

# Victory That Still Felt Like Defeat

- For 3 ½ years Elijah prayed that it would not rain and there was no rain.
- God sent Elijah to Ahab *1Kings 18:17-19*
- All Israel is present with the 450 prophets of Baal.
- God gave a decisive victory.
- Then the rain came at his prayer.
- It must have been an exciting day for Elijah.
- But it didn't change anything!
- Jezebel was going to kill him and he felt no one would stand with him.
- He went to the wilderness asking God to take his life.

# 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*

# Applications Today

- *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 Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter." 37 Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who 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 created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Rom 8:35-39*
- When faced with disaster, we can still be a conqueror

# More than Conqueror to Victim

- *tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, sword*
- Can do what happened to Elijah.
- God's answer can give the courage to stand.
- *Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.*
- We are Victors, because God is behind us.
- We can never be a victim unless we lose faith.

# 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.' ...*
- *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. 6:8-11*
- *“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?*



# The Plight of the Hebrews

- Hebrews was written as the destruction of Jerusalem drew ever closer.
- The church had been very zealous in the early days
- as the end of that age drew closer, persecutions worse, discouragement was setting in.
- *But recall the former days in which, after you were illuminated, you endured a great struggle with sufferings: 33 partly while you were made a spectacle both by reproaches and tribulations, and partly while you became companions of those who were so treated;. Heb 10:32-39*
- *rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name. Acts 5:41-42*

# What Happened?

- Only 1 Thing – They were casting away confidence.
- The exhortation – You Need Endurance.
- *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 10:32-39*

# The Confidence of Faith

- *Therefore he sent horses and chariots and a great army there, and they came by night and surrounded the city. 15 And when the servant of the man of God arose early and went out, there was an army, surrounding the city with horses and chariots. And his servant said to him, "Alas, my master! What shall we do?" 16 So he answered, "Do not fear, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them." 17 And Elisha prayed, and said, "Lord, I pray, open his eyes that he may see." Then the Lord opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw. And behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha. 2Kngs 6:14-18*



# The Confidence of Job ... Crumbled

- Job was “*more than conqueror*” in first trials.
- Lost children possessions but unmoved Job 1:20-22
- He never once considered his treatment to be unfair. He never felt sorry for himself. He was a “*victor*”
- Even after he lost his health, wife’s support(Job 2:7-9), and his reputation(Job 30:1-10) he never wavered in his conviction that God was treating him fairly and that all would end well.
- It was the “**help**” of his three “*friends*” that led to his downfall. **They fanned the flames of self-pity and discouragement** t

# A Victor became a Victim.

- Began blaming God and went from “*victor to victim*”
- As a victim he “*charged God foolishly.*”
- “*darkened counsel by words without knowledge*” (38:2),
- “*rebuked God*” (40:2),
- sought to “*annul My judgment*” and
- “*condemned Me that you may be justified*” (40:8).
- Only after God reminded him of the truth:
- *Therefore I have uttered what I did not understand, Things too wonderful for me, which I did not know.*
- *Therefore I abhor myself, And repent in dust and ashes.” Job 42:3, 6*

# 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.

# Jeremiah

- Began as the victor (*behold, I have made you this day A fortified city and an iron pillar, And bronze walls against the whole land — Against the kings of Judah, Against its princes, Against its priests, And against the people of the land. They will fight against you, But they shall not prevail against you. For I am with you, says the Lord, to deliver you – Jer. 1:18-19; 15:18-21*).
- Yet persecution led him to become a victim.
- *Why is my pain perpetual, and my wound incurable, which refuses to be healed? will you indeed be unto me as a deceitful (brook), as waters that fail?*
- It felt like God had become deceitful brook. Promised water, but now to Jeremiah had dried up and failed.

# Jeremiah's Misery

- In his misery and dismay he became a victim.
- Like the ten spies, he only saw the obstacles
- Lost sight of the truth: God can sweep them away.
- God's comfort was a call to repentance.
- *“If you return, Then I will bring you back; You shall stand before Me; If you take out the precious from the vile, You shall be as My mouth. Let them return to you, But you must not return to them”*  
Jer. 15:18-19
- Jeremiah became another more than conqueror through Him that loved us. We must focus on God.



# When we Feel Discouraged – Remember

- *“Take for an example of suffering and of patience, the prophets who spake in the name of the Lord Behold, we call them ’blessed that endured: you have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord, how that the Lord is full of pity, and merciful.” James 5:10-11*

# When we Feel Discouraged – Remember

- *Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, 2 looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. 3 For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls. Heb. 12:1-3*