SEA CHANGE CHURCH

THE CURRENT

Elijah: From Drought to Downpour · S2E2

Somewhere to Run, Somewhere to Hide

A 7-Day Study

"And the angel of the LORD came again a second time and touched him and said, 'Arise and eat, for the journey is too great for you.' And he arose and ate and drank, and went in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights to Horeb, the mount of God. There he came to a cave and lodged in it. And behold, the word of the LORD came to him, and he said to him, 'What are you doing here, Elijah?' He said, 'I have been very jealous for the LORD, the God of hosts. For the people of Israel have forsaken your covenant, thrown down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword, and I, even I only, am left, and they seek my life, to take it away.' And he said, 'Go out and stand on the mount before the LORD.' And behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind tore the mountains and broke in pieces the rocks before the LORD, but the LORD was not in the wind. And after the wind an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake. And after the earthquake a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire. And after the fire the sound of a low whisper. And when Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his cloak and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave. And behold, there came a voice to him and said, 'What are you doing here, Elijah?'"

1 Kings 19:7–13 ESV

Pastor Adam Stadtmiller · August 30, 2026

THIS WEEK'S MEMORY VERSE

"So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ."

Romans 10:17

HOW TO USE THIS STUDY

Each week, The Current walks through a piece of Sunday's passage: a short verse study, encouragement, journal questions, and a daily prayer.

Take one day at a time. There's no need to rush.

DAY 1

Lost His Strength, Never His Way

> **1 KINGS 19:9 ESV**
>
> *"There he came to a cave and lodged in it. And behold, the word of the LORD came to him, and he said to him, 'What are you doing here, Elijah?'"*

VERSE STUDY

Pastor Adam framed this whole passage around one word: dwell. Elijah is not standing still in this story. He moves from Israel to Judah, to a broom tree, to the wilderness, and finally to a cave on the mountain of God. Every one of those locations matters, because as Pastor Adam put it, the places you dwell in large part shape the person you become. Location influences formation.

Here is the point Pastor Adam wanted to make sure nobody missed: Elijah lost his strength and courage, but he never lost his way. He was discouraged, exhausted, even suicidal at one point, and still, every time he made a move, he moved toward God rather than away from him. That is worth sitting with. You can be completely undone and still know how to get home.

Home, in this sense, is not just a physical address. It is the direction your feet turn when everything in you wants to quit. Elijah did not have his life together in this passage. He did not feel strong or confident. But he kept ending up closer to God's presence, not further from it, and that pattern is what carried him all the way to the cave where God finally spoke.

If you feel like you have lost your strength lately, worn thin, discouraged, unsure how you got here, this passage is not asking you to fake confidence you don't have. It is asking a simpler question: even in this state, which direction are you moving?

TAKE HEART

Losing your strength for a season does not mean you have lost your way. Elijah proves that discouragement and direction toward God can exist in the same person at the same time.

JOURNAL QUESTIONS

1. In your current season, are you moving toward God or away from him, even in small, quiet ways?
2. What would it look like this week to keep moving toward God even while you're still discouraged, rather than waiting to feel strong first?

DAILY PRAYER

Before you pray, spend a few quiet minutes with today's verse: read it slowly once more, or simply sit in silence and let it settle. Then, when you're ready, pray this over your day:

Lord, some days I feel like I've lost my strength completely, and I wonder if I've lost my way with it. Thank You that Elijah shows me those are not the same thing. Help me keep turning toward You

even when I don't feel strong, confident, or sure of much at all. Teach me that the direction of my heart matters more right now than the condition of my strength. Meet me on the road toward You, however slow or unsteady my steps. Amen.

ACTION CHALLENGE

Name one small, concrete way you can move toward God today, even if you don't feel strong enough for anything bigger.

NOTES

DAY 2

The Journey Is Too Great for You

> **1 KINGS 19:7 ESV**
>
> *"And the angel of the LORD came again a second time and touched him and said, 'Arise and eat, for the journey is too great for you.'"*

VERSE STUDY

Pastor Adam picked the story back up right here, with the second touch from the angel, and asked us to underline one phrase: the journey is too great for you. Not might be too great. Is too great. God is not scolding Elijah for his limits. God is naming them, plainly, before providing exactly what's needed to cover the gap.

This is a hard sentence for a lot of us to sit with, because we tend to treat our limits as personal failures rather than simple facts. Pastor Adam pointed out that when we try to make a journey in our own power that was never meant to be made in our own power, we tend to fail. The touch and the food come first, before Elijah takes another step. Provision precedes the journey, not the other way around.

Notice that Elijah does not argue with the assessment. He does not insist he can push through on his own strength to prove something. He eats, and drinks, and he arises again, and that meal alone carries him forty days and forty nights to Horeb. Whatever this food actually was, its effect was completely out of proportion to its size, because it was never just food. It was strength he could not have produced himself.

