

LESSON 4

GOD WHISPERS TO ELIJAH

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Can Speak to Us in Unexpected Ways

SCRIPTURE: 1 Kings 19

GOD'S BIG STORY: Afraid for his life, Elijah runs into the wilderness where God cares for his needs. Then God tells Elijah to stand on the mountain, where He comes in the most unexpected way—a gentle whisper.

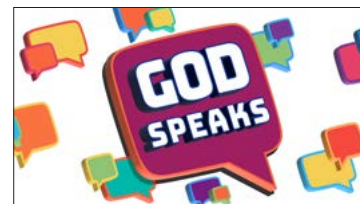
WORD OF WONDER: Come near to God, and he will come near to you. —James 4:8a

CURIOSITY

BELIEF

FAITH

- Welcome Question: What is a creative way someone has gotten your attention?
- Curiosity Questions
- Word of Wonder Activity
- God's Big Story
- Discussion Questions for Elementary Kids and Preteens
- Small Group Prayer Time
- LARGE GROUP
- Elementary Responding in Worship: Stress Ball Prayers
- Preteen Responding in Worship: God Speaks Journals



God Rescues Elem Spotify playlist

INVITATION

We invite you to pause, listen, and shift your gaze toward the Father ...

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Can Speak to Us in Unexpected Ways

SCRIPTURE: 1 Kings 19

WORD OF WONDER: James 4:8a

Have you ever been in a situation where the odds seemed stacked against you? When you felt like you'd given it all you had, and you wanted to throw in the towel? Despite those feelings, God's plans are greater than our discomforts, worries, disbeliefs, and fears.

I invite you to read 1 Kings 19, and as you read, note the places where you empathize with Elijah.

For me, it was Elijah's feeling of wanting to throw in the towel. We've all felt the weight of the day-to-day grind. How much sweeter, then, are the moments when we hear God say to us like He did to Elijah, "Get up" and "Go out" (1 Kings 19:7, 11)?

God doesn't count us out.

The fact that you're reading this right now shows that no matter what else you're facing in life, God's voice is still guiding you. He gets what you're going through, and He has not abandoned you.

The next time you kneel, sit, or lay down ... imagine the voice of God saying to you, "Get up." He's got you in this moment. And He's got you in the next. So be ready for God to speak in ways you'd never expect.

—**Andrae Jones**

Nextgen Pastor

Contributor to Wonder Ink

DID YOU KNOW?

FOUNDATION BUILDING BLOCKS

WHO?

Elijah was a prophet during the reign of Israel's King Ahab. As a great prophet, Elijah's life was full of dramatic moments—being fed by ravens, multiplying a widow's grain and oil, raising her son from the dead, and calling fire down from heaven.

WHAT?

After significant miracles and revelations from God, Elijah found himself tired and afraid. Fleeing for his life, he asked the God who had sustained him to take his life. In this moment of Elijah's weakness, God promised His presence, which came in an unexpected way.

WHERE?

Elijah mostly prophesied to the northern kingdom of Israel, condemning the idolatry of Baal under wicked King Ahab and Queen Jezebel. In his exhaustion, Elijah ran into the wilderness of the southern kingdom, where God spoke to him on Mount Sinai.

WHEN?

When King Ahab married Jezebel, he worshiped her god, Baal. Elijah prophesied during the reign of King Ahab, eventually defeating the prophets of Baal and proving God is the one true God. Queen Jezebel was so angry she sent word that she planned to kill Elijah.

CONNECTING TO GOD'S BIG STORY

Even when the northern kingdom of Israel was ruled by ungodly kings and God's people turned away from Him, God showed His love and faithfulness to the Israelites by sending prophets to share His message. After Elijah, God sent Elisha, Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Micah to call His people back to Him.

LESSON 4 **ELEMENTARY & PRETEEN**

Small Group

Spark curiosity and get kids thinking about the wonder of God.

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: God Can Speak to Us in Unexpected Ways

SCRIPTURE: 1 Kings 19

WORD OF WONDER: James 4:8a

Pre-Service Connection (15–20 min)

RESOURCES: whiteboard, poster paper, or butcher paper, writing utensils, board games or games

Games & Activities Guide

Small group leaders should be seated in place in their small groups 20 minutes prior to service time. Have activities ready to keep children occupied and engaged WITH you. This time is important to build relationships, welcome new kids, and keep structure in the room - you should be an active participant with them! Learn the kids names, and make sure they all know yours too!

