

Elijah

Making the Bible Come Alive

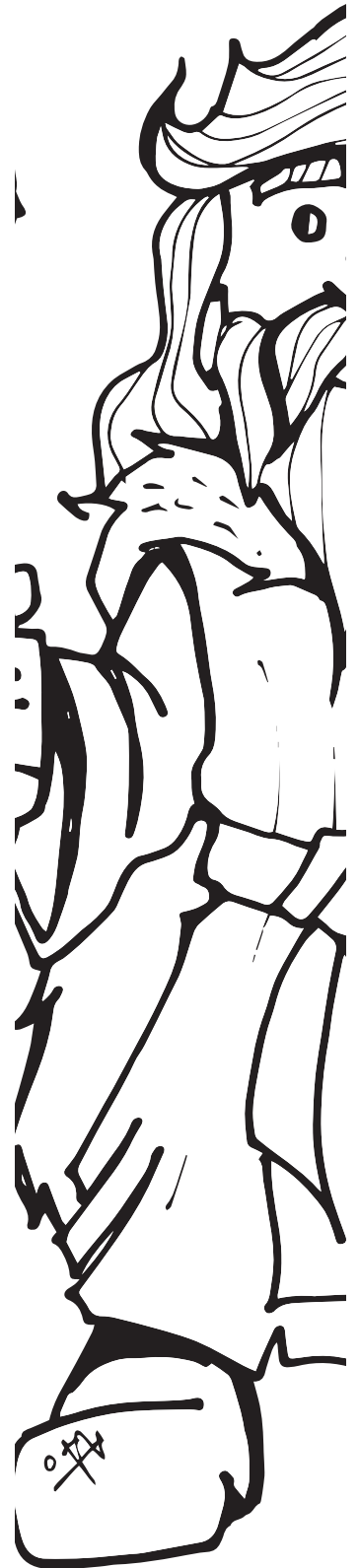
The resilient one

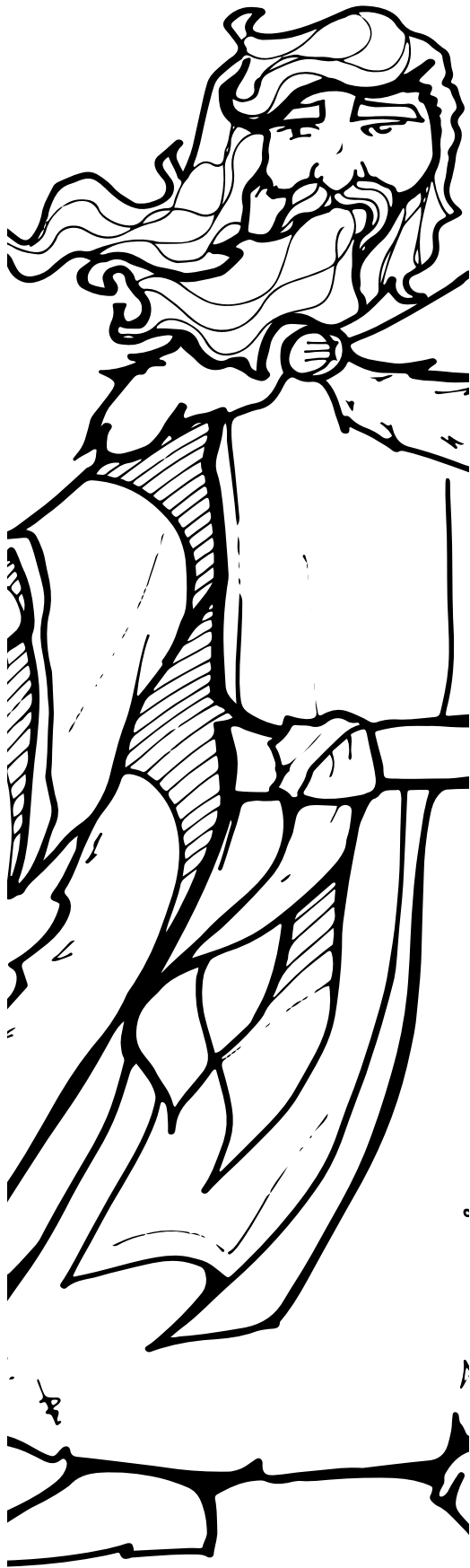
WHO WAS THIS PERSON?

- Elijah was a prophet of God.
- His name means "God is Yahweh".
- Elijah was a native of Tishbeh in Gilead.
- Nothing is known about his family or his birth.
- Elijah was bold and able to make decisions while being fearful and hesitant at times.
- Elijah is one of the greatest prophets and he performed many miracles.
- Elijah was Elisha's mentor (1 Kings 19:19-20).
- Elijah is one of the two prophets who appeared with Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration (Matthew 17:1-8, Mark 9:2-8, Luke 9:28-36).

WHAT IS THIS PERSON KNOWN FOR?

