

God's Gentle Whisper

1 Kings 19:1-18; *Prophets and Kings*, pp. 167-176

One night Shanika was alone in her bedroom trying to go to sleep. Every shadow seemed to move. She felt afraid. Then her mother came into the room. Her gentle voice helped Shanika calm down.

A long time ago God's prophet Elijah became frightened too. Then God spoke to him in a quiet voice.

Elijah was running for his life. King Ahab's wife, the wicked Queen Jezebel, was trying to kill him. Elijah was so scared that he had forgotten that God could protect him from the wicked queen. Instead, for 40 days he ran hundreds of miles into the desert. Finally he came to Mount Horeb. There he hid in a cave.

"What are you doing here?" God asked him. You can tell Elijah felt sorry for himself by the way he answered God. "I have worked very hard for You, Lord," he said. "The Israelites have rejected You. They have broken down Your altars and killed Your prophets. I am the only one left, and now they're trying to kill me too."

Elijah was telling God: "I worked hard for You. See how tired and discouraged I feel?"

So God replied: "Go stand on the mountain in the presence of the Lord, for the Lord is about to pass by." This was God's way of saying, "Elijah, come here. I want to talk to you."

Elijah did as God said. Then a great wind tore through the mountains and shattered the



The Message

*I will listen to
God's gentle whisper.*

Memory Verse

*"Your ears will
hear a voice . . .
saying, 'This is the
way; walk in it' "
(Isaiah 30:21).*

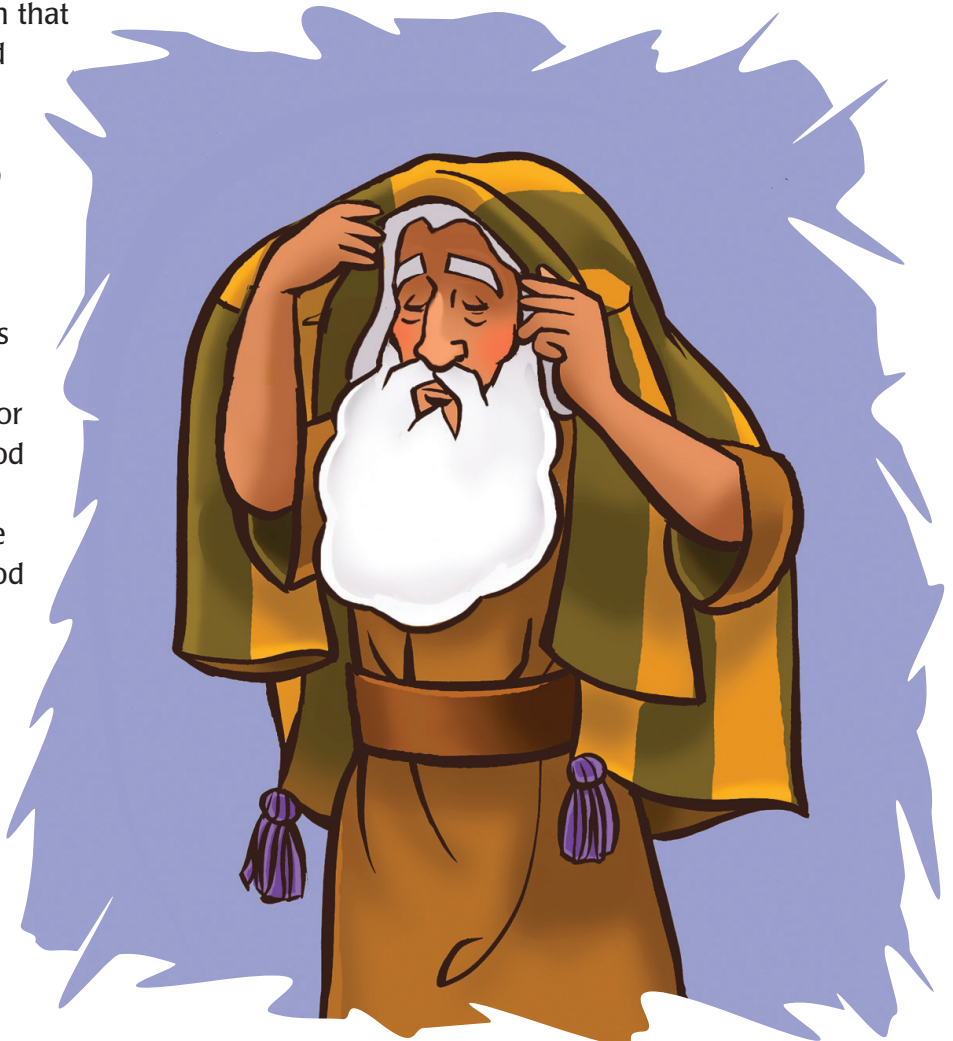
rocks. But Elijah didn't get up, because he didn't hear God's voice in the wind. God was not in the strong wind.

