11). And again, in view of any who are really such: "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that *the man of God* may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works" (2 Tim. 3: 16, 17). God is always looking out to have men for Himself in this world. It is an immense thing for you or me to be able to say, By grace I desire above all things to be a man of God; I desire to be on the Lord's side; and, in a world where Satan rules, to be for

God. Do not forget that Satan is the god of this world. It is a great thing for you to be a man of God here. This widow knew by his ways that Elijah was a man of God.

The New Testament tells us precisely what had taken place prior to the moment of Elijah's public appearance. "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" (James 5: 17). That man knew God, and had gone to him *earnestly* in prayer. He realised the awful state of Israel. He saw how the Lord had been dishonoured; His temple slighted, and His worship set aside; for later on he says, "The children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword" (1 Kings 19: 10). This is what the apostle Paul calls his intercession against Israel.

Nothing could be worse than the state of Israel in that day. A person who was not really in nearness to God, and in the sense of His power, which alone could meet so serious a state of affairs, would have given all up as hopeless. But what is so exceedingly charming to learn is this, that before this man appears in public, he has been alone with God. If we are going to have much blessing, there will have to be more prayer. The men who have been really used of God, the mighty men in the field, have been always mighty men in the closet. They have been men of prayer. I find that Elijah prayed "earnestly." He was a wonderful man, but he was "a man subject to like passions as we are." He was exactly like you and me. What does he do? He goes to God in prayer, feeling that the only way in which Israel's declension could be arrested was by the intervention of God's hand. Then in answer to his prayer, God in His sovereignty is pleased to shut up the heavens for three years and a half. You know what terrible effects a drought of that nature would produce.

At this point Elijah comes out from God, appears on the scene, and says to Ahab, "As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word" (1 Kings 17: 1). Observe the expression, "The God before whom I stand." Now, I ask you, and I ask myself, Is that true of you and me? Of course I do not think an unconverted person can say, Yes. But it is a very serious question. If you do not stand before Him as your Lord and Master now, the day is coming when you will have to stand before Him as your Lord and judge. Elijah, so to speak, says: "I am in touch with God. I am here for God, and I have a message to you from God, and it is a very sorrowful one."

That was Elijah's message that day. But, my friend, I have not to tell you of dearth and drought. No, no. If you are an unsaved sinner, I have sweet news for you. The Lord before whom I stand is a living, loving Saviour-God, and what He wants is that your heart should be acquainted with Him. He wants you to receive His Son, and to know His grace, and if you are wise you will make up your mind for the Lord tonight. To know God is unspeakable joy. Many a young man thinks that to be a Christian would be a dull thing. You never made a greater mistake in your life. "Oh!" you say, "I have seen some Christians, and they are dull enough." Well, you have not seen the right kind. The man that really knows Christ has his soul filled with peace and joy from week's end to week's end. He is saved, he is pardoned, he is a joint-heir with Christ, he knows his sins are forgiven, he has the Holy Ghost dwelling in him, Christ is his Saviour, and God is his Father, and he is on his way to everlasting glory. Can that be said of you?

No sooner has Elijah given his message than the Lord says, "Get thee hence, and turn thee eastward, and hide thyself by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan " (1 Kings 17: 3). Again he must go into private. The servant must be hidden while his Master cares for him. "And it shall be that thou shalt drink of the brook; and I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there " (1 Kings 17: 4). Very probably that was not exactly what Elijah looked for. Perhaps he thought God would bring him into prominence. But instead, he goes away for three and a half years into private life. He has the brook to drink from, and the ravens, of all birds, to feed him. Perhaps you do not believe the tale. I do. The raven is the last bird under the sun to give up a nice piece of flesh, but "I have commanded" lets us into the secret of this remarkable bird-ministry. God was there. That is the whole point.

