



## God Speaks in Stillness

(based on 1 Kings 19:1-18)

King Ahab was furious with Elijah! Elijah had defeated 450 prophets of Baal. Ahab was embarrassed because he had started the worship of Baal in Israel. Ahab swore he would find Elijah and punish him.

Elijah was terrified. He ran for his life into the desert. After a day of fleeing for his life, he sat down under a bush. Elijah was exhausted, hungry, and afraid. He thought that it was just a matter of time before Ahab's armies found him. He quietly fell asleep.

Suddenly an angel tapped his shoulder and said, "Wake up! Eat something!"

Elijah opened his eyes—he saw flatbread baking on glowing coals and a jar of water! He ate and drank, and then went back to sleep.

The Lord's angel returned a second time and tapped him. "Wake up!" the angel said. "Eat something, because you have a difficult road ahead of you."

Elijah got up, ate, and drank. For forty days and nights, Elijah traveled to God's mountain. When he arrived, he went into a cave and fell asleep.

In the darkness of the night, the Lord said, "Why are you here, Elijah?"

Elijah replied, "The Israelites have abandoned your covenant. They worship false gods now. I'm the only one left, and now they want to take my life too!"

The Lord said, "Go out and stand on the mountain. The Lord is passing by."

A powerful wind tore through the mountains and broke apart the stones before the Lord. But the Lord wasn't in the wind.

After the wind, there was an earthquake. But the Lord wasn't in the earthquake.

After the earthquake, there was a fire. But the Lord wasn't in the fire.

After the fire, there was a sound, thin and quiet, the sound of sheer silence.

Elijah went out and stood at the cave's entrance. A voice came to him and said, "Why are you here, Elijah?"

He said, "All of the Israelites have broken your covenant—they worship other gods. I'm the only one left, and now they want to take my life too."

The Lord said to him, "There are still 7,000 faithful people in Israel. They have not bowed down to Baal. I will be with you, Elijah. Come, you and I have work to do. The name of the Lord will be worshiped in all of Israel."



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Use one or more activities from each section to explore grace and gratitude with your children this week.

#### Recognizing God's Grace

- Read and enjoy the story with your children—imagine and wonder.
- Let each person tell about a time when they were so exhausted that they fell asleep right where they were.
- Some people are sound sleepers, and the slightest noise wakes other people. Talk with your children about how each person in your family wakes up.



#### Responding to God's Grace

- Ask your children to draw a picture of a powerful wind, an earthquake, and then silence. Enjoy everyone's depictions of Elijah's experiences.
- Pretend that your family has to make a difficult trip. What will you need to prepare and take with you?
- God reminded Elijah of 7,000 faithful people. While you may not know 7,000 people, can you make a list of people you recognize as faithful?

#### Celebrating in Gratitude

- Have a meal similar to Elijah's. Purchase refrigerated thin pizza crust, or make flatbread dough from a recipe. Bake the bread in your oven. Serve the flatbread with a jar of water to drink. If possible, eat sitting under a bush.
- Talk about a time when your family had to make a long trip. Remember the things that made the trip hard, and the ways you coped with the hardships. Be thankful for God's care while you and your family were on the trip.
- Pray this prayer each day this week:

*God, we thank you for providing food, water, and sleep for us, things we need in order to feel good. Thank you for being with us. Amen.*