

Elijah and the Contest on Mount Carmel

1 KINGS 18:1-40



Old Testament 7
Part 1: The Divided Kingdom

SUNDAY MORNING

Old Testament 7 [Class Attendance Sheet](#) provided in activity sheets (NOTE: The document is interactive, allowing the teacher to type in the Class, Teacher, and the children's names.)

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES:

1 Kings 18:1-40; Leviticus 19:2,4; Deuteronomy 5:7-9; Exodus 20:2-5; Joshua 24:14-21

MEMORY WORK:

YOUNGER CHILDREN: “[A]s for me and my house, we will serve the Lord” (Joshua 24:15b).

OLDER CHILDREN: “Choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve... But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord” (Joshua 24:15b).

SONGS AND FINGERPLAYS (SEE END OF LESSON FOR WORDS):

A [song book](#) and [audio recordings](#) of many of the curriculum songs are available on the curriculum Web site.

- [“Elijah, a Prophet of God”](#)
- [“Elijah and Baal on Mt. Carmel”](#)
- [“Elijah, a Man of God”](#)

LESSON VISUALS AND TEACHING AIDS (NOTE ANY DISCLAIMERS):

- See [AP's Pinterest page](#) for ideas on bulletin boards, visuals, crafts, etc. [DISCLAIMER: Pins may sometimes need to be adjusted to be Scriptural.]
- [The Divided Kingdom 1](#) Bible fact cards (provided under “O.T. 7 Bible Facts”)
- “Summary of the Bible” from [“Kids Prep”](#) CD by Jeff Miller
- Pictures/drawings from the books listed under 3rd-4th Grader Pre-Class Activities/Learning Centers
- Betty Lukens' felt pieces
- Elijah A Beka Flash-a-Card Series (DISCLAIMER: use the cards, not the lesson book; skip card 4.3)
- Use Bible character dolls or pipe cleaner figures in sandbox to tell the story
- Pictures of the results of a drought, such as the Dust Bowl of the U.S. in the 1930s or the African droughts. (Can be found on the Internet or in magazines like *Smithsonian* or *National Geographic*)



- Bible Class Workshop Visuals: “[Burning Torch/Flame Lamp](#)”; “[Timeline of Elijah’s Life](#)”
- In a metal or glass baking pan, build an altar of sugar cubes which you have sprinkled with vanilla before class; light it with a match and the “altar” should burn. (Experiment with this at home first!)
- Pictures of things that, if we’re not careful, might become more important to us than God (sports, toys, videogames, money, etc.)
- “[Map of the Divided Kingdom](#)” (provided in activity sheets)

PERSONAL APPLICATION:

I must never allow people or money or things to become more important to me than God.

LESSON STARTS HERE

INTRODUCTION: (YOUNGER CHILDREN)

What is the name of the prophet we studied last week? How did God take care of him? How does God take care of us today? Who should we love above anyone or anything else? Do you think it would make God happy if we loved someone else more? What if we wanted to miss Bible class or worship service to watch a TV program or play with our friends? God should always be more important than anything else. Today we’re going to talk about God’s people (the Israelites) not putting God first and how Elijah helped them remember God again. Let’s see what happens in the story.

INTRODUCTION: (OLDER CHILDREN)

Review last week’s lesson.

What do you think it means to “put God first”? Do we sometimes forget to put God first? What are some things we do that show we don’t put God first? During Elijah’s time, many people worshipped idols. You probably don’t know anyone who has idols like those in the Old Testament, but sometimes we let people or things become idols to us because we let them become more important to us than God. Today we’re going to talk about what Elijah did to bring the Israelites back to God and give up their idols.

POINTS TO EMPHASIZE:

1. Remind the children that Elijah was a great prophet (messenger for God) in the northern part of the Divided Kingdom (Israel). God had told the prophet Elijah to tell wicked King Ahab of Israel that a **drought** would bring suffering to his people because of his sin (worshipping idols and encouraging his people to worship them).



NOTE: James 5:17 tells us that the **drought** lasted 3½ years.



RECOMMENDED READING FOR TEACHERS: See the article “[Elijah and the Drought](#)” by Eric Lyons on the Apologetics Press Web site for a discussion about an alleged biblical discrepancy regarding the drought of Elijah’s day.

