

# Overcoming Discouragement

1 Kings 19:4-10

Introduction: The best of people will become discouraged and frustrated. Some of the finest biblical characters were victims of discouragement. Life has its high points and its low points; its peaks and valleys. From time to time, everyone gets discouraged.

## I. A few Biblical characters that had discouragement.

A. Elijah (1 Kings 19:4). Elijah was physically exhausted. He lost faith in all others to keep God's laws. His enemies were out to kill him. He believed he was the only righteous man left in Israel. Elijah was discouraged until he found out he wasn't alone (1 Kings 19:18).

B. David (Psm. 42:11). The exact time of this discouragement is not certain. However, we know how discouraged he was at the death of his child due to his own sin (2 Sam. 12:15-19).

C. Jesus (Luke 22:41-45). Jesus didn't want to die. He was discouraged at the prospect of a torturous death and having to go it alone. Yet, he was willing to die for your sins.

## II. Some occasions of discouragement.

A. Illness. When loss of health occurs many people become bitter and discouraged. The apostle Paul could relate (2 Cor. 12:7-10). However, Paul saw the suffering with poor health as a blessing. He knew God would be needed to give him strength. When God is with you in your life because of your physical illness, are you not actually strong? Illness should draw us closer to God (James 5:14-15).

B. Death. We know death will come to all. It is a part of life. But the loss of a loved one is still hard to take and many of us become discouraged. Just remember, when these times come we can find comfort in the Lord (2 Cor. 1:3-5).

C. Physical losses. All of us have large sums of money tied up in many physical blessings in life. We own cars and homes that represent years of labor to acquire. When we suddenly lose those blessings, it often sets us back emotionally and we become discouraged.

1. Job lost 11,500 head of cattle, seven sons and three daughters all at the same time. Notice Job's reaction (Job 1:20-22).

2. Job recognized that his blessings weren't really his to have. Everything belongs to God. Simply, we have been entrusted by God to care for the blessings He provides (1 Tim. 6: 6-8).

3. If we put Christ first in our lives, God will take care of our physical needs (Matt. 6:31-33).

D. Dashed hopes and dreams. Your business may have failed. You may have lost your job. Your effort to get a college education may have gone for not. You may be on the verge of losing your own home. Consequently, you become discouraged.

1. Yet, consider that our disappointments in life can result in good (Rom. 8:28).

2. For example, Paul and his traveling companions wanted to go into Bithynia but were not allowed to do so by the Holy Spirit. Such resulted in the establishment of the cause of Christ upon European soil (Ref. Acts 16:7-40).

3. Joseph was a better example. He was the favored son of Jacob. Yet, he was taken away from his father, sold into slavery, and imprisoned unjustly. In the end he saved his entire family and their descendants from starvation preserving a nation unto God (Ref. Gen. 37-46).

### III. How can we overcome discouragement?

A. Don't lose heart (2 Cor. 4:16-18). Our discouragements in life are but light afflictions that are only temporary. We work, live and serve a God who is able to reward His own. Let us keep our eye on the eternal glory where discouragement will be a foreign concept.

B. Trust in God (2 Cor. 1:8-11). Paul said he was so discouraged that he "despaired even of life." He was troubled, burdened beyond measure and above his strength. He even had people out openly trying to kill him. When you are so discouraged, just trust in God to take care of you.

C. Encourage one another (1 Thess. 5:11-14). The discouraged need comfort. They need to be upheld and edified. A kind word and a thoughtful prayer for the discouraged will go a long way.

D. Pray (Phil. 4:6-7). When we are discouraged, if we would just pray to God, He can provide the peace of mind that surpasses all understanding.

E. Don't give up (James 5:11). Trying times are no time to quit trying.

1. There was a young man who ran for the legislature in Illinois and was badly defeated. He then entered business; failed and spent 17 years paying off the debts. He fell in love with a beautiful young woman to whom he became engaged; then she died. He re-entered politics, ran for congress and was badly defeated. He then tried to get an appointment to the U.S. Land office, but failed. He became a candidate for the U. S. Senate and lost terribly. Two years later he was defeated by Douglas. His name was Abraham Lincoln.

2. Yet, a better example than that was our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ (Heb. 12:2-3). The next time you become discouraged, think about Jesus who endured shame, hostility and the cross and is now on the right hand of God.

Conclusion: The sun sets each evening, yet, it rises each morning. We too, can rise above our discouragement each time we are confronted with them. Ephesians 6:10 states, *“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.”* If you are feeling discouraged and you need a prayer of encouragement, there is no better time to take care of that need than now. Please come...