**Session 11**

**God Speaks to Elijah in a Whisper**

1 Kings 19:9-18

**Worship Theme:**
- God encourages us.

**Weaving Faith Into Life:**
- Children will use God’s encouragement to encourage others.

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<tr>
<th>Session Sequence</th>
<th>What Children Will Do</th>
<th>Supplies</th>
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| **1** Let’s Praise God! (up to 25 minutes) | Sing  
- “How Wide?” (Ephesians 3:18) (track 12)  
- “Wherever You Go” (Joshua 1:9) (track 13)  
- “Praise Him” (track 5)  
- “Motivate One Another” (Hebrews 10:24) (track 7)  
- “Give of Your Best to the Master” (track 3) | KidsOwn Worship Kit:  
- Songs From FaithWeaver,  
- KidsOwn Worship DVD: “Praying Lucy” (8) |
| | Classroom Supplies:  
- CD player; TV, DVD player; newsprint; markers; tape; large, colorful stickers |

**Preschool**

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| **2** Let’s Learn the Point! (up to 25 minutes) | Encouraging Words  
Experience encouragement. | Classroom Supplies:  
- 2 yards of soft red fabric |
| | Elijah Fabric  
Imagine the wind, earthquake, and fire, and feel the encouragement in God’s whisper. | Classroom Supplies:  
Fabric from “Elijah Fabric” |
| | *Thank God  
Discuss encouraging others, and thank God for his encouragement. | |
### Let’s Learn the Point!  
(up to 25 minutes)

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>* In a Quiet Whisper</td>
<td>Devise sound effects to use as they hear the Bible story.</td>
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</table>
| * Encouragement Relay | Hear encouragement as they run a relay. | Classroom Supplies:  
2 flashlights |
| God’s E-Mail | Use God’s Word to make encouraging cards. | Classroom Supplies:  
Paper, markers, crayons, white board and marker, copies of the list of Scripture verses (p. 143) |

* Starred activities can be used successfully with preschool and elementary children together.  
Customize your session to fit your needs. You can separate preschoolers and elementary children for Let’s Learn the Point!  
Or, if you keep the children all together for the entire worship session, we suggest you choose from the starred activities.

### Let’s Pray!  
(up to 10 minutes)

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| The Offering | Offer their gifts to God. | Classroom Supplies:  
Offering bowls, paper, pencils |
| Not Alone | Pray together, thanking God for his encouragement. |  |
| Encouragement in Action | Pray for each other. |  |
When Ahab told Jezebel what had happened to the false prophets on Mount Carmel, she was furious and vowed to kill Elijah within 24 hours. Even though Ahab had witnessed God’s power on the mountain, he apparently did nothing to oppose her. Elijah ran for his life.

Elijah’s fear of Jezebel may seem strange to us. But remember that no human is perfect. After the events on Mount Carmel, Elijah may have been physically and emotionally exhausted. Rather than relishing another chance to prove God’s power over Jezebel, he tired of the fight. Or maybe he was disappointed or angered that his life was still in danger after all God had done to prove that he is God. He may have been overwhelmed by the prospect of having to do spiritual battle again right away. Whatever the reason, he felt he had had enough and retreated into the desert. Even though Elijah’s faith was apparently weak at this point, God was faithful and brought food and drink to him in the desert. In fact Elijah hadn’t abandoned God; after eating and drinking, he began a 40-day journey to Horeb, the mountain of God.

Elijah’s statement recorded in 1 Kings 19:10 reveals his feelings. He felt alone, abandoned by the Israelites, and tired of running and hiding to protect his life. It seemed to him that he was the only one in all the world who truly followed God. Elijah shared his feelings with God, and God responded by promising to bless Elijah with his presence.

