

Overcoming despondency

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It would do me so much good if I could kill a few people right now, sorry mom. For the past few days I have been fighting the powers of darkness, still they prevail with me. But I have more or less gotten my head out of the inferno, my body I am sure will follow later. How I have had to struggle, really, to overcome this accursed blackness. This attack of despondency was due to the fact of regret at having to be virtuous, nothing more.

In moods of heavy despondency, I feel as if it would be delightful to sink down in some quiet spot, and just lie there forever, allowing the soil gradually accumulate and form a little mound over me, and the grass and perhaps flowers gather over it, I have just dug my own grave. However, at such times, death is too much of an event to be wished for, I have not the spirits to encounter it, just choose to pass out of existence in this sluggish way.

The value of solitude is one of great values. It is of course, that there is nothing to cushion against attacks from within, just as there is nothing to help balance, at times of particular stress of depression. A few moments of desultory conversation, of which I took kindly too, and it did help to calm my inner storm for the moment. But it did not change the point, that storm, as painful as it is, had some truth in it. So, I suppose I simply had to live through the moment only to endure a period of illumination, if I can live through it, attentive to what it exposes or demands.

I had lived in a house of many rooms, and there has been a fire and it was all charred to hell except for a small attic bedroom. So, I think I can enjoy a feeling of melancholy, and that there is a good deal of satisfaction about being thoroughly miserable, but I still don't care for a fit of the blues.

Nevertheless, we all have them, notwithstanding which, nobody can tell, except this time I am in full knowledge of mine. At other times, there has been no accounting for them. I was just as likely to have a day of that nature on the day I had come into a large fortune, still waiting for that one, as on a day after I left my silk umbrella on the Manhattan train while it was pouring outside, had a few of those, real bummers. Having said, now and then a sea of despair still lift its ugly head and rages.

1 Kings 19: 1 – 19

Even great people, like Elijah, went through times of despondency. How did he overcome his time of despondency?

1) The road to despondency (1 – 7)

- You feel that life is against you even though you've tried to do everything right (1 – 2)
- Fear sets in specifically the fear of failure (3)
- You run from life (3)
- You leave those who have stood by your side (3)
- Then you move into isolation and start moving into despair. (4 – 6)
- Elijah fled to mount Horeb and spent a night in a cave. It was probably his safe place. (7 – 8)

2) The attitude of despondency (9b – 10)

- A feeling of being overwhelmed by everything (10)
- A sense of injustice against us. (10)
- A false belief that we're the only one experiencing what we're going through. (10)

3) The release from despondency (11 – 19)

- Know that the Lord is with you in your despondency. (5, 7, 9, 11)
- Enter into the presence of the Lord – prayer (11 – 13a)
- Accept the Lord's confrontation – "What are you doing here?" (13b & 9b)
- Go back the way you came – get back to what you were doing (15)
- Be prepared to do new things that you hadn't done before. (15b – 17)
- Accept the truth that you aren't the one going through what you are experiencing. (18)
- Get up and do what God has told you to do. (19)