

# Breaking Free From a Controlling Spirit

by Don Wilkerson

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*This sermon teaches that a controlling spirit is a spirit that seeks to bring other people under its power, influence, and control, often through manipulation and oppression, and that breaking free from such a spirit requires submission to God, humility, and humble leadership.*

**Duration:** 1:00:41

**Scripture:** Isaiah 3:13-14, Isaiah 14:3, Hosea 12:7

**Topics:** "Freedom"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the power of God to break free from controlling spirits. He refers to the story of Elijah in the Bible, where an angel of the Lord came to him and provided him with food and strength for a journey that seemed too great for him. The preacher encourages the audience to trust in the Lord and let Him fight their battles. He also shares a personal anecdote about a couple who had a job opportunity that seemed perfect, but they felt a red flag in their spirits and sought guidance from the Lord. The preacher warns them with two words, indicating that the Lord had spoken through him.

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## Transcript

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None of these messages are copyrighted and you are welcome to make copies for free distribution to your friends. 1 Kings chapter 21, just leave your Bible open there for a bit. Breaking free from the bondage of a controlling spirit.

1 Kings 21, but let me read to you Isaiah 14.3. You don't need to turn there, just keep your Bible on 1 Kings chapter 21. By the way, if you're a visitor here, Pastor David is away on his vacation and taking a little rest, as each of we pastors have done during the past month or so. And he's away and will be back with us very, very shortly.

Isaiah 14.3 says, and it will be in that day, when the Lord gives you rest from your pain and turmoil and harsh service. And in the King James, it uses the word bondage instead of harsh service. The Lord will give you rest from your pain and turmoil and bondage in which you have been enslaved.

1 Kings 21, we'll get to that in just a moment. Recently a couple in our church here shared with me the following experience, and I asked the permission that I could share it. They were being interviewed for a position in a certain Christian organization.

And at first it appeared that this was an open door from the Lord, so it seemed to them. The work that they were going to be asked to do is something that they had been praying about, something they felt God was calling them to do. There were other things about it that seemed to be to their liking in a material way, not regarding salary, but regarding housing and so forth.

And the conditions seemed to be just right. The way they heard about it also seemed to be providential. And yet when they came away from the interview, something in both of their spirits, there was something in their spirit that wasn't right.

A red flag went up. And so they prayed about it, and they decided that they would talk to me and ask that the Lord would speak as we were discussing it, that the Lord would say something through me. And so when they shared it with me, I paused, and then the Spirit of God gave me a warning, and I turned to them and I said two words.

I said, controlling spirit. And they looked at each other, and they said, that's exactly what the Spirit showed us. And it was the exact word, the exact warning that they had already felt from the Holy Spirit and therefore confirmed it, and obviously they did not accept the position in the organization.

I think of another case tonight, of a wife who is having numerous difficulties in her marriage because her husband seems to be incapable or unwilling to be the priest, a proper husband, a leader, and proper provider in the home. And the reason is that the husband's mother is trying to control the marriage, control her son, and as the wife says, though my mother-in-law does not live in the house, she may as well. It's as if she's here because my husband can't seem to do anything without her.

He's on the phone with her all the time. She's on the phone with him. He doesn't do anything, and what she was saying, though she didn't use these words, I got the picture of a mama's boy.

And furthermore, she said, it's almost as if she is purposely trying to put a wedge between us and pull him away from me. And she admitted that it was eating her inside, it was making her physically sick. And no wonder this poor wife is the unfortunate victim of her husband's bondage to a controlling spirit.

Happens to be through this son's own mother. And this often happens in family situations. I think of a third case that I dealt with recently and one that seems to come up or come to my attention quite often.

And that is of a missionary, a young missionary, serving in a particular area of the world. He and other missionaries have to relate to a senior missionary supervisor in that particular area of the world. And this young man shared this with me.

He said, Brother Don, it seems like everything that I initiate, everything that other missionaries initiate and try to bring to birth, this man tries one way or another to slow it down or to kill it or to control it. And he said, it's as if a revival would break out over here. He wouldn't want it to break out because he would have no control over it.