But by-and-by the brook dries up. That too was part of the ways of God with His servant, and "Arise, get thee to Zarephath, which belongeth to Zidon, and dwell there: behold, I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee" (1 Kings 17: 9) is the next word. When God commands, all a servant has to do is to obey. Without a single word, away goes Elijah to this widow woman. He finds the widow gathering some sticks. There is nothing left in her house but a barrel of meal and a cruse of oil. And she says, "And, behold, I am gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it, and die" (1 Kings 17: 12). Elijah says, "Fear not; go and do as thou hast said; but make me thereof a little cake first, and bring it unto me, and after make for thee and for thy son," and then adds this sweet word, "For thus saith the Lord God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth" (1 Kings 17: 13, 14). What light and joy came to that woman's house. It is a great thing to care for the servants of God. She did it, "and she and he and her house did eat many days. And the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the Lord, which he spoke by Elijah" (1 Kings 17: 15, 16). God sustained them. God can do anything. That is the great point, and that is the lesson which faith learns in a scene like this.

After awhile the widow's son dies. God would teach her, as well as His prophet, that He was the God of resurrection. When he died she said to Elijah, "What have I to do with thee, O thou man of God? art thou come unto me to call my sin to remembrance, and to slay my son?" (1 Kings 17: 18). Yes, there was something that God had to settle with her. And perhaps God has some sin to bring to your remembrance. While things are outwardly smooth you can go on, but by-and-by when death comes in, and you lose your boy, or husband, or father, or mother it may be, what comes up? There is some long-forgotten sin that comes up upon the conscience. That is oftentimes the way God puts His finger on the souls of men.

Then Elijah turns to the Lord in prayer, and the child is raised; and he learns, and the widow, too, that God is the God of resurrection. Now that is exactly where the gospel comes in. I have to tell you of the God of resurrection. He has given His Son in blessed grace, for "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son," even to death. But God has raised Him from the dead, and the gospel now proclaimed is in connection with a risen Christ. It was the God of resurrection that Elijah knew, and it is the God of resurrection that you are called to know now. The Son of God has come into this world, gone right down into death, and God has raised Him from the dead. God now calls you to know a loving, living Saviour, so that you should have Him as your Lord and Master. It is the One who is risen from the dead. You are to know Christ

in resurrection. He is on the other side of death, and He has power over death. It is a wonderful thing, in a world of death, to know One who lives, and who has power over death.

That widow would never forget all the days of her life how God stepped in. God had brought life in again, and she knew Him as the God of resurrection. And it is a great thing to touch resurrection. You and I pass through a world where death reigns on every hand, and it is a wonderful thing to get into an atmosphere of resurrection, and that is where the gospel brings us. Such was the lesson that widow learnt, and thereby, also, Elijah was fitted for fresh work.

The next thing is, God says to him, "Go, show thyself unto Ahab; and I will send rain upon the earth" (1 Kings 18: 1). Thus commissioned of God, Elijah goes out to seek Ahab. The moment is come when the rights of God, the authority of God, and the claims of God, are to be asserted upon a backsliding people. Before Elijah meets Ahab he crosses Obadiah's path. Elijah was a bold man, and Obadiah was not. Was Obadiah a saint? I think he was. But he was a man who had never fully hoisted his colours. In the bottom of his heart he believed in Jehovah, but he kept it quiet. People often say to me, "I do not make any profession." Why? I do not think they have much to profess. If you had your heart full of Christ you may depend upon it — it would come out. You could not keep it in. You have the privilege of standing for the Lord in a day of declension, but the question is, Are you a secret disciple? Obadiah was a secret disciple. He did not come out boldly like Elijah. Their meeting, however, was very touching.

Ahab had said to Obadiah, "Go into the land, unto all fountains of water, and unto all brooks, peradventure we may find grass to save the horses and mules alive, that we lose not all the beasts" (1 Kings 18: 5). Ahab did not care whether the people got food. He wanted grass for the horses. He was a downright selfish man, hence Elijah says to him presently, "Get thee up, eat and drink." His only thought was the things of this life. "Let us eat and drink; for tomorrow we die" (1 Cor. 15: 32), is really the worldling's motto. That is the life of most men. On his way through the land Obadiah meets Elijah. Obadiah ought long ago to have been in Elijah's company. If there had been purpose of heart on Obadiah's part he would have come boldly out with God's servant. I am rather afraid there are a great many Obadiahs nowadays. Oh, friend, if you love Christ, do not be afraid to confess Him.

