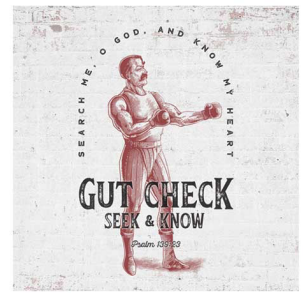


# My Connectedness

With so much going on around us, we can't lose track of what's going on within us. A **"gut check"** is a pause to assess the state, progress, or condition of something. Let's assess the different facets of our relationship with God, and check if we've got what it takes.



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## INTRODUCTION

Pastor David continued the Gut Check sermon series today by looking at how isolation leads to discouragement. Studying Elijah's story of isolation in 1 Kings 19, we discovered God's remedy for discouragement and how we can connect with one another.

## STARTER QUESTION

How have you been staying connected lately with your family, friends, and community? What, if any, effects of isolation have you experienced these last months? Have these days of social distancing caused you to find new, creative ways of connecting with others?

## INTO THE WORD

Read Jeremiah 29:4-11. How are the words of God then, to the exiles in Babylon, relevant today? How does this passage teach us to live our lives during a pandemic? What is the feeling that prevails in your heart when you read Jer. 29:11?

Reread 1 Kings 19:1-18, the story in which Elijah is running for his life and ends up at Horeb, the mountain of God. Discuss the following questions with your family or small group, or jot down your answers in your journal:

- Why do you think we are tempted to isolate ourselves when we are faced with challenges?
- It is so easy to focus on the negative when things are not going right. What practical ways can we focus on the positive instead of the negative in situations?
- What misunderstandings and false beliefs led Elijah to a state of despair and desire to die?
- What was God's response to Elijah when he was discouraged and isolated?

Read Ecclesiastes 4:9-12. Discuss ways you could relate these verses to God's remedy for discouragement we studied in 1 Kings 19.

## APPLICATION

Everyone in our church community is sharing this experience of a global pandemic. Discuss what has been revealed about our beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors during this time. Pastor David said this season would reveal the weakness in our faith. Will we do nothing about it? Or will we take advantage of this season and connect with others and grow in our faith?

Describe how the four truths from God to Elijah (I'm here, I'm faithful, I'll never leave you, and I've got a plan) overcome the lies that creep in and how they guide our next steps.

If you are experiencing isolation and discouragement right now, what is the next right step for you? Journal about ways you can get back into community and routine during these pandemic times.

## **PRAYER**

This season will reveal the weakness in our faith. Let's take advantage of it and find new ways to connect with others and grow in our faith. As you pray this week, reflect on Elijah's story in 1 Kings 19 and listen for God's voice. Then take the next right step He has for you, and get back into community and routine.