



Date: _____
Series: God in the Storms of Life
Spring Year 4, Lesson 54

Elijah and the Prophets of Baal

Primary Scripture: 1 Kings 18:1-46

Key Verse: 1 Kings 18:21, “How long will you try to have it both ways? If the LORD is God, follow him; if Baal is God, follow him.”

How does this address a need in our kids' lives?

Kids today grow up in a world that offers many spiritual “truths.” In fact, there is a collection of “gods” from which they can choose. New age spirituality, materialism, and Eastern religions are among some of them. Kids need to know clearly that God is the true and living God. He calls us to follow him.

How does Jesus fill this need?

Jesus for us: Jesus, as a prophet, came to proclaim the truth that there is but one God. Jesus, as God’s Son, gave his life so we would have forgiveness from our idolatry and live in fellowship with God.

Jesus in us: As we open our hearts to Jesus, he dwells in us by the power of his Holy Spirit so we might follow the one true God.

Jesus through us: We, too, can proclaim that there is only one God and we can follow him through faith in Jesus.

Stamp of Excellence:

Remind the kids what excellent worship looks like. We are in God's presence to honor him. Put on your best manners. This might include wearing your name tag, participating eagerly at all times, listening when the leader is talking, raising your hand to speak, not distracting others, playing the learning game with cooperation, singing enthusiastically, and praying reverently. Offer rewards or positive reinforcement to those who worship with excellence.



Worship

Invocation:

Let kids bring forward the worship symbols such as the cross, candles, Bible, and offering plate. Invite God's presence and call by name the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Attention Grabber:

Capture the children's attention and help them focus on the worship theme for the day.

Supplies: dollar bill, thick book, some type of small idol (a little Buddha, a crystal, or a plastic animal)

Kids, how many of you have ever held up your pointer finger and said, "We're number one?"

Sometimes we do that at sporting games or when we win a contest. In worship today, we will do this in a special way. We are going to say, "God is number one!" There is only one true God. He is God the Father who made us, God the Son who gave his life for us, and God the Holy Spirit who lives in us. He is three persons, yet one God. He is number one!

People follow many types of gods. Some people do not even realize they are following things as gods.

Hold up the dollar bill.

Some people serve money like a god and don't realize it. Money can be a god when the most important thing in your life is getting more money or more things.

Hold up a crystal.

Some people seek power from crystals or read horoscopes to see their future.

Hold up the book.

Some people seek power in trying to be so smart that they do not think they need God. Some people worship gods they think are in trees or animals, maybe in the spirits of their dead ancestors. What might be some other ways people worship other “gods”?

Though people serve many different types of gods, the truth is there is only one true God—the one who gave us his Son Jesus. If we believe in him, we will live forever with him. He is the one that we should follow.

Let’s praise the one true God with song.

Songs of Worship:

Choose two or three songs. Briefly introduce songs so kids can better understand what they are singing and be drawn into a more focused worship. Keep the attention on God!

Your choice of music.

The Power of the Cross:

Jesus has given his life for us that we might have forgiveness and power to live for him.

Supplies: cross

Hold up the cross.

Christianity is the only religion in which God comes to us to fix the broken relationship between man and himself. All other religions are based on things we have to do to get God to love us or help us. Christianity is based on what God does to save us. Who can tell us what God has done to save us?

Take kids’ responses. Then present the Gospel, pointing out that through Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection for us, we have forgiveness of sins and new life in him.

Let’s come to Jesus and thank him for what he’s done. Let’s tell him we need him in our lives. Let’s also tell him the things we have done wrong and need his forgiveness for so he can change us.

Lead kids in a prayer of confession and thankfulness for God’s forgiveness.

Song of Response:

Choose a song to help the children turn to Jesus. Or, you may want to help them celebrate what God has done by singing a song of praise.

Offering:

Teach the importance of giving and talk about the mission activities they are supporting.

Say:

What are some ways we can show God how much we appreciate what he has done for us? How can we show him he is number one in our lives?

Let kids respond.

One way to show our love to God is when we give an offering of money at church. Not only does it show God we love him and trust him, it also supports ministries that tell others about his love.

Talk about your current mission project and how close you are to meeting your goal. Then receive the offering and speak a prayer thanking God that we have resources to share so others can experience his love, too.



The Word

Learning Game:

Some churches dismiss children from the adult service at this time to join Kids Church. The learning game provides a fun kinesthetic activity to help kids connect with each other. The learning point will help reinforce the theme of the day.