Next an earthquake shook the mountain. But Elijah still didn't get up. He didn't hear God in the earthquake. After the earthquake a terrible fire swept by. But still Elijah didn't hear God's voice. God was not in the wind, the earthquake, or the fire.

After all those powerful forces of nature, a gentle whisper came. Some Bible translations call it a "still small voice." And in that gentle whisper Elijah recognized God's voice. He pulled his coat over his face. Then he stood at the cave entrance to listen to God.

Again God asked Elijah the same question. "What are you doing here?" And Elijah gave his same "poor-me" answer.

God wasn't angry at Elijah for giving up and running away. God wasn't angry because Elijah forgot to trust Him. God's gentle whisper spoke of God's love. God loved Elijah, even when he felt sorry for himself. Gently God encouraged the tired prophet. Then He sent him back to work. And God assured Elijah that he was not alone. And he wasn't, for God still had 7,000 faithful worshippers in Israel.



S A B B A T H

READ Go outdoors with your family to a quiet place. Have someone read the lesson story in a quiet voice. Imagine Elijah listening to God's gentle whisper.

DO Then walk down a path together. Ask someone to walk behind you and read your memory verse aloud (Isaiah 30:21). If you were lost, how would your memory verse make you feel?

SING Sing together "Anywhere With Jesus" (Sing for Joy, no. 45).

M O N D A Y

READ What question did God ask Elijah—twice? With your family read it in 1 Kings 19:9 and 13.

DO Make a question mark (?) shaped cutout and write God's question on it. Read Elijah's answer (1 Kings 19:10) with sadness and crying in your voice. Continue Elijah's sad tale of pity in your own words (see 1 Kings 19:11-14).

DO Listen to your recorded memory verse with the volume on low—to remind you of God's still, small voice. Whisper it from memory.

T U E S D A Y

DRAW With your family, read 1 Kings 19:11-13 again. Draw pictures of the four great things that happened while Elijah was in the cave.

DO Discuss together: If you were Elijah, what would you rather hear? A loud voice or a soft voice? What does God's way of speaking in this story tell us about His love?

DO Whisper your memory verse together.

S U N D A Y

SHARE During family worship, read the lesson story in 1 Kings 19:1-18. Why did Elijah feel afraid and sorry for himself? What did God do to help him feel better? (verses 5-7).

DO Think of a time you felt afraid or sorry for yourself. How did God help you? Act it out. Draw a face of someone who has suddenly heard a loud voice.

DO If possible, record your memory verse. If not, whisper it to yourself. Teach the verse to your family.

When Elijah was afraid and ran, God wasn't angry. God still took very good care of him. God even sent Elisha to work with Elijah so he wouldn't feel alone anymore.



W E D N E S D A Y

SHARE During worship today, think of God's gentle whisper. Tell three ways you can hear His voice. Talk about conscience. What is it? How can it help you? Who speaks through your conscience? Does it ever tell you to do wrong? Read in Acts 24:16 what Paul said about his conscience.

DO Draw the shape of an ear and write the memory verse inside it. Then thank God that you can hear His voice.

THURSDAY

READ

Sometimes God speaks in a big way. With your family, read one example in Exodus 19:16-19. Discuss: Do you think God will speak to you in a loud voice? Why? How can you make sure you don't miss God's voice? Have you heard His voice or felt His presence? When and where? Read 1 Kings 19:15-18 together.

DO Write or draw about something you heard and acted on today.

DO Ask your family to whisper your memory verse with you. Then thank God for speaking gently to you.

FRIDAY

DO

Start family worship by acting out this week's Bible story. Talk about things that keep you from hearing God's voice. Read together Psalm 46:10. Then play soft music. Ask everyone to close their eyes and say, "Be still, and know that I am God." Pay attention to thoughts God puts in your mind. After a while, stop the music. What did you learn from this quiet time? Was it easier to listen to God's voice? Why?

DO

Ask your family to whisper your memory verse with you.

SING

Sing "Teach Me, Lord" (Sing for Joy, no. 110) before prayer

PUZZLE

Directions: First, circle the picture that best shows how Elijah heard the voice of God. Then finish drawing Elijah's face when he finds out how many other people also love God.