When they do meet, Obadiah says to Elijah, "Art thou that *my lord* Elijah?" Elijah coldly replies, "Go, tell *thy lord*, behold, Elijah is here" (1 Kings 18: 7, 8). He says, You go back to your lord. You have never sided with me. There is unmistakably a reserve, a coolness on Elijah's part. Was he right or wrong? Well, beloved friends, grace is a wonderful thing; but Elijah had the sense, that Obadiah ought to have come out boldly before now. Obadiah says, "Was it not told my lord what I did when Jezebel slew the prophets of the Lord, how I hid an hundred men of the Lord's prophets by fifty in a cave, and fed them with bread and water" (1 Kings 18: 13). Yes, that was all very well, but why had not he come out boldly? Ah, fellow-Christians, I think some of us will be sorry by-and-by that we have not been more out-and-out for the Lord than we have been. Let us beware!

Obadiah goes and tells Ahab, and Ahab comes to meet Elijah. "And it came to pass, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said unto him, Art thou he that troubleth Israel?" (1 Kings 18: 17). If a man comes out boldly and thoroughly for the Lord, if he stands for the truth, what may he

expect? Everybody will be against him. It was so in the church at Pergamos. Antipas came boldly out, and it cost him his life. It was like to cost Elijah his life, as you will see presently. When a man takes a bold stand for the truth he is usually hated. Thank God for the men that maintain the standard of truth in an evil day — for such as have the truth, and are not afraid to own and preach it, no matter what anybody thinks about them. Elijah had here the sense, I have now the opportunity of standing for God. Ahab says to him, "You are troubling Israel." Then Elijah says to him, "I have not troubled Israel; but thou and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the Lord, and thou hast followed Baalim" (1 Kings 18: 18). The eight hundred and fifty prophets were witnesses of the truth of this charge.

Then Elijah says, "Now therefore send, and gather to me all Israel unto Mount Carmel, and the prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty, and the prophets of the groves four hundred, which eat at Jezebel's table" (1 Kings 18: 19). You may depend upon it, if there had not been anything to eat they would not have gone to Jezebel. She stands out as the spirit of that which always persecutes the witnesses of God. They did not eat at Ahab's table. It was at Jezebel's table.

And now we come to the point where they have to choose between the man of God and the men of Baal — between God and Baal. And you will have to take your stand either for God or against Him. The God of resurrection, the God that gave an only Son to be the Saviour of the world, is not welcomed by it. The world has refused and rejected the Son of God, nay, more, it has forgotten Him. Now the point is this: Where does your heart stand in relation to Christ. Can you say that Christ is yours, and you are Christ's, and that you are on the side of the One whom the world has refused? Satan will bring in anything to keep people away from the truth of God. Everything that is in this world he introduces just to put a barrier between your soul and God if possible.

Ahab summons the prophets unto Mount Carmel. Elijah's object here is very distinct. He stands for God, and wants the people's hearts for God. He wants Jehovah to be known, and His name to be believed. Is Jehovah God, or is Baal God? is the serious question. That was the great point to be settled. Look at that man standing there all alone, while eight hundred and fifty haters of the truth surround Ahab. It is a grand thing to stand for God whoever and wherever you be. Mind that, young man, if you are afraid to confess Christ.

"And Elijah came unto all the people and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the Lord be God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word" (1 Kings 18: 21). Things are brought to a point. And now, my friends, if Christ is not worth having, say so. If He is worth having and following, then fling in your lot with Him. How long halt ye? "Well," you say, "I am not in a hurry," God knows that, and the devil knows that too. And he will not let you be in a hurry if he can help it. But oh, if you have never been brought to the point before, may you be able to say tonight, "Christ for me." If you come to Him where you are in your guilt, what will He do? Bless you, cleanse you, clear you of all your sins, bring you from darkness to light, from distance to nearness, yea, bring you to God. But the point is this, there must be decision. The great want of the moment I believe is decision. Young men and young women especially need to be decided. To such would I say in all affection, If you do not decide for the Lord now, you will very soon find you have gone under the wheels of Baalim's car. If you do not turn to the Lord before you are twenty, you have but an ever-lessening chance

after. You would find if you went through this audience tonight that over fifty per cent. of the Christians present were brought to the Lord before they were twenty. And can nobody be saved after they are twenty? I do not say that, but the probability of conversion diminishes very rapidly as age creeps on. Some reliable statistics on this point once fell into my hands, and I give them to you. It was found that of 1,000 Christians the age when converted was as follows: —

