

How to Deal With Disappointment

By Pastor Bob Tasler (LCMS)

How do you deal with disappointment? What can you do to work through your feelings when things do not turn out the way you expected? The prophet Elijah knew all about disappointment. It all started when God had Elijah provide food for a widow and her son when they were starving.

In 1 Kings 17, God called Elijah to speak His Word to King Ahab of Israel. The Promised Land had been divided into the northern kingdom of Israel and the southern of Judah. Ever since King David and King Solomon, it seemed like every new king was as bad or worse than the last one.

Then along came King Ahab whom the Bible said, "He did evil in the sight of the Lord more than all who were before Him" (1 Kings 16:30). He married Jezebel, daughter of the King of Sidon and worshipped her god Baal, even participating in the horrible practice of infant sacrifice.

Ahab's behavior so angered God that He sent Elijah to speak God's Word against him. Through this great prophet God showed His power, raising the widow's son from the dead, withholding rain for three years, and then sending fire from heaven to consume the sacrifice of meat, water, wood and even stones of the altar as thousands of people watched in amazement.

Elijah killed all the prophets of Baal as punishment for their idolatry. Then he ran like the wind ahead Ahab's chariot when the rains returned, all this according to God's almighty Word.

But Elijah was no match for Queen Jezebel. When she threatened his life, Elijah ran away and hid in a cave. In 1 Kings 19:9, the Bible says God came to Elijah asking, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" The fearful and disappointed prophet answered, "Your people have deserted You, O Lord. I am the only one left, and they seek my life."

But God reminded Elijah He was still in charge. Instead of concentrating on his disappointment, God said Elijah should remember what He had already done through him. The dead had been raised, fire rained from heaven and all the people had shouted, "Jehovah is God!"

When you and I are disappointed in people or events, we must not hide our faces in fear, anger or sadness, but remember that God is still in charge. He has done great things through us and for us. If we will trust Him rather than the leaders of this world, our disappointment will fade. Trusting God's providence for our earthly life and Jesus' forgiveness for our eternal life, we, too, can speak with faith and confidence, "Jehovah is God!"

"It is better to take refuge in the Lord than to trust in princes" (Psalm 118:9).

Pastor Tasler writes a weekly message like the one above and emails it to hundreds of people around the country free. You may subscribe by emailing him at pbt45@central.com.