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"A light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of thy people Israel."

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DISCOURAGED ELIJAHS.

BY REV. LOUIS MEYER, D. D.

Ahab, son of Omri, did evil in the sight of the Lord above all that were before him and did more to provoke the Lord God of Israel to anger than all the kings of Israel that were before him. And Elijah, the Tishbite, appeared before King Ahab and said, "There shall not be dew nor rain these years." Two years went by without a drop of dew or rain, and the memorable scene upon Mount Carmel came to pass. Elijah, the man of God, met the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal. He was alone, but his strong faith in the Lord God of Israel upheld him, and in answer to his believing prayer the fire of the Lord fell and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. A few short days or weeks went by, and Elijah "went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree." Thoroughly discouraged, the hero of Mount Carmel requested for himself that he might die. Finally the discouragement and the despair caused him to lodge in the cave, where the Lord asked him the searching question, "What doest thou here, Elijah?" What a change from faithful public witness-bearing to discouraged hiding.

Discouraged Elijahs are quite frequent in our days, for "Elijah was a man subject to like passions as we are." A study of the reasons of Elijah's discouragement will be helpful to many a man of God who is today a faithful and courageous witness, but is in danger of being a discouraged Elijah tomorrow.

Two reasons we discover which caused the utter dejection and discouragement of faithful Elijah.

(1) *The Lord did not give him the expected measure of success.* It had been a remarkable scene upon Mount Carmel when the fire of the Lord fell. The people saw it and they fell on their faces; and they said, "The Lord, he is the God; the Lord, he is the God." When Elijah heard that cry, his heart was stirred and confidently he looked into the future. This hour must be the beginning of a great revival, of a reform movement that was destined to sweep the whole land. The groves would be abandoned and the worship of Baal would be forsaken. But, alas, Elijah was mistaken. No great revival came and no religious reforms ensued. Yes, the covenant of the Lord was forsaken, His altars were thrown down and His prophets were slain. Discouragement and despair took hold of Elijah and he cried out, "I, even

I only, am left," "I am not better than my fathers," "Lord, take away my life." Thus he deserted his post in discouragement.

The faithful pastor of many a Christian congregation labors among his people day after day. Prayerfully and with zealous care he prepares his sermons. On the Lord's Day he comes to the house of God and lo! many empty pews greet him. Thus he goes on, week after week, until his season for the celebration of the Lord's Supper comes again. On that great day, amidst its blessed privileges and its joys, the people seem to proclaim, "the Lord, He is the God," and the already discouraged pastor breathes a sigh of relief. Surely a spiritual awakening has taken place and from that day on the house of the Lord will be crowded with earnest Christian men and women. No longer will the pews be empty, for every member of the church will be in his place if not detained by some very serious cause. Maybe, a few more in attendance at first, but soon it is the old scene of empty pews. Then, like Elijah, the discouraged pastor would like to go a day's journey into the wilderness and sit down under a juniper tree.

The missionary and the faithful Christian worker have labored on in faith for many days, but seemingly without success; like Elijah, they would like to lodge in a cave.

But mark, ye discouraged Elijahs, that the Tishbite was utterly mistaken when he cried out "I, even I only, am left." The answer of God to him was, "I have reserved to myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal." He who labors with immortal souls must not expect to see the fruits as plainly as he who builds with wood and stone. We have no right to ex-

pect that the Lord will give us that large measure of success which we desire, yea, for which we confidently look. But the apparent lack of success is no reason for despair in our work within the Master's vineyard.

It is God who "Giveth the increase." However difficult and disheartening the sowing may be, the Divine Husbandman superintends it, and all the indifference of men and all the opposition of Satan cannot hinder the final harvest. God's gracious purposes do not and cannot fail, and, if we do not see the fruit now, we will see it in the glory of eternity, for our labor in the Lord is not in vain and His Word cannot return to Him void.

(2) *The Lord did not work in the way in which Elijah expected Him to work.* That such was the second reason for Elijah's despair is made clear to us in that remarkable scene when the discouraged prophet had gone forth from the cave and stood upon the mount of God. The great and strong wind rent the mountains and broke in pieces the rocks, but the Lord was not in the wind. The earthquake caused the earth to tremble, but the Lord was not in it. The fire devoured all before it, but the Lord was not in the fire. Then came the still, small voice, and Elijah wrapped his face in his mantle, for in it he recognized the Lord. When Elijah continued in his work of testimony-bearing after that great day upon Mount Carmel, he expected to see the kingdom of God extended by remarkable methods. But the Lord did not desire to work thus. He worked quietly, like the still, small voice. Elijah failed to recognize the fact, and he became discouraged, because the Lord's way was not that which he expected.

Like Elijah, we desire to see the Lord's power revealed in the great revival with its stirring scenes, and, like the generation of the day of Christ, we want to see signs and wonders. When signs and wonders fail, we become faint-hearted and discouraged and go back into the cave. The way of the Lord is not in the wind, nor in the earthquake, nor in the fire, though sometimes He may be found in all of them, but in the still, small voice. It is no reason for discouragement that the great revival is not yet sweeping all lands, or that the wave of national reform is not yet destroying the strongholds of the enemy. The Gospel is working quietly at home and abroad and many times seven thousand are not bowing their knees to Baal.

Discouraged Elijahs, take warning and do not expect the Lord to give you the expected measure of success just in the way in which you want it. "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord."

There remains for us, however, the consideration of the Lord's dealing with discouraged Elijah. He did not hear his prayer under the juniper tree that he might die. He did not leave him in the cave, but disapprovingly He asked him, "What doest thou here, Elijah?" Then He sent him down from the mount with the distinct order to anoint Jehu king over Israel and Elisha prophet in his place. His work was not yet done. Likewise, ye modern discouraged Elijahs, the Lord cannot use you as long as you lodge in the cave, nor will He answer your prayer for death when you sit down under the juniper tree. He desires to reveal Himself to you in all the fulness and the beauty of His grace and

then to send you back into the vineyard, which you forsook when momentarily discouraged. Not as a deserter, discouraged and heavy-hearted, are you to die, but in triumphant faith when you have run your course and finished your work.

Servants of God, the seeming fruitlessness of our labors, the vicissitudes to which our work is often subjected, are nothing but the discipline of our God by which we should profit. They call us to examine ourselves before Him, that we may determine if His glory is our sole aim, if our methods and our zeal are spiritual, if our trust is wholly in the Lord—in brief, that we may see if we are fit instruments for His use. Thus the apparent fruitlessness of our labors and prayers will strengthen faith and courage, zeal and endurance and true humility, and, recognizing that the abundance of harvest will come in His appointed time, we will be more willing than ever before to spend and to be spent in the Lord's service.

THE LATE ARCHDUKE AND THE JEWS.

The assassination of the heir-apparent, the Archduke Francis Ferdinand, and his wife, has made a painful impression upon all Jews in the monarchy. Memorial services have been held in every community and telegrams of condolence have been sent by every congregation to the aged Emperor and King.

It is interesting to place on record that the unfortunate heir-apparent and his wife breathed their last in the arms of two Jewish military doctors, Dr. Arnstein and Dr. Pollock, who, however, were unable to save them. The stories about the Archduke's supposed Antisemitism are mere fables. The Archduke had both personal and business relations with many Jews and never showed any signs of aversion for the Jewish race.—*The American Hebrew.*