RIVER
Flow

Seven Days of Devotional Practice
October 18 – 24, 2026

I Alone Am Left

1 Kings 19:1–18

A Note Before You Sit

This week walks the story of Elijah, from the ravens at the brook to the chariot of fire. Each day watches how God deals with a prophet who has come to the end of himself: what God gives, what he leaves unsaid, and whom he sends. The question the week keeps asking: when Elijah was most sure he was alone, where was God, and where might he be for you?

Take the days slowly; some may touch something tender. If the week stirs something heavy, please reach out to me or to someone you trust.

Ways to use this guide, from the most shared to the most personal:

1. As a group: watch this Sabbath's sermon together (website and YouTube), then walk the week and discuss the questions at the back.

2. As a group that meets once a week: each person walks the days alone, and you gather one day, in person or on Zoom, to pray that day together.

3. One-on-one: read it with someone you are discipling, taking a day, or the closing questions, as your conversation.

4. On your own, or with your family, a day at a time.

— Pastor Mel Baga, D.Min.
Lead Pastor, Auburn SDA Church

Daily Devotional Guide

SUNDAY, October 18 — Fed Before the Broom Tree

"The ravens brought him bread and meat" — 1 Kings 17:6

Read: 1 Kings 17:1–16

Reflect: Elijah enters Scripture without a genealogy or a call story.

He stands before Ahab, announces a drought, and then God tells him to hide. His first assignment after speaking for God is to disappear beside a brook called Cherith and be fed. Ravens bring him bread and meat, morning and evening. When the brook dries up, God sends him to a widow in Zarephath of Sidon, Jezebel's own homeland. She has a handful of flour and a little oil, and she is gathering sticks to cook a last meal for herself and her son. Elijah tells her, *Do not be afraid*, and the jar of meal does not run out.

Long before the broom tree, God's way with Elijah was bread, given daily, often through unlikely hands. The prophet who will one day lie down and ask to die has been carried by this kindness for years. He once spoke courage to a frightened mother. A day is coming when he will need someone to stay with him in his own fear, and God will already know how. The widow's jar is a small sign of the same care: never full, never empty, enough for each day.

Notice: Notice one ordinary provision today, a meal, a kindness, a person, that reached you through unlikely hands.

Pray: Lord, you fed your prophet by ravens and by a widow who had almost nothing. Open my eyes to the bread you are already sending, and to the hands that carry it. Amen.

Stay: Find a quiet place and sit before God for ten or twenty minutes, as you are able. Sit with both feet on the floor and hands open. Keep your eyes open if that feels safer, resting your gaze on something steady. Let thoughts and sensations come and go. When one rises, notice it and let it go gently, without scolding yourself, and return to a short word chosen beforehand: *God*, *love*, *here*. If the silence ever feels like too much, it is right to stop, to stand, or to walk; God is no less present when you move. The point is not performance but presence, giving the Spirit room to do his unseen work in you.

MONDAY, October 19 — Two Messengers

"Then Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah" — 1 Kings 19:2

Read: 1 Kings 19:1–3

Reflect: Ahab goes home and tells Jezebel all that Elijah had done.

The narrator chooses the words with care. Carmel was the LORD's doing: the fire was his, and so was the rain. In Ahab's report it has become Elijah's doing, and so Elijah becomes the target. Jezebel sends a *maľāk*, a messenger, with an oath on her gods. The same Hebrew word will name the one who comes to Elijah under the broom tree. The chapter sets two messengers side by side. Both arrive uninvited, and both concern Elijah's life, his *nepeš*. Jezebel swears to make it like the lives of the dead prophets. God's messenger comes to keep it.

Elijah hears the first messenger and runs. It will take a long road before he can receive the second. The voice that threatens often reaches us sooner and louder than the voice that tends. Fear does that, and the chapter does not hurry Elijah past it. Nothing in the text calls his running unbelief. It simply follows him south, out of Jezebel's reach, and waits to see what God will do. The second messenger, when he comes, will not ask Elijah to explain why he ran.