2. The long drought had caused a severe famine. [Make sure the children know the meanings of “drought” and “famine.”] Food and water were scarce for animals and people alike. Even King Ahab searched the land for water. When God decided that it was time for the drought to end, He sent Elijah to King Ahab with another message: “I will send rain on the face of the Earth” (1 Kings 18:1). Ahab and Elijah met in the countryside, and Ahab angrily blamed Elijah for the drought. Elijah made sure that Ahab knew the person to blame was the king himself (1 Kings 18:17-19).
3. [Remind the children that the practice of idol worship and the use of false priests and prophets began many years earlier with Jeroboam. See the note about Canaanite religion and idols in Lesson 4.] King Ahab and his wife Queen Jezebel provided food and housing for 850 false prophets (the men who led idol worship). Ahab made a mistake marrying Jezebel, the daughter of the King of Tyre (a Phoenician city). When she moved to Samaria, she brought priests of the idol Baal with her (1 Kings 16:32) and persuaded Ahab to build a temple for the idol. Ahab is remembered as one of the most wicked kings in all of Israel’s history. (Ahab’s father, Omri, was also a very wicked king.)
4. Elijah challenged the prophets of Baal and Asherah to a kind of contest on Mount Carmel to prove who was the real God. Elijah also challenged Ahab and the people who gathered on Mount Carmel to watch the contest to choose between the living God and the idols; they could not worship idols and still claim to be God’s people. Elijah told them that they could not “limp/waver/falter between two opinions,” i.e., have it both ways, worshipping God **and** Baal (Deuteronomy 30:15-20; Joshua 24:15).
5. [Describe the preparation of the altar and the different things that the prophets of Baal did to get their god to demonstrate his power to the people. They even cut themselves in their vain efforts (Leviticus 21:5; 19:8).] By late afternoon or early evening (time for evening offerings), Elijah gave orders to repair “the altar of the Lord that was broken down” (1 Kings 18:30) with 12 stones—one stone for each of the once-united 12 tribes. He ordered wood to be arranged on the altar and an ox to be put on top of the wood. He told the people to dig a trench around the altar; it was large enough to hold between five and six gallons of water. Then he ordered huge amounts of water (which remember, was very scarce during the drought) to be poured over everything—not once, but three times!
6. Elijah prayed that God would show His great power to the people who had turned their backs on Him. God answered Elijah’s prayer immediately and sent fire from heaven to completely consume the altar, the wood, the sacrifice—even the dust—**and** all the water that collected in the trench around the altar. This miracle, like all the others in the Bible that glorify Almighty God, was done to prove that the message spoken through Elijah was from God. When the people of Israel saw this, they fell on their faces in terror and in awe and said, “The Lord, He is God; the Lord, He is God” (1 Kings 18:39). Because Elijah knew that the priests of Baal were false prophets who would try to draw the people back to idol worship, Elijah ordered that all those priests be killed at the Kishon Brook.
7. There are millions of people in the world today that worship men or idols or things in nature instead of the one true God. Even though we do not worship idols, we can still let people, money, and things become more important to us than God. We can’t worship God on Sundays and then make other things more important to us every other day of the week. When we do that, we are just like the Israelites, who were “limping between two opinions”—trying to have it both ways.



RECOMMENDED READING FOR TEACHERS: See the article “[**Where is God when I Hurt?**](#)” by Dave Miller on the Apologetics Press Web site for a discussion about how various Bible heroes weathered suffering and where God was while it happened.

PRE-CLASS ACTIVITIES/LEARNING CENTERS (TO BE USED AS CHILDREN ARE ARRIVING—BEFORE CLASS, AND UP TO THE FIRST FIVE MINUTES OF CLASS; OR AS HOMEWORK):

- Click here for complete [Activity Book](#) and [Answer Key](#).

Ages 2-5:

- [“Elijah On Mount Carmel Coloring Sheet”](#) (provided in activity sheets)
- On sheets of cardstock (one for each child), write the words “The Lord, He is God!” Cut small “stones” out of gray construction paper (enough for each child to have 12). Let each child glue his “stones” on his paper to make an altar. Give the children strips/pieces of yellow, orange, and red tissue paper for the children to glue onto the altars to look like fire. ([“The Lord, He is God!”](#) stone cutouts provided in activity sheets)
- As you tell the story let the children make sound effects. Make bubbling noises for the water. Use paper or foil to make it sound like fire crackling. Bring a squirt bottle to spray when the rain falls, or ask the children to pat their knees to make the sound of a hard rain.

1st-2nd Graders:

- “I Can Name that Memory Verse in...” game: Use the memory verses from this and previous lessons. (You will need several for the game.) Divide the class into two teams. Say aloud the reference (chapter and verse) of a memory verse the children should know. The team (or team member) going first decides how many words they need you to give them so they can say the entire memory verse. Before the first team tries, the other team can decide if they want to try with fewer words given. The teams “bid” back and forth until one team decides to let the other try, and says, “Name that verse.” You say the given number of words from the verse, and the team must then say the entire verse. (Example: If a team says they can name the verse in two words, you give the first two consecutive words as a clue, and then they must say the whole verse.) If the team (team member) says the verse correctly, they get a point. If they don’t, the other team gets the point. ([verses provided in activity sheets](#))
- [“Elijah on Mount Carmel Crossword Puzzle”](#) (provided in activity sheets)

3rd-4th Graders:

