

What You Need in Addition to the Holy Spirit

This is one of the great paradoxes of the Christian life: We need more and more preparation when we have more and more of the Holy Spirit. One might think that if we are full of the Holy Spirit, surely that is all the preparation we need. Wrong! We need preparation more than ever! It is partly because of the human tendency in all of us to take ourselves too seriously when we are given more and more success.

When Samuel anointed David to be king, “the Spirit of the Lord came on David from that day forward” (1 Sam. 16:13). But it would be another 20 years before David would be king. Why? It is because—strange as it may seem—being Spirit-filled is not enough. David’s anointing would need to be *refined*. He was only 17 years old. He was not ready to be king!

It takes a lot of maturity to admit to the need of preparation. Age helps us to come to our senses. Charles Spurgeon, one of the greatest preachers of all time, said that if he knew he had 25 years left to live, he would spend 20 of them in preparation. Billy Graham said much the same thing, that if he had his life to live over, he would spend more time in preparation.

But God also has a way of doing on-the-job preparation. He did this with Elijah. Elijah’s greatest work lay in the future, when one day he would confront the false prophets of Baal. This would take place while the famine was still on, before the rain came—when Ahab had no choice but to listen to Elijah. Three years without rain got Ahab’s attention.

The three years after Elijah’s edict to Ahab were the era of preparation for Elijah. Those years were as vital to Elijah’s development as they were crucial for bringing Ahab to openness

regarding Elijah.

Are you in preparation? Perhaps you are Spirit-filled. Could it be that you are not ready—even yet—for the greatest job God has in mind for you? Whom the Lord loves He chastens—disciplines—and He “punishes everyone he accepts as a son” (Heb. 12:6).

This punishment is not a case of God “getting even” with us owing to some terrible sin in our past. No, it is God getting us ready for what is coming. Chastening is essentially preparation. It enables us to share in God’s holiness (Heb. 12:10), thus producing “a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it” (Heb. 12:11). The more God uses you, the more you will need preparation. I can tell you candidly, at the age of 76, I am still being prepared.

Elijah needed more preparation. After he left the presence of Israel’s king, he was ordered to turn eastward and hide in the Kerith Ravine where he would drink from the brook and be fed by the ravens. I have seen what is said to be the Kerith Ravine in Israel.

The first thing you notice is that it would indeed be a good place to hide. There is almost no way King Ahab could find Elijah in such an area.

God has a plan for your life. His idea for your future is a thousand times better and greater than anything you could come up with on your own. God loves you with an everlasting love (Jer. 31:3); He wants only what is best for you. He will withhold no good thing from you when you seek to do His will above all else (Ps. 84:11). You may or may not be another Elijah, but God will go to the same pains in preparing you for what He has in mind for you as He did for Elijah.

One’s visible profile in the kingdom of God does not determine the extent of God’s love. Not all of us can be Elijahs, but all of us are loved and cared for as much as Elijah. The niche

that God has determined for each of us requires preparation so that we will be ready when our ultimate moment comes.

*Excerpted from R.T. Kendall's book, These Are the Days of Elijah. **Dr. R. T. Kendall**, renowned pastor and author, spent 25 years as senior minister of the historic Westminster Chapel in London. He has authored numerous bestselling books, conducts conferences all over the world and is a columnist for Ministry Today. You can order the book [here](#).*