Notice: Notice which voices reach you first today, and which ones you have to slow down to hear.

Pray: Lord, I hear threats more quickly than I hear your care. Send your messenger to me again, and give me time to receive him. Amen.

Stay: As on Sunday. If a threatening thought arrives, let it pass like a messenger at the door, and return to your word.

TUESDAY, October 20 — No Better Than My Ancestors

"I am no better than my ancestors" — 1 Kings 19:4

Read: 1 Kings 19:3–4

Reflect: Elijah leaves his servant at Beersheba and goes a day's journey into the wilderness alone.

He sits under a single broom tree. The text says he asked his life, his *nepeš*, that he might die. In two verses the chapter has used that word three times: Jezebel threatens his life, Elijah runs for it, and now he asks God to take it. The reason he gives is telling: *for I am no better than my ancestors*. He has measured himself against the faithful who came before him and found himself a failure. Somewhere he had believed this time would be different, that Carmel would turn the nation and he would be the one to turn it. Israel did not turn. Jezebel still reigns.

A great deal of despair lives in that sentence. It is an expectation laid on oneself, failed, and turned into a verdict. God never answers it with argument. He never tells Elijah he is better than his ancestors. He gives him sleep, and bread, and a road. If thoughts of ending your life are near you this week, tell someone today, or call or text 988. The silence of God on that point is part of his mercy. Some verdicts are not refuted. They are outlived, a meal and a night's sleep at a time.

Notice: Notice a standard you have set for yourself that has quietly become a verdict. Only notice it.

Pray: Lord, I have measured myself and found myself wanting. Take the verdict out of my hands, and let me rest in your care instead. Amen.

Stay: As on Sunday. If a harsh word about yourself rises in the silence, notice it and let it go, without arguing with it.

WEDNESDAY, October 21 — In the Strength of That Food

"in the strength of that food" — 1 Kings 19:8

Read: 1 Kings 19:5–8

Reflect: The second time the messenger touches Elijah, he speaks of the way ahead, the *derek*, the road.

The word threads through the chapter. Elijah went a day's way into the wilderness to die. Now a longer way lies before him, and the messenger says plainly that it is more than Elijah can manage. So God feeds him for it. Elijah walks forty days and forty nights in the strength of that food. The meal does not end his exhaustion at a stroke. It carries him. Healing in this chapter looks less

like an event at the broom tree than like provision for a road: given in advance, and enough for the next stretch.

Forty days and nights recalls Moses on the mountain, and Israel's forty years in the wilderness, fed with manna one morning at a time. God has done this before. He knows how to keep a tired people walking, and he does not ask them to see the end of the road before they take the next step. The word for that food is ordinary: a cake baked on hot stones, and water. God does not wait for something grander before he sends his prophet on.

Notice: Notice what is carrying you this week. It may be smaller than you would like. Let it be enough for today.

Pray: Lord, I want the whole road made easy. Give me the bread I need for this stretch, and the trust to walk in its strength. Amen.

Stay: As on Sunday. Receive the silence today as food for the road, not as a task to finish.

THURSDAY, October 22 — Hidden Where Moses Was Hidden

"At that place he came to a cave" — 1 Kings 19:9

Read: 1 Kings 19:9–13

Reflect: Elijah comes to Horeb, the mountain of God, and enters *the* cave.

The Hebrew has the article, as though the reader should already know which one. Many interpreters hear the cleft of the rock where God once hid Moses while his glory passed by. The echoes gather. The LORD is passing by, the verb used of God and Moses. Elijah wraps his face in his mantle, as Moses hid his face at the bush. The prophet who feels abandoned is being placed, quietly, inside Moses' own story. Moses too grew weary of a faithless people, and Moses too stood on this mountain and asked to see God.

God does not explain any of this to Elijah. He simply brings him to the place where Israel first learned his name: the LORD, merciful and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love. Before Elijah is given a new word, he is set back inside the oldest story his people knew. The first gift to a lonely person may be a place among those who went before. Moses had once asked God, show

me your glory, and was answered with God's goodness passing by. Elijah, who asked for nothing but death, receives the same mountain.

