

LESSON 63

Elijah & The Prophets of Baal

1 KINGS 18



BIBLE TRUTH

OUR GOD IS ABOVE ALL GODS

LESSON SNAPSHOT

1. **OPENING REVIEW** **5 MIN**
Use last week’s lesson outline to review with the children what they learned.
2. **BIBLE STORY** **10 MIN**
Read 1 Kings 18:1–40 from the Scriptures or read story 63, “Elijah and the Prophets of Baal,” from *The Gospel Story Bible*.
3. **OBJECT LESSON 1** **10 MIN**
Foolishness Can’t Bring the Fire
SUPPLIES:
 - ✓ two candles with holders
 - ✓ lighter or stick matches (for the teacher’s use only)
4. **TEACHING/DISCUSSION** **10 MIN**
5. **OBJECT LESSON 2** **10 MIN**
A Bit of Pizzazz
SUPPLIES:
 - ✓ waterproof matches
 - ✓ normal wooden matches
 - ✓ a glass bowl
 - ✓ cup of water
6. **WORD BIBLE MEMORY** **5 MIN**
7. **ACTIVITY TIME** **10 MIN**
Coloring Activity
SUPPLIES:
 - ✓ coloring page 63—one copy for each child
8. **CLOSING PRAYER** **5 MIN**
9. **BONUS OBJECT LESSON** **10 MIN**
The Better Choice
SUPPLIES:
 - ✓ platter
 - ✓ carrot sticks
 - ✓ licorice sticks (enough for all of your students)

TOTAL 75 MIN

PREPARING TO TEACH

TEACHING POINTS

There is a difference between God and other gods—Today’s Bible passage presents a famous story from the Old Testament. God’s people, rebelling once again, worship false gods who they believe control the weather. As a result, God has not allowed it to rain in Israel for three years. For all that time Elijah has been waiting for God to speak and hiding from Ahab the wicked king. Now God speaks and Elijah obeys.

Through Elijah, God is planning to end the drought. But first, God wants to demonstrate the clear difference between himself and the false god Baal. God arranges a kind of contest with himself and his prophet Elijah on one side and Baal and hundreds of his prophets on the other side.

Elijah calls upon God—Elijah sets up an altar of twelve stones representing the tribes of Israel at a time when the nation of Israel is divided. He has twelve jars of water poured over the wood of the sacrifice at a time when water is very precious. Most dramatically, Elijah challenges a false god—who is supposed to be able to control the weather—to bring lightning.

Elijah’s prayer shows that he does all this for the sake of God’s glory and so that Baal-worshipping Israelites might return to God. He prays, “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” (1 Kings 18:37).

God brings judgment and blessing—God judges the false prophets, and they are killed so that they can no longer lead God’s people astray. Now that God has proven that he is all-powerful and Baal is nothing, he will send his people rain.

As we see Elijah praying over and over and sending his servant over and over to look for a rain cloud, we have a picture of the kind of faith we should all have. As we pray in faith for God to bring a promised blessing, we need to keep praying and believing, even when the blessing has not yet come.

WHERE IS JESUS?

How does today's Bible story fit into God's greater plan of redemption?

Read Matthew 27:49.

On Mount Carmel, God revealed himself through consuming the sacrifice offered by Elijah. This was an expression of his grace. Even though the people of Israel rejected him, he showed himself by accepting Elijah's sacrifice.

The sacrifice of the bull was another reminder before God that one day a sacrifice would be made to atone for all the sins of his people. Knowing Jesus' sacrifice would come, God poured out mercy and accepted Elijah's sacrifice that day.

When Jesus hung on the cross the people mocked him saying, "Let us see whether Elijah will come to save him" (Matthew 27:49). Little did the people know that all of Elijah's wonders were meant to point to Jesus.

THE LESSON

OPENING REVIEW 5 MIN

Use last week's lesson outline to review with the children what they learned.

BIBLE STORY 10 MIN

Read 1 Kings 18:1–40 from the Scriptures or read story 63, "Elijah and the Prophets of Baal," from *The Gospel Story Bible*.

OBJECT LESSON 1 10 MIN

Foolishness Can't Bring the Fire

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ two candles with holders
- ✓ lighter or stick matches (for the teacher's use only)

Use this object lesson as an introduction to the story.

Place the candles on separate tables at least eight feet apart. Divide the class in half and explain that you are going to have a competition to see which of the two groups can get their candle lit the fastest.

Explain to the first group that they believe that fire is magic and can light itself. Explain that it is their job to dance around the candle and shout, “Fire, fire, here is the trick, as we dance, light the wick!” Encourage them to dance around and shout louder and louder. After a minute or so, have them sit down.