As kids arrive ...

Warmly welcome new friends, and introduce them to your group.

Introduce the Welcome Question and the following "I'm Curious" questions to engage kids. Say "**I'm curious..**" before each question and give kids an chance to think before answering each one. After each question, consider having kids share their ideas with a neighbor before you call on one or two of them to share with the group.

Consider having a whiteboard or poster for kids to write or draw answers to any of the questions:

- **Have you ever hoped God would speak directly to you in a voice you could hear out loud? What do you think God would say?**
- **What are some ways we speak to each other without using our voices?**



Small Group Begins

After the Opening Activity or game, Large Group Leader will begin small group time by reading the Welcome Question aloud and inviting everyone to open their Bibles and begin.

Word of Wonder Activity

WORD OF WONDER

Come near to God, and he will come near to you.

—James 4:8a (NIRV)

SUPPLIES: Bible, colored paper, scissors (prep only)

RESOURCES: Word of Wonder Slips NIRV (1 set per small group)

Ahead of time, print one copy of the Word of Wonder Slips NIRV for each small group on multiple colors of paper and cut out the strips (a different color for each small group). Before the activity, hide the verse strips throughout your space.

Everyone who follows Jesus is God’s kid, and God loves speaking to His kids! Sometimes God speaks to us in unexpected ways, like how He spoke to Elijah in a quiet whisper. Let’s say our Word of Wonder

together and remember that we can be near to God! Open your Bible to James 4:8a. If possible, display the Word of Wonder Slide or watch the [Elementary Word of Wonder Video](#). Read James 4:8a several times together.

Let’s practice our Word of Wonder by going on a scavenger hunt! Each small group should be assigned one color of Word of Wonder Slips. Challenge your group to find all 12 of their slips. When kids have found all 11 words plus the reference, they can put the words in order. Once they have the whole verse in order, invite them to recite it a few times together.



Leader Tip: If some groups struggle to find all their Word of Wonder Slips, assist them by giving “hot or cold” clues as they look. Hot being closest to the slip, cold being far away.

God’s Big Story

SUPPLIES: Bibles (1 per kid)

Today’s story is from **1 Kings 19:1–13**, in the Old Testament. The book of 1 Kings records how Israel and Judah were led by many kings—some faithful to God and others who turned away. Elijah was one of God’s prophets during the time of King Ahab and Queen Jezebel, who led the people to worship false gods. After Elijah showed God’s power on Mount Carmel, Jezebel became angry and wanted to hurt him. Elijah ran away into the wilderness, scared and tired. But instead of scolding Elijah, God met him with kindness, strength, and a gentle whisper. This story reminds us that God is near to us even when we feel afraid or alone.

PASSAGE: 1 Kings 19:1–13

Elementary Questions

- **What are some amazing things God did for Elijah before today's story even started?** (God fed Elijah, a woman, and her child for days with just a small jar of oil and handful of flour; God made it rain when Elijah prayed for the famine to end; and God sent fire from heaven.)
- **Why was Elijah scared in today's story?** (A woman named Jezebel was trying to kill him, and Elijah felt alone.)
- **Have you ever felt scared? Have you ever felt alone? Tell us about it.**
- **What were some of the things Elijah saw and heard on the mountain?** (a strong wind, an earthquake, a large fire, and then a soft whisper)
- **God told Elijah that there were seven thousand other people in Israel who were still following God. How do you think that made Elijah feel?**
- **What are ways God speaks to you or to people you know?**

We might expect God to speak to us or show up in big and loud ways—and sometimes He does! But God can also speak to us in ways we don't expect. Elijah's story can remind us that God can meet us in the quiet to speak to us. Let's pray now for our ears to hear God's voice.

Leader Tip: God speaks to His people in many different ways, some more unexpected than others! Help kids understand that as Jesus-followers, we might hear God's voice through reading His words in Scripture, through words spoken by people who love and follow God, and through ideas, thoughts, and even dreams. Yet no matter how God speaks, His words always align with who He is!