Notice: Notice someone who walked a hard road before you, in Scripture or in your own family of faith. Let their story keep you company.

Pray: LORD, merciful and gracious, set me inside your long story. When I feel I am the only one, hide me where you have hidden others. Amen.

Stay: As on Sunday. Today you might let your word be the name God gave Moses: *LORD*.

FRIDAY, October 23 — The Plowman Who Burned His Plow

"he set out and followed Elijah" — 1 Kings 19:21

Read: 1 Kings 19:19–21

Reflect: Elijah finds Elisha son of Shaphat plowing with twelve yoke of oxen, himself with the twelfth.

Elijah passes by and throws his mantle over him. No speech is recorded. The gesture says enough. Elisha asks to kiss his father and mother goodbye. Elijah's reply is curt and hard to read: *Go back again; for what have I done to you?* Elisha goes back, slaughters the oxen, boils their flesh over the wood of the yoke, and feeds the people. Then he follows Elijah and serves him. The verb, *šārat*, is the word used of Joshua attending Moses.

Elijah had left his servant behind at Beersheba to go on alone. Now God gives him a companion who burns the road back to his old life. The answer to Elijah's isolation arrives as a young farmer who leaves everything to walk beside him. Elisha will learn from Elijah, and Elijah will no longer walk alone. Each will need the other. Elijah performs only this one of the three anointings he was given; the others will pass through Elisha and those around him. The work, like the road, is shared.

Notice: Notice who walks beside you in your faith, and whom you might walk beside.

Pray: Lord, you answered Elijah's loneliness with a companion. Show me the people you have given me, and make me a faithful companion to someone else. Amen.

Stay: As on Sunday. As you sit, hold before God, one by one, the people who walk with you.

SABBATH, October 24 — I Will Not Leave You

"As the LORD lives . . . I will not leave you" — 2 Kings 2:2

Read: 2 Kings 2:1–12

Reflect: Years later, on the day the LORD is about to take Elijah up, Elijah tries once more to go on alone.

Stay here, he tells Elisha, at Gilgal, at Bethel, and at Jericho. Three times Elisha answers with an oath: I will not leave you. The man who once left his servant behind at Beersheba is now the one who cannot be left. The company of prophets warns Elisha that his master will be taken. He knows, and asks them to keep silent. He stays. At the Jordan, Elijah strikes the water with his mantle, and the two of them cross together on dry ground.

The story that began under a broom tree ends with two friends walking and talking until a chariot of fire comes between them. Elijah does not die forsaken in a wilderness. He goes up from the side of a friend who refused to leave. The Sabbath rehearses that ending each week: God's people gathered, no one sent ahead alone. Come today and be among them. Behind them on the far bank, Elisha picks up the fallen mantle and walks back toward the Jordan, carrying what was given him.

Notice: Notice today who has refused to leave you. Thank God for them by name.

Pray: Lord of the Sabbath, you did not let your prophet go up alone. Gather me with your people today, and make me someone who stays. Amen.

Stay: As on Sunday. Today sit a little longer if you can, and let the silence be your Sabbath.

Group Discussion Questions

1. Elijah was fed by ravens and a widow long before the broom tree. Looking back, where has God provided for you through unlikely hands?

2. Jezebel's messenger reached Elijah sooner than God's. Which voices reach you first, and what helps you slow down enough to hear God's care?

3. "I am no better than my ancestors." Is there a standard you have turned into a verdict on yourself? What would it mean to let God answer it with care rather than argument?

4. Elijah walked forty days in the strength of one meal. What has carried you through a long stretch, even when it did not feel like enough?

5. At Horeb, God set Elijah inside Moses' story. Whose story of faith has kept you company when you felt alone?

6. Elisha left everything to walk beside Elijah. Who walks beside you, and whom might God be asking you to walk beside?

7. Three times Elisha said, "I will not leave you." How could our church become a place where no one has to go on alone?