



11

God Uses Elijah

Key Theme

- God alone is to be worshipped.

Key Passages

- 1 Kings 18:22–24, 18:26, 18:29, 18:33–35, 18:37–38

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Compare the actions of the prophets of Baal to Elijah's actions.
- Describe how God demonstrated His power over Baal.



Lesson Overview



Come On In

Students will complete the Memory Verse Review Sheet. Then, they will recite the verse to each other and/or the entire class.



Activity 1: God Uses Elijah Class Notes

Students will complete the God Uses Elijah Class Notes as you study the lesson. Pass out the class notes before you begin to teach.



Studying God's Word

God sent the prophet Elijah to challenge wicked King Ahab and the prophets of Baal to demonstrate His power. The prophets of Baal could not call down fire on their sacrifice. But Elijah's sacrifice was consumed, and the people bowed in worship to the almighty, one true God.



Activity 2: Altar Made of Stones

Students will divide into teams and answer review questions to earn altar stones. The teams will use the stones to build an altar like Elijah did.

Lesson Preparation

WHAT YOU WILL DO

WHAT YOU WILL NEED



COME ON IN

- Print one Memory Verse Review Sheet from the Resource DVD-ROM for each student.

- Memory Verse Poster
- Memory Verse Review Sheet for each student



GOD USES ELIJAH CLASS NOTES

- Print one God Uses Elijah Class Notes from the Resource DVD-ROM for each student. Keep the answer key for your use.
- Print one each of the three Altar Illustrations. Two will be taped to the board or wall. The third is to be used to help you during the lesson as you draw the water and fire on Elijah's altar.

- God Uses Elijah Class Notes for each student
- God Uses Elijah Class Notes Answer Key
- Three Altar Illustrations
- Poster putty or tape
- Pencils
- Blue and red crayons for drawing water and fire on Elijah's altar



STUDYING GOD'S WORD

- Study the Prepare to Share section.
- Go Before the Throne.

- Student Take Home Sheets



ALTAR MADE OF STONES

- Make stones out of paper bags and newspaper; number them 1–15.
- Print one God Uses Elijah Review Questions from the Resource DVD-ROM.

- Paper stones numbered 1–15
- Marker
- God Uses Elijah Review Questions

Memory Verse

1 Chronicles 29:11 Yours, O Lord, is the greatness, the power and the glory, the victory and the majesty; for all that is in heaven and in earth is Yours; Yours is the kingdom, O Lord, and You are exalted as head over all.

➤ **Pace your lesson!** Use the clocks to mark the time you want to finish each section. This will help you stay on track and finish on time. You may need to shorten or drop sections as necessary.





Prepare to Share

SCRIPTURAL BACKGROUND

Prepare to teach by preparing your heart. Read the lesson key passage along with this background.

Today's lesson is about another prophet of God. God used prophets throughout the Old Testament to send messages of encouragement, judgment, warning, and to perform miracles in His name to show His glory! The prophet Elijah ministered, like Jonah, to the 10 tribes of the Northern Kingdom of Israel. He had a powerful ministry in spite of the turmoil, the victories, the defeats, and the depression he often endured (1 Kings 17–19).

Through Elijah we come to know that God is a jealous God. When we hear the word jealous, we often think it refers to being envious of someone—wanting something they have for ourselves. We tend to consider jealousy a sinful reaction. So when we hear that God is jealous (Exodus 34:13–14), we wonder what it means. God cannot sin, nor does anyone physically possess anything He would want, since everything belongs to Him (Psalm 50:12). His jealousy is not the sinful jealousy we often consider. So what is it? God's jealousy is a desire for His own glory! God's jealousy is provoked when we worship anything above Him. In the Bible, His jealousy is related to idolatry (Exodus 20:4–5, 34:14; Deuteronomy 4:23–24, 5:9, 32:21; Joshua 24:19–20). As the Creator, God is the only one who rightly deserves to be worshipped. As the Creator, He is righteous in His jealousy to be exclusively worshipped, and those who bow down to other gods will surely face His wrath.

Elijah knew that there is one true God and that He alone is to be worshipped. But at that time, King Ahab and his wife Jezebel ruled over Israel in Samaria. Ahab worshipped the false god Baal, built a temple, set up an altar to Baal in the temple, and erected wooden images to worship (1 Kings 16:31–33). In fact, Ahab did more to provoke God's anger than any other king of Israel (1 Kings 16:33). And God would reveal His jealousy when Ahab promoted pagan worship. Into this idolatrous environment God sent Elijah, who stood before King Ahab and pronounced that the Lord God of Israel would stop the rain and cause a severe drought in the land (1 Kings 17:1).