Preteen Questions

- **What are some amazing things God did for Elijah before this part of God's big story?** (God fed Elijah, a woman, and her child for days with just a small jar of oil and handful of flour; God made it rain when Elijah prayed for the famine to end; and God sent fire from heaven.)
- **Why was Elijah scared in today's story?** (A woman named Jezebel was trying to kill him, and Elijah felt alone.)
- **How do you think you would have felt if you were Elijah and Jezebel was threatening you? What do you think you would have done?**
- **How did God provide for Elijah while he was in the wilderness during today's story?** (God provided an angel to care for Elijah, fresh bread, and water.)
- **What were some of the things Elijah saw and heard on the mountain?** (a strong wind, an earthquake, a large fire, and then a soft whisper)
- **Which of those things may have seemed the most likely way for God to speak to Elijah? Which may have seemed the least likely way for God to speak to Elijah? Why?**
- **Imagine God spoke to you in a whisper. What message do you think He would have for you? What message might He have for others in our world today?**

We might expect God to speak to us or show up in big and loud ways—and sometimes He does! But God can also speak to us in ways we don't expect. Elijah's story can remind us that God can meet us in the quiet to speak to us. Let's pray now for ears to hear God's voice.

Small Group Prayer Time

SUPPLIES: paper (optional), writing and coloring utensils (optional)

Invite kids to share what's on their minds—both celebrations and concerns—and to pray for one another. Invite kids to embrace this time of silent prayer as an opportunity to ask God to speak to them, even if it's in a small whisper. If kids need more direction, they can write down things they'd hope for God to speak to them about.

Head to Large Group!

Return and finish the rest of this guide before parents arrive.

Elementary Responding in Worship: Stress Ball Prayers

SUPPLIES: 12" balloons (1 per kid), flour or uncooked rice (1 cup per kid), funnel (1 or more), table, pen or pencil, permanent marker (prep only, optional)

RESOURCES: [God Speaks Elementary Spotify playlist](#)

Allergy Caution: This activity calls for latex and possible food allergens!

During this activity, kids will create stress balls by filling balloons with one cup of flour or uncooked rice. If possible, write the words “God Speaks” on each balloon with permanent marker ahead of time.

The prophet Elijah saw God do many amazing things! He saw God raise a boy who had died, provide food in a miraculous way, and send fire from heaven. But even after experiencing God in these big and powerful ways, Elijah felt scared and lonely in today's part of God's big story. Elijah needed to be reminded that God was with him and that there were other people in Israel who loved and followed God. All of us feel scared and lonely sometimes, and like Elijah, all of us need to be reminded that we are not alone. God speaks to us too, and sometimes He speaks in unexpected ways! Let's make stress balls and spend some time talking with the God, who is with us when we feel scared and lonely.

Give one balloon to each kid. Help them make stress balls by following the following steps. If possible, work with the flour and funnel at a table. If your group is large, use multiple funnels, and invite additional leaders to help kids.

1. Stretch the balloon by blowing it up and then letting the air out of it.
2. Pull the open end of the balloon over the end of the funnel.



3. Pour one cup of flour or rice into the funnel. Gently shake and tap the funnel to get the flour or rice to go down into the balloon. If the flour or rice gets stuck in the funnel, use a pen or pencil to push it through.

4. Once one cup of flour or rice is in the balloon, remove the funnel, and tie a knot to close the balloon.



Once everyone has finished making their stress balls, encourage kids to spread out and sit down with their stress balls in hand. Consider playing music from the [God Speaks Elementary Spotify playlist](#) in the background during this time. Invite kids to close their eyes as you lead them through a time of guided reflection and prayer:

When Elijah was scared, he cried out to God. And God took care of him. When we're scared, we can pray to God too. He loves us and cares for us. When do you feel scared? Pause for kids to think quietly. **Squeeze your stress ball as you tell God about it. Ask Him to help you when you feel scared.** Give kids about 20 seconds to pray quietly.

Elijah was worried, and God cared for him. When we're worried, we can tell God about it. He cares about us. What do you worry about? Pause for kids to think quietly. **Squeeze your stress ball as you tell God about it. Ask Him to help you when you feel worried.** Give kids about 20 seconds to pray quietly.

In today's story, Elijah was really hungry—so hungry he was upset. Have you ever been so hungry you were upset? Pause for kids to think quietly. **We can tell God about that too because He cares! Squeeze your stress ball as you tell God how you feel when you are hungry.** Give kids about 10 seconds to pray quietly.

Make It Inclusive: Be aware and sensitive of the fact that some kids in your group may experience food insecurity. If you think a child or family might not have access to adequate food, talk with a trusted leader to see what ministries in your church or community might come alongside them.