Balloon Obstacle Course:

Supplies: obstacle course using hula hoops or other objects that are safe when kids step into them or bump against them, two to five inflated balloons

In advance, set an obstacle course in the room using hula hoops or some other kind of objects.

Divide the kids into two to five groups and have them line up in single file lines. Give an inflated balloon to the first person in each line. Tell them that the object of the game is to go from the starting point to another point (which can be a wall or a line on the floor marked with masking tape), navigating through the obstacle course without stepping in any hula hoops or bumping against the obstacles. While doing this, they are to *bounce* the balloon in the air.

After they arrive at the destination, the starters then carry the balloons back to the starting line for the next kids waiting in line. Continue until all have had a turn.

Gather kids together and say:

In this activity, you had one balloon to focus on and follow. Just like each team had one balloon, there is but one true God. We want to follow him. We want to keep our eyes on him. We will come across many obstacles in our lives that would try to keep us from following the one true God. We need to keep our eyes on him and not follow any other gods or get bumped by any other obstacles.

Bible Presentation:

Help children pay attention by giving them a word or concept to listen for as you read. Consider letting a child read who could do so with excellence.

Read the Bible verse 1 Kings 18:21.

The prophet Elijah made a challenge to the people. He asked them whom they were going to serve—the true God or the false god of Baal. If he were to ask you that same question, what would you say? Let's find out what happened to the prophet Elijah as we learn that there is but one true God to follow.

Application:

Option #1:

Show the video, *Animated Stories from the Bible: Elijah* (Nest Family Entertainment Network, 1993). Start the video when God tells Elijah to present himself to Ahab. God will speak to Ahab and then we see him in the hot sun wiping his brow.

Option #2:

Supplies: box for an altar, sticks, wadded up paper for rocks, two pretend slabs of meat, costumes for King Ahab and Elijah, flash paper, microphone for announcer, four empty milk jugs or pitchers

Set up:

In advance, set the stage area as follows:

1. A box altar should be placed on one side of the stage area, with several sticks assembled on top of it to look like a fire. Place one slab of "meat" on top of the wood.
2. On the other side of the stage, use paper, rocks and sticks scattered and scrambled, with the "meat" laid to the side.
3. The skit requires two men—one dressed as King Ahab in a crown and robe, and the other dressed as Elijah. King Ahab should have crumpled flash paper hidden under his robe.

Character Introduction:

Today our Bible Event is going to be a contest. How many of you like contests?

Let me introduce you to Elijah.

Elijah comes forward.

He is a prophet. That means he speaks God's word. He is our good guy. Let's all cheer for him. Yea!!!

This is King Ahab.

King Ahab comes forward.

He follows the bad prophets of Baal. He is the bad guy in our contest. Can I hear you say "Boo"?

These two men will have a contest to find out which god is the true and powerful God.

I need six volunteers to come forward and pretend to be the prophets of Baal. You will be the bad guys in helping us act out the Bible Event.

Contest Introduction:

Announcer holds microphone and says:

Good morning, everyone. Welcome to Mount Carmel. Are you ready for the big contest to begin? Today will be our showdown between Elijah and the prophets of Baal. Let's give a big round of applause for Elijah.

Everyone claps.

Here is King Ahab and his prophets of Baal. What do we say to them?

All say "Boo."

The Contest Begins:

The big question of the day is, "Which god is powerful?"

Turn to King Ahab.

King Ahab, which god do you say is the most powerful? Who do you think will win today's contest?

Hold microphone to Ahab.

King Ahab: Why, Baal, of course! The prophet of Elijah is just a troublemaker. His god is not real. The one true god is Baal!

Announcer, speaking into his microphone:

Thank you, King Ahab. Now we turn to Elijah. Who do you say is the one true god? Which god will win in today's contest?

Hold microphone to Elijah.

Elijah: Only the Lord God is the true God. Today everyone will know that the power belongs to the Lord God.

Announcer: **Thank you, men. Let the competition begin. The prophets of Baal will be up first. You may take your place around the altar.**

Have the volunteers circle the box altar.

Speaks to the audience:

The purpose of this contest is to pray to the gods for fire. The altar that starts on fire belongs to the one true and powerful God. Prophets of Baal, you may begin praying.

Baal Is Called:

King Ahab shouts phrases and has the volunteer Baal prophets repeat them. Use the following phrases:

- *Baal, give us fire!*
- *You can do it, Baal.*
- *Burn, Burn!*
- *Show us your power now!*

Elijah: Come on. Your god can do better than that. I bet your god is sleeping. Did he forget his people?

