



MEETING AIM: Through this meeting plan we will gain an overview of the man, Elijah. This famous prophet who spoke God's words at a time of extreme danger. He was a doer of fantastic miracles and spoke tough words to the people of the day. However, he was a scared, runaway prophet who cried out to God for his constant help.

BACKGROUND PREPARATION: Search Google for some images of people in trouble (use the ones attached). Have paper and pen available and ask a member of your church to share a time in their life when God was very close to them, in spite of their personal situation.

### Freeze Frame (10 mins)

This is a quick exercise to involve your young people whether they are into drama or not. Get the young people into smaller groups (depending on your overall group size) and explain that you will read out a list of scenarios. As soon as you have done so, each group must silently freeze into a pose:

- Ον α ρολλερχοαστερ
- Ατ α ωεδδινγ σερωπιχε
- Ατ α ροκκ χονχερτ
- Σχορινγ α γοαλ

Using the same freeze frame idea, assign each group one of the passages below, each one highlighting a time from Elijah's life. Give a couple of minutes for each group to develop a freeze frame to represent their

verses. Once they have done this, have each group perform their freeze and talk the rest of the group through their passage.

- 1 Κινγς 17:5–7 Φεεδ βψ ραϖενσ
- 1 Κινγς 17:13–16 Τηε ωιδωωσ οιλ
- 1 Κινγς 17:17–24 Ελιφαη ηεαλσ τηε δεαδ βοψ
- 1 Κινγς 18:16–40 Ελιφαη ον μουντ Χαρμελ
- 1 Κινγς 19:3–9 Ελιφαη φλεεσ
- 1Κινγς 19:9–15 Λορδ αππεαρσ το Ελιφαη

### When the chips are down (10 mins)

Ask your group to look at the following scenarios (you may want to create some more and alter them so that they are applicable to your group) and vote on which they think is the worst situation to be in and ask them why:

- Α γρλ ισ δυμπεδ ον ηερ ονε–ψεαρ αννιϖερσαρψ βψ ηερ βοψφριενδ
- Α γυψ ηασ ηισ χαρ στολεν
- Ψου αρε χαυγητ χηεατινγ ιν α τεστ ωηιχη μεανσ ψου ωιλλ βε εξπελλεδ φρομ σχηοολ
- Α τεεναγερσ παρεντσ δεχιδε το γετ διϖορχεδ
- Α ωομαν λοσεσ ηερ φοβ μεανινγ σηε χαν τ φινανχιαλλψ συππορτ ηερ χηιλδ
- Α φουτβαλλερ βρεακσ ηισ λεγ
- Ψου γετ φουοδ ποισονινγ φυστ βεφορε γοινγ ον ηολιδαψ

Ask the group what they do when life is hard. Who they talk to and how they react when things go wrong.

Although Elijah was a great man of God, a prophet and worker of miracles, he was also very human. Read to the group 1 Kings 19:3-9 and explain that here we see Elijah so down and depressed that he wanted to die. Ask the group if they ever realise that their favourite preacher, worship leader and even youth worker gets down and fed up some times. Just like Elijah, we are all human and experience the full emotions of life. Ask the group to look again at the passage and see what God does to his servant Elijah (gives him rest, food, water and sends him on his way).

**KEY POINT:** The 2 books of Kings were written to cover the time from the death of Solomon to the end of the Babylonian captivity. It covers a time of turmoil in Israel's history and a leaning towards a cult worship of Baal. Into this context Elijah, (then afterwards Elisha) is called to proclaim judgement, perform miracles and

Speak the words of God.

## Who do you worship? (20 mins)

Have a selection of magazines available (the selection should include ones such as celebrity gossip magazines, TV guides, film, games, teen girl magazines, music, car and sports) and encourage the young people to spend some time looking through the magazines, either in small groups or individually, ripping out people that they admire or 'worship.' After the young people have had a chance to look through each magazine (you may need to flick through beforehand and remove any material that you feel is not suitable), either feed back in small groups or as a whole group, the people or things that have been chosen and why.

Have a big piece of paper with 'God' written in the centre on the floor in front of the group. Ask the young people to come forward and create a big collage of everyone's magazine cut outs on the bit of paper. By the end of this, 'God' may have been lost or covered by all the other images from the magazine. Ask the young people whether this happens in their lives.

As a group, read out the passage 1 Kings 18:16-39. Elijah encountered an Israel that was ignoring God. People had turned to false idols and a god called Baal, taking their focus off of God. Elijah was sent by God to the Israelites to demonstrate who the one true God was. Afterward reading the passage, ask the question – who or what do we worship, and does this result in us taking our focus off of God?

**KEY POINT:** Elijah was sent to speak truth into the lives of the Israelites. Taking a bold step he trusted in God to prove his power to the people he had called together. Do we allow God time to have an impact in our lives, or do we fill up our time with our own 'false idols'?

## Response (15 mins)

Through the life of Elijah we can see the road of the Christian is not easy, with many dangers and discouragements. Even the most 'successful' Christian can feel discouraged and fed up a times, but that in our times of desperation, God reaches out to touch us in a personal way. Ask your young people to find some space and close their eyes. Read both 1 Kings 19:3-9 and 1 Kings 19:10-15 aloud, leaving some space for silence and reflection in between both passages. End the reflection by emphasising God's provision and God's calling on Elijah's life and encouraging the young people that God that calls us, helps us, guides us and cares for us. Finish the session with a prayer of encouragement for the young people.

## Notes for adapting

**For younger group:** Allow more time for a personal story of when God cares for people in distress,

hearing a testimony from a member of the church about the God who cares. **For older groups:** Allow some time for the group to share some struggles in their lives, and whether during this they have felt that God has been close to them. **For unchurched young people:** Draw a 'lifeline' for the life of Elijah, allowing the group to see the amazing miracles he performed as well as the time when he was down and depressed. Explain to the group that being a Christian is not about a God who removes the bad times in our lives, but is there in the middle of them. **For churched young people:** As an extension to this session ask the young people to go off on their own and over the next week read about the next major prophet Elisha (2 Kings 2:19 - 2 Kings 10:35)

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