And as soon as I heard him share this, I knew that he and other missionaries were up against what they were up against. It's called a controlling spirit. Now, whether it's in the church or it's in the ministry or in a

marriage or in interpersonal relationships or wherever, there are controlling persons and controlling personalities and controlling spirits that seek to bring other people under their power, under their position, and under their influence.

And from the beginning of time, men and nations have sought to hold other men and nations under their control and creating an oppressive bondage. Just now in Russia and the communist countries, people are finally waking up to the control and the oppression and the bondage that they had been under for decades. And we all rejoice with them in being able to shake off the chains of years and years of controlling dictators and controlling dogmas.

But you see, you don't have to go to Russia, you don't have to go to Romania, or you don't have to go to Nicaragua to see the tragedy of a controlling spirit. They take place every day in a marriage, in a home, in a family, in interpersonal relationships between male and female, between male and male, female and female. It takes place in businesses.

And sad to say, it happens in churches, it happens in denominations, it happens in religious organizations. I've seen a pastor, I've seen a pastor with a controlling spirit literally enslave a people to his personality using either doctrine or dogma or the abuse of personal charisma to hold a people in bondage. I've seen the opposite.

I've seen when deacons and what I would call the power structure of churches, I've seen it when those deacons have held a church in its grip. And I've seen in some cases a series of pastors come and go never able to break the stronghold that certain men and personalities have in that church. And God has to pass it by.

My father was a pastor and I remember just as a young fellow, I didn't understand it all, but I look back now and I remember this one brother, one deacon in the church. Very, very personable man. Very, very well-liked man.

But my father came to find out that he held sway over that church. Now, it so happened that he was the biggest tithe payer of the church as well. And I suppose that's one of the reasons he was never dealt with.

And I watched my father with godly wisdom withstand that controlling spirit. And that man, he left, he left without a scene, but he left and he left with his tithe. But God replaced him, more than replaced him and brought others in.

Hallelujah! Now, this message then tonight is about facing the potential bondage of a controlling spirit. Psalm 54.3 says, For strangers are risen up against me, and oppressors seek after my soul. They have not set God before them.

Now, tonight you may be under the bondage. You may be under such a bondage in your life right now. You may, like the wife or the missionary that I just mentioned, you may indirectly and through no fault of your own be catching the fallout of somebody's controlling spirit, somebody who's being controlled by somebody else.

And therefore, your life is affected through no fault of your own. Or you may be recovering from a bondage in your past that makes it difficult for you to trust other people now and for you to have wholesome, interpersonal, godly relationships now where it's difficult for you to trust pastors, it's difficult for you to trust a man, it's difficult for you to trust somebody else because at one time you were under a controlling spirit.

Let me take you to the most classical and worst case of a controlling spirit found in Scripture apart from Satan himself.

And I want you to note here in 1 Kings 21 the story of Jezebel. Jezebel, a tool of Satan, controlled by Satan himself, she in turn controlling men and situations. Now, it used to be that we often referred to, they used to refer to a Jezebel.

When I was little, and I think I'm going to try to explain this as best that I can, they used to call a Jezebel, when I was in the church, anybody who wore makeup. And, of course, back then in the church they didn't believe that women, and so they classified everybody, anybody that wore a little bit of makeup they just classified as a Jezebel. Well, we learned later that sometimes, as Billy Graham said one time, someone would do well to put a little on and let all things be done in moderation.

But particularly, more importantly, or more accurately I should say, we speak of a Jezebel or someone who was seductively painted up. A floozy, if you please, a loose woman. She was called a Jezebel.

Well, she may be that, but she is much, much more than that as we're going to see. And, by the way, a woman, a female does not have an exclusive franchise on a Jezebel spirit. It's not male or female.

A man can have a Jezebel spirit just as much as a woman, as we'll see. Now, here's the story of Jezebel. 1 Kings 21, verses 1 and 2. Now, it came about that after these things that Naboth, the Jezreelite, had a vineyard which was in Jezreel beside the palace of Ahab, king of Samaria.

And Ahab spoke to Naboth saying, Give me your vineyard that I may have it for a vegetable garden because it is close beside my house and I will give you a better vineyard than in its place, if you like. I will give you the price of it in money. Now, Naboth was a God-fearing man who could not be bought, bribed, or baffled.

He refused to sell his vineyard because it was against Levitical law. It was against the law of Moses to do so. You see, to sell God's property to a foreigner was against God's law.

Now, Naboth normally would have been glad to oblige the king. He probably would have said, Look, if you want to borrow it, if you want to have a little plot here, if you want me to plan something for you, I'll be glad to do so. But he said, I cannot sell it to you.

And he was saying by that that he had to obey God rather than man. And so he politely but firmly refused the king. Now, Ahab knew the law, or he should have known it, and thus he was wrong even for asking for it.

But Naboth had the courage to resist the king because he looked on his earthly inheritance as an earnest of his lot in the heavenly Canaan, and therefore he would not part with his earthly piece of real estate lest he forfeit his heavenly piece of real estate. Now, you see, Naboth was one of the 7,000 of the remnant of those who did not bow their knee down and cave in to the evil surroundings of the day, did not follow the New Age religion of Baal that was popular in that day. And so he stands up to the king.

Now, Ahab gets all bent out of shape over Naboth's righteous stand. You see, there's nothing like a holy man's unbending compromise that will arouse the ire of a wicked, covetous man. And after Ahab is refused, he storms into the palace.

He refuses to eat his supper. He goes up into his room in a rage and he lies down on his bed and he starts to pout. Look at it in verse 4. So Ahab came into his house, sullen and vexed because of the word which Naboth the Jezreelite had spoken to him.

For he said, I will not give you the inheritance of my father's. And he lay down on his bed and turned away his face and ate no food. Poor king.

The poor king, he could not get his way. And so he soaks. King James says he was heavy with displeasure.

He soaks and he pouts and he storms off into his room like a little kid who has been denied a toy that he so desperately wants. And to make matters worse, Ahab, you see, is such a proud man. And his haughtiness further ignites the indignity that Naboth did in denying him his desires.

You see, people of power and of prestige and of greed, they hate it. They hate it when they come up against a man of holy convictions. They don't know what to do with him.

They don't know what to do with that type of a man. Ah, but Jezebel did. Waiting in the wings was Jezebel, a woman always looking for her next victim, always waiting for the next opportunity to strike.

Look at verse 5. But Jezebel his wife came to him and said to him, How is it that your spirit is so sullen that you are not eating food? And verse 7, she says, Do you now reign over Israel? In other words, don't you, Ahab, aren't you in charge? Aren't you the king? Don't you reign over Israel? She said, Arise, get up out of your bed. Quit pouting. Go down to supper and eat your bread.

And let your heart be joyful. I will give you the vineyard of Naboth, the Jezreelite. And you see, under the guise, under the pretense of comforting her husband, Jezebel feeds his pride and his passion and she blows on the coals of his angry heart.

And in the process, she takes up his cause. Note what she said again. She said, Get up.

Go down to supper. Let your heart be joyful. And I, I've got everything under control.

I will give you the vineyard. You see, Jezebel is a woman of confidence. It sounds like, doesn't it sound like she's been down this road of defiance before? And she knew she could get her way.

She'd gotten her way before. And she tells her husband, who's acting like a spoiled child, she says, Big Mama will get it for you. Now, let me, let me interject something right now.

Let me, let me interject something. We must not confuse competence and a take-charge person with a controlling spirit. There's a difference.

Many godly people are qualified people who know how to get things done and motivate other people to work. I'm not talking about this quality of character. There are people who lead and control in a godly manner.

And let's not confuse it just because you happen to know somebody that is a good leader. Jezebel did take charge, but in a controlling manner. She had an evil, controlling spirit in her.

And you see, one of the keys by identifying it is that the spirit of control always wants to rule over people and things. It wants to dominate, to manipulate. In biblical terms, it's an oppressive spirit.

Hosea 12, 7 sounds a warning to a man who is a merchant in whose hands is a balance of deceit. It says, he loveth to oppress. He loves to control.

Isaiah 3, 13 and 14 says, As for My people, children are their oppressors and women rule over them. O My people, they which lead thee, cause thee to err and destroy the way of thy paths, the Lord standeth up to plead. And he says, He will enter into judgment against the oppressor.

And over and over in the Scriptures, you see that God always stands up. God fights against the oppressive, controlling spirit and He takes the place of a humble heart. Now, oppression means the cruel or unjust use of power or authority.

Now, Jezebel connived and manipulated to obtain Naboth's vineyard by this misuse and abuse of power. First of all, she chided Ahab for not using his power. Look at verse 7, And Jezebel his wife said to him, Do you not now reign over Israel? Arise, eat bread, and let your heart be joyful.

She said, I know how to get things done. Verse 8, What did she do? So she wrote letters in Ahab's name and sealed them with his seal and sent letters to the nobles who were working with Naboth in the city. You see, a controlling, oppressive spirit wants power.

And they will get it any way that they can in order to advance their cause or somebody else's cause who they enjoy controlling. And I've seen Jezebels do this very... I've seen them write letters, as it were, in their husband's name or in the name of somebody else in a power or authority in order to manipulate people and events. I've seen more.

I've seen on occasion. I've seen a pastor. A pastor's ministry sometimes has been destroyed by a wife behind the scenes who wants to manipulate a congregation.

I know of a situation right now where a pastor's wife, in the name of prophecy, in the name of prophetic utterances, has a prophecy for this one, has a prophecy for that one, and a prophecy for another one. And in the process, she is the neck that turns the head. And she is behind the scenes just very quietly, very quietly, innocently as it were, but working herself into a position to control people in a congregation.

I've seen also in a marriage. I've seen a husband who can misuse his leadership role or even misuse the concept of being the priest in the home or being the head, I should say, the head of the house. And he'll misuse the concept of submission.

Misuse the concept of submission in order to control his wife or to bring about a harsh, slave-like relationship, treating his wife, as it were, like a slave. Sometimes it comes out of culture. Sometimes that kind of situation comes out of the culture where the man says, well, I'm the macho attitude, the macho man who's controlling his wife, never giving her room to move.

And then when they move, if they move into the Christian realm and they hear the teaching about a woman is to be into submission, oh, they love that. They love that, forgetting the teaching that says husbands love your wife as Christ loved the church and gave Himself for it. And the only way a husband, by the way, earns the right for his wife's submission is if he, first of all, is in submission to the Lord Jesus Christ Himself and thereby he gains the right of his wife's submission by his submission unto the Lord.

But I've seen this whole thing of submission. A husband misuses it. I've seen a controlling woman, a controlling woman, who sometimes will look for a man she can control.

She'll look for a passive man. Try to marry him. Try to control him.

I've got a few amens from a few men. The sad thing, however, about Jezebel, and this is one of the points that I'm making, is that Jezebel controlled the situation all under a religious cloak or covering. Look at verse 9. Look at verse 9. And she wrote in the letters saying... She sent out these letters in Ahab's name and this is what she did.

She said, proclaim a fast. Let's have a fast. Let's have a religious fast.

And by doing so, whenever you proclaimed a fast, it meant that your city or your house or your people were under judgment. And so what she's saying by this is that listen, there's some trouble in your city. And I want you to proclaim a fast and we've got to get to the bottom of it and we've got to see what the cause of it is.

And so under the guise of this religious cloak, under the guise of this fast, she says call it and then seat Naboth at the head of the people. And by this she told the elders of Naboth's city that some dreadful judgment was about to come upon them which they must divert by prayer and fasting and by finding out what it was that was causing God's anger to be against them. And you see, the most dangerous kind of control is when people will use Scripture or they will use prophecy or they will use God's name.

They will use the name of Christ and in fact taking it in vain, but they will use His name in order to control other people's lives. There was over the past decade or so, there was in the body of Christ there was a whole movement. There was a whole movement of people.

It was called the Discipleship Movement that started out with all good intentions, but it ended out that men would control other men's lives. And do you see how slick and cunning Jezebel operates? Jezebel set Naboth up to be tried, to be judged and to be convicted by a courtroom of her peers all under the cloak of a religious fast. And in verse 10 she had it all set up.

She said, Seat two worthless men before Him and let them testify against Him saying, You curse God and the King, then take Him out and stone Him. You see, ultimately, here's the sad thing about it, ultimately a controlling spirit will stop at nothing to get her way or His way. Jezebel lies and connives and deceives and causes a godly man's death.

And remember, she didn't want the vineyard. That is not what it was all about. Gardening wasn't her thing.

She said, Bless my poor husband, you know, let him have it. But she seized it as an opportunity. She enjoyed the game more than the prize.

She sat back and played the puppeteer pulling all the strings. Ahab wanted a vineyard, but Jezebel wanted power to be able to control. And there's one more tragic picture, one of the most sad, tragic pictures in all of the Old Testament.

One more picture. Go to 2 Kings chapter 9. 2 Kings chapter 9. This is the end of side 1. You may now turn the tape over to side 2. Later, 20 years later, Jezebel and Ahab's despicable cruelty to Nabath is judged. And God anoints, the prophet anoints a man, Jeho, and says, I have anointed you for the throne of Israel.

But before doing so, I want you to wipe out Ahab and his household and avenge Nabath. And so there is a picture after Jeho goes out and he begins to accomplish this and Ahab is slain, is done away with. And Jezebel knows that the kingdom is under siege.

She knows that her time is up. And Jezebel hides. She tries to hide and save her own neck.

And here is a picture of Jeho. He comes riding in on his chariot. He comes riding in fiercely where she is hiding out.

And she's taking a position up in a palace overlooking a courtyard where she can see Jeho coming down. And she stands out there in chapter 9 and verse 30. And when Jeho came to Jezreel, Jezebel heard of it.

And here's where we get the term of Jezebel. It says she painted her eyes and adorned her head and looked out the window. Now get the picture.

Foolishly, foolishly she thinks that perhaps she can use... Now she's 20 years older now. She's an older woman. And yet she foolishly thinks I can still control the situation.

I can still be in charge. And she paints herself up. Stands out there as if to say I can seduce Jeho.

And I can still control this situation. She has no other power of manipulation left to her. Ahab's power is gone.

It's just her against the world. And she is a pitiful picture of an older woman trying to lure a young warrior into her trap. And listen to me tonight.

Beware of a painted up Jezebel who will use her personal, physical, or fleshly charm to gain control or mislead you. Well, I got an amen. Somebody got the point.

But Jehu was able to see right through Jezebel's facade. You see, he was under the anointing of God. He was under the anointing of God to rid the nation of Ahab and Jezebel.

And when we are walking in God's will, He will expose a painted up, falsely adorned head of a Jezebel for us and a controlling spirit that may come and may look good and talk good and talk even religious, but you'll be able to see through it and judge it. Hallelujah! Now, there's one last thing that she tried. The physical charms didn't work.

And look at the next verse. And she saw that she was getting nowhere with the physical approach. And so she tries by words.

She tries by intimidation. She tries by smooth talking and by threatening. And as Jehu entered the gate, she said, Is it well, Zimri, your master's murderer? Now, instead of trembling before Jehu, the instrument of God's judgment on her, she tries to make him tremble by pointing out or posing a threatening question.

She says, in effect, Did Zimri have any peace after he flew his master? In other words, if you kill me, it's going to be on your conscience. It's going to be on your conscience. And you see, it's another practice of a Jezebel spirit to always divert the attention off of themselves and try to pick out a moat in the eye of somebody else who opposes them.

And they will try to smooth talk themselves out of trouble once it's been discovered who they are and how they operate and once it's been discerned what they're trying to do. But this didn't work either. This didn't work either.

Then Jehu lifted up his face to the window and said, Who is on my side? Who? And two or three officials looked down on him. And he said, Throw her down. So they threw her down.

And some of her blood was sprinkled on the wall and on the horses. And he trampled her underfoot. And when he came in, he ate and drank and he said, See now to this cursed woman and bury her, for she is a king's daughter.

And they went to bury her, but they found no more of her than the skull and the feet and the palms of her hands. Oh my friend, I don't know about you, but that strikes fear in my heart. But at the same time, it encourages me to know that God knows how to deal with controlling spirits.

Hallelujah! And He is able to cast them down. He is able to cast them down out of your life so that they no longer control you. Now, how do you deal with a controlling spirit? How do you rid yourself of a Jezebel spirit? The prophet Elijah gives us the answer.

Interesting enough, he also knew all too well what it was like to be under Jezebel's spirit. Go with me to 1 Kings 19. Back to 1 Kings 19.

Very, very interesting, encouraging picture. Important that you receive this as a part of my message tonight. The prophet Elijah gives us the answer.

Verse 1, chapter 19 says, Now Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and how he had killed all the prophets with a sword. Now this refers to the time on Mount Carmel. As you know, the New Age religion came up against the Old Time religion.

And you know what happened. The New Age religion was wiped out. 450 prophets of Baal, 400 prophets of Asherah who ate at Jezebel's table, they were wiped out.

You see, and Jezebel of course is angry because she got her authority and power from this devilish religion, this religion of demons. And so she sends a messenger to Elijah saying, So may the gods do to me and even more if I do not make your life, your life Elijah, as a life of one of them, slain prophets by tomorrow this time. And look at verse 3, And Elijah was afraid and arose for his life, and he came to Beersheba.

Now it seems strange, yes it seems strange that Elijah was so bold before the altar contesting Baal, but now that the contest is over, he's in a state of physical exhaustion, and now we see him coming under her spell, coming under her oppression. And strangely enough, Elijah allows himself to come under Jezebel's control. He believes her threats, and they were mere threats because if she wanted to do away with him, she wouldn't have given him a warning.

It was just a threat. But he runs away, he hides so to escape what he thought might be the fulfillment of her prophecy. And let's read verse 4, And he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and he came and he sat down under a juniper tree.

But remember, he's also sitting down under this Jezebel spell. And he says, what did he say? And he requested for himself that he might die. And he said, It's enough now, Lord.

It's enough now. In other words, Lord, I've had it. Lord, take my life, for am I not better than my father's? But you see, something marvelous happened here in the wilderness.

Something so beautiful happened under the juniper tree. And he got up, out from under the controlling spirit of Jezebel. And listen to me tonight.

If you're here in this meeting, and if you're sitting under a juniper tree, if you're sitting here tonight defeated, or weary, running, hiding, being overcome because of a Jezebel spirit, I want you to note what God did for His servant, because you, hallelujah, you can break free from a controlling spirit tonight. Hallelujah. Now, first of all, you can't fight a controlling spirit in your own power or authority.

The victory over controlling spirits has to be won in the spiritual realm, through spiritual warfare. Look at 1 Kings 19, again. He sat himself, the fourth verse, I just read that to you, and he laid down and he slept under a juniper tree.

And behold, there was an angel touching him and said to him, well, let me go back again to verse 4, where Elijah is there, and he's under the juniper tree. And what I see about this, even though he's run, yet in the end he does not take matters into his own hands. He did not try to fight fire with fire, or flesh with flesh.

He did not try to control a controlling spirit in his own strength. The fact that he sleeps, he goes to sleep, shows me that he had reached the end of himself. And when we hear him saying, Lord, it's enough, and he wants to die, I hear a man admitting and saying, God, only You can get me out of this mess.

Only You can overcome this Jezebel. And this is the very position that God wants us to be in. Whenever you come up against an attack of Satan, especially when he will use an enemy, or he'll use a friend, or he'll use a family member, he'll use somebody on the job, he'll use a fellow worker, whoever he can, he will use to try to control us and make life miserable for us.

And beware when you come under that kind of attack or control. There is a right way to fight, and there's a wrong way to fight. And I've been down both roads.

And I know there have been times when individuals have come into my life, in my past, when I have reacted in an unrighteous way to unrighteous people and to personal injustices that were done to me. And at times I fought back in the flesh instead of the spirit. Do you remember once when the disciples were on the way to Jerusalem and the Samaritans would not let them in their village? They said, no, you can't come here, we control this village.

They would not let the disciples pass through their territory. And James and John wanted to fight fire with fire and call fire down out of heaven to gain control over the situation. And the Lord said to them, you know not what manner of spirit you are.

In other words, that's the same spirit that wants to control Samaria. That's the same spirit that's coming up against me. You can't fight that spirit with the same spirit of Samaria.

That's not the way to do it. And I say to you tonight, Lord, preserve us from that spirit. The Lord let Elijah go into the wilderness by himself so that he could come to the end of himself.

Look at verse 4 again. He says, am I not better than my fathers? And what a truth he spoke without recognizing it. You see, his fathers in Egypt, his fathers in Canaan could not fight their oppressors by their own strength.

They had to totally rely on the Lord. And tonight, if you're under a controlling spirit, if you're under an oppressive spirit, either a direct attack to Satan, or Satan using somebody else as an instrument, the word from the Lord for you tonight is this, is that you must let the Lord fight those kinds of battles. Take your hands off of it.

You cannot win. You cannot win. You must fight this battle by the Spirit, not in the flesh.

Like Elijah, you and I are not better than our fathers. The Lord told them, for example, in Exodus 14.14, He said, the Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace. Deuteronomy 3.22, ye shall not fear them, for the Lord your God, He shall fight for you.

Now listen, whenever you're in the kind of situation Elijah was in, we take one or two reactions. One is to do what Elijah did and run. Run and hide, and you give in to discouragement and despair.

Or secondly, we can attack our attackers trying to meet sword with sword, and flesh with flesh, and evil with evil. And unless you want to allow yourself to stoop down to the level of a Jezebel, listen, you can never fight against that Spirit on her terms or in her territory. You'll never win.

If you have a heart for God, you can never win. She will always beat you, or He will always beat you. Listen to this mighty prayer.

Turn with me. In fact, Psalms. Psalms, chapter 35.

Oh, what a blessing this is. And then we're going to see a few other things that, I don't know, just bless my socks off, and I don't know about you. But here's a wonderful prayer.

Tonight, here's a way to come to God. If you're in a situation, you've got no control over it. Psalms 35.

Contend, O Lord, with those who contend with me. Fight against those who fight against me. Take hold of the buckler and the shield, and rise up for my help.

Draw also the spear and the battle axe to meet those who pursue me. Say to my soul, I am your salvation. Let those be ashamed and dishonored who seek my life.

Let them be turned back and humiliated who devise evil against me. Verse 22 and 23. Thou hast seen it, O Lord.

Do not keep silent. O Lord, do not be far from me. Stir up thyself and awake to my right and to my cause, my God and my Lord.

Now, tonight, you've got a choice to make. Either you're going to stand on the Word and let God fight your battles for you, or you're going to fight them for yourself. And you'll never win.

Jezebel will beat you every time. Now, go back to 1 Kings 19. Back to 1 Kings 19.

And I'm going to close in just a moment. After Elijah, somebody said, praise the Lord. Well, I'm going to close.

I am. Got to get a praise the Lord or amen one way or the other. I'm going to close now.

After Elijah fell off to sleep under the juniper tree. Oh, this is what blesses me. He got a wake-up call from an angel.

Oh, I don't know if you've ever been in a wake-up call. And behold, there was an angel touching him. And he said to him, arise and eat.

Oh, the Lord is so good. How merciful He is when He sees us lying down in defeat under the juniper tree. Elijah is wakened by the angel.

And he looked and behold, there was a cake baked on the coals. And a cruise of water at his head. And Elijah sat up and he did eat and drink.

And he laid him down again. Now, the second, I can tell you something. The second time Elijah went to sleep, he slept a lot better than he did the first time.

The first time he went to sleep, something was eating him. Jezebel was trying to eat him. Psalm 53, 4, Have the workers of wickedness no knowledge, who eat my people as though they were bread, and have not called upon God? You see, Elijah went to bed feeling like Jezebel was eating him up.

But when he laid down again, he felt much better because he had eaten angel food. Hallelujah! He went to sleep being eaten up mentally and emotionally and spiritually and physically by the oppression that he was under. And some of you are here tonight lying in a similar condition.

Something is eating at you on the inside. You may be currently under the control of a controlling spirit or person. Or you may not be able to recover from a past experience in which your life was shattered by decisions others made affecting you, and over which you had no control or you did nothing to deserve.

But you see, what happens is often those people can pass out of our life. They are long gone. We may never even see them.

We may or may not see them. You may have no dealing with them. And yet, they can still be a controlling spirit over you if you're still festering on the inside.

If there's bitterness or sorrow or sulking inside, you see that person has gone on to control somebody else. They're out of your life, but you're still under their control. Jezebel was nowhere to be seen in the wilderness.

But Elijah was under her spell. Psalms 127, 2 says, It is vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows, for He giveth His beloved sleep. And let me tell you something, the bread of sorrows will leave a bitter taste in your stomach and in your head and in your mind.

You know, and I want you to... The Scriptures are so precise. Oh, here's a... Every little detail means something. Where was... When Elijah got this wake-up call, and he turns, and here is bread and water, a cake of bread and water.

Look at verse 6. This is 1 Kings 19, verse 6. Then he looked, and behold, there was... Where? At his head. At his head. There it was, right at his head.

Oh, as I said, God is so good and practical. The Lord knew Elijah was under both a physical and a mental attack. Jezebel was trying to mess up his head.

He wasn't thinking clearly. There's evidence of this by what happened in the wilderness. Elijah had a mental and spiritual lapse.

He forgot God could take care of Jezebel and protect him. And the man of God has a heavy heart because of the attack going on in his mind. And so the angel brings Elijah breakfast in bed.

Hallelujah! And he says, Elijah, here's a little something that will clear up your headache. Here's some little angel food and water to wash it down. And it's a lot better than aspirins and Roloids and pills and whatever.

Try this. And so he gets up and he takes it. And I want to ask you tonight, has the devil... You see what can happen is the devil will attack you.

And some of you, the devil's been trying to mess up your mind. Maybe the experience of being under somebody's control is long gone, but it's still up in here in your head. But I want to know that the Lord has an antidote for you tonight.

The bread and the water is a type of Christ. Now to some people that may sound like prison food, but I want to tell you this kind of bread, this kind of water is deliverance food. Glory to God! He is that bread which cometh down from heaven.

He who eats this bread shall live forever. Also Christ is our living water. We shall never thirst again.

And it shall be a well of water springing up within you. Hallelujah! Giving you power. Giving you power to face controlling spirits.

Glory to God! And here's finally what happens. Here's the final. Here's the touchstone of it all.

Verse 7, And the angel of the Lord came again a second time and touched him and said, Arise, eat, because the journey is too great for you. You think you can't face what you're facing? You can't face that controlling spirit? Yes, it's true. The journey is too great.

And I've had journeys that have been too great for me. I've needed a little bread and water. I thank God that the angel of the Lord is there with a little cake of bread representing my Lord and my Savior.

And a little bit of water. And so he arose and ate and drank. And listen, he went in the strength of that food for forty days and forty nights.

And he went to the mount of God, the mount of Horeb. Hallelujah! And my friend, that's some kind of food. That's some kind of meal that will carry you forty days, which is a type of temptation.

It's a type of what Christ went in His own temptation. But when you feast upon the Lord, hallelujah, when you trust in Him, when you let Him fight your battles, when you take your stand with Him and eat off of Him, hallelujah, there is strength in that to be able to come against every controlling spirit. If it's in your marriage, if it's in some interpersonal relationship, if it's on the job, if it's in a church, hallelujah, there is strength in that to go forty days and to see you through your difficult journeys.

Hallelujah! Hallelujah! And to take you to the mountain of God, glory to God, out from underneath. Now, Elijah went through other trials, but he was out from underneath Jezebel, and God took care of her. He didn't right then, but eventually He took care of her.

Hallelujah! And He'll take care of your Jezebel as well, praise the Lord. Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Let's stand together. Let's stand together.

Oh, hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Jesus breaks every fetter, and He sets me free. Lord, tonight, Lord, tonight, if there are people who are under a controlling spirit from the past or the present, Lord, I pray tonight that You would give them a vision in Your Word. Give them a vision through Your Word tonight.

Show them, Lord, tonight they can be free. Whom the Son has set free is free indeed. Lord, minister tonight, we pray.

Minister, Lord, to those that may be under a controlling spirit. Maybe they never would have. If I had said to them at 7 o'clock or 6 o'clock tonight, you're under a controlling spirit, they might not have recognized.

But, Lord, somehow through the Word, somehow through the Word, somehow through the service, somehow through this message, Lord, You've given them a picture of how they may have been, or are now, or at times in their life, allow themselves to go and brood under the juniper tree because of a Jezebel. Lord, thank You. Thank You.

Bring the angel of the Lord tonight. Hallelujah! Lord, touch them tonight. As the angel touched Elijah, touch them, Lord, tonight.

Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Touch them, Lord, tonight, Lord. Break them loose from that controlling spirit. In Jesus' name.

In Jesus' name. Amen. This is the conclusion of the tape.

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