

## How to Overcome Discouragement and Depression

*4 while he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness. He came to a broom bush, sat down under it and prayed that he might die. "I have had enough, Lord," he said. "Take my life; I am no better than my ancestors." 5 Then he lay down under the bush and fell asleep. All at once an angel touched him and said, "Get up and eat." 1 Kings 19:4-5 NIV*

### Interactive Questions:

- Why does discouragement come into our lives?
- How does depression begin?
- What are the signs of discouragement?

**Illustration:** *Now Ahab told Jezebel everything Elijah had done and how he had killed all the prophets with the sword. 2 So Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah to say, "May the gods deal with me, be it ever so severely, if by this time tomorrow I do not make your life like that of one of them." 3 Elijah was afraid[a] and ran for his life. When he came to Beersheba in Judah, he left his servant there, 4 while he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness. He came to a broom bush, sat down under it and prayed that he might die. "I have had enough, Lord," he said. "Take my life; I am no better than my ancestors." 5 Then he lay down under the bush and fell asleep. All at once an angel touched him and said, "Get up and eat." 1 Kings 19:1-5 NIV*

**Introduction:** *How can one detect when a loved one is entering a stage of discouragement or depression? A few signs are isolation, lack of strength, tiredness and lack of vision. As the above verse states, these signs also occurred in Prophet Elijah. After a tremendous victory he was unable to endure Jezebel's threat so he departed into the desert, sat down under a broom bush and the angel of the LORD found him and said, "Get up and eat some more, or the journey ahead will be too much for you." Today God says the same to us, if you were discouraged or depressed because of failures, loss or injustice get up and eat of the Word of God, because there's a long way ahead of you. Today we will learn about the signs of discouragement and depression, and how to overcome depression. Let's view the following points:*

### **1. Isolation 1 Kings 19:4**

- a. Sometimes when we are offended and do not forgive or when we keep anger inside, this can become discouragement. When we do not deal with discouragement then it becomes depression; even Christians are exposed to the dangers of discouragement just as it happened to Elijah.
- b. The first things prophet Elijah does is isolate himself into the desert where he walks an entire day. This represents being antisocial- when someone begins to act like a hermit and departs from church, the house of peace and family. One doesn't want to interact or fellowship with others, even in marriage the spouses sleep in separate rooms.
- c. When this begins to happen to a person pay close attention because this may be a sign of discouragement. Remember that isolation is not the solution to our problems, we were created to live in communion with one another.

### **2. Inactivity 1 Kings 19:5**

- a. The prophet sits next to a broom bush wanting to die! He was an active man of god and prayer but suddenly he becomes inactive, he closes up and isolates himself because he is tired and discouraged.

- b. After challenging, overcoming and killing hundreds of the prophets of Baal, he becomes weary and passive because he is intimidated by Jezebel's offense.
- c. For example: when a husband is discouraged because of hearing his wife's constant complaints, when a brethren from church is offended and doesn't sit at the front of the church anymore but instead listens to the preaching from the lobby or a person who was very serviceable suddenly becomes an inactive person.

### 3. **Desire to Die 1 Kings 19:4**

- a. "I have had enough, Lord," he said. "Take my life; I am no better than my ancestors." There are people who do not desire to live and the spark of life no longer shines in them; they wish God would just come and rapture the church.
- b. They're fatigued, fed up and bitter with life. They no longer want to fight for their marriage, personal challenges or dreams; there's no difference to them between life and death.
- c. They begin to have thoughts of suicide, leaving the ministry and or regressing into their past lifestyle. They feel to quit, hide and not exist.

### 4. **Low Self-Esteem 1 Kings 19:4**

- a. "I have had enough, Lord," he said. "Take my life; I am no better than my ancestors." Elijah begins to compare himself to his ancestors and despises himself.
- b. One begins to exalt others and degrade themselves. The enemy achieves to plant seeds of low self-esteem making one think they're useless, less or unqualified as a parent, son/daughter, spouse, leader etc. and due to these thoughts one's behavior changes and their level of performance becomes mediocre.

### 5. **The Person Seems to Live Blinded or Disconnected 1 Kings 19:1-9**

- a. When we are going through those dark and painful nights sometimes we are blinded, unable to see God's hand move and so we are disconnected from our faith. Suddenly serving in church, working and studying becomes a routine and commitment that is done with no enjoyment nor vision.
- b. You may be in your house of peace, church or home but your heart is in the night of discouragement and little by little your faith is disconnecting from the ultimate source who's God.

### 6. **How to Overcome Discouragement**

- a. **Remember that you are not the center of the world.** Many times we tend to lock ourselves up in "our own world" full of melancholy and distractions that delay God's plans. We should not enclose ourselves but instead seek help, be accountable, pray and trust God.
- b. **Do not be selfish.** "3 Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, 4 not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others." (**Philippians 2:3-4 NIV**) We should not focus on our worries because God knows every single one of our needs and he will meet them at the necessary time. Remember that when we take care of God's business, He takes care of ours.
- c. **Be a blessing to someone this week.** Forgive others failures and your own failures. "Love prospers when a fault is forgiven," **Proverbs 17:9 NLT 1 Kings 19:15-16 NIV** Maybe you have experienced discouragement in leadership, you feel like you're not giving enough but God is calling you to empower someone and to bless someone.

#### **Sinner's Prayer**

Lord Jesus I recognize that I have sinned and that you died for me. Today I repent and ask for forgiveness. I give you my life and heart so you can be my Lord and