God’s lesson to Elijah in all that happened on the mountain may have been in response to something we’re not told. Elijah apparently wanted God to judge Israel through a terrifying event such as a mighty wind, an earthquake, or a fire. But God wanted Elijah to know that those kinds of judgment weren’t part of his plan at that time. Rather, in coming to Elijah in a gentle whisper, God showed Elijah that he wanted him to continue his mission of speaking to the Israelites for him. And Elijah was reminded that God was with him even when he felt utterly alone.

After demonstrating his presence, God again asked Elijah what he was doing there (1 Kings 19:13). By responding exactly as he had the first time, Elijah showed that he didn’t really understand the significance of what had just happened to him. Even so, God continued to lead Elijah on his mission, knowing that Elijah would eventually understand the lesson of the events he’d just experienced.

After giving Elijah instructions for his next move, God had some encouraging news to keep Elijah going: Seven thousand others in Israel hadn’t worshipped Baal; Elijah wasn’t alone in following God. So Elijah was assured not only that God was beside him when he felt alone, but also that thousands of others in Israel were faithful to God. He would never really be alone.

**Devotion for Leaders**

When Jesus leads our lives, we are never alone. Even when we’re discouraged or lonely, we can experience his presence—and the support and encouragement of other Christians.

**Weaving Faith Into Your Life:** Think about a time you felt abandoned by God or by people. Write a few sentences describing your experience. Did you receive strength from God or from friends during this trial? Write a few sentences about the encouragement you felt. Like Elijah, you’ve experienced the support of a loving God. You might share your story with a struggling friend this very week!
Why We Worship for Leaders

Today we worship because God encourages us. Our Bible story shows us that even as great a man as Elijah needed encouragement. Even though Elijah had just been through an amazing victory with God, he suddenly found himself feeling alone and afraid. Rather than rebuking Elijah for his fears, God encouraged him. God knows us so well that he knows we need encouragement again and again. Let’s help the children worship God for his comforting encouragement.

Easy Prep for Leaders

Let’s Praise God!

- Tape a sheet of newsprint on the wall. At the top, write “Be strong and courageous.” At the bottom, write “for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.” Make sure there’s enough space for stickers the kids will place on the banner.
- Set up a TV and DVD player, and cue the KidsOwn Worship DVD to “Praying Lucy” (8). Watch it at least once before the worship session so you’ll be familiar with it.

God’s E-Mail—Write the following list of Bible verses on a sheet of paper. Photocopy the list so you have a copy for every three children.

- “I will never leave you nor forsake you.” —Joshua 1:5b
- “He is our help and our shield.” —Psalm 33:20b
- “The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid.” —Hebrews 13:6b

Preschool Activities—Refer to the preschool pages for preparations.

Web Help—Get bonus leader tips and ideas at kidsownworship.com.

1 Let’s Praise God!

Play Songs From FaithWeaver, Fall 2010 as children arrive. Greet the first children to arrive by name, and say something encouraging to each one. Recruit those children to say something encouraging to the next children who arrive, and have them recruit more children.

When everyone has arrived and has been encouraged,

**Say**

As you arrived, someone gave you some words of encouragement.

**Ask**

- How does getting encouragement make you feel? (Good; like I belong here; like I can do more.)
- Who do you like to get encouragement from? (My parents; my friends; my teachers.)

**Say**

God encourages us because his love for us never ends. God can encourage us better than anyone can. Let’s sing about God’s love to thank God for his encouragement.
Sing “How Wide?” (Ephesians 3:18).

Lyrics are in the back of this book.

Point to the banner on the wall.

**Say** Let’s read this banner together.

Read the banner aloud with the children. If the group includes kids who can’t read, tell them what the banner says, and then have them say it aloud with the rest of the group.

**Say** This is a Scripture verse of encouragement for Joshua. These words of encouragement are for you, too. God often encourages us through what’s written in the Bible. Distribute markers and large, colorful stickers. Ask the children to write their names boldly on the stickers.

Come up and place your name on the poster between the first line and the second line. After the kids have placed their stickers on the banner, have them return to their seats. Encourage kids to reread the banner, each one inserting his or her name in the middle.