God did not spare Elijah from this drought but did care for him in supernatural ways—first at the Brook Cherith where he found water to drink and food from ravens sent from God (1 Kings 17:3–4). And then God sent him to Zarephath, a city on the Mediterranean Sea, to a widow who was commanded to provide for

the prophet of God (1 Kings 17:9–10). Although destitute, she was able to do so by God's miraculous mercy and grace (1 Kings 17:11–14).

God eventually sent Elijah back to challenge Ahab and the 850 false prophets who worshiped pagan gods (1 Kings 18:1, 18:18–19). Elijah persuaded King Ahab to assemble with the false prophets and all Israel at Mount Carmel for God's determined confrontation. There, he asked the Israelites, "How long will you falter between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him" (1 Kings 18:21).

Altars were built, sacrifices were prepared, but the challenge was to be the fire. Whoever would answer the plea for fire to burn the sacrifice was the true God (1 Kings 18:24). The Baal worshippers called, danced, leaped, howled, and cut themselves with knives and lances—but to no avail. The one true God would not allow them to succeed (1 Kings 18:26–29). He was restraining the demons behind the inanimate idols. The priests' efforts were futile.

Now Elijah was prepared to show the power and glory of the true Creator God. The altar was prepared, and lest anyone doubt God's authority, Elijah ordered that four pots of water be poured onto the sacrifice and over the wood. This was done three times! Even the trench around the altar was filled with water (1 Kings 18:33–35).

Elijah cried out to the Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel (Jacob). Then, the fire of the Lord fell and consumed the burnt sacrifice, the wood, the stones, the dust, and the water that was in the trench. The people fell to the ground and proclaimed that the Lord, He is God (1 Kings 18:38–39).

At Elijah's command the prophets of Baal were seized and executed at the Brook Kishon (1 Kings 18:40). This fulfilled God's law that any false prophet should be killed (Deuteronomy 13:5). And as Elijah prayed to the Lord from the top of Mount Carmel, a cloud appeared and the drought ended with heavy rainfall.

In Israel, it was evident that Baal was nothing and that God was everything. God is not mocked. His truth will prevail, and the whole world will one day know that He is God, the only true God, and that salvation comes only one way—through His Son Jesus Christ, crucified on a Cross and raised again to life!

HISTORICAL/APOLOGETICS BACKGROUND

Elijah had a long ministry in both the northern and southern kingdoms. He was born in Israel and

is said to have come from Tishbe (1 Kings 17:1). As God's prophet, Elijah was called to fulfill many different roles. He delivered messages of national judgment because of idolatry and messages of judgment to individual leaders. His ministry was affirmed by the working of many miracles. These signs were a mark of the authenticity of Elijah's work on behalf of God. He stopped the rain (1 Kings 17:1), raised the dead (1 Kings 17:22), called fire from heaven (1 Kings 18:38), and performed other signs.

Elijah ministered during the early part of the divided kingdom, a time when there was rampant idolatry in Israel and Judah. As he constantly called the tribes back to worship Jehovah, he faced a religious system that was based in works and superstition rather than in truth. The demonic influence in the religious systems of the Gentile nations was obvious and was a constant cause for judgment against Israel and Judah. God used the nations surrounding the two kingdoms to bring judgment on the people.

Elijah was one of the earliest of the prophets proclaiming to the Israelites the message of repentance and reconciliation with God, but that message would be repeated by others over the next several hundred years. The Jews did not remain faithful to God as a nation, but they repeatedly involved themselves in spiritual adultery with other gods—the idolatry that is still present in all other religions today. And as we look at the world around us, and our own hearts, the words of John Calvin ring true: "From this we may gather that man's nature, so to speak, is a perpetual factory of idols" (Institutes Book I.XI.8). 1 Corinthians 10:14

warns us to "flee from idolatry." God alone is worthy of praise and deserves first place in our hearts.

God is faithful, and as He did in Elijah's time (1 Kings 19:18), He will always reserve a remnant who worship Him in truth and who declare His Word to the next generation. Remember that this is your task as you teach your students.

For more information on this topic, see the Online Resource Page.



