

# Nine Tests Every Christian Must Face

## Lesson Six- The Discouragement Test

### **1 Kings 19:1-2 (KJV)**

*And Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and withal how he had slain all the prophets with the sword. [2] Then Jezebel sent a messenger unto Elijah, saying, So let the gods do to me, and more also, if I make not thy life as the life of one of them by to morrow about this time.*

### **1 Kings 19:3-4 (KJV)**

*And when he saw that, he arose, and went for his life, and came to Beer-sheba, which belongeth to Judah, and left his servant there. [4] But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree: and he requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers.*

### **1 Kings 19:5-6 (KJV)**

*And as he lay and slept under a juniper tree, behold, then an angel touched him, and said unto him, Arise and eat. [6] And he looked, and, behold, there was a cake baken on the coals, and a cruse of water at his head. And he did eat and drink, and laid him down again.*

### **1 Kings 19:7-8 (KJV)**

*And the angel of the Lord came again the second time, and touched him, and said, Arise and eat; because the journey is too great for thee. [8] And he arose, and did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights unto Horeb the mount of God.*

### **1 Kings 19:9-10 (KJV)**

*And he came thither unto a cave, and lodged there; and, behold, the word of the Lord came to him, and he said unto him, What doest thou here, Elijah? [10] And he said, I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts:*

*for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away.*

- Discouragement is defined as the act of disheartening or depriving of courage; that which abates or destroys courage—to deprive of confidence.
- At some point in life, everyone will face discouragement.
- In moments of despondency Shakespeare thought himself no poet, and Raphael doubted his right to be called a painter.
- One tends to dwell on DOOM, DISPAIR, and AGONY—at to this DEFEAT and DEPRESSION.

**In the NT, discouragement was translated as:**

*To faint or to grow weary*

***2 Cor. 4:1** Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not;*

***2 Cor. 4:16** For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.*

***Luke 18:1** And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint;*

### **Four Causes for Discouragement**

**1.) Fear—the expectation and apprehension of impending danger; dread or anxiety.**

***Psa 53:5** There were they in great fear, where no fear was: for God hath scattered the bones of him that encampeth against thee: thou hast put them to shame, because God hath despised them.*

***Psa 53:5** There they dreaded with dread, where no dread was; for God has scattered the bones of the one who besieges you; you have put them to shame because God rejects them.*

**Fear produces weakness.** (in the Greek—feebleness or limp hands)

- **Zep 3:16** *Jerusalem, the time is coming, when it will be said to you: "Don't be discouraged or grow weak from fear!"*

(GNB) The time is coming when they will say to Jerusalem, "Do not be afraid, city of Zion! Do not let your hands hang limp!

- **Hab 3:16** *When I heard this message, I felt weak from fear, and my lips quivered. My bones seemed to melt, and I stumbled around. But I will patiently wait. Someday those vicious enemies will be struck by disaster.*

**Fear paralyzes one into INACTIVITY.**

- **Job 32:6** *and began to speak. I am young, and you are old, so I was afraid to tell you what I think.*

## **2.) Fatigue—**

- **Neh 4:10** *And Judah said, The strength of the bearers of burdens is decayed, and there is much rubbish; so that we are not able to build the wall.*
- **Neh 4:10** *Meanwhile, the people of Judah were singing a sorrowful song: "So much rubble for us to haul! Worn out and weary, will we ever finish this wall?"*

- There are times that we all feel like we are tired and worn out. We take some time to rest or sleep and that helps to refresh us and restore our strength.

- We become fatigued when our task is greater than our resources.
- Fatigue affects us physically, emotionally, mentally, and spiritually.
- Fatigue is commonly called BURN-OUT.
- It occurs when we have depleted our strengths and have no reservoirs from which to draw more strength.

### 3.) Frustration—to break or to bring to nothing.

- **Ezra 4:4** *Then the people of the land weakened the hands of the people of Judah, and troubled them in building,*
- **Ezra 4:5** *And hired counsellors against them, to frustrate their purpose, all the days of Cyrus king of Persia, even until the reign of Darius king of Persia.*

#### **Frustration leads to the loss of morale.**

- **Isaiah 19:3** (GNB) *I am going to frustrate the plans of the Egyptians and destroy their morale.*

#### **Frustration leads to burn-out**

- **Hebrews 12:3** (GW)
- Think about Jesus, who endured opposition from sinners, so that you don't become tired and give up.