Sing “Wherever You Go” (Joshua 1:9).

Lyrics are in the back of this book.

**Say** God encourages us by giving us hope and a friend in Jesus, God’s Son. God does this by forgiving our sins through Jesus so we can be his friend forever. Jesus saves us from our sins and wants to have a relationship with us. Raise your hand if you have experienced Jesus as a friend. (Pause.)

Let’s praise God for the encouragement he gives us.

Sing “Praise Him.”

Lyrics are in the back of this book.

**Say** God is a good friend who is always ready to encourage us. We’re going to watch a video about Lucy who was discouraged and needed encouragement. Watch for ways God sent her encouragement.

Show the Kids Own Worship DVD clip titled “Praying Lucy” (8). The segment shows a girl being encouraged by God in several ways.

**Ask**

- How did God encourage Lucy? (With her mother’s phone call; with her friend’s letter; with the Bible.)

- Why didn’t Lucy realize that God was encouraging her? (She wasn’t paying attention; she expected something different.)

**Say** God sometimes uses other people to encourage us. Sometimes people share an encouraging Bible verse, pray with us, or say encouraging words. Raise your hand if you can name one way God has encouraged you through another person. Allow children to share their stories.
Let’s sing “Motivate One Another” and offer encouragement to each other by patting someone on the back or shaking someone’s hand.

Sing “Motivate One Another” (Hebrews 10:24).

Lyrics are in the back of this book.

**Say**

It is very encouraging to me to know that we are God’s workmanship.

**Ask**

What do we mean when we say that we are God’s workmanship?

**Say**

God is our creator; we are the works of his hand—his workmanship. God’s workmanship is of the highest quality. It’s encouraging to know that God made us and he loves us very much. Let’s thank God for that encouragement by singing “Give of Your Best to the Master.”

Sing “Give of Your Best to the Master.”

Lyrics are in the back of this book.

**Pray**

God, we thank you for always encouraging us. Help us learn more about how you encourage us every day. In Jesus’ name, amen.

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**2 Let’s Learn the Point!**

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**Preschool Activities, pages 147-148**

At this time, have the preschool leader invite the preschoolers to go to their own room for this section of activities. Tear out the Preschool Activities page, and give it to the preschool leader. Have the preschool leader bring the preschoolers back to participate in Let’s Pray! with the older children. If you prefer to keep all the children together, do the starred (*) activities. They will work well with both elementary and preschool children.

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**Elementary Activities**

* In a Quiet Whisper

Have kids form groups of four and “count off” from one to four. Tell the Ones they’re “wind.” Have the Twos be “earthquake.” Have the Threes be “fire,” and have the Fours be “whispers.” Have everyone in each group help each member of the group come up with a sound effect for what the group represents. Give the children two or three minutes to develop their sound effects.

**Say**

Our Bible story today includes wind, an earthquake, fire, and whispers. God used these things to encourage Elijah. I’ll tell the story. When I mention your role, do the sound effect you thought up.
This story comes from the first book of Kings. Elijah traveled 40
days and 40 nights to reach Horeb, the mountain of God. When
he arrived at the mountain, he crawled into a cave and slept.

Then he heard God ask, “What are you doing here, Elijah?”

Elijah said, “God, I have served you passionately and faithfully.
But your people have broken their agreement with you. They
have destroyed the altars where they worshipped you, and they
have even killed your prophets. I am the only prophet left, and
they want to kill me, too.”

Elijah was in the cave because he was hiding from those who
wanted to kill him.

Then God said, “Go out and stand on the mountain. I am about
to pass by you.”

Then a very strong wind blew until it caused the rocks of the
mountain to crumble into bits. Pause while the children do the
sound effects.

But God was not in the wind.

Then a mighty earthquake shook the ground. Pause while the
children do the sound effects.

But God was not in the earthquake.

Next a tremendous fire arose and burned the mountainside.
Pause while the children do the sound effects.

But God was not in the fire.

Last, there came a small, gentle whisper. Pause while the children
do the sound effects.

This was when Elijah went out of the cave to meet with God.

God asked him again, “Elijah, what are you doing here?”

Elijah gave God the same answer as before. He said, “I have served
you passionately and faithfully. But your people have broken their
agreement with you. They have destroyed the altars where they
worshipped you, and they have even killed your prophets. I am the
only prophet left, and they want to kill me, too.”

God said, “Elijah, I want you to go back the way you came. Then
I want you to anoint a new king for Aram, a new king for Israel,
and a new prophet. You think you are all alone, but I have kept
7,000 people in Israel who are still faithful to me.”

• How did Elijah feel before he heard from God? (Discouraged;
like he was all alone; afraid.)

• How did God encourage Elijah? (God gave him a plan; God told
Elijah he wasn’t alone; God said he was with Elijah.)

• Why do you think God spoke to Elijah in the way he did? (To be
sure Elijah was listening; because Elijah wasn’t expecting to hear
God that way.)

(continued on page 149)
Preschool Activities

God Speaks to Elijah in a Whisper

1 Kings 19:9-18

Worship Theme:

God encourages us.

Easy Prep for Leaders

None necessary.

Using Theo

Consider using Theophilus the FaithRetriever puppet today in these ways:

• Have Theo lead the preschoolers from the main worship area to the preschool room.
• Have Theo say something encouraging to each child at the beginning of the “Encouraging Words” activity.
• See the KidsOwn Worship Kit for a puppet skit written for today’s worship session.

Encouraging Words

Ask children to sit on the floor.

Say • Let’s talk about a big word today. That word is encourage. Here is an example of what encourage means. Walk around the group, and say something encouraging to each child. As you talk to each child, place your hand on the child’s shoulder or head.

Ask • How did you feel when I encouraged you?

Say • God encourages us all the time. He encourages us when we’re sitting quietly as we are now. Now stand up. God encourages us when we’re walking around throughout the day. Let’s take an encouragement walk. Let’s walk around the room and whisper something encouraging in each person’s ear. Say something nice that will help the person. (Pause.)

Let’s lie down on the floor. God encourages us when we lie down to sleep. God lets us know he loves us.

Now sit up. Think about a time you’ve tried to do something that’s hard. When you have it in your mind, raise your hand. When I call on you, tell me what you tried to do.

Ask • What does your mom or dad say to you when you try to do something hard?

Ask • How do you feel when your mom or dad says encouraging things to you?

Take each child by the hand to help him or her stand up while saying words of encouragement.

Say • God’s encouragement helps us do hard things. God encourages us all the time—when we’re sitting down, when we’re walking around during the day, when we’re lying down at night, and when we have hard things to do.

Then God told Elijah to go out on the mountain because God was about to pass by. Let’s leave our cave and pretend we’re on the mountainside. Lead the children out from under the fabric.

There was a great big wind. I need two new volunteers to hold each end of this fabric and wave it up and down to make a big wind. The rest of us will stand by it and feel the wind in our faces. Choose two volunteers, and help them wave the fabric to create the wind. Let the rest of the children experience the “wind.”

Elijah Fabric

Say • Our Bible story is about a man named Elijah. People were angry with Elijah because Elijah served God. The people who didn’t serve God wanted to kill Elijah. Elijah felt very alone and lonely. Elijah went into a cave. Let’s use this fabric as a cave. I need two people to hold the fabric while the rest of us sit under it. Choose two volunteers to hold the fabric like a canopy. Have the rest of the children sit under it for a moment.

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Preschool Activities

Elijah Fabric (continued)

There was a big wind, but God wasn’t in the wind. Next there was a big earthquake that shook the ground. I need two new volunteers to hold each end of the fabric and shake it as if the ground is moving. The rest of us will stumble around as if we’re in an earthquake. Choose two volunteers, and help them shake the fabric to imitate an earthquake. Let the rest of the children experience the “earthquake.”

