

Elijah's Great Victory!

- For 3 ½ years Elijah prayed that it would not rain
- God sent Elijah to Ahab
- *when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said to him, "Is that you, O troubler of Israel?" 18 And he answered, "I have not troubled Israel, but you and your father's house have, in that you have forsaken the commandments of the Lord and have followed the Baals. 19 Now therefore, send and gather all Israel to me on Mount Carmel, the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal, and the four hundred prophets of Asherah, who eat at Jezebel's table." 1Kings 18:17-19*
- All Israel is present with the 450 prophets of Baal.

Elijah's Great Victory!

- *So Ahab sent for all the children of Israel, and gathered the prophets together on Mount Carmel. 21 And Elijah came to all the people, and said, "How long will you falter between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him." But the people answered him not a word. 1 Kings 18:20-22*
- *Prophets of Baal and Elijah on of Mt Carmel.*
- *Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may know that You are the Lord God, and that You have turned their hearts back to You again. " 38 Then the fire of the Lord fell and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood and the stones and the dust, and it licked up the water that was in the trench. 39 Now when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces; and they said, "The Lord, He is God! The Lord, He is God!" 1 Kings 18:37-39*

Elijah's Greater Victory

- *Then Elijah said to Ahab, "Go up, eat and drink; for there is the sound of abundance of rain." 42 So Ahab went up to eat and drink. And Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; then he bowed down on the ground, and put his face between his knees, 43 and said to his servant, "Go up now, look toward the sea." 1Kings 18:41-43*
- *Then it came to pass the seventh time, that he said, "There is a cloud, as small as a man's hand, rising out of the sea!" So he said, "Go up, say to Ahab, 'Prepare your chariot, and go down before the rain stops you.'" 45 Now it happened in the meantime that the sky became black with clouds and wind, and there was a heavy rain. 1 Kings 18:44-45*
- The prophets of Baal are dead, the people have shouted Jehovah is God, The drought is over at Elijah's prayer.

A Great Victory – Discouragement

- *Then Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah, saying, "So let the gods do to me, and more also, if I do not make your life as the life of one of them by tomorrow about this time." 3 And when he saw that, he arose and ran for his life, 19:4 But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a broom tree. And he prayed that he might die, and said, "It is enough! Now, Lord, take my life, for I am no better than my fathers!" 1 Kings 19:2-3*
- *So he said, "I have been very zealous for the Lord God of hosts; for the children of Israel have forsaken Your covenant, torn down Your altars, and killed Your prophets with the sword. I alone am left; and they seek to take my life." 1Kings 19:10*

A Great Victory – Discouragement

- Although Elijah believed
- *I alone am left; and therefore*
- *prayed that he might die”*
- *“they seek to take my life” 1Kings 19:4*
- God’s answer changed Elijah’s perspective.

- *Yet I have reserved seven thousand in Israel, all whose knees have not bowed to Baal, and every mouth that has not kissed him.” 1Kings 19:18*

Moses – Faced Discouragement

- After the ten plagues, Mt Sinai and many years in the wilderness. Moses reached a breaking point.
- *Where am I to get meat to give to all these people? For they weep all over me, saying, 'Give us meat, that we may eat.' 14 I am not able to bear all these people alone, because the burden is too heavy for me. 15 If You treat me like this, please kill me here and now — if I have found favor in Your sight — and do not let me see my wretchedness!" Num 11:13-15*
- First Moses said “*I am not able*” then “*the burden is too heavy for me*” and finally “*please kill me here and now*” (Num. 11:14-15).

John the Baptist

- Sitting in a prison. Though He heard God say,
- *“this is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased,”*
- Discouragement is evident in his question to Jesus.
- *“Are you really the coming one or should we look for another”*(Lk. 7:19-23)?
- Jesus was firm and clear.
- *“Go and tell John ... blessed is he who is not offended because of Me.”*
- Though *“among those born of women there has not risen one greater than John the Baptist”* (Mt. 11:7), discouragement brought him near to being offended (or stumbled) over Jesus plans.

Isaiah's Call – Ends in “Failure”

- *Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying: "Whom shall I send, And who will go for Us?" Then I said, "Here am I! Send me." 9 And He said, "Go, and tell this people: 'Keep on hearing, but do not understand; Keep on seeing, but do not perceive.' ... 11 Then I said, "Lord, how long?" And He answered: "Until the cities are laid waste and without inhabitant, The houses are without a man, The land is utterly desolate, Isa. 6:8-9*
- *“here am I send me,” “Lord, how long?”*
- *“until the cities are laid waste and without inhabitant, The houses are without a man, The land is utterly desolate” (Isa 6:11).*
- How would we feel if that was to be the result?

