

God is always with me



Hi Everyone. In this session we will be reminded the God is always with us, no matter what. If we have spent any time in church this is a promise we have heard repeatedly'. But too often it is something I forget.



Forgetting things is something that I'm used to, unfortunately. There's hardly a day that goes by when I don't forget where I've left my keys. Do you have something that you feel you are always looking for?



And sometimes when things seem like they are going bad, we feel like God can not be found. We can pray, but feel like no one is listening. We expect God to answer us in a loud voice or show us a video of what we should do from our TVs, but God doesn't usually work that way. There was a man in the Bible named Elijah who found that first-hand. Spoiler alert...God was always with him.



Elijah was a prophet of God. A prophet's job was to listen to the word of God and tell the people God's messages to them.



Prophets often told these messages to the kings and rulers of the day, and for Elijah, he was to give King Ahab a message from God. King Ahab thought that Elijah was a trouble-maker, but Elijah told the King that he was the trouble maker and that he should worship the LORD and not the Baals. Elijah asked the king to gather all the prophets of Baal and the people at Mt Carmel, because he wanted to show off the power of the LORD.



So all the people gathered at the foot of the mountain

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Elijah challenged the people by saying, “How long will you go limping between two different opinions? If the LORD is God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him.” Elijah told the people that he was the only follower of God left and then he challenged the prophets of Baal to a showdown. They needed each to prepare a sacrifice, then they would pray to their gods and see who would provide the fire for the sacrifice.



So the prophets of Baal made their sacrifice and started praying to their gods



Elijah would tease the prophets saying that their gods were useless and not listening to their cries.



There was a great crowd gathering around, waiting to see what would happen. They laughed at Elijah’s words



the prophets of Baal were getting frustrated and started dancing around with lots of energy. They would shout to their gods and try to wake them up. They danced and shouted for hours, but nothing happened



The prophets of Baal wore themselves out and collapsed on the ground.

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It was now Elijah's turn to call upon the Lord.



He had some helpers build an altar with 12 large stones, then they added the wood and the bull. Elijah also had them dig a trench around the altar, which was a strange thing to do. But that wasn't the weirdest thing. He had the helpers get 4 large jugs of water and then pour them over the altar. And if that wasn't enough he had them do it 2 more times. How strange to soak a sacrifice when you are trying to burn it up.



And then Elijah prayed. "O Lord, God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, let it be known this day that you are God in Israel, and that I am your servant, and that I have done all these things at your word. Answer me, O Lord, answer me, that this people may know that you, O Lord, are God, and that you have turned their hearts back."



As soon as he was done praying the fire from the Lord came down and consumed the burnt offering, the wood, the stones and the water in the trench.



The fire was so intense that the people were in awe



And they fell on their faces and said, "The Lord, he is God; the Lord he is God." The Lord through Elijah had a great victory that day.

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Not everybody was happy with God's display of power with the prophets of Baal. King Ahab's wife Jezebeel was mad that her gods were proven worthless and was mad at Elijah, so mad, that she wanted him dead.



She sent out some people to find Elijah and kill them.



But instead of killing Elijah the man told Elijah the Queen's plan and advised him to run away and hide.



So Elijah left and travelled out to the wilderness.



He travelled a day's journey and sat down under the broom tree. Elijah was discouraged and prayed to God saying, "Enough of this, God! Take my life – I'm ready to join my ancestors in the grave!"



Exhausted, he fell asleep under the lone broom tree

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An angel of the Lord came and shook him awake and said, "Get up and eat."



Elijah ate and then went back to sleep



The angel came back and shook Elijah awake again and said, "Get up and eat some more-you've got a long journey ahead of you."



He got up, ate and drank his fill and set out.



When he got there, he crawled into a cave and went to sleep. After he rested, God came to Elijah and said, "So Elijah, what are you doing here?" Elijah said, "I've been working my heart out for you, God, and the people of Israel have abandoned your covenant, destroyed the places of worship and murdered the prophets. I'm the only one left, and now they're trying to kill me."



