**JOURNEYING TOGETHER:** FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Session 2 of 4

# Elijah

### MEETING AIM

To explore how Elijah responded to believing he was all alone.

### BIBLE PASSAGE

1 Kings 19

### BACKGROUND

This session plan is intended for use either in-person or online, depending on how you’re meeting. Adapt the activities to fit your situation.

Elijah is feeling low after the high of recent events. He now feels like everyone is against him and he is the only one. He is on the run and in serious fear for his life, and rightly so. There are obvious signs of depression in how Elijah reacts.

These sessions may evoke painful memories or stir difficult current situations and feelings. It is vital that all those leading are able to offer appropriate pastoral care. A risk assessment of what to do if situations arise is advisable.

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### STARTING OUT – 5 mins

Welcome the young people and share any refreshments you have provided. Invite the group to share what they have been doing during the past seven days. As they share, ask whether any good things happened this week.

### INTRO ACTIVITY – 10 mins

**You will need:** fact bingo sheets (see below); pens

Before the session, ask each group member to think of one fact about themselves that the rest of the group might not know. It doesn’t have to be a secret or personal but could be something like an instrument they play, or even their shoe size. However, the more ‘unique’ the better. Have them send this fact to you. Create a grid of squares and write a fact in each square. Print out enough for each member to have one.

Allow time for the group to talk to one another, trying to match the fact with a person. You could have a prize for the first person to match up every fact and individual. Explain that one thing that often makes us different is our faith and belief in God. It might be that we are the only Christian, or just one of a handful, at our school.

### BIBLE EXPLORATION – 10 mins

**You will need:** Bibles

Introduce today’s Bible passage by reading this story:

Eli was a social-media hero, a tech genius, he was internet famous. You know the sort: YouTuber, always on to the next social trend before anyone else.

His greatest achievement was a meme that totally cut through the lies of the government of his small country. The political policy the government had been following was in tatters. Government ministers and officials lost their jobs, and even the president and his family were in danger of being kicked out of office.

But that was the peak of Eli’s success. The government moved quickly to put out their ‘fake news’ to manipulate the story and save their careers. But that wasn’t all, things got nasty.

The secret police traced Eli’s IP address. Fortunately, he was a tech genius so realised what was happening. He had to get out quick. The last thing he saw were emails from the arrogant politicians and even the president threatening him.

Eli was all alone and on the run. He found himself in a tiny hotel room, alone. He didn’t know what to do. He wasted days unable to even get out of bed. He just about managed to eat to keep himself alive.

One day, he got an anonymous email. It said he wasn’t alone. He logged onto a hidden network and set-up new social media accounts. He set up a group to talk about the issues with his government, switched off the computer and went back to sleep, wallowing in his despair.

Eli woke up. He logged onto the group and there were 7,000 requests to join. Eli wasn’t alone.

Ask someone to read 1 Kings 19. Explain that Elijah felt the whole world was against him. All this followed a great victory for him against the followers of Baal. But now it seems he has feelings of paranoia and may well have been suffering depression. The main difference with the story of Elijah and that of Eli, is God. However, the challenge for Elijah and for us is often where we look for, and how we find, God. What we expect and what we want can be quite different to how God works.

### CHATTING TOGETHER – 5 mins

Chat about the story using these questions, encouraging everyone to join in if they want to:

* Have you ever given up on something?
* What are the reasons that you give up on things?
* Why do some people achieve something, like climbing Everest, while others give up?

### CREATIVE RESPONSE – 10 mins

**You will need:** magazines; paper; art materials

Ask the group to think about where people look for God. In today’s passage, the ‘mighty’ God was found in “a gentle whisper”. There are obvious places like churches, but there are other places too. The Old Testament is full of God being found in different places. And quite often, God is looking for us – it is the angels, God’s messengers, who go to Elijah.

Using images and words from the magazines, paints and other art materials, create some mixed-media art illustrating where we might find God. Encourage the group to be creative and explore this topic. You might want to ask, as they work, how do – or would – you know it is the God of the Bible that you have found?

### PRAYER – 5 mins

Point out that so much of our ‘church’ time is noisy. We have songs, sermons, activities, youth meetings! In the reading, when Elijah looked for God, there was a lot of noise – wind, earthquake and fire, but no God. God was found in the quiet, in the whisper.

Explain to the group that you will have a time of silent prayer. Decide beforehand how long you will do this for and tell the group. Just five minutes can seem like a very long the time for those not used to this practice. Do not have any candles, or quiet background music, just silence.

Begin by saying: “Lord, we are here, quiet and listening for you…” Allow silence for the mentioned time, then finish by saying: “Amen.” If anyone wants to share how they felt and if they heard anything, allow time afterwards.

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tells stories at the [Creative Minimalist](https://www.darrenrhill.com/).