

Shutting Down **Message 04 in the series, “Help, I’m Out of Control”**

A. Elijah takes a nap

“When Ahab got home, he told Jezebel everything Elijah had done, including the way he had killed all the prophets of Baal. So Jezebel sent this message to Elijah: ‘May the gods strike me and even kill me if by this time tomorrow I have not killed you just as you killed them.’ Elijah was afraid and fled for his life. He went to Beersheba, a town in Judah, and he left his servant there. Then he went on alone into the wilderness, traveling all day. He sat down under a solitary broom tree and prayed that he might die. ‘I have had enough, LORD,’ he said. ‘Take my life, for I am no better than my ancestors who have already died.’ Then he lay down and slept under the broom tree. But as he was sleeping, an angel touched him and told him, ‘Get up and eat!’ He looked around and there beside his head was some bread baked on hot stones and a jar of water! So he ate and drank and lay down again. Then the angel of the LORD came again and touched him and said, ‘Get up and eat some more, or the journey ahead will be too much for you.’ So he got up and ate and drank, and the food gave him enough strength to travel forty days and forty nights to Mount Sinai, the mountain of God. There he came to a cave, where he spent the night. But the LORD said to him, ‘What are you doing here, Elijah?’ Elijah replied, ‘I have zealously served the LORD God Almighty. But the people of Israel have broken their covenant with you, torn down your altars, and killed every one of your prophets. I am the only one left, and now they are trying to kill me, too.’ ‘Go out and stand before me on the mountain,’ the LORD told him. And as Elijah stood there, the LORD passed by, and a mighty windstorm hit the mountain. It was such a terrible blast that the rocks were torn loose, but the LORD was not in the wind. After the wind there was an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake. And after the earthquake there was a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire. And after the fire there was the sound of a gentle whisper. When Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his cloak and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave. And a voice said, ‘What are you doing here, Elijah?’ He replied again, ‘I have zealously served the LORD God Almighty. But the people of Israel have broken their covenant with you, torn down your altars, and killed every one of your prophets. I am the only one left, and now they are trying to kill me, too.’ Then the LORD told him, ‘Go back the same way you came, and travel to the wilderness of Damascus. When you arrive there, anoint Hazael to be king of Aram. Then anoint Jehu grandson of Nimshi to be king of Israel, and anoint Elisha son of Shaphat from the town of Abel-meholah to replace you as my prophet. Anyone who escapes from Hazael will be killed by Jehu, and those who escape Jehu will be killed by Elisha! Yet I will preserve 7,000 others in Israel who have never bowed down to Baal or kissed him!’” 1 Kings 19:1-18 (NLT)

1. When things got out of control, Elijah decided to shut down!

Shut Down: Withdrawal, silence, depression, disengagement — “If I can’t control what’s happening, I’ll stop participating altogether.” It looks like peace, but it’s actually defeat.

“So I came to hate life because everything done here under the sun is so troubling. Everything is meaningless—like chasing the wind. I came to hate all my hard work here on earth, for I must leave to others everything I have earned. And who can tell whether my successors will be wise or foolish? Yet they will control everything I have gained by my skill and hard work under the sun. How meaningless! So I gave up in despair, questioning the value of all my hard work in this world.” Ecclesiastes 2:17-20 (NLT)

2. When Elijah was ready to quit, God didn’t lecture him — He fed him and told him to get up. God wants us to keep moving, even when life disappoints us.

“This is my command—be strong and courageous! Do not be afraid or discouraged. For the LORD your God is with you wherever you go.” Joshua 1:9 (NLT)

“Don’t be afraid, for I am with you. Don’t be discouraged, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you. I will hold you up with my victorious right hand.” Isaiah 41:10 (NLT)

"I lay down and slept, yet I woke up in safety, for the LORD was watching over me."

Psalm 3:5 (NLT)

B. Noah gets drunk

"The sons of Noah who came out of the boat with their father were Shem, Ham, and Japheth. (Ham is the father of Canaan.) From these three sons of Noah came all the people who now populate the earth. After the flood, Noah began to cultivate the ground, and he planted a vineyard. One day he drank some wine he had made, and he became drunk and lay naked inside his tent. Ham, the father of Canaan, saw that his father was naked and went outside and told his brothers. Then Shem and Japheth took a robe, held it over their shoulders, and backed into the tent to cover their father. As they did this, they looked the other way so they would not see him naked. When Noah woke up from his stupor, he learned what Ham, his youngest son, had done. Then he cursed Canaan, the son of Ham: 'May Canaan be cursed! May he be the lowest of servants to his relatives.' Then Noah said, 'May the LORD, the God of Shem, be blessed, and may Canaan be his servant! May God expand the territory of Japheth! May Japheth share the prosperity of Shem, and may Canaan be his servant.' Noah lived another 350 years after the great flood. He lived 950 years, and then he died."

Genesis 9:18-29 (NLT)

1. After the destruction of humanity, Noah numbed himself by getting drunk!

Numbing: The deliberate or unconscious suppression of emotional pain through external stimulation or disengagement — avoiding the feeling rather than processing it. It's anything you use to turn down the volume on a feeling you don't want to face.

"My heart pounds in my chest. The terror of death assaults me. Fear and trembling overwhelm me, and I can't stop shaking. Oh, that I had wings like a dove; then I would fly away and rest! I would fly far away to the quiet of the wilderness. How quickly I would escape—far from this wild storm of hatred." Psalm 55:4-8 (NLT)

"How terrible for you who sprawl on ivory beds and lounge on your couches, eating the meat of tender lambs from the flock and of choice calves fattened in the stall. You sing trivial songs to the sound of the harp and fancy yourselves to be great musicians like David. You drink wine by the bowlful and perfume yourselves with fragrant lotions. You care nothing about the ruin of your nation." Amos 6:4-6 (NLT)

2. When anxiety hits, God's answer is not a substance — it's His presence.

"Don't act thoughtlessly, but understand what the Lord wants you to do. Don't be drunk with wine, because that will ruin your life. Instead, be filled with the Holy Spirit, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves, and making music to the Lord in your hearts. And give thanks for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Ephesians 5:17-20 (NLT)

"Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus."

Philippians 4:6-7 (NLT)