- Elijah's ministry marked the beginning of the end of Baal worship in Israel.
- Elijah experienced both the power of God and depression.
- We first meet Elijah in 1 Kings 17:1, when he suddenly appeared to challenge Ahab, an evil king who was then ruling over the kingdom of Israel. Elijah prophesied a drought that would come upon the whole land because of Ahab's wickedness (1 Kings 17:1-7).
- He was warned by God to hide by Kerith Ravine where he was fed by ravens.
- As drought and famine worsened in the land, Elijah met a widow. She obeyed Elijah's request and so God provided provisions for her, her son and Elijah. Miraculously, the widow's jar of flour and jar of oil did not run out (1 Kings 17:8-16).
- Then Elijah confronted 850 false prophets on Mount Carmel (1 Kings 18:17-40). In vain, the prophets of Baal invoked their god all day to rain fire from heaven on their altar. So Elijah built an altar of stones, dug a ditch around it, placed the sacrifice on the wood and asked for water to be poured on his sacrifice three times. Elijah called upon God and he sent down fire from heaven, which burned the sacrifice, the wood and the stones and dried the water in the ditch. God proved that he was more powerful than the false gods. It was then





that Elijah and the people killed all the false prophets of Baal, according to God's command in Deuteronomy 13:5.

- After this great victory, the rain started again (1 Kings 18:41-46). Because of Queen Jezebel, who wanted to kill him, he entered a period of depression (1 Kings 19:1-18). Elijah fled to the desert where he prayed for God to take his life. But God gave him food, drink and sleep instead. Then Elijah undertook a forty-day journey to Mount Horeb where he hid in a cave, still feeling sorry for himself and thinking that he was the last of God's prophets. The Lord commanded him to stand on the mountain while the Lord passed by. There was a great wind, an earthquake, and then fire, but God was not in any of these. Then there was a still, small voice through which Elijah heard God.
- God gave Elijah instructions. He was to anoint Elisha to take his place as prophet. He told him that there were still 7,000 people in Israel who had not bowed down to Baal. Elijah obeyed God's orders. Elisha became Elijah's assistant.
- Also, King Ahab, through Queen Jezebel, had Naboth sentenced to death in order to take his vineyard. The murder and confiscation of his vineyard aroused Elijah's interest as a defender of the moral law. Elijah denounced Ahab for his crimes, claiming that all men were subject to God's law and therefore equal (1 Kings 21:22).
- He also called down fire from heaven on 51 soldiers (2 Kings 1:12).
- He split the Jordan River with Elisha (2 Kings 2:8). He promised Elisha to receive a double portion of his spirit (2 Kings 2:10).
- Once, after speaking out against Ahab, Elijah spent seven years in hiding, much of it in the home of a widow and her son in the city of Sidon, Zarephath. During this time, the widow's son died of illness and Elijah prayed for the boy to come back to life. After Elijah prayed and touched the boy three times, he came back to life (1 King 17).
- Rather than dying a natural death, Elijah was taken to heaven in a whirlwind (2 Kings 2:1-11).

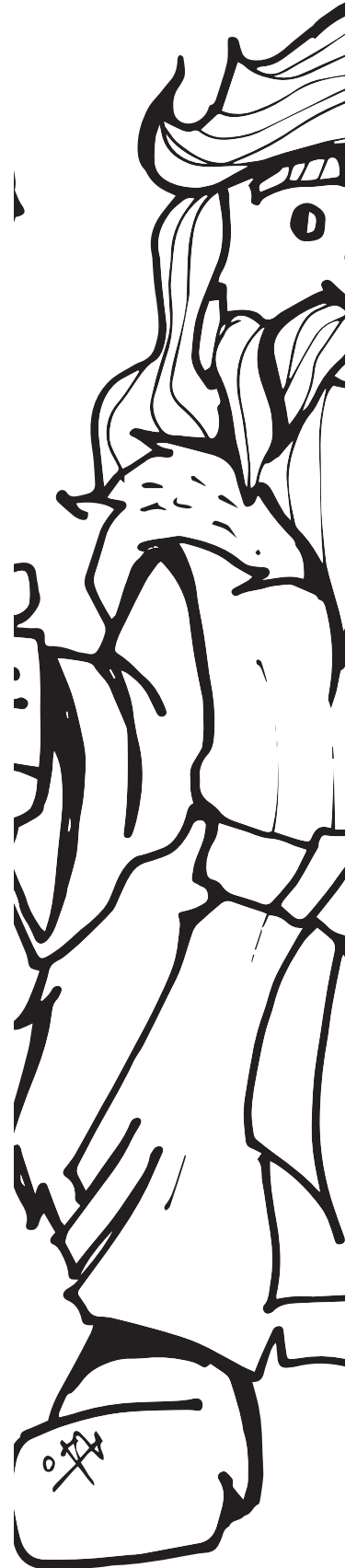
WHY DO YOU THINK THIS PERSON HAS BEEN INCLUDED IN GOD'S STORY?

