

***COMING BACK STRONGER* FROM DISCOURAGEMENT**

1 Kings 19:1-18

- **August 29, 2025 is the 20th anniversary of Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans, a situation that brought lots of discouragement to people's lives.**
- ***When have I struggled with discouragement or depression in my life?***
- **Even godly people and leaders struggle at times with discouragement.**
- *"Elijah was afraid and fled for his life. . . . 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.'"* (1 Kings 19:3-4)
- **Elijah had to learn how to overcome discouraging circumstances and people, which we must also learn if we're to live vibrant, victorious lives.**
- ***What steps can we take to "come back stronger" from discouragement?***

Coming Back Stronger Requires:

UNDERSTANDING THE CAUSES OF DISCOURAGEMENT

- **We often feel discouraged when we struggle with *Forgetfulness*.**
  - **One key to overcoming discouragement is remembering what God has done for us in times past (1 Kings 17-18).**
  - *"Praise the LORD, I tell myself, and never forget the good things He does for me."* (Psalm 103:2)
- **We often feel discouraged when we struggle with *Fear*.**
  - *"Elijah was afraid and fled for his life."* (1 Kings 19:3)
  - **Fear is our reaction to the threat of danger or pain whether real or imagined, and it causes us to think and act in bad ways.**
  - *"God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline."* (2 Timothy 1:7)

    - **Faith is our response to the promises of God – and the Lord blesses and rewards our faith (Hebrews 11:6, 1 John 5:4)**
- **We often feel discouraged when we struggle with *Fatigue*.**
    - *"Elijah was afraid and fled for his life. He went to Beersheba . . . and he left his servant there."* (1 Kings 19:3)
    - **When we overtax our body and mind by working too hard and going without sleep we wind up feeling discouraged and hopeless.**
- **We often feel discouraged when we struggle with *Loneliness*.**
    - *"He went on alone into the desert . . ."* (1 Kings 19:4)
    - **God has designed us all so that we need to regularly experience significant and encouraging relationships (i.e., Life Groups).**
- **We often feel discouraged when we struggle with a sense of *Failure*.**
    - *"He sat down under a 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.'"* (1 Kings 19:4)
    - **Failure is not falling down, but refusing to get up.**
- **We often feel discouraged when we struggle with *Faulty Thinking*.**
    - Elijah – *"I have zealously served the LORD . . . But the people of Israel have broken their covenant with You . . . I alone am left."* (1 Kings 19:10)
    - **The Devil is out to discourage and destroy us, and his primary focus of attack is our mind.**
    - *"Fix your thoughts on what is true and honorable and right . . . and the God of peace will be with you."* (Philippians 4:8-9)
- ***What has kept me discouraged and defeated at times in my life?***

Coming Back Stronger Requires:

IMPLEMENTING THE <u>CURES</u> FOR DISCOURAGEMENT

- **We're able to overcome discouragement and live victoriously when we *Address our Physical Situation.***
    - *"As he was sleeping, an angel touched him and told him, 'Get up and eat!' He looked around and saw some bread baked on hot stones and a jar of water! So he ate and drank and lay down again."* (1 Kings 19:5-6)
    - **If we're going to overcome discouraging situations and people we're going to have to learn how to: 1) eat properly, 2) exercise regularly, 3) rest consistently and 4) relax appropriately.**
    - *"Six days a week are set apart for your daily duties and regular work, but the seventh day is a day of rest dedicated to the LORD your God."* (Exodus 20:10)
- **We're able to overcome discouragement and live victoriously when we *Resume our Spiritual Communication*.**

    - *"The food gave him enough strength to travel forty days and forty nights to Mount Sinai, the mountain of God."* (1 Kings 19:8)
    - **Meeting with the Lord personally and in the company of others is essential for our overcoming discouragement and/or staying strong.**
    - *"Let us go right into the presence of God, with true hearts fully trusting Him. . . . Without wavering, let us hold tightly to the hope we say we have . . .And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage and warn each other . . ."* (Hebrews 10:22-25)
    - **Meeting with the Lord requires talking with Him (Jeremiah 29:12-13) and listening to Him (1 Kings 19:13).**
    - The Lord - *"What are you doing here, Elijah?"* (1 Kings 19:13)
    - **The Lord speaks to His people through His Word (Psalm 119:103-105), His people (Proverbs 15:22), Dreams and Visions (Joel 2:28), Angels (1 Kings 19:7), and by His Spirit (Acts 8:27-29, 13:2).**
    - Jesus - *"My sheep listen to My voice and they follow Me."* (John 10:27)
    - **As we listen to Him the Lord will speak words of instruction and life to us that enable us to overcome difficulties and discouragement.**
- **We're able to overcome discouragement and live victoriously when we *Re-Engage in Personal Ministry*.**
    - *"The LORD told him, 'Go back the way you came, and travel to the wilderness of Damascus. When you arrive there, anoint Hazael to be king of Aram. Then anoint Jehu son of Nimshi to be king of Israel, and anoint Elisha son of Shaphat from Abel-meholah to replace you as my prophet.'"* (1 Kings 19:15-16)
    - **The Lord has called all Christians to minister to others.**
    - *"We are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do."* (Ephesians 2:10)
    - **The Lord has called all Christians to mentor or disciple others.**
    - Jesus – *"Go and make disciples . . ."* (Matthew 28:19)
    - **Ministry to others and discipleship of others best takes place in *Life Groups.***
    - **The Lord will enable us to overcome discouragement and live a victorious life when we focus on serving Him and others.**
    - *"Throw yourselves into the work of the Master, confident that <u>nothing you do</u> for Him is a waste of time or effort."* (1 Corinthians 15:58 Msg)
- ***What do I need to do to start living the victorious, impactful life the Lord wants me to live?***

- The Lord – *"Go back the way you came . . . "* (1 Kings 19:15)

- **Sometimes we have to go back to where we've gotten "off track" physically, emotionally, relationally and/or spiritually.**
- *"'For I know the plans I have for you,' declares the LORD, 'plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.'"* (Jeremiah 29:11)