

REDISCOVERING THE SECRET PLACE

My wife has taken our family through a transformation in what we eat – she has removed highly processed foods and replaced them with whole-grain foods. When she started introducing wholegrain foods, they were tasteless, too rough, and unappealing, but as we kept eating, we developed a taste for them, and now we are beginning to enjoy them.

- Do you know that before Africans were introduced to all these highly processed foods, our diet was mainly African grains like sorghum, millet, yams, African Rice, Leafy Greens and meat (Traditionally, meat was not the focus of a meal but used to enhance stews).
- These are very healthy foods, and it is time to rediscover what we have lost.
- The same is in the spirit; there are things we need to rediscover. What is healthy for your spirit man is usually not tasty to the flesh.
- There are things in our walk with God that need to be revisited, rediscovered, and relived. The devil tends to cause our appetite for certain things to wane and die off over time.
- This morning, I want to talk to you on a message titled **REDISCOVERING THE SECRET PLACE**.
- Jesus spoke about finding a secret place in reference to a place of prayer.
- Unless you discover your appetite for prayer, there are things you will never experience in your life.
- Prayer has been fought by the devil because he knows what prayer can do. The church must rediscover prayer if it is going to experience heaven on earth. Prayer is the only instrument that enables heaven to influence the affairs of your life.
- Jesus taught His disciples to pray “*thy Kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven*”.
- The Bible is full of prayerful people, and one of those was Elijah. Elijah was a man who understood prayer, and the apostle James had this to say about Elijah:
James 5:17 Elijah was a man of like passion as we are. And he prayed earnestly that it might not rain, and it did not rain on the earth for the time of three years and six months. 18 And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth caused its fruit to sprout.
- There are people who think that prayer is for those who are special, but James is telling us that prayer is for all. I don't know if you believe this scripture, but Elijah was like all of us.

1Kings 17:1 *And Elijah the Tishbite, of the sojourners of Gilead, said to Ahab, As Jehovah, the God of Israel lives, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, except according to my word.*

1Kings 18:41 *And Elijah said to Ahab, Go up, eat and drink, because of the sound of plenty of rain. 42 So Ahab went up to eat and to drink. And Elijah went up to the top of Carmel. And he*

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threw himself down on the earth and put his face between his knees. 43 And he said to his servant, Go up now, look toward the sea. And he went up and looked and said, Nothing. And he said, Go again seven times. 44 And it happened at the seventh time, he said, Behold, there arises a little cloud out of the sea, like a man's hand. And he said, Go up and say to Ahab, Bind up and go down, so that the rain does not stop you.

- Here, we have two moments when Elijah was engaged in prayer, and in both moments, Elijah got answers to his prayers.
- Unless you rediscover your secret place, your desire to see God at work will remain unrealized.
- In the days when Ahab was king over Israel, God's people were lured to worship Baal, a false God.
- God raised Elijah the prophet so that he could bring Israel back to true worship. Elijah stood before Ahab and declared that there would be no rain for 3.5 years except at his word.
- Elijah made a short and yet powerful prayer, which God answered immediately. James termed this prayer "an earnest prayer."
- What was Elijah facing? He was not just standing before an ordinary king but was standing before a spiritual entity that had illegally positioned itself as a god to God's people.
- Many people don't pray because they look at their problems through natural eyes, and yet their problems go beyond what meets the eye.
- When you realize that you are not just dealing with natural problems, you will revisit the secret place.
- When you face spiritual entities, you don't engage with your natural faculties – you must fight fire with fire.
- As he stood before Ahab, Elijah switched gears and took the battle from the natural realm to the spiritual realm.
- Paul spoke about this to the church at Corinth.

2 Corinthians 10:3 For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does.

4 The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. 5 We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.

- Look at how Elijah positioned his prayer "As Jehovah, the God of Israel lives, before whom I stand..."

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- He started telling Ahab about the God that he had gotten to know – he started to invoke the nature and character of God.
 - The real power of the secret place is when prayer is made with a true revelation of God's nature.
 - We don't want to rediscover the secret place for the sake of it, but we want to know the power behind the secret place.
 - When you pray, you need to understand that you are engaging in warfare.
 - Elijah's God was not an idol like Baal, but rather He was the God of Israel, who lived among them.
 - Elijah's God is Jehovah, which is a Hebrew word meaning the self-existing one, the eternal one who knows no end.
 - Your prayers will become effective the day you are convinced about the nature of God – that He is able and willing, He is all-powerful, He cares about your affairs.
 - A believer's prayer must be better than the prayers of non-believers. Non-believers pray for their protection, for food, and for favour, and they stop there. A believer must go beyond that and use prayer as a weapon of warfare – believers pray down God's kingdom, believers take over territories through prayer, and believers fight for true worship
 - The second thing that Elijah mentioned was that he was in the presence of God "*before whom I stand.*"
 - Do you know that when you pray, you are not talking to the air, you are not just taking a chance but rather you are in God's presence.
 - You will pray earnestly and with expectation when you know that you are in the presence of God.

 - In the second instance, we see Elijah having another conversation with Ahab, and this time, the time had come for rain to come down.
 - Elijah commanded Ahab to go and eat in anticipation of rain, but Elijah did not go to eat but rather engaged in an activity that would bring about the rain. Elijah went up to a secret place.
- 1Kings 18:41 And Elijah said to Ahab, Go up, eat and drink, because of the sound of plenty of rain. 42 So Ahab went up to eat and to drink. And Elijah went up to the top of Carmel. And he threw himself down on the earth and put his face between his knees.*
- Ahab had no clue about what needed to be done to bring rain, but Elijah knew the key.
 - It is one thing to know what you need, but it is another to know how to get the results.
 - When the rain came down, Ahab did not know what it took to get the rain down.

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- Many people want answers but are not prepared to do what it takes to get them.
- You can live your life off other people's prayers – it is time for you to rediscover your secret place.
- If you cannot pray for yourself, be rest assured that no one is praying for you.
- We don't know for how long Elijah prayed for but this is what we know:

1 Kings 18:42...And he threw himself down on the earth and put his face between his knees. 43 And he said to his servant, Go up now, look toward the sea. And he went up and looked and said, Nothing. And he said, Go again seven times. 44 And it happened at the seventh time, he said, Behold, there arises a little cloud out of the sea, like a man's hand. And he said, Go up and say to Ahab, Bind up and go down, so that the rain does not stop you.

- It must have been quite a long time because he sent his servant seven times to check for results.
- Rediscover the culture of patiently waiting in the secret place.
- Elijah was acquainted with both quick and slow results in the secret place. When you rediscover the secret place, you will experience a God who is both quick and slow at answering your prayers.
- Elijah knew that the same God who answered with urgency would also answer at His own time.
- If your prayer is not answered according to your time, shift to God's timing. The moment you shift to God's timing, you will wait patiently.
- Let us be Abram, who patiently waited on God, despite the amount of time that had elapsed after the promise was given.

Romans 4:18 Against all hope, Abraham in hope believed and so became the father of many nations, just as it had been said to him, "So shall your offspring be." 19 Without weakening in his faith, he faced the fact that his body was as good as dead—since he was about a hundred years old—and that Sarah's womb was also dead. 20 Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God, 21 being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised.