

#1

Conquering Discouragement

1 Kings 19:14
He replied, "I have been very zealous for the Lord God Almighty. The Israelites have rejected your covenant, broken down your altars, and put your prophets to death with the sword. I am the only one left, and now they are trying to kill me too."

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Most of us know something about discouragement.

Discouragement is the feeling of despair in the face of obstacles.

Discouragement is an overwhelming feeling that comes from disappointment, unmet expectations, or failed relationships.

It may be the feeling that accompanies depression or failure.

When faith is weak discouragement rises.

The Psalmist became discouraged because of the trouble he faced.

He said his adversaries and enemies encamped against him and would devour his flesh.

Jesus told us to not let our heart be troubled.

Instead of being troubled, trust in Him.

Paul was afflicted in every way.

He told the Galatians to not lose heart in doing good.

Peter talks about being distressed by various trials.

#2

1 Kings 18-19

Elijah, the great man of God, had just experienced some of the most dramatic challenges and victories of his life
> He challenged all of the prophets of Baal
> He called down fire from heaven
> He called an end to the drought
> He prayed until his servant saw a cloud the size of a man's hand rising out of the sea

Elijah, the great man of God, had just experienced some of the most dramatic challenges and victories of his life.

(1 Kings 18-19)

He served the God who answers by fire.

His experiences easily established the Lord God Jehovah as superior over all the Baals and Pagan gods.

Elijah had been a strong witness for the Lord.

He challenged all of the prophets of Baal and called down fire from heaven.

When God almighty answered by fire, Elijah personally took all of the prophets of Baal and destroyed them.

A great victory had been won for the cause of righteousness.

Immediately after defeating the prophets of Baal and humiliating the worshipers of Baal, Elijah called an end to the drought.

He told Ahab that he heard a sound of a heavy rain.

Elijah ascended Mount Carmel and bowed down on the ground and put his face between his knees and prayed.

Six times he prayed earnestly, and his servant looked out west toward the sea and saw nothing.

On the seventh time he saw a cloud the size of a man's hand rising out of the sea.

Before his servant could get to King Ahab the skies had turned black.

#3

After overcoming his negative circumstances
he faced overwhelming discouragement

All of a sudden Elijah felt isolated and alone

After overcoming his negative circumstances he faced overwhelming discouragement

It appeared that no one understood what God had done and was planning to do.

All of a sudden Elijah felt isolated and alone.

At the apex of spiritual victory he was counter attacked with the low of discouragement. Discouragement is the twin of depression. Discouragement is found anywhere you find people. It has been called the grave in which 95% of today's people live.

The sad truth is that many people suffer discouragement in silence.

They withdraw and become isolated.
They appear to be indifferent and distant.
They are filled with dismay and despair.
Their energy is gone.
Their passion has dwindled.

From the beginning of time, discouragement has been one of Satan's chief and most effective weapons against God's people.

In 1 Kings 19, God is saying you can conquer your discouragement.

The life of Elijah reveals three things you must do to conquer discouragement

First, recognize the causes of your discouragement

God is revealing the causes for Elijah's discouragement.

Elijah faced the same causes of discouragement we face.

James 5:17 (Amplified) Elijah was a human being with a nature such as we have [with feelings, affections, and a constitution like ours]

There are physical causes of discouragement.

Under a juniper tree in the wilderness, south of Beersheba, Elijah asked to die.

#4

The life of Elijah reveals three things you must do to conquer discouragement
First, recognize the causes of your discouragement
James 5:17 (Amplified)
Elijah was a human being with a nature such as we have [with feelings, affections, and a constitution like ours]

He had just seen God's power revealed.
Fire had fallen from heaven and consumed the sacrifice and altar.
He was consumed with a holy zeal for God.
He stood alone against all 450 of the prophets of Baal.
All of the false prophets of Baal were killed with a sword.
The whole nation was on the verge of repentance and revival.
Everything in the Nation was looking up.

Elijah had declared the end of the drought and much needed rain was falling.

Then he was ready to quit.

He couldn't take any more.

He was out there alone and no one cared.

What could have caused such a dramatic change?

#5

First, recognize the causes of your discouragement

Take a critical look at what is going on in your life
Physical exhaustion

Take a critical look at what is going on in your life.

There are several things that brought on Elijah's discouragement.

First, He was physically exhausted.

He had ministered before the Lord and the Nation.

He had spent days in intercessory prayer for Israel and for rain.

He stood before the masses of people and rebuked the falsehood of the Prophets of Baal.

He personally slew all 450 of the Prophets of Baal.

He ran ahead of Ahab's chariot to announce that God was sending rain.

Then, he became afraid of the repercussions of his actions and ran a day's journey into the wilderness to escape.

Many of you have been through times of great physical exhaustion.

You had several days or week of illness, and you were still not feeling yourself.

Your physical reserves are gone.

You spent several sleepless nights tending a sick loved one.

You just finished going through a trying period of physically challenging work.

The days were long and the nights were short.

Your body is exhausted.

You just finished one huge project and another one fell in your lap.

#6

First, recognize the causes of your discouragement

Take a critical look at what is going on in your life
Physical exhaustion
Elijah was physically hungry

Take a critical look at what is going on in your life.

First, Elijah was physically exhausted.

Second, Elijah was physically hungry.

His trip was an unplanned excursion.

He did not have time to even recover from his extended time of intercessory prayer.

He was physically weak from hunger.

He was not able to continue in the ministry because he did not have the strength to go on.

Some of you know what it is like to not eat right.

You tell yourself, "I will do better tomorrow."

But, tomorrow has not come.

Day after day you have neglected the needs of your physical body.

You are not starving, but you are not taking care of yourself.

You have had too much junk food.

You ate too many carbohydrates.

You pumped yourself up with sugar and caffeine.

Your nerves are on edge because your body is screaming at you.

You keep telling yourself, "I will do better tomorrow."

Take a critical look at what is going on in your life.

First, Elijah was physically exhausted.

Second, Elijah was physically hungry.

Third, He was emotionally depleted

He had just been through a very emotionally challenging period of time.

Everything that had happened attacked his emotional well being.

He had experienced a tremendous challenge when God told him to present himself to Ahab.

Jezebel and Ahab had been killing the Lord's prophets.

He experienced an emotional rush when God answered his prayer and fire fell down out of heaven.

His emotions were charged when the 450 prophets of Baal were killed with a sword.

Now he was emotionally exhausted.

Some of you know what emotional exhaustion is like.

It happens to brides after the wedding is over.

Many women experience it after they give birth to a baby.

It happens after the death of a loved one.

#7

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#8

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Physical exhaustion
Elijah was physically hungry
He was emotionally depleted
Elijah was spiritually discouraged

Emotional exhaustion can hit suddenly after a catastrophic event.

Military personnel experience it after months of battle.

Take a critical look at what is going on in your life.

First, He was physically exhausted.

Second, Elijah was physically hungry.

Third, He was emotionally depleted

Fourth, Elijah was spiritually discouraged.

He lost his spiritual perspective.

He had demonstrated extreme faith, fortitude, and zeal. He stood up for God without the encouragement of others.

Jezebel had been hunting down the prophets of God to kill them.

In one day Elijah had personally killed all the prophets of Baal.

Now, Elijah lost his spiritual perspective.

Apparently, he had forgotten the power of Almighty God.

He just saw fire fall from heaven.

He did not say: “I have lost my spiritual perspective.”

He simply told God he was ready to die.

He was not appreciated and was being attacked.

He has lost his spiritual freshness.

No one else was taking a stand for God.

How long does it take to lose spiritual freshness?

Elijah came down from the conquest into fear, and stagnation.

While Israel was preparing for a return to God, Elijah was withdrawing and discouraged.

Satan looks for physical weakness to attack us spiritually.

#9

First, recognize the causes of your discouragement

What brings on spiritual discouragement?

First, unmet or unrealistic expectations.

What brings on spiritual discouragement?

Several things initiate spiritual discouragement.

First, unmet or unrealistic expectations.

You have prayed.

Great things have happened.

But, your expectations are not realized.

This happens in several areas of life.

We forget to celebrate our victories.

Instead of seeing our victories we see the challenge that is still ahead.

One more river to cross,

One more mountain to climb

One more valley that I have to go through

You keep telling yourself, "What next!"

#10

First, recognize the causes of your discouragement

What brings on spiritual discouragement?

First, unmet or unrealistic expectations.
Second, because you are physically worn out you cannot maintain your spiritual disciplines.

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You cannot stay fresh without prayer.

You have to keep fanning the flame to keep the fire hot.

You have problems sustaining the same level.

Third, spiritual and physical attack brings on spiritual discouragement.

#11

First, recognize the causes of your discouragement

What brings on spiritual discouragement?

First, unmet or unrealistic expectations.
Second, because you are physically worn out you cannot maintain your spiritual disciplines.
Third, spiritual and physical attack brings on spiritual discouragement.

Your adversary the devil is seeking opportunity to kill, steal, and destroy.

#12

First, recognize the causes of your discouragement
Take a spiritual inventory
Elijah lost his spiritual perspective

Take a spiritual inventory

***Elijah took a personal stand against spiritual darkness.
After achieving a tremendous victory over evil, Elijah
lost his spiritual perspective.***

It seems that he forgot what God had just done.

He was no longer spiritually fresh.

It appears that he lost sight of the fact that God had sent down fire from heaven.