#### **Frustration leads to RASH ACTIONS.**

- **Act 19:36** *Then these things being undeniable, it is necessary for you, being calmed, to be so, and to do nothing rash.*

### 4.) Forsaken—deserted, abandoned.

- **Mat 27:46** *And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? (CEV) Then about that time Jesus shouted, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" which means, "My God, my God, why have you deserted me?"*
- Feeling deserted

**Joseph**

**David**

**Paul**

## 5.) Failure—

- ***Exodus 18:18** Thou wilt surely wear away, both thou, and this people that is with thee: for this thing is too heavy for thee; thou art not able to perform it thyself alone.*
- ***Neh. 4:10** And Judah said, The strength of the bearers of burdens is decayed, and there is much rubbish; so that we are not able to build the wall.*

### Why the Discouragement Test

- 1.) To cause one to find joy in God, not just circumstances
  - 2.) To reveal that we are not self-sufficient—we need God and people
  - 3.) To reveal our motivation—whether for self-glory or the glory of God.
  - 4.) To allow opportunity for OTHERS to minister
  - 5.) To teach us to “wait” upon the Lord to renew our strength
- The Hebrew word for wait is qâvâh which means to **BIND** together by twisting; to expect: - gather (together), look, patiently, tarry,

### Dealing with Discouragement

- 1.) Encourage yourself in the Lord—taking personal responsibility
  - ***1Sa 30:6** And David was greatly distressed; for the people spake of stoning him, because the soul of all the people was grieved, every man for his sons and for his daughters: but David encouraged himself in the LORD his God.*
- 2.) Read the Bible promises of God
  - ***1Pe 5:12** Silvanus helped me write this short letter, and I consider him a faithful follower of the Lord. I wanted to encourage you and tell you how kind God really is, so that you will keep on having faith in him.*
  - 8,000 promises are available
- 3.) Listen for the Voice of God

- **1Ki 19:12** *And after the earthquake a fire; but the LORD was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice.*
- **1Ki 19:13** *And it was so, when Elijah heard it, that he wrapped his face in his mantle, and went out, and stood in the entering in of the cave. And, behold, there came a voice unto him, and said, What doest thou here, Elijah?*

4.) Make Church attendance a priority.

- **Heb 10:25** *Some people have gotten out of the habit of meeting for worship, but we must not do that. We should keep on encouraging each other, especially since you know that the day of the Lord's coming is getting closer.*

5.) Never forget the power of PRAYER.

- **Neh 4:3** *Now Tobiah the Ammonite was by him, and he said, Even that which they build, if a fox go up, he shall even break down their stone wall.*
- **Neh 4:4** *Hear, O our God; for we are despised: and turn their reproach upon their own head, and give them for a prey in the land of captivity:*
- **Neh 6:8** *I sent a message back to Sanballat, saying, "None of this is true! You are making it all up."*
- **Neh 6:9** *Our enemies were trying to frighten us and to keep us from our work. But I asked God to give me strength.*
- **1Kings 19:10** *He (Elijah) answered, "LORD God All-Powerful, I've always done my best to obey you..."*
- **1Ki 19:14** *Elijah answered, "LORD God All-Powerful, I've always done my best to obey you. But your people have broken their solemn promise to you. They have torn down your altars and killed all your prophets, except me. And now they are even trying to kill me!"*
- **1Ki 19:15** *The LORD said: Elijah, you can go back to the desert near Damascus. And when you get there, appoint Hazael to be king of Syria.*
- **1Ki 19:16** *Then appoint Jehu son of Nimshi to be king of Israel, and Elisha son of Shaphat to take your place as my prophet.*

- ***1Ki 19:17** Hazael will start killing the people who worship Baal. Jehu will kill those who escape from Hazael, and Elisha will kill those who escape from Jehu.*

### **Talking to God in prayer**

- 1). Assures you that God is STILL IN CHARGE
- 2.) Assures you that God knows more about the situation that you do
- 3.) Assures you that God will bring about the end He has purposed.
- 4.) Assures you that the kingdom is bigger than you are
- 5.) Assures you that the kingdom will go on even after you are gone from the scene.
- 6.) Assure you that even in your discouragement, God has not forgotten you
- 7.) Assure you that even in your discouragement, you have a ministry to fulfill.

All of us will face discouragement. It is how we deal with discouragement that determines our successes and failures.