

The Reasons and the Treatment of Burnt Out

¹ 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." ³ 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." ⁵ 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. ⁹ 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." ¹¹ 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." ¹⁵ 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. ¹⁷ 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. ¹⁸ Yet I reserve seven thousand in Israel--all whose knees have not bowed down to Baal and all whose mouths have not kissed him." (1King 19:1-18)

Burnt out: Being worn out or exhausted, as a result of long time stress: You will feel tired, physically and mentally and having lack of joy or desire in life. In the passage about the prophet Elijah who was running away from Jezebel he was burnt out and even expressed his no desire for life even unto God, "I have had enough, LORD," he said. "Take my life; I am no better than my ancestors." Elijah even he prayed that he might die. He was burnt out like you now and for the following reasons:

- 1- Devil back fighting:** Elijah had a great victory over the mountain of Carmel against the enemy and evil prophets of Baal who ate at Jezebel table and who got slaughtered. Surely Devil was angry with Elijah and he used Jezebel to revenge. After any spiritual victory and deliverance devil will fight you back. This you must know so you will not be discouraged when devil will attack you.
- 2- Message of threat or appointment to revenge of you:** Elijah was in constant threat and for long time from the Ahab who was an evil king of Israel who was leading the people in the wicked way of the evil one. Your constant stand against those who oppose the truth will put you in a constant and long term stress that finally might wear you out.
- 3- The Battle in the mind:** Yes there was true threat around Elijah, and that might be true with your circumstances, but still one more thing make life more stressful, is the battle in the mind when you

give the way for your mind to imagine that people are doing evil or planning evil to attack you. Do not be much with people opinions, talks and actions about you.

4- Delay reward: Elijah should be rewarded by God to what he achieved but instead he was forced to flee. You might be facing the same, that you did good but you are repaid bad. You should not be discouraged; to follow God is also your willingness to suffer for Him, "For it has been granted to you on behalf of Christ not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for him." (Philippians 1:29)

5- Lack of food: Excessive fasting brings you weariness. God gave food to Elijah "All at once an angel touched him and said, "Get up and eat." Elijah strengthened by that food.

6- Lack of sleep: Lack of sleep brings weariness. Elijah was so exhausted, *Then he lay down under the tree and fell asleep.*

7- Long journeys and travel: Elijah travelled forty days and forty nights until he reached Horeb and that also contributed to his weariness. The same might be happening to you and you need to be aware.

8- Wrong thoughts: That was the wrong thought of Elijah, "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." Elijah thought that he is the only one is suffering for God and that is why he was weary. Elijah thought that he was alone and God is careless about him. You might think the same, and that you are the only one who is suffering and persecuted and God is not helping you. But these are wrong thoughts and you must know that you are not alone and others are suffering the same for God. Jesus suffered the same when He was on earth, "Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death--that is, the devil." (Hebrews 2:14)

9- Misunderstanding where God is: God was not in the wind, neither in the earthquake nor in the fire. God is not in the big events, fights, strives, etc. God was in the gentle whisper.

Treatment of Burn out: After you recognized the possible causes of burn out in your life then we put here few out line of treatment for you to follow and apply:

- 1- Separate yourself from people, take a leave and a rest to enjoy life, enjoy family life, avoid events, fights, threats, and be in silent place. Silence your thoughts so you will be able to hear and listen to the gentle whisper of God.**
- 2- Eat well, give physical rest to your body and sleep well.**
- 3- Read God's word and pray and pour out yourself before God, and continue to do that till you hear the voice of God as Elijah was able to hear.**

The gentle whisper of God will do you the following:

- A-** Makes you calm down your emotions and will clean your thoughts and give you rest and assurance to your heart and thoughts. It will assure you that God is with you.
- B-** Makes you realized that you are not alone or the only one, but there are many others who are passing through the same and still doing their best to God.
- C-** Restore you and makes you go back to do the next assignment to finish the task that God entrusted to you to do. The same what God did to Elijah when He restored him and sent him back with assignments and task to do, He will do the same with you, as you obey the above instructions and pray. **My Prayer:** *Father God I come before you in the name of Jesus who died on the Cross for my sins and rose from the dead to give me eternal life. Lord thank you for your encouraging word to me in this time of trial. Lord I pour out before you my heart and my trouble _____.* Lord speaks to me and helps me to hear your gentle whisper and restore me to continue to serve you. This is my prayer in Jesus name, Amen.