Elijah was lonely and felt alone. When we feel lonely, we can remember that God is with us, and we can talk with Him! When do you feel lonely? Squeeze your stress ball as you talk with God about it now. Give kids about 20 seconds to pray quietly.

God cared about Elijah and wanted to speak to him. God didn't speak in a loud way like Elijah may have expected. God spoke to Elijah in a whisper. God cares about each of us and wants to speak to us too. What do you think God is whispering to you today? Pause for kids to listen quietly as they hold/squeeze their stress balls. After about 20–30 seconds of quiet listening time, invite those who would like to share to do so. Encourage kids to take their stress balls home. When they feel scared or worried or alone, they can squeeze their stress balls and talk with God in prayer!

Preteen Responding in Worship: God Speaks Journals

SUPPLIES: writing utensils, coloring utensils

RESOURCES: [God Speaks Journal Sheet \(1 per kid\)](#), [God Speaks Elementary Spotify playlist](#)

Ahead of time, print a God Speaks Journal Sheet for each kid.

The prophet Elijah saw God do many amazing things! He saw God raise a boy who had died, provide food in a miraculous way, and send fire from heaven. But even after experiencing God in these big and powerful ways, Elijah felt scared and alone in today's part of God's big story. Elijah needed to be reminded that God was with him and that there were other people in Israel who loved and followed God. All of us feel scared and lonely



sometimes, and like Elijah, all of us need to be reminded that we are not alone. God speaks to us too, and sometimes He speaks in unexpected ways! Let's spend time drawing and journaling as we talk with the God who is with us when we are scared and lonely.

Give a God Speaks Journal Sheet to each kid along with writing and coloring utensils, and have them write their name on it. Encourage kids to spread out as you lead them through a time of guided prayer. Consider playing music from the [God Speaks Elementary Spotify playlist](#) in the background during this time.

When Elijah was scared, he cried out to God. And God took care of him. When we're scared, we can pray to God too. He loves us and cares for us. When do you feel scared? Pause for kids to think quietly. **Tell God about it in writing or by drawing a picture in the top left part of your journal page.** Point to the top left quadrant on the God Speaks Journal Sheet. Give kids about a minute to write, draw, and pray quietly.

Elijah was worried, and God cared for him. When we're worried, we can tell God about it. He cares about us. What do you worry about? Pause for kids to think quietly. **Write or draw your prayer to God in the top right part of your journal page as you tell Him about your worries.** Point to the top right quadrant on the God Speaks Journal Sheet. **Ask Him to help you when you feel worried.** Give kids about a minute to write, draw, and pray quietly.

In today's story, Elijah was really hungry—so hungry he was upset. Have you ever been so hungry you were upset? Pause for kids to think quietly. **We can tell God about that too because He cares for us! Write or draw your prayer to God in the bottom left part of your page as you tell Him how you feel when you are hungry.** Point to the bottom left quadrant on the God Speaks Journal Sheet. Give kids about a minute to write, draw, and pray quietly.

Make It Inclusive: Be aware and sensitive of the fact that some kids in your group may experience food insecurity. If you think a child or family might not have access to adequate food, talk with a trusted leader to see what ministries in your church or community might come alongside them.

Elijah was lonely and felt alone. When we feel lonely, we can remember that God is with us, and we can talk with Him! When do you feel lonely? Pause for kids to think quietly. **Write or draw your prayer to God in the bottom right part of your page as you tell Him about a time when you feel lonely.** Point to the bottom left quadrant on the God Speaks Journal Sheet. Give kids about a minute to write, draw, and pray quietly.

God cared about Elijah and wanted to speak to him. God didn't speak in a loud way like Elijah may have expected. God spoke to Elijah in a whisper. God cares about each of us and wants to speak to us too. What do you think God is whispering to you today? Pause for kids to listen quietly. If they would like, they can write or draw anywhere on their sheet what they sense God is whispering to them. After about 60 seconds of quiet listening time, invite those who would like to share to do so. Encourage kids to take their God Speaks Journal Sheets home and to continue writing and drawing as they talk and listen to God.

Leader Tip: Encourage kids to be open to different ways God might speak to them. For example, sometimes God speaks to us through Bible verses or stories, through an idea or thought in our minds, through the words of other Jesus-followers, or even through dreams and visions—pictures God gives us in our imaginations. Remind them that everything God says always matches with who He is!