

# Elijah on Mount Horeb



1 Kings 19:1–21 / 2 Kings 2:9–12

*Elijah had to flee as Jezebel wanted to have him killed. God provided food for him in the desert and led him to Mount Horeb. There he appeared to him in a soft whisper and commissioned him to anoint new kings over Syria and Israel who should punish the house of Ahab.*

28

*The Lord also appointed Elijah's successor, Elisha, who witnessed in what wonderful manner Elijah was taken away from the earth.*

The children's faith is strengthened by the knowledge that the Lord never forsakes those who serve him faithfully.

**A**fter the impressive events on Mount Carmel, Ahab manages to get home before the heavy rain sets in and tells his wife Jezebel what has happened.

1

Jezebel is beside herself with rage. "How could you stand by and watch all my prophets killed!" she shouts at Ahab. She immediately sends a messenger to Elijah to tell him: "May the gods punish me if by this time tomorrow I don't do the same thing to you that you did to the prophets!"

When Elijah hears this, he knows that Jezebel will do everything in her power to kill him. He has no choice but to flee with his servant. He later leaves the servant in a village and flees into the desert alone. Wearily he drags himself through the hot sand and finally, utterly exhausted, sits down in the shade of a bush. He buries his head in his hands despairingly: "It is too much," he sighs, "please let me die, Lord."

2

A leaden tiredness comes over him and he sinks into a deep sleep. After he has slept for some time, someone touches him and says: "Get up and eat!" Elijah slowly opens his eyes. He sees a loaf of bread and a jug of water in front of him. He is

still half numb with fatigue, and without giving it much thought, he eats and drinks a little and immediately falls asleep again. He does not want to wake up at all any more. But then the voice wakes him a second time and urges: "Get up and eat for you still have a long way ahead of you." An angel is standing beside him. Elijah gets up and eats and drinks. An invigorating feeling courses through him. Driven on by renewed strength, he continues through the desert for forty days and forty nights without pause. Finally, he comes to a high mountain, Mount Horeb, where the Lord spoke to Moses so long ago. Elijah climbs a little way up the mountain and finds a cave where he decides to spend the night. Then he hears God's voice: "What are you doing here, Elijah?" Now all his pent-up distress and despair comes pouring out and he cries: "Lord God Almighty, I have always served you, you alone. But the people of Israel have broken their covenant with you, torn down your altars, and killed all your prophets. I am the only one left, and they are trying to kill me too." The voice replies: "Go out and stand on top of the mountain, I want to come to you."

A tremendous storm comes up and roars and rages around the mountain-top; great pieces of rock plummet down into the depths below with ear-shattering noise. Trembling with fear, Elijah waits for the Lord to show himself. But the Lord is not in the storm. Then a deep rumbling sound is heard from within the earth itself, and an earthquake shakes the mountain. Elijah clings fearfully to the rocks around him. But the Lord is not in the earthquake either. After the earthquake a

thunderstorm comes up. Lightning-flashes shoot down from the heavens and light up his surroundings. But God is not in the thunderstorm. Finally, everything becomes quiet. When he hears a faint murmur, he hides his face with his coat and goes out to the entrance of the cave. He knows: now the Lord is coming! The Lord speaks to him: "What are you doing here, Elijah?" Elijah realizes that he has been despondent and faint-hearted. He knows no other answer than the one he has already given: "Lord God Almighty, I have always served you, you alone. But the people of Israel have broken their covenant with you, torn down your altars, and killed all your prophets. I am the only one left, and they are trying to kill me too." The Lord says: "Return to the wilderness and anoint a new king over Israel. He will bring punishment over Ahab's godless house."

The Lord also commissions him to anoint someone as his successor. Elisha will be called to carry the prophet ministry. He will continue the Lord's work when Elijah is no longer there. The Lord still comforts Elijah greatly by saying: "I shall leave

seven thousand people alive in Israel; all those who are loyal to me and have not bowed to Baal or kissed his idol." Elijah is therefore not the only one who still believes in the true God! He feels wonderfully strengthened. Filled with new vigour and with a joyful spirit he goes back through the desert. He knows that God will always be with him. He has so often experienced him by now that nothing or nobody can shake his faith in the almighty God.

Elijah finds Elisha in the field. In passing, Elijah puts his prophet's coat over Elisha. Without hesitation Elisha leaves his work. He says farewell to his parents and follows Elijah. Elisha becomes like a son to him. He accompanies the old prophet everywhere and has only one wish: he wants to continue to fulfil Elijah's commission in his mind and spirit. He witnesses Elijah's departure from the earth. While they are speaking to each other, a chariot of fire appears and separates them. Elijah is taken up into heaven by a whirlwind. Elisha watches in absolute amazement. This is God's reward for Elijah who fought for him all his life.

3



*Elijah had to flee for his life from Jezebel's soldiers. God strengthened him. He led him to Mount Horeb, where he appeared to him and gave him new tasks.*

- 1 The children relate in their own words what Ahab tells Jezebel. We revise the previous lesson.**
- 2 Why is Elijah so despondent? (He feels forsaken. Everything appears meaningless to him. He fought for his God, and God acknowledged him, but now he has to flee for his life again. What will happen to him?) Discuss the picture. How does God help?**
- 3 The children relate how God strengthened Elijah time and again. (God did not forsake Elijah. He looked after him, comforted him and ensured a successor. He finally took him away from the earth in a wonderful way.)**

## Elijah



E - li - jah called on God a - lone, stood firm and made God's wish-es known.



But Je - ze - bel and A - hab too did i - dol wor - ship-ping pur - sue.

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| 1. Elijah called on God alone,<br>stood firm and made God's wishes known.<br>But Jezebel and Ahab too<br>did idol worshipping pursue.                        | 3. The widow used the very last<br>of flour and oil for their repast.<br>Elijah blessed her house and said:<br>"Now you can always bake more bread!"    |
| 2. God sent no rain and ev'rywhere<br>the land lay barren, scorched and drear.<br>Both man and beast fought to survive –<br>to find some food to stay alive! | 4. God made his might and power clear<br>when fire from heaven did appear.<br>The rains poured down at his command<br>and wonderfully blessed the land. |