



BOUNCE BACK TO LIFE

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Elijah was the great prophet of God in Israel who withstood the four hundred and fifty false prophets of Baal defeated and killed them at Mount Carmel after he had called down fire from heaven. He also prayed for the rain and God obliged him. However, shortly after this victory, King Ahab got home and narrated Elijah's exploits to Jezebel his wife and she didn't take kindly to it. Jezebel threatened to kill Elijah like he did the prophets of Baal and suddenly, though Jezebel didn't see Elijah face to face but merely sent words to him yet the great man of God was afraid and ran for his dear life. Usually, we take women for granted presuming them as weaker vessels. If Jezebel indeed was weaker compared to Ahab, how come she did what he could not do and put Elijah to flight?

Elijah broke down, sulking and complaining that he'd had defended God's name enough in Israel. The truth however is that Elijah at that time was a burn-out! Perhaps he had assumed the contest at Carmel would be the last and committed all his resources to it. Although he won the battle, he lost the fight. He became worn out and had no more will to fight. When Jezebel

showed up therefore, Elijah was flat on his back. Much as God tried to encourage and spur him on he had given up beyond recovery. After much fruitless persuasion God gave up on him too and asked him to anoint three people; Hazael as king over Syria, Jehu the son of Nimshi as king over Israel and Elisha the son of Shaphat as prophet in his stead. Elijah came to the end of his ministry abruptly!

Human life on earth is temporal and has a span. Only God is eternal without beginning or end. God remains today what He was ten, five or a thousand years ago and would remain the same forever. The Bible declares that,

“Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and for ever.” Hebrews 13: 8

It is not so with man. Whatever our ages, we are not now what we were five, ten or twenty years ago. God allots to us a lifespan at birth and gives us resources to last that long. As we grow up we dissipate energy and constantly draw from our reserved resources. We die once we exhaust or use up all our God-given resources. We therefore must learn how to manage and not use up our resources too quickly to last a lifetime. Those who use up their life resources too quickly are burn-outs and get stranded midlife.

This was Elijah’s case as he used up his resources too quickly and came to the end of the rope. If we must not burn out like Elijah we must learn how to be renewed and refreshed in God’s presence. That way, we’ll always bounce and not burn out. Every elastic string always bounces back if it has not exceeded its elastic limit. The same is true for man. After working so hard for a season, God expects us to take time to rest to regain our form. This is the secret of lasting long. Those who keep drawing from life without replenishing soon burn out. Elijah exceeded his elastic limit and could no longer bounce back.

In banking, however fat an account, constant withdrawals from it without new deposits soon overdraw the account and it’d be in red. God doesn’t want us to overdraw our account with Him that way. We should not overdrive or stretch ourselves beyond limits but always bounce back to continue life. Though we cannot overemphasize the place of miracles in human life yet we owe ourselves certain responsibilities by not living recklessly or carelessly. True, God gives us miracles at certain times in life. Some miracles may be late too. God sent His angel and fed Elijah miraculously but he was already discouraged and overstretched beyond

resuscitation the miracles notwithstanding. Elijah had already overdrawn his account. Living long does not depend on God alone. We no doubt owe ourselves certain responsibilities if we must last long.

Life is the best gift from God and must be well managed. God gives us the secret of bouncing back in Isaiah 40: 30-31 thus:

“Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall; but they wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.”

Youths are known for strength but this passage reveals that they also in spite of their strength will come to their limits. However strong or resourceful we may be, there would always be times when we are weak and weary and at our wit's end. Thank God He has made provision for us to be renewed and refreshed in Him at such times. The secret of staying strong and lasting long therefore lies in waiting upon the Lord at all times. Experiences of life buttress this point. Often, we wake up in the morning strong and full of life but in the evening after a hard day's job we're no longer as strong but spent and worn-out. If we however take the time to sleep and rest at night we're renewed and refreshed again by the dawn of the next day. It's like a new deposit is made into our account and we can now draw more resources for fresh life challenges. That is how God expects us to live.

Waiting upon the Lord renews our strength and we mount up with wings as eagles. The eagle unlike most other birds does not struggle but rides the storm and contrary wind. Most men merely struggle through life but God doesn't intend it so. He wants all His children to overcome and be victorious in life no matter what. God wants us to enjoy and not endure life. Life is a race and we're all running in it. The secret of running and not be tired or weary like others is to keep waiting on the Lord. Then the challenges of life will not outpace us; our walk with God will be steady and we'll not faint. This demands action and it's more than a mere wish. Every Bible promise has conditions attached. We only reap the benefits after fulfilling God's conditions of His promises. God says if we wait on Him, He will renew our strength and when this happens we'll always mount and move up, we'll run and not be weary, we'll walk and not faint.

There are many fainting believers around. They are burnouts like Elijah and are living under severe pressure and stress. The following signs and symptoms characterize them.

- 1. Boredom and Lack of Interest.**
- 2. Lack of Ideas and Creativity.**
- 3. Low Productivity and Lack of Effectiveness.**
- 4. Silly Mistakes and Blunders.**
- 5. Lack of Ambition.**
- 6. Constant Recurrent Discouragement.**
- 7. Complaints and Grumbling.**
- 8. Irritation, Edginess, Resentment and Fault-finding.**
- 9. Frustration.**
- 10. Stiffness and Congestion.**
- 11. Tiredness and Fatigue.**
- 12. Loss of Appetite or Self-Indulgence.**
- 13. Distraction & Lack of Concentration**
- 14.**
- 15. Fast Aging.**

The Lord Jesus Christ said, *“I have come that they might have life and have it more abundantly” (John 10: 11)*. If we are to live the abundant life Jesus provides, we must learn to wait upon the Lord regularly to replenish lost energy and be refreshed. God has provided certain means of renewal to cope with and overcome life challenges. They are:

- 1. Sleep and Rest – Psalm 127: 2.**
- 2. Wait on God Fasting – Isaiah 40: 28-31.**
- 3. Pray Without Ceasing – Isaiah 40: 28-31.**
- 4. Practice Quietness –**
- 5. Renew Your Mind by the Word of God – Romans 12: 2.**
- 6. Have a Change of Environment –Mark 4: 35,**
- 7. Break Your Routine & Have Variety –**
- 8. Exercise and Play Games –**
- 9. Win with Water –**
- 10. Use your Faith & Drugs –**

Being renewed surely makes a difference in life. Some of the signs of a renewed life include:

- 1. Feeling of Freshness.**
- 2. Feeling of Wellbeing.**
- 3. Joy and Enjoyment.**
- 4. Youthfulness.**
- 5. Friendliness.**
- 6. Inspiration and New Ideas.**
- 7. Ambition.**
- 8. Brightness, Excitement & Enthusiasm.**
- 9. Focus & Concentration**
- 10. High Productivity & Efficiency.**