

ONLY GOD

Elementary
Week 4

PARENT BIBLE STUDY

Read: 1 Kings 19:1-18

Elijah witnessed God's power in the showdown at Mt. Carmel. As God's prophet, he was used to God's impressive displays of presence and authority. But Elijah was also tired. And because of persecution by corrupt King Ahab and his wife Jezebel, he was also alone. He fled to a cave at Mt. Sinai to escape Jezebel's death threat and essentially collapsed in exhaustion.

This story shows us that not only is God strong and powerful, he is also gentle. Elijah had just seen God's power. But in this story, God showed him kindness and friendship. He sent angels to Elijah to feed him and refresh him. He knew Elijah was tired. Not just physically, but soul-tired. So, instead of appearing to him in a strong wind, a fire, or an earthquake; his voice came to Elijah in a gentle whisper. And in that whisper, God didn't just speak. He listened. God asked Elijah a question and heard his heart. He sent him to find a friend and eventually his replacement in Elisha.

At Mt. Carmel, God showed Elijah his strength. But at Mt. Sinai, God showed Elijah his kindness. In our lives, we need to know that God is both strong and gentle; powerful and kind. Sometimes we have "mountaintop experiences" where we feel the presence and power of God as strong as Elijah did at Mt. Carmel. But most of our lives are lived off the mountaintops. And like Elijah, we also go through seasons of being soul-tired-exhausted. While we might wish that God would show up in a strong wind, an earthquake, or fire, we can't let those things desensitize us to the softness of God's voice. He is always with us, and we have to trust that he knows what we need most. We need his gentle reassurance and kindness. God will refresh us and sustain us, just like he did Elijah.

*"The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters. **He restores my soul,** ..." Psalm 23:1-3.*

In what ways have "mountaintop experiences" with God desensitized you to the quiet ways he shows up in your life every day?

How has God showed his kindness and gentleness to you?