God told him to go stand on the mountain at attention before God and he would pass by Elijah

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A hurricane wind ripped through the mountains and shattered rocks before God, but God wasn't found in the wind. Then there was an earthquake, but God wasn't in the earthquake.



After the earthquake was a fire, but God wasn't in the fire.



After the fire there was a gentle and quiet whisper. When Elijah heard the whisper, he muffled his face with his great cloak. The quiet voice asked, "So Elijah, now tell me, what are you doing here?"



Elijah said again, "I've been out here working my heart out for God and I'm the only one left that still worships you, and people are trying to kill me." God told him to get up and travel to Damascus and there he would find Elisha, the next prophet of God and oh by the way there's actually 7000 other people who haven't worshipped Baal. Elijah was not alone.



Elijah got up and followed God's instructions. He was encouraged that he was not alone and that God had a plan to bring Elisha into the ministry and help Elijah. God always has a plan and he never, ever leaves us alone.



Our memory verse is a great reminder of God's commitment to be always be with us. I will never leave you or turn my back on you. What a great promise of God.

Digging In Questions

True/False

1. Elijah challenged the prophets of Baal to see who could run the fastest. True/False
2. The prophets of Baal worked hard to get the attention of their gods. True/False
3. Elijah had his helpers dump 12 jugs of water on his alter. True/False
4. Elijah's fire burned up the bull and the wood, but not the water in the trenches around the alter. True/False
5. Elijah felt like he was alone and that he was the only one who worshipped the one true God. True/False
6. God spoke to Elijah in the earthquake that shook the land. True/False
7. God let Elijah know he was not alone but that there were many others who worshipped the one true God. True/False

Questions to Ponder

1. Have you ever felt alone? Have you felt like even God doesn't care about you? Isn't it comforting to know that even people in the Bible felt that way but God was always with them and looking out for them.
2. What are some ways that I can remind myself that God is always there for me? What can I do when I'm feeling lonely?
3. How can I encourage a friend who is feeling lonely or who doesn't think God is there?

God loves us and even in our weakness He is right there with us. When you feel alone, spend time praying (just talking to God), and reading His word, the Bible.

Answers to the True/False Questions:

1. False 2. True 3. True 4. False 5. True 6. False 7. True

Isaiah 41:10

SO do not fear, for I am with you;
do not be dismayed for I am your
God.

Proverbs 3:5-6

Trust in the Lord with all you heart,
and do not lean on your own under-
standing. In all your ways
acknowledge Him, and he will make
your paths straight.

Joshua 1:9

Have I not commanded you? Be
strong and courageous. Do not be
afraid; do not be discouraged, for
the Lord your God will be with you
wherever you go.

Psalms 118:6

The Lord is with me; I will not be
afraid. What can mere mortals do
to me?

Isaiah 35:4

Say to those with fearful hearts,
"Be strong, do not fear; your God
will come...he will come to save you.

Romans 8:15

The Spirit you received does not
make you slaves, so that you live in
fear again; rather, the Spirit you
received brought about your adop-
tion to sonship.

2 Timothy 1:7

For the Spirit God gave us does not
make us timid, but gives us power,
love and self-discipline.