- “I Can Name that Memory Verse in...” game: Use the memory verses from this and previous lessons. (You will need several for the game.) Divide the class into two teams. Say aloud the reference (chapter and verse) of a memory verse the children should know. The team (or team member) going first decides how many words they need you to give them so they can say the entire memory verse. Before the first team tries, the other team can decide if they want to try with fewer words given. The teams “bid” back and forth until one team decides to let the other try, and says, “Name that verse.” You say the given number of words from the verse, and the team must then say the entire verse. (Example: If a team says they can name the verse in two words, you give the first two consecutive words as a clue, and then they must say the whole verse.) If the team (team member) says the verse correctly, they get a point. If they don’t, the other team gets the point. ([verses provided in activity sheets](#))
- [“Elijah on Mount Carmel Crossword Puzzle”](#) (provided in activity sheets)
- Have the children read the following:
 - 1 Kings 18
 - *Discovery* magazine articles: “The True Lord of Lightning,” [October, 2014](#); “Miracles—

or Magic?” [February, 2000](#); “Major Bible Mountains,” [June, 2001](#); “Why Did Jesus Refer to John the Baptizer as Elijah?” [February, 2006](#)

- *Elijah: God’s Miracle Man*, by Carine Mackenzie, Christian Focus Publications (DISCLAIMER: Skip the sentence starting with “Sin always...,” on p. 25)
- *The Story of Elijah*, by Rhonda Colburn, Hambleton-Hill Publishing (DISCLAIMER: Skip the second paragraph on p. 12, starting with “They even...”)
- *Elijah and the Great Prophets*, by Joy Melissa Jensen, Contemporary Bible Series, Scandinavia Publishing (DISCLAIMERS: p. 20—the text says a “great fish,” not a “whale”; p. 36—skip the phrase “like the one in his dream”; p. 49—skip the last two sentences; p. 61—change the first sentence of the second paragraph to “So a new law was written that protected the Jews.”)
- *Elijah and King Ahab*, by Crystal Bowman, Zonderkidz I Can Read! Series
- *God, Please Send Fire!*, by Marilyn Lashbrook, Me Too! Books
- *God’s Fire for Elijah*, by Giles Zimmer, Arch books (DISCLAIMER: replace the first paragraph on p. 10, starting with “Elijah laughed...,” with “Elijah said”)

SONGS:

“ELIJAH, A PROPHET OF GOD” ([Click to Hear](#))

Author: Elbert Richey

(Tune: “Zacchaeus Was a Wee Little Man”)

Elijah was a prophet of God,
A prophet of God was he.
He told the prophets of Baal one day,
“Baal’s fire I want to see.”

And he said,
“Prophets of Baal,
Ask Baal for fire!”
And fire they did not see!
And fire they did not see!

Elijah was a prophet of God,
A prophet of God was he.
He said, “Come close, come close, I say,
The power of God to see.”

And he said,
“Dear God,
Please send down fire.”
And fire they surely did see!
Yes, fire they surely did see!

“ELIJAH AND BAAL ON MT. CARMEL”

Author: Jewel Kendrick

(Tune: “Hail, Hail the Gang’s All Here”)

(Words: See *Sing a Story: Volume I*, by Jewel Kendrick)

“ELIJAH, A MAN OF GOD” ([Click to Hear](#))

Author: Unknown*

(Tune: “My Hope is Built on Nothing Less”)

VERSE 1:

Elijah was a man of God,
And he obeyed God’s Holy Word.
King Ahab was so very bad,
He worshipped idols—very sad!

CHORUS:

Elijah was a man of God,
And he obeyed God’s Holy Word.
And he obeyed God’s Holy Word.

VERSE 2:

King Ahab married Jezebel,
And she caused him, his soul to sell.
She was as bad as she could be.
She worshipped Baal, ‘twas plain to see.

(CHORUS)

VERSE 3:

On Mount Car-mel Elijah prayed.
God sent fire down on that great day.
But there was not a voice at all
When men of Baal began to call.

(CHORUS)

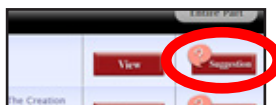
VERSE 4:

The people said, as they bowed down,
“The Lord is God, the Only One!”
They worshipped God instead of Baal.
We’ll worship God; we must not fail.

(CHORUS)

*Author Unknown: Please contact us through the feedback button for this lesson if you are aware of any copyright information for this song.

*** IF YOU HAVE SUGGESTIONS PERTAINING TO THIS LESSON, PLEASE CLICK THE “SUGGESTION” BUTTON BESIDE THE BUTTON FOR THIS LESSON ON THE CURRICULUM WEB SITE.



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WEDNESDAY EVENING

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PERSONAL APPLICATION:

I must never allow people or money or things to become more important to me than God.

INTRODUCTION:

Review [O.T. 7 Bible Fact Flash Cards](#) (provided under “O.T. 7 Bible Facts” on curriculum Web site)

POINTS TO EMPHASIZE:

1. Review Sunday’s lesson. (See [O.T. 7 Review Questions](#) for example questions.)
2. Discuss ways that we try to hold on to God and things at the same time. Read with the older children some or all of Joshua 24:14-21 and/or Matthew 6:24.
3. Also read and discuss Colossians 3:5.
4. Discuss the relevant features in the *Discovery* articles cited in the recommended visuals.
5. This would be a good lesson to role play to help the kids remember the lesson!

PRE-CLASS ACTIVITIES/LEARNING CENTERS (TO BE USED AS CHILDREN ARE ARRIVING—**BEFORE** CLASS, AND UP TO THE FIRST FIVE MINUTES OF CLASS; OR AS HOMEWORK):

See Sunday morning’s lesson

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