



Resting under the Broom Tree

And he lay down and slept under a broom tree. (1 Kings 19:5)

After Elijah's depleting work as a prophet, prayer warrior, mentor, and marathon runner, we find him sleeping under a broom tree. Let's sit with Elijah and reflect on how he became so exhausted.

Even though all Elijah's activities were directed by God, they had left him spiritually depleted and vulnerable leaving him open to a spiritual attack from the Devil. Thus, when Jezebel threatened his life, he doubted God's protection and went running for his life.

We also can become vulnerable in ministry. As we continue to do God's work in nursing, ministry, universities, and clinics, we risk becoming weary and tired. This is especially true during the Coronavirus pandemic when the stress and workload is extraordinary! In a previous devotion, we discussed the inordinate amount of home, work, and personal stress most of us are experiencing. Like Elijah, we are vulnerable to the Devil's arrows in his quiver that bring fear, anxiety, depression, and others (Ephesians 6:16)

As we continue to sit with Elijah under the broom tree, we also notice he is alone. Remember, he left his servant back in Beersheba and then traveled all day to collapse in despair under the broom tree. Similar to Elijah, many of us are isolated from our support systems. The shelter-in-place orders to slow the spread of covid has caused many of us to be isolated from family, friends, colleagues, and church family.

Many of us are trying to stay connected through online church, What'sApp Bible studies, and virtual prayer meetings; yet they are not the same as in-person connections. We were not made to be alone. God created us to live in community. We need to not only stay in community through technologies; we also need extra time for prayer, worship, and fellowship. This is a time when we need one another more than ever.

Exhaustion does not mean an end to the Lord's work. Instead, it means a time to rest, regroup and find nourishment. Take some time to reflect on what has brought you to despair and exhaustion. Are you like Elijah, exhausted from the Lord's work? Alone in ministry and/or in faith? In the next devotion, we will explore strategies for resting.

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Blessings,
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