***1 Kings 19: 4-7 But he himself went a day’s journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a broom tree. And he prayed that he might die, and said, “It is enough! Now, Lord, take my life, for I am no better than my fathers!” 5Then as he lay and slept under a broom tree, suddenly an angel touched him, and said to him, “Arise and eat.” 6Then he looked, and there by his head was a cake baked on coals, and a jar of water. So he ate and drank, and lay down again. 7And the angel of the Lord came back the second time, and touched him, and said, “Arise and eat, because the journey is too great for you.”***

Before I get too deep tonight, I want to share a funny story. I went home after our last evening service on August 30th. I was trying to recall the last time I’d heard the saying, “God helps those who help themselves” on TV or in a movie. As is my habit after I got home, I started listing the things I wanted to do for the next week. I listen to old TV shows while I do this. As I wrote, I heard the voice of an old detective on TV say – as the Bible says, God helps those who help themselves. I smiled and looked up and thanked God. He has a way of letting us know He is near, and He hears us.

Tonight, we’ll be looking at another saying that drives me just a little crazy when I hear it - God Won’t Give You More Than You Can Handle. Sometimes, people say God will never put on you more than you can handle. Regardless of how it’s said, this is another saying that is not in the Bible. And quite frankly I’m glad that it’s not. It’s a comfort that it’s not. It conflicts with what I know about God and I don’t like conflicts.

One of the beliefs that has risen in popular culture and has leaked it’s way like toxic gas into the American church is that we already have inside of us all the strength we need, all the answers we need. It’s a lie straight from Hell! If Satan can get us to believe this, we won’t cry out to God in desperation. Instead, we’ll wonder why we can’t handle the things coming our way? Talk about a recipe for depression, a recipe for anxiety, and recipe for hopelessness.

Let’s consider Elijah, who anointed kings, prayed the clouds of heaven closed, raised the widow’s son from the dead, and called down fire from heaven. This same Elijah prayed in verse 4 to die. *But he himself went a day’s journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a broom tree. And he prayed that he might die, and said, “It is enough! Now, Lord, take my life, for I am no better than my fathers!”* It is enough Lord – take my life Lord – I can’t handle it Lord. Does this sound in any way shape or form like a man that God had not put more on him than he felt he could bear? No. In fact he says – enough.

Some of us have said, “It is enough Lord” in our lifetimes. We may not have said it out loud, but we’ve murmured it in our hearts and minds. We’ve felt defeated and tired and alone. But we always know that God is near, as we sing in the song – Almost Persuaded – angels are lingering near.

Some claim 1 Corinthians 10:13 proves this old saying - *No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.* God is always faithful. This verse speaks to temptations that come. God is not the tempter. He is faithful to provide us a way of resisting temptation, ordering Satan to flee in Jesus name, and escaping the tempters snare. But temptation is not the same as troubles. Ask Job, ask Paul, ask Jesus.

People mean well when they look at someone going through a hard time and say, “Don’t worry, the Bible tells us that God won’t give us more than we can handle.” But it is not Biblical and, in fact, the Bible speaks of God helping us more than 7000 times! This saying is in direct opposition to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. *Psalm 46:1 God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Matthew 7:7 Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. Psalm 146:5 Happy is he who has the God of Jacob for his help, whose hope is in the LORD his God. Isaiah 41:13 For I, the LORD your God, will hold your right hand, saying to you, ‘Fear not, I will help you.* Sounds like God is there to help. Sounds like we are weak and He is strong. Sounds an awful lot like God knows that there will be times that more of life will fall n us than we can handle and that we will cry out and He will be there. It sounds like we have a wonderful father who never leaves us nor forsakes us. But it sure doesn’t sound like at all that God won’t give us more than we can handle

When we accept Christ as Lord and Savior, we have a High Priest behind the veil praying for us – *Hebrews 4:15-16 For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to* ***help*** *in time of need.* Listen to Jesus describe the Holy Spirit that indwells us, connecting us with an unbreakable chord, *John 14:26 But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.* More than 7000 times in the Bible, we are reminded that we are in need of a Savior, that we are dust and to the dust we shall return, that the wages of sin are death and only Christ can save – that we need help and He is our Help in times of trouble.

Instead of believing that God will never place more on us than we can bear, let’s instead believe *Philippians 4:13 I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.* It’s true that we can do all things, because Christ strengthens us, indwells us, watches over us, and loves us. Let’s instead believe. It is us, being used as the hands and feet of Jesus, doing the impossible through the strength and guidance of the Infinite. *2 Corinthians 12:9-10 reminds us “And He said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. 10 Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ’s sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong.”* The Gospel of Jesus calls on us to be meek, lowly, humble, and submissive to Him, recognizing and acknowledging our desperate need for Him. To claim otherwise is to sin, is to blaspheme, is to make ourselves god.

Listen to 1 Kings 19:7 *And the angel of the Lord came back the second time, and touched him, and said, “Arise and eat, because the journey is too great for you.”* Jesus is saying the same thing to His children today. The journey is too great for us without Jesus presence. Take My yoke upon you. Learn of Me. The way to heaven is narrow and no one will find it without Me, no one can walk it without Me, no one finds the Father without Me. The Gospel doesn’t call on us to be an island, strong in our own mind, confident in our worldly strength. This is a recipe for Pride and a roadmap to Hell.

Instead tonight, let’s go home believing this – God will not lay more on us than He can handle, than He can bear. His mercies are new every morning. His strength is sufficient for the demands of our day. *2 Timothy 1:6-7 6Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands. 7For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.* Let’s walk in that spirit of power and love, knowing that the God of the Universe, Christ Jesus Himself, is strengthening us for the journey ahead. Let us arise and be on our way, not in our strength, but cloaked in the strength of Almighty God.