Under 20 years of age, 548

Between 20 and 30 years of age, 337

" 30 and 40 " " 86

" 40 and 50 " " 15

" 50 and 60 " " 13

" 60 and 70 " " 1

Look well at that table. Is there no hope for the aged? You old, hoary-headed man, thank God there is hope. I do not say there is no chance. But I have seen very few grey-haired men and women saved.

Come on, you young people, and decide for the Lord. Make up your mind for the Lord tonight. "How long halt ye between two opinions?" was Elijah's query, and it is mine also. Halt till you are over thirty, and your chance of receiving Christ is very little. If you are a wise soul you will say, By the grace of God tonight I decide, Christ for me. Why will ye halt? Is He not worth having? Is He not worth knowing? Indeed He is. "But I am such a sinner." You are the very one for Christ. "I have such a burden." Come to Him, and He will take it away from you. If you were the very vilest sinner under the sun, the blood of Christ would wash you whiter than snow. Come to Him. Come as you are. Come now. But, above all things, do not halt. Procrastinate no longer, I implore you. Procrastination is the thief of souls. It is the recruiting officer of hell. There are millions of souls in eternity that meant to come to Jesus some day, but somehow or other the power of Satan was so great, and what the apostle Paul calls the "deceitfulness of sin" (Heb. 3: 13) so paralysed them that they lingered and were lost.

Satan is a great preacher of procrastination. Says he, You have plenty of time. Put it off a little longer. Wait till you get into middle age. And then the cares of business occupy your mind and you do not turn to Christ. "Oh," you say, "it is all very well for you with your black coat, but we have got to work." So have I, my friends. I work all day, and sometimes all night too. I work as hard as any of you. This is often the lie of the devil, viz., that you are too busy to attend to the affairs of the soul. That is not it, my friend, at all. You are not too busy, but you are *indifferent*. And sin has begun to harden your soul. And when you get old, what then? Satan will tell you that you have missed the day of grace and salvation altogether. Stop, my hearer, that is a lie too. As long as you have a year, day, or an hour left on earth you may be saved. Thank God, you may be saved tonight. Oh; do not halt any longer. Come to Jesus. If you have halted till now, halt no longer.

Let us now return to Carmel, and see the way Elijah takes with the prophets. He says, "Choose you one bullock for yourselves, and dress it first; for ye are many; and call on the name of your gods, but put no fire under" (1 Kings 18: 25). He gives them the first chance, and they prepare their sacrifice. What is the next thing? They cry: "O Baal, hear us. But there was no voice, nor any that answered. And they leaped upon the altar which was made" (1 Kings 18: 26). And now the prophet gets a little sarcastic as he says, "Cry aloud! for he is a god; either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is in a journey, or peradventure he sleepeth, and must be awaked" (1 Kings 18: 27). I think Elijah was right in the way he treated them. He knew the whole thing was false, just as today everything that is not Christ is false. What you and I want is the truth. And Christ is the Truth.

The end of the day comes and no fire has fallen upon Baal's sacrifice. Then the man of God says to them: "Come near unto me. And all the people came near unto him. And he repaired the altar of the Lord that was broken down" (1 Kings 18: 30). The Lord's altar had been broken down, but Elijah builds it up. He stands for the whole truth of God. "And Elijah took twelve stones, according to the number of the tribes of the sons of Jacob, unto whom the word of the Lord came, saying, Israel shall be thy name" (1 Kings 18: 31). Why twelve stones? It was the expression of the unity of Israel. Instead of being a divided, broken-up people, Elijah knew that before God they were one. So also the servant of God today who knows the truth, knows that there is one Body and one Spirit, and one Head in heaven. And of course he will endeavour to maintain this glorious truth.

