Overcoming Discouragement

Intro: God had used Elijah to warn the people and to try and destroy idol worship in the contest with the prophets of Baal in 1 Kings 18 resulting in the false prophets being slain. This resulted with Queen Jezebel placing a death warrant of Elijah’s life. Elijah fled fearing his life. Elijah was alone and discouraged. It then states in 1 Kings 19:4 “4 But he himself went a day’s journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree: and he requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers.” Have you ever felt like Elijah on this occasion? It is no disgrace to be discouraged. It happens to everyone at some point in their life. The Bible, however, identifies several ways we can overcome discouragement.

I. Remember You Are Not Alone.
   A. There are always others:
      1. God reminded Elijah there were 7000 who had not worshipped Baal; 1 Kin. 19:18 “18 Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him.”
      2. The Lord told Paul during the storm that he was not alone; Acts 27:23 “23 For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve,”
   B. Discouragement feeds off of feeling alone.
      1. Pray—talk to God.
      2. Talk to fellow Christians (no doubt there are others who have the same problems you are facing).
      3. Give and receive encouragement.

II. Know That God Is In Control.
   A. When it looks like all creation is breaking loose and chaos runs rampant with its feverish fury, know that God is still on His Throne in Heaven.
      1. God is in control is one of the great themes of Daniel.
      2. God will maintain the cause of the righteous; Psa. 140:12 “12 I know that the LORD will maintain the cause of the afflicted, and the right of the poor.”
      3. The righteous will come through trouble; Pro. 12:13 “13 The wicked is snared by the transgression of his lips: but the just shall come out of trouble.”
   B. God will always be with us.
      1. Rom. 8:35-39 “35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? 36 As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. 37 Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. 38 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, 39 Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”
      2. Heb. 13:5-6 “5 Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. 6 So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me.”
III. **Speak A Kind Word To Others.**

A. **Discouragement muffles pleasant words of encouragement.**
   1. Force yourself to say good things to those around you; your mind will remember you have a good heart to speak good words.
   2. Listen to others as they say good things about you.

B. **Good words bring gladness.**
   1. Pro. 12:25 (NKJV) "Anxiety in the heart of man causes depression, But a good word makes it glad."
   2. Pro. 17:22 "A merry heart doeth good like a medicine: but a broken spirit drieth the bones."
   3. Pro. 25:11 "A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver."
   4. Pro. 15:23 "A man hath joy by the answer of his mouth: and a word spoken in due season, how good is it!"

IV. **Let God’s Word Remain In Your Heart.**

A. God is familiar with all persecution and suffering we might face.
B. Any difficulties that might arise, we fear God and His Word alone.
   1. Psa. 119:161 "Princes have persecuted me without a cause: but my heart standeth in awe of thy word."
   2. Mat. 10:28 "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."

V. **Do Not Give Up Hope.**

A. Pro. 13:12 "Hope deferred maketh the heart sick: but when the desire cometh, it is a tree of life [it is the cause of happiness]."

B. The necessity of hope:
   1. Rom. 5:5 "And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us."
   2. Rom. 8:24 "For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?"

C. Jesus has not and will not give up on us; why give up on Him?
   1. He has promised to be with us.
   2. Mat. 28:20 "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen."

**Conclusion:** We will become discouraged at some point in our life. Remember, we can overcome discouragement and do great things for God.