Isaiah 12:2

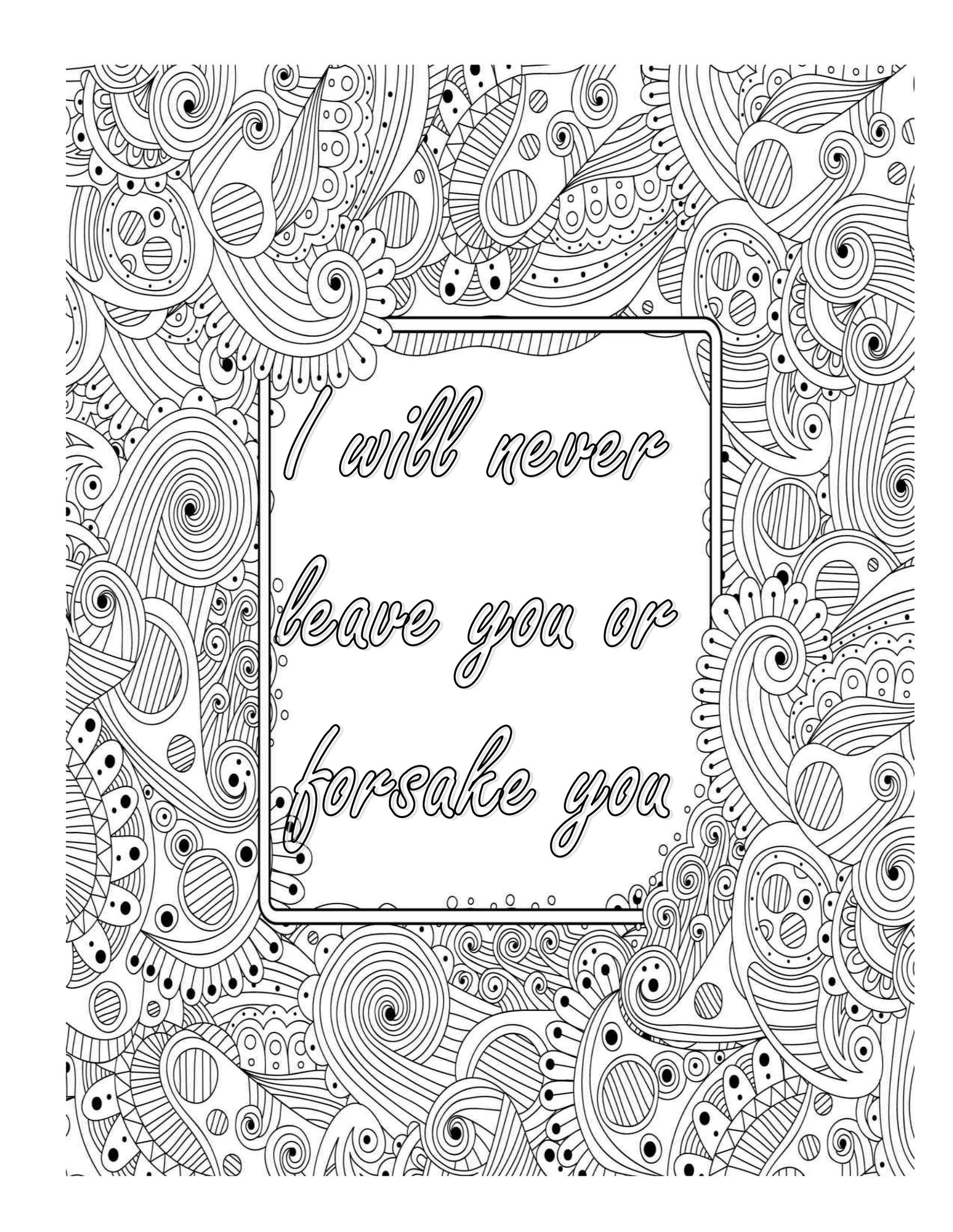
Surely God is my salvation; I will
trust and not be afraid. The Lord,
the Lord himself is my strength and
my defense; he has become my sal-
vation.

Lamentations 3:22-23

Because of the Lord's great love we
are not consumed, for his compas-
sions never fail. They are new eve-
ry morning; great is your faithful-
ness.

