

EVERYBODY GETS DISCOURAGED

Numbers 11:14-15 1 Kings 19:4 Jonah 4:3

Intro: Everybody gets discouraged at one time or other and Satan is a master in taking advantage of such circumstances and thus causes God to often get the blame in such discouraging times.

The truth in most times of discouragements is that one becomes preoccupied with "self." Things are not going as one wants and thus discouragement sets in and "self" wants to blame it all on something or someone other than "self."

Here are three of God's great men of the Old Testament who became so discouraged that they wanted to just die.

I. MOSES BECAME DISCOURAGED (Numbers 11:14-15)

1. Moses had been selected by God to deliver the people of Israel out of Egyptian bondage under God's guidance and provision and had done so. They were free.
2. What caused Moses to become so discouraged?
 - The people were grumbling about not having this or that and had become homesick.
 - Moses felt that he was responsible for all the needs of these multiplied thousands and he just couldn't meet their needs.
3. What did God do?
 - God gave Moses (father in law's advice) 70 men to help minister.
 - God would supply all that was needed for the multitude.
 - God reminded Moses that it was He who would take care of all the people's needs.
4. Often discouragement comes from trying to do God's work without God in one's own strength and one's own way.
5. To avoid such discouragement, one must learn to let God do what He says He will do and then do his/her part along with God.

II. ELIJAH FELL VICTIM TO DISCOURAGEMENT (1 Kings 19:4)

1. When God's people would get into things that drew them away from God, He would often send a prophet to preach, to warn, and to bring His people back.
 - Elijah was such a man whose mission was to preach against King Ahab and his wife Jezebell as they had drawn Israel into Baal worship.
2. Jezebell had threatened to kill Elijah for his preaching against her and her gods and for some reason, Elijah became fearful and fled to a cave in the wilderness.
3. For 40 days God cared for Elijah who was so discouraged that he just wanted to die.
 - God asked Elijah why was he still there and Elijah's reply was that there was nobody left but him who still believed in God.
4. Elijah was exhausted, scared, felt alone and had become preoccupied with his own self.
 - In his state of mind, he had left God out and was thinking of himself.
5. God then gave encouragement to Elijah by telling him that there were still some 7,000 others who believed as Elijah did in God.

6. Physical weaknesses or even sickness can cause one to take his/her eyes off God and focus on his/her own self, forgetting about God and thus discouragement comes.
 - God sometimes causes one to remember some little thing that was done right and the excitement surrounding that particular time and thus causes one to become revived or encouraged once again.

III. JONAH ALSO BECAME DISCOURAGED (Jonah 4:3)

1. God gave Jonah the assignment of going to Nineveh to preach repentance to them.
 - God at times gives His children things to do for Him that are strange to them.
2. Jonah refused to go to Nineveh and actually ran away because he didn't care for Nineveh.
 - Nineveh was considered to be an enemy and it was not logical that he should help an enemy.
3. God got Jonah's attention through a storm on the sea and then while he was in the belly of the great fish.
 - Jonah preached to the city of Nineveh and everyone repented, even the King and God was pleased, but not Jonah.
4. God again did something to get Jonah's attention.
 - Overnight a vine grew with big leaves and it gave shade to Jonah from the intense heat then the next day God sent a worm that destroyed the vine and the shade was gone.
 - Upset that his shade was gone Jonah just wanted to die but God reminded Jonah that the shade was important to him, but not the city of Nineveh but to God Nineveh was more important than a shady vine.
5. Discouragement often comes because one doesn't understand how God works nor His purposes which sometimes are vastly different from what seems to be "normal."

CONCLUSION:

1. Discouragement can come when one takes it upon him/herself to do God's work his/her way instead of allowing God to work His will His way.
2. Discouragement can come when one is tired and is faced with opposition so much of the time.
3. Discouragement can come when what God has in mind is not the "normal" way of doing things.
4. Whenever "self" takes over doing what God wants one to do, almost always discouragement will come and God may have to "step in" and get one's attention and send a reminder of Who is really in charge.
5. When God invites/asks someone to do something for Him, it is always WITH Him as He never leaves His children alone to do it by him/her/their self.
6. Even the greatest of God's children took their eyes off God at times and became discouraged. No one is immune to discouragement but doing things WITH God sure helps keep it away.