BEFORE THE THRONE

Blessed are you, Lord! I rejoice in your power and might and recognize that you alone are worthy to be worshipped. Nothing is too difficult for you. You are great in power and mighty in deed. Help me to remember that although my desire is for an undivided heart, sometimes my heart is prone to wander. When that happens, Holy Spirit, convict me, so I confess quickly and turn back to you. As I teach this lesson, help me to point out your omnipotence. There is no one like you. Help me and my students to grow in faith until we are able to trust you to do the impossible. And Lord, for those students who don't know you, draw them to yourself. Convict them of their sins, so they long for forgiveness and a newness of life that only you can provide, through Jesus Christ.



COME ON IN

As students arrive . . .

- They will complete the Memory Verse Review Sheet.
- They will recite the memory verse to another student or the teacher.

This time at the beginning of class should be used to review the memory verse. We have provided an activity sheet on the Resource DVD-ROM for you to use. You may have other ideas and ways to encourage your students to memorize the verse.



After all the students arrive, pray with them before beginning the lesson.



REVIEW

Using the Lesson Theme Posters provided with each lesson, quickly review the previous lesson(s) with your students. Take 5 to 10 minutes to reinforce the important truths the students have heard so far in your class.

Ask the children questions about the previous lessons as you display the Lesson Theme Posters. Reflect briefly on the passages you read, bringing the objectives and themes back into focus. This will refresh the truths in your students' minds and maintain continuity as you teach through the lessons.



God Uses Elijah Class Notes

MATERIALS

- God Uses Elijah Class Notes for each student
- God Uses Elijah Class Notes Answer Key
- Three Altar Illustrations
- Poster putty or tape
- Pencils
- Blue and red crayons for drawing water and fire on Elijah's Altar

INSTRUCTIONS

Print the class notes for each student. Pass them out at the beginning of class. Have students fill in the blanks as you study the lesson.

We will be completing these class notes as we study the Bible passages. Try not to work ahead. You will fill in each word as we go through the lesson.

After filling in each point on the class notes, re-read the statement or call on individual students to read it.

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

As we study today and complete our class notes, we will learn about Elijah and how powerful the one true God really is!

► Because of the age and ability of 1st and 2nd graders to read and comprehend, we encourage you to read the Scriptures to the students. However, if you have strong readers, by all means have them participate by reading God's Word.



Studying God's Word

READ THE WORD

► Use the History of Israel Poster included with your teacher kit to show your class where the biblical accounts you study chronologically fit into this timeline.

Today's lesson is about a prophet of God. God used prophets in the Old Testament to send messages to His people. The people back then did not have Bibles like we do. So, God spoke through these special men to teach people His truth. *Refer to the Roles of the Prophets Poster.*

Today we'll meet Elijah. Elijah believed in God and trusted in Him. He was obedient to God's call and gave an important message to King Ahab and his false prophets. *Refer to Elijah and King Ahab on the History of Israel Poster.*

King Ahab was a wicked king. He did not worship the true God but worshipped many false gods—especially the god called Baal. King Ahab had 450 prophets who worshipped this false god. We know that God demands all worship and praise be given to Him alone. God was not happy that people were not worshipping Him! So, God sent Elijah to speak to King Ahab and the false prophets who did not love the one true God.

God sent Elijah to give a challenge to the wicked King Ahab. Everyone gathered at a place called Mount Carmel— King Ahab, the 450 prophets of Baal, the children of Israel, and Elijah. Elijah came to the people and asked them once and for all, "Who will you follow? Will you follow the Lord who is God or will you follow the false god Baal?" No one answered.

EXAMINE THE WORD

1 Kings 18:22–24

Listen as I read 1 Kings 18:22–24. You will hear what the challenge was about. This is Elijah talking to all the people gathered at Mount Carmel. *Encourage those with Bibles to find the place. Read 1 Kings 18:22–24.*

Observe the Text

► Re-read the appropriate verses as you ask the questions so the students can answer from the text you read.

? Elijah was the only prophet of God. How many of Baal's prophets were gathered at Mount Carmel? *1 Kings 18:22. 450.*

Wow! One prophet of God against all those prophets of Baal.

? Who was that one prophet of God? *Elijah. Good. Look at #1 on your class notes. Someone read that question for us. What is the answer? Assign a reader. Elijah.*

? Now here's the challenge from God. *Re-read 1 Kings 18:23. What did Elijah ask for? What animals? Two bulls.*

That's right. One bull would be laid on the wood of each altar—one on Elijah's altar and one on the altar of the false prophets.

Put the two Altar Illustrations on the board. These pictures are of the two altars. Here are the prophets of Baal and their altar. And here is Elijah and his altar to the holy God. A bull was placed as a sacrifice onto each altar.

