

# Practical Tips to Deal with Discouragement

***1 Kings 19:1-9 (erv) King Ahab told Jezebel everything that Elijah did and how Elijah had killed all the prophets of Baal with a sword. <sup>2</sup> So Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah and said, “I swear that by this time tomorrow, you will be just as dead as those prophets. If I don’t succeed, may the gods do the same or worse to me. <sup>3</sup> When Elijah heard this, he was afraid. So he ran away to save his life. He took his servant with him, and they went to Beersheba in Judah. Then Elijah left his servant in Beersheba <sup>4</sup> and walked for a whole day into the desert. Then he sat down under a bush and asked to die. He said, “I have had enough, Lord! Take my life. I am no better than my ancestors.” <sup>5</sup> Then Elijah lay down under the bush and went to sleep. An angel came to him and touched him. The angel said, “Get up and eat!” <sup>6</sup> Elijah looked around, and by his head there was a cake that had been baked over coals and a jar of water. He ate and drank and then went back to sleep. <sup>7</sup> Later the Lord’s angel came to him again, touched him, and said, “Get up and eat! If you don’t, you will not be strong enough to make the long trip.”<sup>8</sup> So Elijah got up. He ate and drank and felt strong. Then Elijah walked for 40 days and nights to Mount Horeb, the mountain of God. <sup>9</sup> There Elijah went into a cave and spent the night. Then the Lord said to him, “Elijah, why are you here?”***

Three helpful tips when facing discouragement.

## **1. Recognising that Life has Seasons.**

The first tip is to realise that we will experience seasons of victory and triumph and discouragement and despondency.

God has chosen to build a world that revolves around changing seasons. The same in our lives.

There are no mountains without valleys, and no valleys without mountains.

Why do bad things happen to good people?

*Ecclesiastes 7:14-16 (nlt) Enjoy prosperity while you can, but when hard times strike, realize that both come from God. Remember that nothing is certain in this life. <sup>15</sup> I have seen everything in this meaningless life, including the death of good young people and the long life of wicked people.<sup>16</sup> So don't be too good or too wise! Why destroy yourself?*

It is a wise person who recognises that no one escapes the ups and downs in the flow of life.

So *Why destroy yourself?* with worry and anxiety.

This is when we need to...

## 2. Trust God in Every Season.

There are at least 365 verses in the Bible that encourage us not to be afraid or discouraged.

The best place to run to when we are discouraged is to run to God.

*God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in times of trouble. Psalm 46:1*

*Hebrews 13:5b “...never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.”*

*Proverbs 3:5-6 (gw) Trust the Lord with all your heart, and do not rely on your own understanding. <sup>6</sup> In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths smooth.*

Cleaving to and trusting God, even when we don't understand what is going on and the world around us has gone crazy, He will keep us on the straight and narrow.

**Spurgeon:** *“I, of all men, am perhaps the subject of the deepest depression at times. Yet there lives not a person who can say more truthfully than I, “My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.”*

### 3. Don't Quit Too Early.

*1 Kings 19:3-4* When Elijah heard this, he was afraid. So he ran away to save his life. He took his servant with him, and they went to Beersheba in Judah. Then Elijah left his servant in Beersheba <sup>4</sup> and walked for a whole day into the desert. Then he sat down under a bush and asked to die. He said, "I have had enough, Lord! Take my life."

Elijah had given up and quit too early. But God wasn't finished with Elijah just yet!

**Spurgeon:** "The man who did pray that he might die never died at all. How foolish he was to pray that he might die, when God had intended that he should go to heaven by a whirlwind with a chariot and horses of fire!"

Elijah received encouragement and direction. He was refreshed and revived. He went on and pursued the things God had for him.

To rise from discouragement, we must have a purpose to live for, to keep pressing on.

*Philippians 3:13-14* (gw) Brothers and sisters, I can't consider myself a winner yet. This is what I do: I don't look back, I lengthen my stride, and <sup>14</sup> I run straight toward the goal to win the prize that God's heavenly call offers in Christ Jesus.

# Every follower of Christ should be **PRESSING ON**.

We may make mistakes, we may fail and stumble but we should never quit too early, being overcome with self-pity or discouragement.

We must realise that life revolves around seasons. And in every season we can trust God for His protection, provision and presence.

Never quit too early! Our victory and answer could just be on the other side of our quit!

Let's live with this attitude as Paul expresses in

***2 Corinthians 4:8-9** (erv) We have troubles all around us, but we are not defeated. We often don't know what to do, but we don't give up. <sup>9</sup> We are persecuted, but God does not leave us. We are hurt sometimes, but we are not destroyed.*