Ezekiel Given an Explanation

- It is not your fault.
- *7 But the house of Israel will not listen to you, because they will not listen to Me; for all the house of Israel are impudent and hard-hearted. Ezek 3:7-8*
- *“Indeed you are to them as a very lovely song of one who has a pleasant voice and can play well on an instrument; for they hear your words, but they do not do them” Ezek. 33:32*

- Jesus knew that the results of His labor would end in His death. He had no discouragement because He accepted failure as a part of the plan for His life that would lead to victory. Even the lack of growth and weaknesses on the part of His disciples He simply took in stride.
- *A bruised reed He will not break, And smoking flax He will not quench; He will bring forth justice for truth. 4 He will not fail nor be discouraged, Till He has established justice in the earth; And the coastlands shall wait for His law." Isa. 42:3-4*

Baruch

“Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, to you, O Baruch: 3 'You said, "Woe is me now! For the Lord has added grief to my sorrow. I fainted in my sighing, and I find no rest." 4 "Thus you shall say to him, 'Thus says the Lord: "Behold, what I have built I will break down, and what I have planted I will pluck up, that is, this whole land. 5 And do you seek great things for yourself? Do not seek them; for behold, I will bring adversity on all flesh," says the Lord. "But I will give your life to you as a prize in all places, wherever you go."””

Jer. 45:2-5

Paul Felt Great Sorrow

- *“great sorrow and unceasing grief in my heart”* (Rom. 9:3), because he could not help Israel.
- The answer to keep from discouragement:
- *“I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. So then neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but God who gives the increase”*
1Cor. 3:6-7
- At the end his focus was on his effort, not results.
- *“I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep what I have committed to Him until that Day. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith”* 2Tim. 1:12; 4:7

Satan's Devices

- Satan knows a serious setback at the right moment or in clusters can lead even the best of God's servants to a discouragement (Job 1:9-11).
- Paul's confidence in similar circumstances
- *If God is for us, who can be against us? 32 He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? Rom 8:31-33*
- *Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. Rom 8:37*
- We walk by faith and not by sight.

Handling Discouraging Circumstances

- *Therefore do not cast away your confidence, which has great reward. 36 For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise: 37 "For yet a little while, And He who is coming will come and will not tarry. 38 Now the just shall live by faith; But if anyone draws back, My soul has no pleasure in him." 39 But we are not of those who draw back to perdition, but of those who believe to the saving of the soul. Heb 11:35-39*

Words of Discouragement

- When the ten spies returned from the promised land they saw only obstacles.
- *we saw the giants (the descendants of Anak came from the giants); and we were like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their sight." Num 13:33*
- *when they went up to the Valley of Eshcol and saw the land, they discouraged the heart of the children of Israel, so that they did not go into the land which the Lord had given them. 10 So the Lord's anger was aroused on that day, and He swore an oath, saying, Num 32:8-11*
- Yet Joshua and Calab had words of encouragement

The Shield of Faith

- No trial or loss is worthy to be compared to the glory God will give us at the end of this life!
- From Noah, Isaiah, and Ezekiel we learn that even years of seemingly fruitless effort will be rewarded if we remain faithful.
- It is this faith that protects us from all *fiery darts of the evil one*(Eph. 6:16).
- God did not fault the one talent man for his lack of results. Only for his lack of effort.

Dealing with Discouragement

- Discouragements will come into our lives. When setbacks arise and there is no solution, we will become discouraged and disappointed.
- But there is an answer.
- *For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls. 4 You have not yet resisted to bloodshed, striving against sin. 5 And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as to sons: "My son, do not despise the chastening of the Lord, Nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him; Heb 12:3-5*

More Than Conquerors

- Job, Jeremiah, Moses and Elijah reveal the danger and damage discouragement can create.
- The very moment we think the words: “*it’s not fair*” we make ourselves a victim.
- The instant we feel begin to *feel sorry for ourselves*, victory can slip from our grasp.
- The moment we believe our efforts are fruitless, alarms should be warning us.
- We cannot be “*more than conquerors*” when we feel cheated or beaten down!
- We cannot “*count it all joy*” in every tribulation when struggling with self-pity.

More than Conqueror

- If we are to “*run with patience the race set before us*” we have to lay aside all the “*weights*” and ask God for the wisdom to view them with joy (James 1:2-8).
- We can only do this as long as we are the victor. If we are feeling like a victim, Pray and remember the prophets. Heb 10:35-39