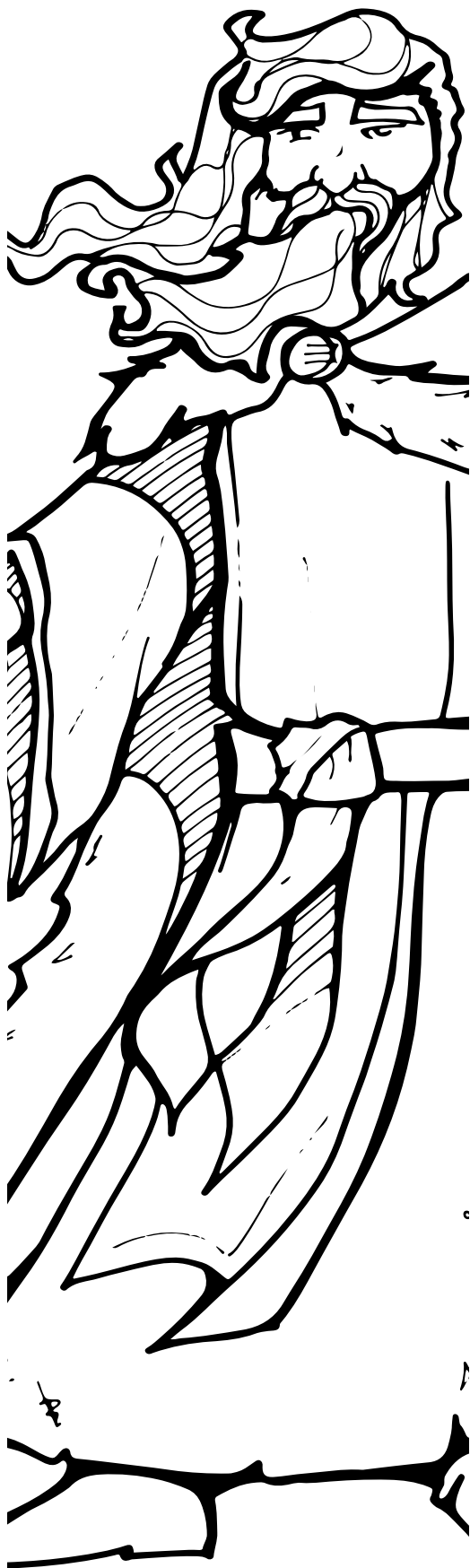
- **God wants us to walk in fellowship with him and to obey him.** If we are open to his will and follow it, he will provide for all our needs and his mercy toward us will never fail.

- **God wants us to focus on Him.** Like Elijah, when we focus on the noise in our lives, we can turn our eyes away from God and become discouraged. God can manifest Himself with power, but He also wants to relate to us personally as a gentle whisper. God meets our physical needs, encourages us to examine our thoughts and behaviors, instructs us and assures us that we are not alone. When we are attentive to God's voice and obedient to Him, we find encouragement, victory and reward. Elijah struggled with his human weaknesses, but he was powerfully used by God. If we obey God, he can also use us for his kingdom.
- **We must learn to listen to God.** Elijah was a man who heard God. In the Scriptures we see men and women who turn their ears to God. Elijah was one of them. We can say that he was a man who heard God (1 Kings 17- 22; 2 Kings 1 & 2; 1 Kings 17:2; 1 Kings 19:9). We must learn to go to God, to take the time to listen to him and to wait for his answer. Jesus said that his sheep would recognize his voice. It is important to learn this from a young age.
- **A prayer warrior.** Elijah was a prayer warrior. Elijah had fellowship with God throughout the Old Testament. He showed us what we should do in our own walk of faith. He encourages us all to pray, to be a warrior, to recognize that the Lord is God and to follow Him (James 5:17).
- **God's plan of salvation is being fulfilled.** Elijah appeared with Jesus on a high mountain. Even in the New Testament, we read that Elijah stood beside Moses, both of them talking with Jesus. Peter, John and James witnessed this wonderful time. Jesus was about to go to the cross for our sins and give us access to God. The three together, Moses, Elijah and Jesus, represented the fulfillment of the promise of salvation. Moses symbolized the law. Elijah represented the prophets, the restoration of all things. And Jesus beautifully fulfilled the promise of salvation (Matthew 17:3). It is important to see the plan of salvation throughout the Bible. We see in the Old Testament that God was preparing for the coming of Jesus and even today we must see and believe that God is preparing all things so that one day we too can meet with Jesus face to face if we believe and persevere in following Jesus despite our various challenges.

LIFE APPLICATION QUESTIONS:

Pose the following two questions to your children, one at a time. Allow for interaction and discussion, letting them share their thoughts while you guide the conversation.





- What life lessons can I learn from this Bible character about / how I should and should not live?
- Based on what I have learned from this Bible character, how can I live in a way that is pleasing to God.

MORE IN GOD'S WORD

Challenge yourself to find five minutes each day for a week, to quiet your spirit, finding a spot where you are not distracted, and practice just listening to God and being in tune with Him. Take your Bible to that quiet place. Use some of that time to pray, and some time to just meditate on His Word. Keep your ears and your heart open to what God is wanting to say to you. It's not a matter if IF He wants to talk to you. He does want to speak. But, He also wants you to be ready and positioned for listening, so you can actually hear in your heart what He is saying. Then, respond in obedience with a heart that is open to what God would have you to do. God called Samuel three times. How many times is He calling you? The more you spend time in His presence, the less He will have to try calling you over and over again. Maybe you will hear His voice the very first time He calls!