There was an earthquake, but God wasn’t in the earthquake. Then there was a big fire. I need two people to lift the fabric up and down as if it’s flames. The red color looks like a fire. The rest of us will pretend to feel the heat on our faces. Choose two volunteers, and help them move the fabric to look like flames. Let the rest of the children experience the “fire.”

There was a big fire, but God wasn’t in the fire. God wasn’t in the wind, the earthquake, or the fire. Let’s sit on the floor in a circle and see where God was.

Whisper the next few sentences.

Say God was in a gentle whisper. God whispered encouragement to Elijah. God told Elijah that he wasn’t alone, and God told Elijah just what to do. God’s words were very encouraging to Elijah. Let’s pass this soft fabric around the circle and touch it to our faces. You can feel how soft it is. You can feel how good it feels against your skin. Pass the fabric around.

Ask • How does God’s encouragement feel?
• How do you think Elijah felt when God talked to him in a soft whisper and encouraged him?

Whisper the following statement.

Say God encouraged Elijah by showing Elijah that he was in a soft, gentle whisper. God encourages us, too. Let’s learn more about that.

* Thank God

Say God encourages us in many ways. Sometimes God encourages us through people. Raise your hand if you can tell me some people God uses to encourage you. Allow children to tell their stories. Raise your hand if you can think of a way you can encourage someone else. Allow children to tell what they would do.

We can encourage others in many ways. We can say something nice about them. We can tell them that God loves them. We can encourage them when they have something hard to do. We can cheer for them in a game. We can pray for them. We can help them not to be sad.

God can encourage you through your mom and dad, your friends, your teachers, or your relatives. That encouragement feels like a big, soft hug. When we encourage someone else, that feels like a big soft, hug, too.

Let’s give each other a big group hug! (Pause.)

Ask • How does God’s encouragement make us feel?
• How do we feel when we don’t get any encouragement at all?

Say God always encourages us. God’s encouragement makes us feel good, just like this nice soft fabric does. Wrap the fabric around yourself, and thank God for encouraging you.

We’re going to take turns thanking God for encouraging us. When I pass the fabric to you, pretend it’s a nice, soft blanket wrapped around you, and use your own words to thank God for encouraging you. Then pass the fabric to the next person.

Pray Thank you, God, for encouraging us. Thank you for giving us people to encourage us. Thank you for helping us to do what we need to do. In Jesus’ name, amen.

Extra Impact

When children mention ways they can encourage others, challenge them to commit to do whatever it is this week. Have them make reminder cards so they remember to encourage people who need it.
God didn't speak in a big, dramatic way. God spoke in a whisper. Sometimes when God encourages our hearts, it's as if he's speaking in a whisper. However he encourages us, it is just what we need.

* Encouragement Relay

Have the children get into two equal lines in opposite corners of the room. Have the first person in one line face the first person in the other line while the rest of the teams line up behind them. Give each line a flashlight.

Elijah had the job of carrying the light of God's truth to his people. He needed some encouragement along the way. We all have the job of carrying God's light. Let's turn on the flashlights and turn off the room lights. (Pause.)

God's light shines in a dark world. Between the two teams is a "dark world" that needs the light. Your job is to take the light to the middle of the dark world and trade with the person from the other team. Then bring the new light back to pass to the next person on your team. If you are waiting for your turn to carry the light, make sure you encourage your teammates.

• How did you feel as people cheered you on? (Like I was special; good.)
• How does it feel when God encourages us? (Like I can do more than I thought I could; special; like what I'm doing matters.)
• How was our game similar to or different from what Elijah experienced? (Elijah didn't have people to cheer him on; he carried God's light, but it was real; Elijah worked alone for a long time.)
• What would it be like trying to carry God's light in a dark world without any encouragement at all? (Hard; lonely; I'd get discouraged.)

