



APPNOTES

Date: March 11-15, 2019

Series: Elijah

Numbers 11:14-15 In today's society, complaining is an art form. Whether it's our children, boss, friends, spouse, or family - we all deal with our fair share of bellyaching. It was not much different in Biblical times. In this passage, Moses is leading the people of Israel through the wilderness on the way to the Promised Land. Moses is so worn out from the constant complaining that he would rather face death than continue. He calls out to God to lessen his burden. Like Moses, we need to fix our eyes upon the Lord. Look to Him for the power and perspective needed for each day. Reach for His energy when we feel we cannot make it through one more minute. Remember there is an endgame to our grief. Let our souls be warmed with the reassurance that we will reach the Promised Land. Find peace in God's strength!

Jonah 4:3 Some days feel like the whole world is against us; nothing goes right. This is how the Old Testament prophet Jonah feels in this passage. He is so upset with his circumstances he doesn't want to go on living! His anger toward his circumstances quickly leads to woe. Constant self-pity drains our energy and leaves us depressed. But we need to interpret our circumstances by God's promises, not our expectations. When we turn our attention to God's promise, we discover His unique plan for our lives. Seek joy in God's sovereignty; He is the author of our lives and has plans to prosper us. He comes to us in the darkest times - suffering never has the last word. Jesus' resurrection ensures our sorrow will turn into joy. Find encouragement in God's promises!

2 Corinthians 1:8 Theodore Roosevelt said, "Nothing in the world is worth having or worth doing unless it means effort, pain, difficulty." In this passage, we find Paul telling the church of Corinth the same. He and his friend Timothy faced great resistance to the Gospel message. Their discouragement became overwhelming. Often overpowering feelings of failure bring us down. But Paul reminds us we are called to patient endurance. There is purpose in our suffering. First, it reminds us that we cannot rely on our own strength; God must carry us. Also, in our own suffering we gain empathy to be able to serve and comfort others. Our relationship with the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit helps transform our outlook and eases our suffering by showing us pain's purpose. We can have peace in the realization that suffering has an expiration date. Glory awaits all those who call upon the name of the Lord, Jesus Christ. Find comfort in God's compassion!

Matthew 26:38-39 Many people believe that faithful Christians don't get depressed. But the Bible tells us that some of the Godliest people in history struggled with depression. Moses, Jonah, Elijah, and Paul all succumbed to feelings of despair. In this passage, we see that even Jesus was not immune from feelings of discouragement. He was wary of His impending torture and crucifixion. He felt overwhelmed comprehending the totality of what He needed to endure to save humanity. The one thing all these people of God and Christ himself have in common? Each gave their anguish over to God. No one is immune from depression. Left unchecked, it can lead to destruction – relationally, spiritually and personally. When we feel abandoned and afraid, we need to remember our feelings do not define the truth. God holds our precious lives in His hands at ALL times. Find salvation through Christ's sacrifice!

Psalm 34:18-19 There's a cartoon I often allude to when describing my life in times of trial. It is the image of a person with a black, raining cloud following only him/her. Everywhere else is sunny and bright. I'm sure many of us often experience these feelings. But this Psalm reminds us that God has a special place in His heart for the brokenhearted and crushed in spirit. Even at our lowest moment, we can have confidence knowing the troubles we face today will end someday. Moreover, there is no separation from God in this world! Even in times where we cannot feel His presence or we are not walking with Him, He is there. Because of His unwavering love, we will overcome all temporal pain and spiritual anxiety. Walk steady in the Lord's presence. He has a glorious plan for us, even in our suffering. Find joy through God's unconditional love!

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