



# WHEN DEPRESSION COMES

*A 5 DAY DEVOTIONAL TO ANCHOR YOUR SOUL  
WHEN DARKNESS COMES*

*by maria dyck*





## THE STORY OF ELIJAH

Elijah had a problem. Actually, in reality, he had several. As a prophet of God for the people of Israel, he was a constant target for wicked King Ahab and his wife, Queen Jezebel. But the problem that plagued Elijah had more to do with the struggle within him than the threat around him.

Elijah was a prophet who struggled with depression. On one hand, I find this comforting. If a mighty man of God can struggle with depression, then my own struggle with depression does not feel as lonely or shameful. On the other hand, if a mighty man of God can struggle with depression, is no one safe from the darkness and despair that creeps into our lives?

For the next 5 days, we will examine Elijah's story and hopefully catch a glimpse, not only of how to face the battle of depression, but the heart of God towards those who are broken and suffering.

I pray it will encourage you and give you hope for the days ahead.

*Maria*





## WHEN DEPRESSION COMES

Today's Scripture: 1 Kings 18:1-15

I've often wondered if there is a gene that causes depression because it seems certain people are more prone to depression than others, as in, it's a life-long, daily struggle. Often this struggle belongs to those who are highly sensitive – the artists, the creatives, the musicians – who internalize life's hardships and struggle to process them.

But even if you don't classify yourself as an artist, chances are, you will struggle with depression at some point because life is hard. From the moment sin entered this world until we take our last breath, we are engaged in a struggle with our heart, bodies, and minds. Whether we are struggling with our own sinful nature, navigating complicated relationships, suffering from a broken heart, or contending with our dying bodies, we will most likely find ourselves in a pit of despair at some point.


So, the question isn't, *if* depression comes, but *when*. *When* depression comes, how will we deal with it? Who will we turn to? How will we manage it?


In 1 Kings 19, we read about the prophet Elijah, and in verse 4, he cries out to God, "*I have had enough, Lord. Take my life; I am no better than my ancestors.*"

Have you ever had such a thought? If I am being honest, I will admit to thinking something similar at some point. I have had enough, Lord. I'm done. Wiped out. I can't go on.

Perhaps you've heard the phrase: the Lord won't give you more than you can handle, and you cling to this promise when you feel you are drowning. The only problem is, it's not a promise from God. He never said it.

Scripture does say that God won't tempt us beyond our ability to handle it, but that doesn't mean we won't experience life's cruelty firsthand, or that it won't overwhelm us. When it comes to suffering, Satan would like us to drown in it, and we would were it not for the grace of God. Life will give us more than we can handle, but not more than God can handle, and since He's never lost a battle yet, the safest action we can take is to surrender our pain into His hands.





Psalm 56:8 tells us that God collects our tears in a bottle and records each one in His book. This comforts me in ways I can't express because it confirms that God does see my pain, and it matters to Him.

But how does knowing this help us?

Knowing God cares about every tear that falls reminds us to cry out to Him. Withholding our emotions or being dishonest with ourselves only seems to drive the depression in deeper. We cannot heal when we don't confront what is tormenting us. God already knows what we are thinking, but we often don't. I am sometimes shocked at what comes out of my mouth when I pray – I had no idea those thoughts were trapped inside of me until I came before the Lord and poured out my heart.

Prayer doesn't change my circumstances, but it positions my heart and mind to listen to God and be receptive to His leading. It acknowledges that any attempt to heal will need to come from the Creator and Healer of my soul because I can't lift myself out of the mud. I am not capable of healing myself, but I can fall down at the feet of Jesus and cry out.

If you are suffering from depression, remember there is nothing to be ashamed of. Depression is a natural emotion to experience when life hurts. Just as we would expect to feel pain when we break a leg, we should expect our hearts to hurt when we feel grief. Depression is not always a concern – it's often a part of a larger process - but when it lingers and refuses to heal, we need to take a deeper look at what is causing it.

In the next few days, we will take a closer look at Elijah's struggle with depression, examine what may have caused it, and see what we can learn from his experience. We may just find we have more in common with this man of God than we realized.

*When was the last time you poured out your heart to God?*

