

2. *The causes of spiritual depression* are partly physical, partly mental, and partly in the surroundings.

3. *God deals gently with his servants in their discouragement*, not answering their unwise prayers, nor reproaching them for their lack of faith, but tenderly supplying their needs.

4. *We may bring our deepest trouble to the Lord*, and tell him all our griefs, assured that he will listen to us.

5. *A remedy for spiritual depression is found in spiritual work*. He who labors for God will be lifted up in peace.

By Way of Illustration.

Elijah's prayer not answered. Suppose God had said, "Well, Elijah, you can die if you want to." They would have buried him in the desert, and the moaning winds would have been his only requiem. You know God had something better for Elijah. You have been saying sometimes, "My prayer has not been answered." Yes, it has. God said, "No," and "no" was better. Elijah's difficulty was that he had had a mountain-top experience, and now he has come to the valley. There was a man who went up on the mountain top. He was transfigured. His face shone as the sun. His garments were bright with light, and he came down into the valley and brought the mountain-top experience with Him. This is what you may do. Bring the mountain-top experience down with you, and you may rejoice, even though it be darkness about you.—*J. Wilbur Chapman.*

Verses 5-8. What a rare picture this is of human weakness and divine tenderness! A man, famished and faint under the broom-bush of the desert, and God brooding over him motherlike, "giving his beloved sleep," and the cruse of water and the loaf of bread. We catch the same picture again in the life of Jesus at the house of Jairus who, when he raised the little girl from her deathbed, commanded that something should be given her to eat. So Jehovah brings to Elijah twice over the two great natural remedies for wasted tissues and overtired nerves—sleep and food. Nothing is said about prayers or herb teas or sea air or rebuke, but just sleep and food. Hear it, ye men of business, who toil early and late; ye weary women, whose nerves are on edge with care and undone work, the restoring gifts of God to his prophet are long naps and square meals.—*W. H. Davis.*

Elijah learned that his success was not to be measured by things that strike the senses. The hidden forces of life are by far the most powerful. No earthquake that ever tossed whole continents

into chaos, no hurricane or cyclone that cut a swath of devastation through rich populations, has shown a tithe of the strength which is evinced each recurring year by the silent forces of spring. The storms beat on the surface of the earth and we exclaim, "How strongly the wind blows!" and we invent machines to measure its rapidity. But no man ever invented a machine to measure the strength of the unadvertised forces that cause the roots to swell and fill their delicate fibers with sap and nourish the great forces of vegetation.—*R. R. Doherty.*

Heart Talks on the Lesson.

Shall I talk with my fellow-teachers, as with my class, about this tired servant of the Lord, so discouraged, under the juniper tree? Elijah's faith has been a great inspiration to us; his discouragement may be equally helpful. It is discouraging to be told only the wonderful goodness of people, with never a glimpse of their human frailty. I remember once, being ill and discouraged, saying to my physician: "I have been reading the life of Susannah Wesley. It seems hardly worth while for me to live in the world after such a woman as she. Perhaps you may as well not give me any more medicine." "O, well," he said, laughing, "you never lived with Susannah Wesley. And besides, I do not believe she had half the demands on her time and strength that you have now, even with her nineteen children; so you may as well keep on, and in the end you may accomplish as much." God's saints on earth are human, and will be until they join the "spirits of the just made perfect" in heaven.

It is possible to go from the heights and triumphs of Carmel to the dead level of the wilderness and the request to die because life does not seem worth living. Moses had the same experience. The burden grew so great that he cried to the Lord: "I am not able to bear all this people alone, because it is too heavy for me. And if thou deal thus with me, kill me, I pray thee, out of hand, if I have found favor in thy sight; and let me not see my wretchedness." These two men of mightiest faith and great deeds for God were not exempt from depression of spirit as long as they were in the flesh. For aught we know, they have talked it over in the world where they see now there was never any real reason to be discouraged, except that the flesh was weak and weary. They, too, were on the transfiguration mount, talking with Jesus of that time in Jerusalem when he would cry out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" There is a blessed bond of sympathy

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