Elijah felt as if he were the last person to carry God's light. He felt afraid and alone, but God cheered him on. God encouraged him.

• What did God say to Elijah that encouraged him? (God told Elijah he wasn't alone; God said Elijah had work to do.)
• How does God encourage you when you feel alone or afraid? (I don't feel alone when I remember God is with me; I know God will help me.)

Elijah felt alone, but he wasn't. There were many others who still worshipped God. We can take encouragement from that, too. Even though we may feel alone, we are never alone. God is always with us, encouraging us! And there are many, many Christians around the world who can encourage us, too.
God’s E-Mail

Show the word *encourage* on a white board or poster board. Have kids form groups of three, and ask them to look for another word in *encourage*.

**Say**

I see the word *courage* there. To *encourage* means “to say something or do something to give someone courage.”

**Ask**

What did God’s encouragement give Elijah the courage to do? (To go back to being a prophet; to find a new king and a new prophet.)

**Say**

Raise your hand if you like to get e-mail. *E-mail* means “electronic mail.” But God sends us another kind of e-mail—encouragement mail—through his Word. God’s e-mail gives us courage to do what God wants us to do.

In a moment, I’ll give you a list of encouraging Bible verses. Take turns in your group reading the verses aloud. God’s Word encourages us when we’re afraid, sick, lonely, or need help. Choose a verse that you think might be encouraging to someone you know.

Then make encouragement mail for that person by making a greeting card that includes the Bible verse you chose. Older children, please help the younger children write their verses.

Have groups work at tables. Distribute paper, markers, and crayons to each table. Give each group a copy of the Bible verse list (see “Easy Prep” on page 143).

**Say**

Choose a verse to use as encouragement. Take a minute to discuss in your group how that verse is encouraging. Allow kids several minutes to decide which verse they will use and then make their cards. Encourage them to show the finished product to the others at their table. Encourage the children to deliver the cards to the people they made them for.

God knows we need encouragement; that’s why he encourages us. God encourages us through his Word, in our hearts, and through other people. We praise God today for encouraging us.

3 Let’s Pray!

The Offering

Distribute paper and pencils.

**Say**

Before we give our offering today, think of someone in your life who could use encouragement. Write that person’s name on a piece of paper. If you need help writing, ask a friend to help you. Fold the paper, and place it in the offering bowl with your offering. As you pass the offering bowl, say, “God, help me to encourage [the name on your paper] this week.”

Give the children a minute or two to write. Then take the offering.
Not Alone

**Say** Elijah felt alone in the world. Raise your hand if you've ever felt alone.

**Ask** What did Elijah learn from God when he felt alone? (He learned he wasn't alone; God protected others as well as Elijah; God was with Elijah.)

**Say** Elijah learned that he was never alone. God was always with him. You are never alone either. Think of a time you felt alone and God encouraged you. If you can't think of a time God encouraged you, think of a situation in which you need encouragement now.

Let's make a circle. We'll go around the circle to thank God for his encouragement. I'll start, and we'll go to my right. Motion which direction is right. Squeeze the hand of the person to your right when you're finished praying. If you don't wish to pray aloud, squeeze the hand of the person next to you. Then your neighbor will know it's his or her turn. It's all right to pray in your heart and not aloud—just remember to squeeze the hand of the person next to you when you're finished.

Encouragement in Action

**Say** Raise your hand if you need God's encouragement right now. Keep your hands raised for a minute. (Pause.) If you didn't raise your hand, look around the room to see whose hands are raised.

If you would like to, go to one of the people whose hands are raised. Take a few minutes to pray for him or her. It's OK to have more than one person praying with someone, but make sure that each person who has raised his or her hand has at least one prayer partner. After you pray, say something encouraging to the person for whom you were praying. Allow enough time for the children to offer meaningful encouragement.

**Pray** God, we thank you for encouraging us in your Word and through other Christians. Help us to be an encouragement to others. In Jesus' name, amen.