

## Sessions – Hope

<http://www.myfishbites.com/sessions-hope.php>

### Hope

Many people suffer with feelings of depression, feeling down, doubting themselves or with fear and anxiety. Many young people hate themselves, struggle with what's happening in their world and don't know where to turn. Some are lost in family breakdown, fathers who have failed them, struggles with their identity and lost in a world with many so-called 'truths'. Others have suffered loss or death and it leaves them feeling hopeless and lost.

So this session is about Hope. Not just any hope, but the hope that only Jesus brings. He is bigger than any situation, over and above anything we face or feel or think and he is always there, ready to offer us his hand of help and hope.

[Romans 15.13 - May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.](#)

### Worksheet Part 1

The truth is that Jesus has provided the answer to our every problem. It's easy to say but not always so easy to work through. But the starting place if we're feeling down, lonely, empty or broken is that there is hope and that hope is found in Jesus. Jesus is the ultimate answer although he will use different ways to work things out for you. So here's an A4 worksheet. Cut these up, doing one for each member of your group.

Go through the top half of the sheet first, giving one to each young person.

### Worksheet



Download the Hope Worksheet

### The Bible

[Now Ahab told Jezebel everything Elijah had done and how he had killed all the prophets with the sword. So Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah to say, 'May the gods deal with me, be it ever so severely, if by this time tomorrow I do not make your life like that of one of them.'](#)

Elijah was afraid and ran for his life. When he came to Beersheba in Judah, he left his servant there, while he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness. He came to a broom bush, sat down under it and prayed that he might die. 'I have had enough, Lord,' he said. 'Take my life; I am no better than my ancestors.' Then he lay down under the bush and fell asleep.

All at once an angel touched him and said, 'Get up and eat.' He looked around, and there by his head was some bread baked over hot coals, and a jar of water. He ate and drank and then lay down again.

The angel of the Lord came back a second time and touched him and said, 'Get up and eat, for the journey is too much for you.' So he got up and ate and drank. Strengthened by that food, he travelled for forty days and forty nights until he reached Horeb, the mountain of God. There he went into a cave and spent the night.

## **Elijah Lessons**

We can learn a lot from this story of Elijah that can help each one of us in the different struggles that we face. While we won't go through what Elijah went through, there are many lessons we can learn.

When we look through the Bible we find it full of people who struggled with depression, having to overcome terrible things done to them, murderers, people who got drunk and those who made really bad decisions. Yet each one of these people (Elijah, David, Joseph, Moses, Abraham, Rahab etc) overcame with the help of God. There is nothing that God can't change, no situation too big, no mountain too high! So what kinds of things did Elijah go through?

He went through real fear and terror; he was worried he would die or be killed and ran; he hid himself away under a bush, not wanting to face the world; he was alone and lonely; he ended up in the wilderness both physically and emotionally; he was depressed; he was tired; he wanted to die; he was feeling sorry for himself. He was also hungry and thirsty. So if you are going through any of these things or anything similar to these things, then you know that there is Hope for you. This hope won't disappoint you or let you down. It will help you and lift you up! And how did God respond?

God sent an angel to Elijah who touched him, spoke to him and brought him freshly baked bread and a jar of water. Elijah ate and drank then slept again. The angel of the Lord returned a second time and touched Elijah, telling him to get up and eat. So Elijah got up and ate. He then travelled for 40 days and nights and ended up in a cave.

It was there in the cave that God spoke to him again - confronting Elijah with his situation, focusing his attention back onto God and then back into life and his work for God.

## **My Story**

Direct link - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mo8GHXEE794>

## **Elijah and Helping us Find Hope**

So these are all ways in which we can help people, or allow other people to help us. There's loads of things to learn to help people or be helped... First of all, there is physical touch. Nearly everyone likes and needs physical touch. It reassures people. For some people it's the way they receive and feel loved. It's very important for a baby to be touched and to touch its parents, especially mother. It's good to hug people appropriately. One guy who was going through a lot was just held and hugged by a couple of friends and it made such a difference. Don't shut yourself away from people even if it's a battle not to do this. We need each other. God said to Adam in the Garden of Eden, "It's not good for man to be alone." Yes, we have God in us and he will never leave us or forget us. But we also need people.

Secondly, the angel spoke to Elijah and no doubt Elijah spoke to the angel. Very often we forget how important it is to hear other people and to be heard by other people. This means listening really well and also speaking to people. When my brother was killed some people didn't know what to say to me, so they didn't speak at all. Wrong! Don't avoid issues, don't focus on them but do talk to people. If you're feeling down, let someone know. Don't hold it in. If you know someone who's down or suffered loss, talk to them! When David was feeling bad or lonely or afraid, he wrote prayers and songs to God - we call them the Psalms. Maybe that's something you can do!

Thirdly, there is caring for people's physical needs. There's a famous phrase that says, 'people don't care how much you know until they know how much you care.' One of the most important things that we can do is to genuinely care for people. Jesus cares about our needs and the needs of others. He cooked a BBQ for the disciples, he healed people, he encouraged people, he connected John and his own mother (while on the cross) so John could be like her son (John 19.26). Jesus told the disciples where to find money for taxes (mouth of a fish), he went to sleep on a boat, he fed the 5000 (and the 4000) etc. He cares for you as a human as he knows what it's like. Jesus is never distant from your pain and he longs to help you and heal you, making you whole.

Fourthly, Jesus helps us move from where we are to where we can be. When he went with the disciples across Lake Galilee, he told them "let's go to the other side". With Elijah, the angel made sure Elijah was fed, watered and feeling refreshed because there was somewhere Elijah had to go. When you're feeling low, if you can possibly do it, get out somewhere; try and do something; even better, try to help someone else out. Often as we give out, we receive and this helps us. One of my friends is in a wheelchair and he has done lots of voluntary work, helping others who are struggling in various ways. Maybe you can find somewhere or someone to help, even using some of your own pain. I heard about one man called [Chad Daniel](#) who runs a ministry to help people thinking of suicide (or those self-harming etc) because his dad killed himself. He's turned a tragedy to something positive for God.

Finally, God brought Elijah to the cave and it was here that God began to speak to Elijah and help him overcome some of his fears. God corrected Elijah in some of his wrong thinking too. But God only did this very gently (he spoke to Elijah in a 'still, small voice'). God only did this once he knew that Elijah was recovered enough. God knows where we're at, what we can take and what the best thing is for our lives. So we just need to trust him and work with him. God cares so much about us, he understands where we are but doesn't want to leave us there!

## **Worksheet Part 2**

It's time to give out the lower half of the worksheet to each young person. This is for them to take away and shows us the way that Jesus has already made provision for our needs when he died on the Cross. Jesus has also given us his Word (which is true, has been tested and which always does what God says it will do) and it's full of God's promises that we can pray and ask God for in our lives.

This is to take away and to keep. Each promise is from the Bible. Take the promises and read them each day - speak them over yourself. This means saying, "Jesus was wounded for me, so that I can be healed" etc. This releases the power of the Word of God !!



[Download the Hope Worksheet](#)

## **Billy Graham's Video – Heaven**

Direct Link - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y6twEXynopo>

This is an amazing 30min video that will challenge, where people tell their stories and that gives an opportunity to say yes to Jesus!