Here, in the face of all these enemies, Elijah owns the unity of Israel, and acknowledges Jehovah as LORD. Then to show that there was no sham about his actions he says, "Fill four barrels with water, and pour it on the burnt sacrifice, and on the wood" (1 Kings 18: 33). He is determined to let them see that there is no fire there. The truth of God is very simple. There is no underhand work about it. And he says: "Do it the second time. And they did it the second time. And he said, Do it the third time. And they did it the third time. And the water ran round about the altar; and he filled the trench also with water" (1 Kings 18: 34, 35). He puts the thing to the perfect test. And what then? "And it came to pass at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near, and said, Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word. Hear, me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the Lord God, and that thou hast *turned their heart back again*" (1 Kings 18: 36, 37). What did he want? He wanted their hearts for the Lord. And, beloved friend, I can say from the bottom of my heart, what I want is your heart. I do not want your brains or your money, but I want your heart for Christ. I know I cannot draw you to Christ. But if I could I would.

"Then the fire of the Lord fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench" (1 Kings 18: 38). That burnt sacrifice was indeed a sweet savour going up to God, a figure of Christ in death. The next moment there was the most wonderful testimony in Israel that Jehovah was God. "And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The LORD, he is the God; the LORD, he is the God" (1 Kings 18: 39).

Condign and immediate judgment then fell on the prophets of Baal; for God must judge idolatry. Elijah then says to Ahab, "Get thee up, eat and drink; for there is a sound of abundance of rain" (1 Kings 18: 41). He gives Ahab's true character. His only thought was eating and drinking. Is there a man here whose only thought is to eat and drink? Well, you have to die. Ahab is a type of a downright worldling. He did not care a straw whether Jehovah was God or Baal was God, and he died a miserable, wretched death. He was mortally wounded at Ramoth-gilead, and the dogs licked up his blood. If you die as you are, you will die a sinner's death, and you will have a sinner's coffin, a sinner's burial, a sinner's resurrection, a sinner's judgment, and a sinner's lost eternity. May God save you tonight.

Do not let Ahab's history be repeated in yours. Be like Elijah. He can say to Ahab, You go, the rain is coming. And Ahab goes up. Look at the difference between the man of God and the man of the world. "So Ahab went up to eat and to drink. And Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; and he cast himself down upon the earth, and put his face between his knees" (1 Kings 18: 42). He is in prayer. One feasts, the other prays. No wonder God opens the heavens. He went and prayed the first time, "Lord, do not send rain." And now the second time he prays, "Lord, send the rain." Then Elijah's servant comes and says: "Behold, there ariseth a little cloud out of the sea like a man's hand. And he said, Go up, say unto Ahab, Prepare thy chariot, and get thee down, that the rain stop thee not. And it came to pass in the meanwhile, that the heaven was black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain." Oh, how rich, how full is the blessing which God gives. "And Ahab rode and went to Jezreel. And the hand of the Lord was on Elijah; and he girded up his loins, and ran before Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel" (1 Kings 18: 44-46).

After this Ahab tells Jezebel that Elijah has slain all the prophets of Baal, for he had taken them to the brook Kishon, and slain them there. He was only doing what Jehovah had commanded long before. They are all put to death in accordance with the instructions given in the eighteenth chapter of Deuteronomy. He merely obeyed the Word of God. Ahab tells Jezebel, and she sends to Elijah a dreadful threat. "So let the gods do to me, and more also, if I make not thy life as the life of one of them by tomorrow about this time." And what now? "And when he saw that, he arose, and went for his life, and came to Beer-sheba, which belongeth to Judah, and left his servant there" (1 Kings 19: 2, 3).