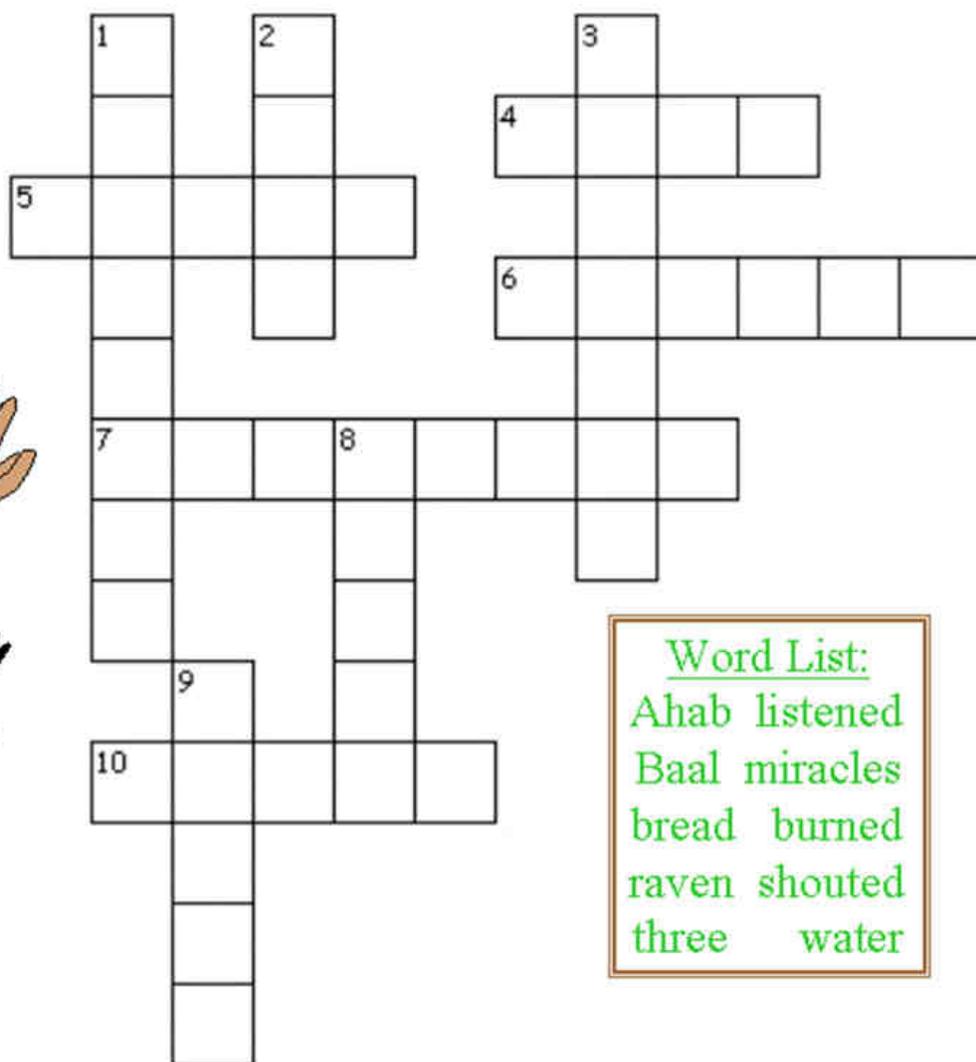
Zephaniah 3:17

The Lord your God is with you, the
Mighty Warrior who saves. He will
take great delight in you; in his love
He will no longer rebuke you, but
will rejoice over you with singing.



*I will never
leave you or
forsake you*

Elijah Prays Crossword



Word List:
Ahab listened
Baal miracles
bread burned
raven shouted
three water

Across

4. This king didn't obey God but worshipped Baal the weather god.
5. The woman who fed Elijah never had to worry about making this again.
6. After Elijah only asked God once, his alter completely ____ up.
7. This story is full of examples of when Elijah prayed God ____ and answered.
10. This is the type of bird that brought food to Elijah.

Down

1. Try to count all of these in the story, amazing things only God could do.
2. This is the name of the made up god most of the Israelites worshipped.
3. The prophets of Baal danced and ____ to their god but he couldn't listen.
8. There was no rain or dew in Israel for ____ years because God stopped it.
9. Elijah drenched his alter full of this to prove that God can do anything.