Where is your journey currently too great for you? Not too great in theory, but actually, honestly too great, the kind you cannot muscle through by trying harder. This verse says that admission is the doorway to provision, not the end of the story.

TAKE HEART

You are allowed to admit a journey is too great for you. Elijah did, and it was not the end of his story. It was the moment right before God supplied exactly what the next forty days would require.

JOURNAL QUESTIONS

1. What in your life right now feels like a journey that is genuinely too great for you in your own strength?
2. Where have you been trying to power through something in your own strength instead of receiving what God has already provided?

DAILY PRAYER

Before you pray, spend a few quiet minutes with today's verse: read it slowly once more, or simply sit in silence and let it settle. Then, when you're ready, pray this over your day:

Lord, there are places in my life right now where the journey really does feel too great for me, and I've been too proud or too tired to admit it plainly. Thank You that You don't wait for me to be strong enough before You provide what I need. Help me stop trying to muscle through in my own strength what You've already offered to sustain. Give me the humility to arise and eat instead of insisting I can make it on empty. Carry me the distance I cannot carry myself. Amen.

ACTION CHALLENGE

Name the one journey that currently feels too great for you, and instead of pushing harder today, ask God specifically for the provision to cover it.

NOTES

DAY 3

Bread That Actually Sustains

> **JOHN 6:35 ESV**
>
> *"Jesus said to them, 'I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst.'"*

VERSE STUDY

Pastor Adam was honest about how easily we run to the wrong food when we're struggling. He told a story about walking into Costco during a genuinely hard week and suddenly wanting to buy a rug he didn't even like, just because something in him needed comfort. He and his wife used to do the same thing at IKEA in their twenties, loading up a cart to soothe something that furniture was never going to fix. Most of us have a version of that go-to, something we reach for that works for a few hours and leaves us no more sustained than before.

Against that backdrop, Elijah's meal in the wilderness looks completely different. God did not just give him calories. He gave him strength that carried him forty days and forty nights, an effect wildly out of proportion to a single cake and a jar of water. Pastor Adam connected this directly to Jesus in John 6:35: I am the bread of life, whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst.

The question worth asking honestly is simple: do you eat the food God actually gives you, or do you go find that other food? The scrolling, the spending, the distraction that promises relief for four hours, four days, maybe four months, but never actually sustains you the way real bread does. Pastor Adam described a picture from Psalm 23, God preparing a table in the presence of our enemies, and admitted that so often, as believers, we just don't eat what's already been set in front of us.

This is not a call to feel guilty about every ordinary comfort. It's an invitation to notice which food you're actually reaching for on your hardest days, and whether it's building you up or quietly breaking you down.

TAKE HEART

Whatever your go-to distraction is, it was never going to sustain you the way Christ can. Jesus is not offering you one more short-term fix. He's offering bread that actually lasts.

JOURNAL QUESTIONS

1. What is your go-to substitute food, the thing you reach for when you're struggling that gives short-term relief but no real sustenance?
2. What would it look like this week to consciously choose the bread of life over that substitute, even once?

DAILY PRAYER

Before you pray, spend a few quiet minutes with today's verse: read it slowly once more, or simply sit in silence and let it settle. Then, when you're ready, pray this over your day:

Lord Jesus, You are the bread of life, and I confess how often I reach for something else first. Thank You for setting a table in front of me even in the presence of my struggles, and for being patient when I don't sit down to eat it. Help me notice what I'm actually reaching for when I'm tired or overwhelmed. Teach me to come to You first, not as a last resort, but as the meal that actually sustains me. Satisfy the hunger in me that nothing else has ever been able to touch. Amen.

ACTION CHALLENGE

The next time you reach for your go-to distraction today, pause first and bring that same need to Jesus instead, even briefly.

NOTES

DAY 4

A Word You Can Actually Hear

> **ROMANS 10:17 ESV**
>
> *"So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ."*

VERSE STUDY

Pastor Adam introduced a word this week that shapes the rest of the message: rhema. In Matthew 4:4, Jesus tells the devil that man does not live on bread alone, but on every word, rhema, that proceeds from the mouth of God. Pastor Adam distinguished this from logos, the eternal, all encompassing Word that is Jesus himself. Rhema is different: a specific, spoken word, given to an individual person, small enough to actually be received and understood.

Faith comes through hearing, Romans 10:17 says, and hearing through the word of Christ. Pastor Adam connected this straight to Elijah's forty day journey: whatever supernatural food carried him that far, it worked because he actually received a specific word for a specific moment, not just a general truth to file away. God has a rhema word for your marriage today, Pastor Adam said, for your children, your business, your health. Specific, not vague. Daily, not stored up.