Announcer looks at prophets and says:

Prophets of Baal, it is now evening and your god has not answered.

Turns to audience.

Children of Israel, it seems to me that the god of Baal is not a powerful god.

Turns back to the prophets of Baal.

Since your god is not answering your prayers, he must not be powerful. He must not be the true god. You may sit down.

Have kids sit down.

King Ahab, what do you have to say now about Baal?

King Ahab: The contest is not over yet! Let's just see if the Lord God does any better!

Announcer says to the audience:

Let's call Elijah. Elijah, it is now your turn to call upon the God of Israel.

An Altar Built and Water Poured:

King Ahab: (Looking at Elijah's altar.) Ha! Elijah doesn't even have a decent altar!

Elijah fixes his altar. Have kids help him count out 12 rocks (wadded up paper) for the 12 tribes of Israel.

Elijah: (Turning to the audience.) Children of Israel, I need a few good helpers. We will show King Ahab and the prophets of Baal that God is the most powerful.

Elijah picks out four children to be helpers. Each child is given an empty milk jug or container to pretend to pour water over the altar.

Elijah: Look at the altar. It is soaked with water. No man can make a fire in that! But my God is powerful.

Prayer of Fire:

Elijah: (Raising his hands.) Oh, Lord, you are the God of these people. Please answer my prayer so these people will know you are the Lord God and they will turn their hearts back to you.

During Elijah's prayer, King Ahab walks up to the altar and turns his back on the audience. He "humphs" and makes other noises that indicate he disbelieves Elijah, while secretly placing the flash paper near Elijah. At the end of the prayer, the actor playing Elijah with his back to the audience lights the flash paper with a lighter and throws it into the air. ***This must be practiced ahead of time so it can be done safely.

Announcer: **Look at the fire! (Pointing to the altar) It is on the altar, on the wood and even in the water! Now we know the Lord God is the true God. The Lord God has won the showdown at Mount Carmel! Children of Israel, let's bow down to the true God.**

Have children volunteers bow and then exit.

Elijah character picks up the Bible and reads 1 Kings 18:21:

“How long will you try to have it both ways? If the LORD is God, follow him; if Baal is God, follow him.”

Kids, who will you follow?

Announcer leads kids in a cheer while pointing to heaven, repeating about three times: ***Jesus is number one!***



Witness and Tell:

Give children opportunities to share how God is working in their lives. It is best to use a microphone to ask children interview questions around the theme for the day.

1. Have volunteers come forward and give examples of ways people try to get others to follow false gods.
2. Have volunteers come forward and give examples of how they have chosen to follow the one true God.

Prayer:

Let the kids pray out loud. If you are using a microphone, invite children to form a prayer line and speak their thanksgivings or requests. If you have portable microphones, you can roam the audience. Kids can also go to prayer stations set up for specific types of prayer.

Options: (select one from the options below)

_____ **Prayer Line Option:** Kids line up and take turns stepping in front of the microphone to speak their prayers briefly.

_____ **Prayer Chair:** Adults or children with special prayer needs are invited to sit in the chairs. Kids gather around them, lay hands on their shoulders or knees and take turns praying.

_____ **Popcorn Prayer:** The leader moves through the crowd with a microphone and turns it toward kids who are raising their hands to pray. The kids speak their prayers into the microphone.

Lord's Prayer: Lead the children through the Lord's Prayer, phrase by phrase, or let them pray the entire prayer along with you.

Blessing:

Speak a blessing prayer over the children. Personalize this to your setting. Use a special scripture verse or blessing around the theme of the day.

Song of Sending:

Choose one song. Briefly introduce song so kids can better understand what they are singing and be drawn into a more focused worship. Keep the attention on God.

Supplies:

Attention Grabber:

- a dollar bill
- a thick book
- some type of small idol (a little Buddha, a crystal, or a plastic animal)

The Power of the Cross:

- cross

Learning Game:

- obstacle course in the room using hula hoops or some other kind of markers that are safe if children step into them or bump against them
- two to five inflated balloons

Application:

Option 1:

- video from Nest Family Entertainment, *Animated Stories From the Bible: Elijah* (Nest Family Entertainment Network, 1993)—order from www.nestfamily.com. Link to Children's Bible Stories in the left margin. Type in "Elijah" in the search box and enter. Order as instructed.

Option 2:

- box for an altar
- sticks
- wadded up paper for rocks
- two pretend slabs of meat
- costumes for King Ahab and Elijah
- flash paper
- microphone for announcer
- four empty milk jugs or pitchers

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