How came this flight about? Such is man, my friends. Such is even a servant of God, if he get his eye off the Lord. If a man lose faith in God he will flee away. Elijah got dejected and fled. And was he really a man of God? Who can doubt that? He reminds us of John the Baptist. When he was pursuing his ministry he could say, "There cometh one mightier than I after me, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose" (Mark 1: 7). But when he is locked up in prison he actually sends his disciples to say, "Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?" (Matt. 11: 3). It makes all the difference the circumstances you are in. The Baptist's faith fails for a moment, and he doubts the Messiah. Jezebel's threat causes Elijah's faith to fail, and he flies to the desert. But look now at the beautiful grace of God to His dear servant: "But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree: 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). I think whenever a man speaks that way he does think he is better a good deal, but that no one understands or appreciates him. That is my conviction. For a moment his faith had failed. And here we learn a lesson of the

weakness that may mark any one of us. We, too, get a little bit disappointed, and we go under some juniper tree. There is a juniper tree somewhere for you and me. I want you to avoid getting under a bitter tree like that. It was as bitter as Elijah's own spirit was. There is many a Christian today that has made a mistake and he wants to die. He says, I cannot do any more. Like Elijah he too says, "For I am not better than my fathers." At the back of his heart he thinks that he is rather better, depend upon it.

But what does the Lord do? Elijah goes to sleep presently, and while he is sleeping he is touched by an angel, who says: "Arise and eat. And he looked, and, behold, there was a cake baked on the coals, and a cruse of water at his head. And he did eat and drink, and laid him down again" (1 Kings 19: 5, 6). A minister from God is at his side. Not now is he tended by a raven or a widow, but by God's own loving hand. This weary man, who thinks nobody cares for him, looks up and sees this much-needed refreshment. Who put that there? God Himself Ah, beloved friends, God does not give His servants up, blessed be His name. When I fail it is quite possible that my brethren may give me up. My Master will not. The Lord does not fling His servants off as the devil does his slaves. When the devil has got all the work out of you that he can get, he will leave you to die like a dog in the field. But it is not so with the Lord.

Well, Elijah goes to sleep a second time, and the angel comes again and says: "Arise and eat, because the journey is too great for thee. And he arose, and did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights unto Horeb, the mount of God" (1 Kings 19: 7, 8). There he learns some marvellous lessons. God's food sustains him these forty days and nights, and then God teaches him that He has been at work in a way that His servant knew nothing of. God had a great regard for Elijah spite of his failure. There is a remarkable prediction regarding him in the last chapter of the Old Testament "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord: and He shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse" (Mal. 4: 5, 6). No doubt in a day yet to come God will give him a wonderful place in connection with the restoration of that Israel upon the earth whom he had failed to restore. The Lord has not given him up.

But before that day even we see Elijah again. If I take you to the Mount of Transfiguration, when the blessed Lord was there, who were with Him? Moses and Elijah. The other night we saw Moses was forty days and forty nights on the mount without food. Tonight we have seen Elijah going in the strength of God's meat forty days and forty nights. It is divine power in each case sustaining human feebleness. That is the lesson. There is no place where divine grace cannot sustain you and me. Grace first of all saves us, and then sustains us in every possible difficulty in the pathway. Such is the blessedness of the knowledge of God.

What took place with Elijah at Horeb is very instructive. He goes into a cave, and the Lord comes and says to him, "What doest thou here, Elijah?" (1 Kings 19: 9). He ought to have been standing in Israel, still witnessing for God, instead of hiding himself. "And he said, Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the Lord. And, behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake: and after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice" (1 Kings

19: 11, 12). It is the still small voice that touches him. When he hears it he hides his face in his mantle and comes forth. There usually comes the moment, if a servant of God has got a little bit away, when the Lord speaks to him, in a still small voice, and he is restored. So was it in this case.

God here gives Elijah the sense that He has a deep interest in him. He says to Elijah, You go back and anoint Elisha in your room, you are tired of earth, but before I take you up, I want you to know this, you thought you were the only witness for God in Israel, "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). It was a wonderful discovery to Elijah. And I daresay from that moment Elijah said to himself, "If God had all these men left, why did not I find them out?" He had said, "And I, even I only am left; and they seek my life to take it away" (1 Kings 19: 14). He was immensely mistaken. So are we oftentimes. If we have light from God let us see to it that we pass it on, never forgetting, however, that all light and all grace are not in you and me. God always has His witnesses, and He will have them right on to the end.