This raises an honest question worth asking: are you actually positioned to hear it? Pastor Adam was direct about how much is competing for that space. Billions of dollars are spent to influence your every decision, he said, and if you're scrolling, something is spiking your emotions one way or another and quietly deciding what you think and feel. That is the opposite of being led by the Spirit.

You don't need to wait for a dramatic word delivered on a mountaintop. You need a daily rhythm of actually listening, the same rhythm Elijah needed just to survive the next forty days.

TAKE HEART

God is not withholding his voice from you. He has a specific, daily word for the exact situation you're in right now. The real question is whether you've made room to actually hear it.

JOURNAL QUESTIONS

1. What is currently competing loudest for the space where you'd otherwise hear a rhema word from God?
2. What is one area of your life right now, your family, your work, your health, where you need a specific word from God rather than a general truth?

DAILY PRAYER

Before you pray, spend a few quiet minutes with today's verse: read it slowly once more, or simply sit in silence and let it settle. Then, when you're ready, pray this over your day:

Lord, faith comes by hearing, and I want to actually hear You, not just know things about You. Thank You that You have a specific word for the specific place I'm in today, not just a general truth

I already know. Help me notice what is competing for the space where I could be listening to You instead. Quiet the noise long enough that I can actually receive what You want to say. Give me the discipline to make room for Your voice every day, not just when I'm desperate for it. Amen.

ACTION CHALLENGE

Set aside ten minutes today with no scrolling, no input, just quiet, and ask God directly for a specific word for whatever situation is heaviest on you right now.

NOTES

DAY 5

Sheltered in the Cleft of the Rock

> **EXODUS 33:21-22 ESV**
>
> *"And the LORD said, 'Behold, there is a place by me where you shall stand on the rock, and while my glory passes by I will put you in a cleft of the rock, and I will cover you with my hand until I have passed by.'"*

VERSE STUDY

Elijah's shelter did not stop increasing as he moved. Pastor Adam traced it step by step: he crosses a border into Judah, he finds shade under a broom tree, and finally he ends up in a cave on the mountain of God, the same mountain, Horeb, where Moses had his own defining encounters generations earlier. Elijah was likely carrying that history with him. He knew this was the place of the burning bush, the place where the Ten Commandments were given, the place where Moses struck the rock and water came out.

Most striking of all, this was the place where Moses himself was sheltered in the cleft of the rock while God's glory passed by, too much for Moses to see fully and survive, so God covered him with his own hand until it was safe to look. Pastor Adam pointed out an interesting contrast: Moses had a visual encounter with God, seeing the train of his glory. Elijah, in this same location, has an audible one. He does not see God pass by. He hears him.

Both encounters required shelter. Neither Moses nor Elijah could simply stand exposed in God's direct presence and be fine. There is something instructive in that: nearness to God was never meant to be something you white knuckle through unprotected. It required a hiding place, a covering, a cleft in the rock, something between the full weight of God's presence and a human being who could not bear it unshielded.

Wherever you are seeking God's presence this week, know that he provides the shelter for the encounter. You are not meant to approach him raw and unguarded, hoping to survive it. He covers you with his own hand.

TAKE HEART

God does not ask you to approach him unprotected. The same God who sheltered Moses in the cleft of the rock and met Elijah in a cave is willing to shelter you as you draw near to him too.

JOURNAL QUESTIONS

1. Where do you currently need God's shelter, his covering, as you draw near to him in a difficult season?
2. What would it look like to trust that God provides the protection for the encounter, rather than trying to approach him in your own strength?

DAILY PRAYER

Before you pray, spend a few quiet minutes with today's verse: read it slowly once more, or simply sit in silence and let it settle. Then, when you're ready, pray this over your day:

Lord, You sheltered Moses in the cleft of the rock and met Elijah in a hidden cave, and I need that same shelter as I draw near to You. I cannot approach You in my own strength, unguarded and unprotected, and I don't have to. Cover me with Your hand in the places where I feel exposed right now. Thank You that nearness to You was never meant to be something I white knuckle through alone. Meet me in my own hidden place this week. Amen.

ACTION CHALLENGE

Identify a physical place this week that can be your own version of a cleft in the rock, somewhere sheltered and quiet where you can meet with God.

NOTES

DAY 6

Not in the Wind, Not in the Fire

> **1 KINGS 19:11-12 ESV**
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> *"And behold, the LORD passed by, and a great and strong wind tore the mountains and broke in pieces the rocks before the LORD, but the LORD was not in the wind. And after the wind an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake. And after the earthquake a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire. And after the fire the sound of a low whisper."*

VERSE STUDY

Three enormous displays of power pass by Elijah on that mountain: a wind strong enough to tear rocks apart, an earthquake, a fire. Pastor Adam pointed out how easy it would be to assume God is in the middle of all of that. It looks exactly like the kind of dramatic, unmistakable power we tend to associate with God showing up. And each time, Scripture says plainly, the LORD was not in it.