Have your second group gather around their candle, and explain that they do not believe in magic but in truth. Tell them that they know you the teacher have a lighter/matches and can light the candle. They also know there is no way fire can light itself. Have them walk calmly around their candle and say, “Teacher, teacher, quick as a lick, strike the match and light the wick!” As soon as they say it once, light the wick and start a round of applause.

Have both groups sit down around the candle and ask why one lit but the other did not. Draw them out about how foolish it was to think that fire was magic and could light itself. Then explain that a similar thing happens in our story today.

TEACHING/DISCUSSION **10 MIN**

Using the teaching points, teach through the lesson for today.

OBJECT LESSON 2 **10 MIN**

A Bit of Pizzazz

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ waterproof matches
- ✓ normal wooden matches
- ✓ a glass bowl
- ✓ cup of water

Always be aware of the dangers of even the smallest fire. Do not allow the matches out of sight, even for a moment.

Use this exercise as a way to add a bit of pizzazz to telling the story. Prior to class, place the bowl on a table with a cup of water next to it. Keep the matches in your pocket. Place several

waterproof matches in with the others. (Practice this exercise at home so you can get good at striking a wet waterproof match.)

Tell the story of Elijah and the prophets of Baal. When you get to the place where Elijah has the water poured over the sacrifice, ask the children why he had the wood doused with water. The answer is that no one could accuse Elijah of starting the fire himself and to show just how powerful God is.

Take the regular wooden matches out of your pocket. Pull out a match and strike it. Ask the class what will happen if you pour water on it? After they answer, pour some water over it to extinguish the fire. Then take a half dozen or so matches out of the container including some waterproof ones and throw them into the bowl. Pour water over them just as Elijah did. Mix them all around. Then pick up a waterproof match and strike it just as you talk about the part where God's fire consumes Elijah's offering.

Then ask the class the following questions:

- **What do we learn about the power of God from this story?**
(God is all-powerful.)

- **Where do we see God's mercy at work in this story?**
(Even though Israel has fallen away from God, God still reaches out to Israel through this demonstration of power. As a result, the people of Israel join with Elijah and kill the prophets of Baal.)

SWORD BIBLE MEMORY **5 MIN**

Take time during the class to review the SWORD Bible Memory verses with the class. Provide the opportunity for each child to recite the verses to an adult worker.

ACTIVITY TIME **10 MIN**

Coloring Activity

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ coloring page 63—one copy for each child

While the children are coloring, engage them by asking the following questions:

- Ask the children to describe what Elijah is doing and what is going to happen.
(Elijah is praying, and God is going to answer his prayers by sending fire from heaven.)

Have the children color the water blue. Then have them take red and orange crayons and draw in the fire from heaven.

- What can we learn about God from this story?
(God is real; he is all-powerful; he speaks to his people.)

CLOSING PRAYER **5 MIN**

Pick several children to pray prayers based on the day's scripture passages.

BONUS OBJECT LESSON **10 MIN**

The Better Choice

SUPPLIES:

- ✓ platter
- ✓ carrot sticks
- ✓ licorice sticks (enough for all of your students)

This exercise helps us to see how our desires can overpower the truth that we know.

Place the carrots and licorice on a platter and pass the platter around to your class, explaining that they can have either a piece of licorice or a carrot stick.

After passing the plate, interview a few of the children as to why they chose the licorice.

Then ask the class the following questions:

- Which of the two selections is healthier for you?
(carrots)
- Which of the two selections is more likely to cause disease?
(Licorice can cause or contribute to tooth decay, diabetes, and obesity.)
- Which of the two would your parents rather you eat?
(carrots)

- In light of the truth that carrots are healthier for you, are less likely to cause harm, and more likely the preferred choice of your parents, why did the majority of you choose the licorice instead?

(Have the children go deeper to reveal the way licorice satisfies their cravings and desires to feel good.)

- In light of the truth that God is powerful, that idols are powerless, and that God commands that we follow him and his Word, why did Israel choose to follow other gods instead?

(Help the children to see it is all about satisfying desires. With a wicked king like Ahab in power, to follow God and travel to Jerusalem could have likely gotten you in trouble or even killed. Why take such a difficult journey to Jerusalem when you could worship a golden calf near your home instead? Sin is the result of following our desires when they conflict with God's Word. It is not a sin to eat a piece of candy instead of a carrot stick, but the same basic desires, if not disciplined by the Word of God, will lead us to sin and even reject God.)

LESSON 63 - ELIJAH AND THE PROPHETS OF BAAL

