

6 Keys to Preparing for Revival

We love to read in 1 Kings 18 about how the prophet Elijah confronted the priests of Baal and called down fire from heaven. But if the story tells us anything, it is that the fire does not fall in just any old place in the middle of the desert. We must prepare the altar of our lives if we want to be ready for the fire of God to fall upon us.

Before the fire fell for Elijah, he endured an arduous process of preparation. And what was God preparing him for? To change the religion of an entire nation in one day! Elijah's task was to pull the Jews away from the pagan worship of Baal and bring them back to their belief in one God, Jehovah the Lord.

We read in 1 Kings 17:1: "Now Elijah the Tishbite, from Tishbe in Gilead, said to Ahab [who was the king], 'As the Lord, the God of Israel, lives, whom I serve, there will be neither dew nor rain in the next few years except at my word (NIV).'" Immediately a drought began in all of Israel.

"Then the Word of the Lord came to Elijah: 'Leave here, turn eastward and hide in the Kerith Ravine, east of the Jordan. You will drink from the brook, and I have ordered the ravens to feed you there' (vv. 2-4).

God was saying, "I am preparing something. I am preparing the nation, and with this drought, I am going to break them."

Baal was the god of rain, crops, prosperity and fruitfulness. God was hitting Baal hard when He sent a drought. In essence, He was saying to the people, "What kind of god do you worship if there is no rain? What kind of god of abundance and prosperity is this, if all your fields have dried up?"

Be sure not to curse your drought because sometimes dry

seasons are from God. Many times He permits difficulties in our families, churches, cities and nations in order to prepare us and make us hungry for revival. When things do not work, when there is discomfort, people often become more receptive to the Lord.

STEPS IN THE PREPARATION PROCESS

How did God prepare Elijah to become the leader of a great revival in Israel? He told him to hide himself. He told him to drink from the brook of Kerith and to eat the food brought to him by ravens in the morning and evening. He has steps for us to follow, too.

Step 1: We must learn to depend on God. God did not build Elijah a dining room. He did not give Elijah a telephone so that he could order out for pizza. The Lord said: "You are going to depend on Me, and I am going to use methods that are unfamiliar to you. I am going to use one of those birds that are called 'unclean.'"

The people of Israel normally kept their distance from ravens. Yet this was the very bird God sent to take bread and meat to Elijah. He had direct food service sent by the Lord. If we're going to be used by Him, we must depend on Him as Elijah did.

Step 2: We must be willing to change. Elijah "did what the Lord had told him. He went to the Kerith Ravine, east of the Jordan, and stayed there. The ravens brought him bread and meat in the morning and bread and meat in the evening, and he drank from the brook. Some time later the brook dried up because there had been no rain in the land" (1 Kin. 17:5-7).

How difficult it can be when God sends us to a place where we can drink fresh water and suddenly the brook begins to dry up. We think, But God sent me to do this ministry. God spoke to me 10 years ago!

The Lord is trying to say to us, "I sent you to the brook, but now I am telling you to leave that place. I made it dry up so

that you would no longer depend on a mere stream. Now I am going to send a national downpour!

“With the brook, I could give you enough to drink, but the people of the nation are dying. I want to move you out of this hiding place so you can defeat the Baals. Then I will send a downpour over the entire nation and bless it.”

The Lord will do what it takes to move us out of our ministries and comfortable lives into a new place. He may say, “Yes, I sent you there 10 years ago, but now it is time to move. I want to do something new with you.”

We must be willing to move from where we are and obey God’s instructions.

Step 3: We must go where God directs. We read in 1 Kings 17:9 that the Lord told Elijah to go to Zarephath of Sidon. Zarephath was to the north of Israel, in Phoenicia. The Lord said, “I am going to use you, but I am going to take you out of your comfort zone.”

How comfortable it is to stay right where we are in our little corners, hidden next to our peaceful brooks. But God is calling us to something greater, and some will not pass the test because they are unwilling to go where God wants them to go.

Step 4: We must be willing to depend on others. What would have happened if Elijah had refused to leave Kerith? He could have said, “What do you mean a widow is going to feed me? God feeds me directly from the heavens. I am not going to depend on a woman, especially a Phoenician who is not from Israel.”

How many Christians do the very same thing with the will of God for their lives? Then they wonder why the fire does not fall and why the rain does not commence.

We have to be docile and sensitive to the will of God and

serious in our service to Him. My heart is gladdened when I see the amazing commitment of some of His servants.

Step 5: We must be willing to humble ourselves and ask. When Elijah got to Zarephath, he asked a widow for some bread and water (see 1 Kin. 17:10-11). This great servant of God, who was getting ready to set all of Israel free from idolatry, had to request a plate of food from a starving widow!

How many people have been broken, not because they did not have enough to eat, but because they did not understand the purpose of the Lord in their time of scarcity? They would have overcome and survived if they had continued following God. One way or another, He would have provided all they needed.

But the terror and shame that come through not understanding God's ways cause many to give up. They do not understand that sometimes we have to pass through tribulation, testings and struggles.

Walking with God is a faith enterprise. If we are going to continue and not lose our fire and our blessing, we have to walk by faith. Sometimes God wants us to depend directly on Him, and other times, on special circumstances He sets up.

God is doing a new work. He wants to use us, but we have to be sensitive to His presence and do what He says. We have to be willing to let Him provide in the way He chooses.

Do You Want Revival?

How many of you want revival in your nation?

God wants to use you. He is preparing you and the others who stay in His army. Those who say, "Count on me, Lord," are the ones He is going to use in the end-time revival.

Are you willing? Do you want to be used? Do you have the kind of faith that can persevere?

I pray that the same strength the Lord gave Elijah would flood

your life. The normal state in life is to be unfaithful. But when the fire of the Holy Spirit falls on the life of a servant, God gives him strength to take him forward. It is like an oil that never runs out.

Follow the leading of the Lord. If He tells you to change places, change. If He tells you to go, then go.

God is preparing you. He wants to put a resistance inside you that you have never known before. Maybe some of you have started and then quit dozens of things in your life. Right now, God wants to make you faithful, strong and firm until the very last day of your life.

I pray that you would continue walking in this glorious way until the day the Lord Jesus comes again. If you desire to prepare the altar to receive the fire of God, pray this prayer out loud and in faith:

“Lord, remove from me the superficiality that destroys any lack of commitment to You. Father, affirm me in You like never before in my life. Lord, help me, so that when You ask me to go west of the Jordan, I will go west of the Jordan. When You ask me to change places, I will change places.

Help me to go where You want me to go, O Lord. Father, I pray that You make me docile and obedient to Your Word and Your will forever. Amen.”

Read a companion devotional.

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