Then, after the fire, comes the sound of a low whisper. Not a shout, not a display, just a whisper, and that is where the word of the LORD actually meets Elijah. Pastor Adam called this the apex of the passage, the part everyone remembers, but he was careful to point out that it only makes sense because of everything that led up to it: the broom tree, the food, the forty day journey, the cave. Elijah had already been practicing smallness and stillness before this whisper ever came.

There's a real temptation to assume that if God isn't showing up dramatically, he isn't showing up at all. This passage pushes directly against that. The wind, earthquake, and fire were real and powerful, and God still was not in them. He chose the whisper instead, something that requires you to actually be still and listening in order to catch it at all.

If your life feels quiet right now, free of dramatic wind or fire, that is not necessarily a sign that God has gone silent. It may be exactly the kind of setting where a whisper can finally be heard.

TAKE HEART

You don't need a wind, an earthquake, or a fire to know God is near. Sometimes the quietest moment in your life is the one where he is actually closest, if you're still enough to notice.

JOURNAL QUESTIONS

1. Have you ever assumed God was absent simply because nothing dramatic was happening? What actually happened in that season?
2. What would it look like this week to listen for a whisper rather than waiting for something louder?

DAILY PRAYER

Before you pray, spend a few quiet minutes with today's verse: read it slowly once more, or simply sit in silence and let it settle. Then, when you're ready, pray this over your day:

Lord, I confess I often look for You in the wind, the earthquake, and the fire, the dramatic and unmistakable, and miss You in the whisper. Teach me to be still enough to actually hear You when You choose the quiet way. Help me stop assuming Your silence means Your absence. Give me the patience Elijah had to wait through the loud things for the quiet word that actually mattered. Speak to me in whatever whisper You choose this week, and give me ears to catch it. Amen.

ACTION CHALLENGE

Spend five quiet minutes today with no expectation of anything dramatic, simply listening for whatever quiet word God might have for you.

NOTES

DAY 7

Change Your Geography

> **MARK 9:4 ESV**
>
> *"And there appeared to them Elijah with Moses, and they were talking with Jesus."*

VERSE STUDY

Pastor Adam pointed out something remarkable: this same mountain, this same story, comes back up centuries later. When Jesus is transfigured on the mountain, it is Moses and Elijah who appear beside him, the same two men who were both once sheltered on this very range, one in a cleft of the rock, one in a cave. This time, though, they are not just hearing a word or catching a glimpse of glory passing by. They are talking with Jesus face to face.

Both Elijah and Moses were archetypes and precursors to Jesus, and their appearance together at the Transfiguration is a kind of full circle moment. What began as desperate, hidden encounters in the wilderness becomes, generations later, direct conversation with the Son of God himself. Pastor Adam's point was simple: the hidden places where you meet with God now are not wasted time. They are formation for something further down the road you may not yet see.

This week's practical challenge from Pastor Adam is direct: change your geography, and place yourself more often in the places where God dwells. That could be among the poor, in a hospital, in an elderly home, with a neighbor, under a tree in your own backyard. He was honest about his own recent shift: three minutes of silent prayer a day, at a counselor's direction, that has grown into sitting with God for an hour at a time, something that would have sounded impossible to him just weeks earlier.

Where is your mountain of God, the place you can return to on a regular basis? And just as important, where is the valley of the shadow of death you need to stop frequenting? Pastor Adam was clear that both questions matter. Changing your geography is not just about adding a new habit. It is about being honest about which places are forming you and which places are quietly deforming you.

TAKE HEART

The hidden places where you meet with God are never wasted. Elijah's cave and Moses's cleft in the rock became, generations later, a face to face conversation with Jesus. Your quiet, ordinary time with God is doing more than you can currently see.

JOURNAL QUESTIONS

1. What is one place in your life right now that is either forming or deforming you spiritually, and what would it take to change that geography?
2. Where is your mountain of God, the place you could return to on a regular basis this week to meet with him?

DAILY PRAYER

Before you pray, spend a few quiet minutes with today's verse: read it slowly once more, or simply sit in silence and let it settle. Then, when you're ready, pray this over your day:

Lord, Elijah and Moses were shaped in hidden places before they ever stood face to face with Jesus, and I believe my own hidden places with You matter just as much. Show me where I need to change my geography this week, whether that means leaving a place that deforms me or returning to a place that forms me. Give me the courage to place myself more often where You dwell. Thank You that no quiet moment spent with You is ever wasted, even when I can't yet see where it's leading. Meet me on my own mountain of God. Amen.

ACTION CHALLENGE

Choose one specific place, a room, a bench, a park, a quiet corner, that will be your mountain of God this week, and return to it at least three times.

NOTES

MEMORY VERSE

“So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.”

Romans 10:17

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