

Men in the Bible - Men Like You and Me

Elijah in a nutshell

Elijah was a prophet who lived in the 9th century BC. He probably came from a humble home, being born in Tishbe east of the river Jordan. In his time, the country was threatened in particular by a famine as a result of a long-lasting drought, and by religious conflicts. However, God gifted Elijah with food and shelter: Initially, he was provided with food by ravens, then experienced the miraculously never-ending supply of flour and oil of the widow of Zarephath, whose son he resurrected by prayer after he died of an illness. His biggest triumph he won defeating Baal's priests in a competition on Mount Carmel. Our Bible text follows directly after that episode. Mount Horeb ("wasteland") is also the mountain on which Moses first encountered God and heard Him speak from the Burning Bush.

And this is what YOU do:



Read the bible text on page 2. Have a look at page 3 for "Something to Think about".



Share your inspirations.



Discuss your insights.

- What problem did Elijah face?
- Which approach to solve it did he pursue at first?
- What did become of it?
- How do such problems look today?
- Which approaches to solve them would be available today?
- What might become of it?



Prepare your presentation.

Sum up the results of your discussion in a 5-minute-presentation which can be performed as a role play, an interview, a short talk etc. Be creative!

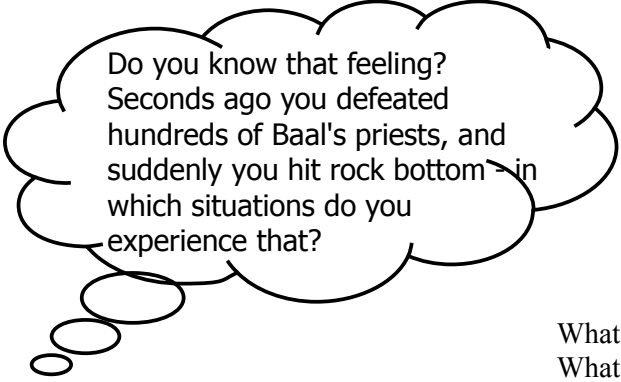
😊 **Have fun!**

Elijah (1. Kings 19)

1 Now Ahab told Jezebel everything Elijah had done and how he had killed all the prophets with the sword. 2 So Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah to say, 'May the gods deal with me, be it ever so severely, if by this time tomorrow I do not make your life like that of one of them.' 3 Elijah was afraid and ran for his life. When he came to Beersheba in Judah, he left his servant there, 4 while he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness. He came to a broom bush, sat down under it and prayed that he might die. 'I have had enough, Lord,' he said. 'Take my life; I am no better than my ancestors.' 5 Then he lay down under the tree and fell asleep. All at once an angel touched him and said, 'Get up and eat.' 6 He looked around, and there by his head was some bread baked over hot coals, and a jar of water. He ate and drank and then lay down again. 7 The angel of the Lord came back a second time and touched him and said, 'Get up and eat, for the journey is too much for you.' 8 So he got up and ate and drank. Strengthened by that food, he travelled for forty days and forty nights until he reached Horeb, the mountain of God. 9 There he went into a cave and spent the night. And the word of the Lord came to him: 'What are you doing here, Elijah?' 10 He replied, 'I have been very zealous for the Lord God Almighty. The Israelites have rejected your covenant, torn down your altars, and put your prophets to death with the sword. I am the only one left, and now they are trying to kill me too.'

11 The Lord said, 'Go out and stand on the mountain in the presence of the Lord, for the Lord is about to pass by.' Then a great and powerful wind tore the mountains apart and shattered the rocks before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind. After the wind there was an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake. 12 After the earthquake came a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire. And after the fire came a gentle whisper. 13 When Elijah heard it, he pulled his cloak over his face and went out and stood at the mouth of the cave. Then a voice said to him, 'What are you doing here, Elijah?' 14 He replied, 'I have been very zealous for the Lord God Almighty. The Israelites have rejected your covenant, torn down your altars, and put your prophets to death with the sword. I am the only one left, and now they are trying to kill me too.' 15 The Lord said to him, 'Go back the way you came, and go to the Desert of Damascus. When you get there, anoint Hazael king over Aram. 16 Also, anoint Jehu son of Nimshi king over Israel, and anoint Elisha son of Shaphat from Abel Meholah to succeed you as prophet. 17 Jehu will put to death any who escape the sword of Hazael, and Elisha will put to death any who escape the sword of Jehu. 18 Yet I reserve seven thousand in Israel—all whose knees have not bowed down to Baal and whose mouths have not kissed him.'

Something to Think About

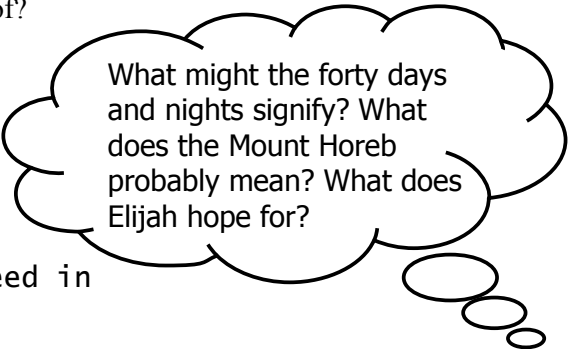


Do you know that feeling? Seconds ago you defeated hundreds of Baal's priests, and suddenly you hit rock bottom - in which situations do you experience that?

When he dealt with Baal's priests, Elijah showed much courage. Is he now weak all of a sudden? Does his weakness let him lose his credibility?

What Elijah is running away from?
What is he suddenly afraid of?

Why does Elijah ask God for the gift of death? Why doesn't God grant him this request?



What might the forty days and nights signify? What does the Mount Horeb probably mean? What does Elijah hope for?

What does Elijah need in this situation?

How does Elijah talk with God? What does he say, and how does he say it (v.10)? Why does he repeat his exact words in v.14?

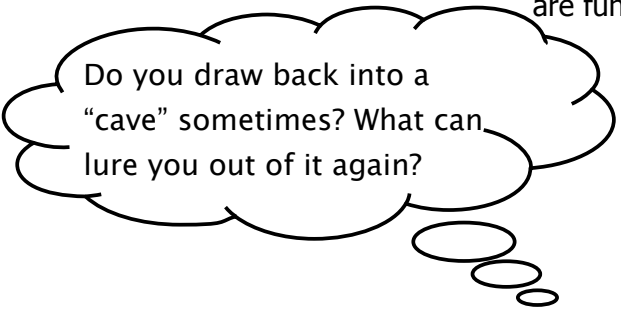
God's message to Elijah might sound brutal to us today. How might the words have sounded to Elijah, and what might have been the effect? What did God tell him? Was it good or bad news?

How does Elijah experience God's presence? What is remarkable about it?

Have you ever been as discouraged as Elijah? Why? What has helped you?

What makes your life difficult at the moment?

In what way do you resemble Elijah? Where the two of you are fundamentally different?



Do you draw back into a "cave" sometimes? What can lure you out of it again?

When do you feel particularly close to God? How does he reveal himself to you?