

MOVING BEYOND DISCOURAGEMENT

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1 Kings 18:45–19:18 (NLT) [45] And soon the sky was black with clouds. A heavy wind brought a terrific rainstorm, and Ahab left quickly for Jezreel. [46] Then the LORD gave special strength to Elijah. He tucked his cloak into his belt and ran ahead of Ahab's chariot all the way to the entrance of Jezreel. [1] When Ahab got home, he told Jezebel everything Elijah had done, including the way he had killed all the prophets of Baal. [2] So Jezebel sent this message to Elijah: "May the gods strike me and even kill me if by this time tomorrow I have not killed you just as you killed them." [3] Elijah was afraid and fled for his life. He went to Beersheba, a town in Judah, and he left his servant there. [4] Then he went on alone into the wilderness, traveling all day. He sat down under a solitary broom tree and prayed that he might die. "I have had enough, LORD," he said. "Take my life, for I am no better than my ancestors who have already died." [5] Then he lay down and slept under the broom tree. But as he was sleeping, an angel touched him and told him, "Get up and eat!" [6] He looked around and there beside his head was some bread baked on hot stones and a jar of water! So he ate and drank and lay down again. [7] Then the angel of the LORD came again and touched him and said, "Get up and eat some more, or the journey ahead will be too much for you." [8] So he got up and ate and drank, and the food gave him enough strength to travel forty days and forty nights to Mount Sinai, the mountain of God. [9] There he came to a cave, where he spent the night. But the LORD said to him, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" [10] Elijah replied, "I have zealously served the LORD God Almighty. But the people of Israel have broken their covenant with you, torn down your altars, and killed every one of your prophets. I am the only one left, and now they are trying to kill me, too." [11] "Go out and stand before me on the mountain," the LORD told him. And as Elijah stood there, the LORD passed by, and a mighty windstorm hit the mountain. It was such a terrible blast that the rocks were torn loose, but the LORD was not in the wind. After the wind there was an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake. [12] And after the earthquake there was a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire. And after the fire there was the sound of a gentle whisper. [13] When Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his cloak and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave. And a voice said, "What are you doing here, Elijah?" [14] He replied again, "I have zealously served the LORD God Almighty. But the people of Israel have broken their covenant with you, torn down your altars, and killed every one of your prophets. I am the only one left, and now they are trying to kill me, too." [15] Then the LORD told him, "Go back the same way you came, and travel to the wilderness of Damascus. When you arrive there, anoint Hazael to be king of Aram. [16] Then anoint Jehu grandson of Nimshi to be king of Israel, and anoint Elisha son of Shaphat from the town of Abel-meholah to replace you as my prophet. [17] Anyone who escapes from Hazael will be killed by Jehu, and those who escape Jehu will be killed by Elisha! [18] Yet I will preserve 7,000 others in Israel who have never bowed down to Baal or kissed him!"

- 1) It is possible for _____ to experience periods of discouragement in their lives.
- 2) We need to spend some time _____ we are feeling discouraged.
 - a) Elijah allowed _____ to control his life.
 - b) Elijah was _____.
 - c) Elijah lost his _____.
 - d) Elijah allowed himself to be _____.
 - e) We lose our perspective about _____ in life.

1 Peter 4:12–13 (NLT) [12] Dear friends, don't be surprised at the fiery trials you are going through, as if something strange were happening to you. [13] Instead, be very glad—for these trials make you partners with Christ in his suffering, so that you will have the wonderful joy of seeing his glory when it is revealed to all the world.

John 16:33 (NLT) [33] I have told you all this so that you may have peace in me. Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows. But take heart, because I have overcome the world."

Matthew 24:7–12 (NLT) [7] Nation will go to war against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in many parts of the world. [8] But all this is only the first of the birth pains, with more to come. [9] "Then you will be arrested, persecuted, and killed. You will be hated all over the world because you are my followers. [10] And many will turn away from me and betray and hate each other. [11] And many false prophets will appear and will deceive many people. [12] Sin will be rampant everywhere, and the love of many will grow cold.

f) We are caught up in sinful behavior and have an unrepentant heart.

Psalm 38:8 (NLT) [8] I am exhausted and completely crushed. My groans come from an anguished heart.

3) It is important to _____ to move beyond our discouragement and not just give up when we feel discouraged.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS:

1) We need to care for our _____ and make sure we get enough rest.

2) We need to feed our minds with things that remind us of _____ and God's promises.

3) We need to surround ourselves with _____ who can help lighten our load.

4) We need to trust God to provide _____ to face whatever happens in our lives.

2 Corinthians 12:8–10 (NLT) [8] Three different times I begged the Lord to take it away. [9] Each time he said, "My grace is all you need. My power works best in weakness." So now I am glad to boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ can work through me. [10] That's why I take pleasure in my weaknesses, and in the insults, hardships, persecutions, and troubles that I suffer for Christ. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

5) We need to be open to God's care and leading in our lives in _____.

1 Kings 19:11–13 (NLT) [11] "Go out and stand before me on the mountain," the LORD told him. And as Elijah stood there, the LORD passed by, and a mighty windstorm hit the mountain. It was such a terrible blast that the rocks were torn loose, but the LORD was not in the wind. After the wind there was an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake. [12] And after the earthquake there was a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire. And after the fire there was the sound of a gentle whisper. [13] When Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his cloak and went out and stood at the entrance of the cave. And a voice said, "What are you doing here, Elijah?"

6) We need to choose to believe God has a unique _____ for our lives.