He was not hearing the still small voice of God.

He was hearing his own inner voice of fear and trepidation.

He was hearing the message of his adversaries.

Fear replaced faith.

***Regardless of the spiritual and physical gains, Elijah
was discouraged.***

Some of you know what that feels like.

***If you would stop and take inventory you would know
better.***

You have forgotten what God has done for you.

You have forgotten the blessing and the favor.

You have taken your eyes off of God and started looking at the things that are attacking you.

***The Bible says Satan comes like a roaring lion seeking
whom he may devour.***

He is not a roaring lion.

He just wants to get your attention.

He wants to instill fear in your heart.

#13

Second, what are the consequences of discouragement

When Elijah became discouraged he forsook God's purpose for his life.

***Second, what are the consequences of discouragement?
When Elijah became discouraged he forsook God's purpose for his life.***

A real revival was at hand.

That is what Elijah had been praying for and what God wanted.

Israel was headed back to God.

The people were crying: "The Lord, he is the God; the Lord, he is the God."

He ran for his life.

He ran all of the way through the kingdom of Judah to the southernmost town of Beersheba.

Then he ran another day's journey into the Negev desert, all of the way to Sinai, or Mount Horeb.

There he collapsed under a juniper tree, and started praying to die.

He was discouraged and had forsaken God's purpose for his life.

He had told the woman in Zarepath not to be afraid. Now he was running for his life.

Discouragement brings a flood of negative thinking.

He was expecting nothing good to happen.

He was planning his funeral.

He felt alone and abandoned.

He knew that no one else was serving God.

His words reveal the depth of his thoughts.

Proverbs 23:7 (NKJV) For as he thinks in his heart, so is he.

#14

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If Elijah stays in that state of mind and spiritual condition he is going to die.

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#15

Psalm 27:1-2 (NKJV)
The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; Of whom shall I be afraid? When the wicked came against me To eat up my flesh, My enemies and foes, They stumbled and fell.

God has a cure for your discouragement.

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#16

Psalm 138:7 (NKJV)
Though I walk in the midst of trouble, You will revive me; You will stretch out Your hand Against the wrath of my enemies, And Your right hand will save me.

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#17

2 Corinthians 4:8-9 (NIV)
We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed.

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#18

John 14:1 (NIV)
"Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me."
Philippians 1:6 (NIV)
being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

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Philippians 1:6 (NIV) being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

#19

God has a cure for discouragement
He was hungry - God gave him food.
He was thirsty - God gave him drink.
He was tired - God gave him rest.
He was alone - God gave him help.

There are several steps to Elijah's recuperation and conquest of discouragement.

God has a cure for discouragement

It is imperative that you get this word into your heart and mind.

God addressed everything that brought on Elijah's discouragement.

*He was hungry – God gave him food.
He was thirsty – God gave him drink.
He was tired – God gave him rest.
He was alone – God gave him help.*

#20

Psalm 124:1-8 (NIV)
"If the Lord had not been on our side— let Israel say— if the Lord had not been on our side when men attacked us, when their anger flared against us, they would have swallowed us alive; the flood would have engulfed us, the torrent would have swept over us, the raging waters would have swept us away."

Psalm 124:1-8 (NIV) “If the Lord had not been on our side— let Israel say— if the Lord had not been on our side when men attacked us, when their anger flared against us, they would have swallowed us alive; the flood would have engulfed us, the torrent would have swept over us, the raging waters would have swept us away.

#21

Psalm 124:1-8 (NIV)
Praise be to the Lord, who has not let us be torn by their teeth. We have escaped like a bird out of the fowler's snare; the snare has been broken, and we have escaped. Our help is in the name of the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth."

Praise be to the Lord, who has not let us be torn by their teeth. We have escaped like a bird out of the fowler’s snare; the snare has been broken, and we have escaped. Our help is in the name of the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth.”

Pay attention to God’s companionship.

He has not forsaken you.

He has not abandoned you to your enemies.

He has been your help and strength.

#22

God's cure for Elijah's discouragement involved a renewed purpose and plan for his life.
You can conquer discouragement

God’s cure for Elijah’s discouragement involved a renewed purpose and plan for his life.

God was not finished with Elijah.

Elijah was still recuperating when God started telling him what he was supposed to do next.

He was not going to have a lot of time to sit and think about what had happened.

God wanted Elijah to get busy.

He was ready to die and God says get up and get busy.

You have too much to do to die.

You need to get over what has been happening in your life.

You need to turn off that negative voice that keeps telling you that God has abandoned you.

You have survived.

God has blessed your life.

God has given you fresh bread from heaven.

He has sent His Holy Spirit.

There is a fresh fire burning in you right now.

If you will hear the voice of God there is fresh bread for you on the fire.