

A solitary tree standing in a field.

Niko photos

Then he was afraid; he got up and fled for his life, and came to Beer-sheba, which belongs to Judah; he left his servant there.

But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a solitary broom tree. He asked that he might die: 'It is enough; now, O Lord, take away my life, for I am no better than my ancestors.'

1 Kings 19: 3-4

Have you ever been busy with work or a task and, having got through it all, then found the anti-climax afterwards even harder to deal with?

Following a dramatic confrontation with the prophets of Baal, Elijah found himself in a literal and spiritual wilderness. None of us are immune to bodily, emotional and spiritual tiredness. The threats of those who seek to do us harm, get to us. We feel negative about ourselves, about our circumstances, and about what might happen in the future. We get depressed. We doubt God, and feel that we have failed God. We might even feel that our lives are no longer worth living. Life seems both dark and hopeless. This is not about lack of faith.

Elijah's response is honest and leads him to meet with God not in dramatic events, but in a place of sheer silence (verse 12). However active and enthusiastic we may be in God's service, we all have our limits. When we reach these limits, are we able to encounter God in the silence to which they lead us?

A "Have a Go" habit: Eat, rest, sleep

- If you read the [rest of Elijah's story](#), you'll see that he needed sleep, and food and something to drink. Are you getting enough sleep and eating well?
- Use a meditation phrase from the psalms: "I will both lie down and sleep in peace; for you alone, O Lord, make me lie down in safety." ([Psalm 4:8](#)) Repeating this as you go to sleep may help.
- Practise the [ancient prayer of examen](#) at the end of each day.
- Thank God for signs of his love and beauty. Let go of things that were not lovely and beautiful. Be forgiven and try to forgive. Bless yourself with peace as you drop off.



Looking for support?

Explore services and organisations that can offer help and support

A wooden block with the word 'bless' written on it.

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Next reflection

Read the next reflection in the series

The *#FaithAndMentalHealth* reflections were written by Rev Prof Chris Cook. Ruth Rice developed the "Have a go" habits.

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