- ? But Elijah said do NOT add something. What was that? *1 Kings 18:23. Fire.*
That's right. The two altars were prepared the same way. One altar was for the false god Baal and the other altar was for the one true Lord God. Neither of the altars had any fire underneath like they usually would.
- ? Who did Elijah tell the prophets of Baal to call on? *1 Kings 18:24. Their false gods.*
- ? And who was Elijah going to call on? *The name of the Lord.*
- ? How would the people know who the true God was? What did Elijah tell them the true God would do? *1 Kings 18:24. The true God would be the one who sends fire down from heaven to burn the sacrifice.*
- ? So, what would the true God send down from heaven? *Fire! Great. Now look at #2 on your class notes. What is the answer to that question? Fire. Write that in on the line.*

➤ Refer to the Lesson Theme Poster when appropriate.

Discover the Truth

The challenge was set. The people were gathered. Two altars were prepared in the very same way. *Refer to the illustrations on the board.* One prophet of the true God against 450 prophets of Baal. Who would send fire down from heaven to burn the sacrifice on the altar? Would it be the true God, or the false god, Baal?



READ THE WORD

Let's find out. Listen to this. *Read 1 Kings 18:26 enthusiastically.*

1 Kings 18:26

EXAMINE THE WORD

Observe the Text

- ? Who did the 450 prophets of Baal cry out to? *1 Kings 18:26. Baal.*
- ? How long were they calling out? *1 Kings 18:26. From morning till noon.*
- ? What were they crying out? *Oh Baal! Hear us!*

And the Bible says no one answered them. No voice was heard. No fire came down from heaven.

- ? What did they do when they heard no voice? *1 Kings 18:26. They leaped about the altar.*

Are you picturing this? They were calling out over and over again, "O, Baal, O Baal hear us!" and nothing was happening so they started jumping up and down to try and get Baal's attention to send fire down.

1 Kings 18:29

In the afternoon, they continued crying out to Baal. This went on all day long!

- ? Did anything happen? Did Baal answer? *Read 1 Kings 18:29 emphasizing no voice, no one answered, no one paid attention. No. There was no voice; no one answered; no one paid attention.*
- ? By evening, there was still no answer to all of their shouting! Look at # 3 on your notes. How will you answer that? Baal did not answer even after all of their what? *Shouting.*

Discover the Truth

The so-called god of Baal did not hear the 450 prophets. They were shouting and leaping up and down but there was no answer. No fire came from heaven to burn up the bull prepared on their altar. Now it was Elijah's turn to call on the Lord God. Remember, Elijah's challenge was about fire! The God who could send fire down from heaven and burn the sacrifice would be the one true God!



READ THE WORD

1 Kings 18:33–35

Let's read 1 Kings 18:33–35 and see what Elijah did. *Read the passage aloud emphasizing all the water Elijah put on his altar.*

EXAMINE THE WORD

Observe the Text

This doesn't make a lot of sense does it? What did Elijah put on his altar with the bull and the wood? *Re-read 1 Kings 18:33. Water!*

- ? Do water and fire mix well? What do firemen do to put OUT a fire? *Put water on it.*
- ? And Elijah told them to put water right on the wood. And how many times did Elijah add water to the altar? *Re-read 1 Kings 18:34. Three times!*

Elijah added water to his altar three times! I am going to add water to my altar here on the board. I want you to add water to Elijah's altar on your class notes. *Add blue water lines around the altar. See answer key for an example.*

They put water on the wood and on the altar. And they put it in the trench around the altar. A trench is a ditch around the altar. The ditch would usually keep the fire from spreading. And Elijah even filled the trench up with water!

Draw more blue water lines on the wood of Elijah's altar. Add water around the bottom of the altar. Let's add some more water to Elijah's altar on our notes. Draw more water on to the altar. Elijah was adding lots of water.

- ? How will you complete #4 on your class notes? What did Elijah add to his altar? *Water.* Fill that in now.
- ? Hmm. I wonder why Elijah would put water on his wood when he wanted it to burn? Any ideas? *Allow answers.*

Elijah made the wood wet so it would be harder to burn. He wanted to show the people that the fire from God was not an accident. He wanted to show the people how very powerful and mighty God really is. And now, Elijah was getting ready to call on the Lord God.

Let's read what happened—straight from God's true Word! *Read 1 Kings 18:37–38 enthusiastically!*

1 Kings 18:37–38

- ? Who did Elijah call out to? *1 Kings 18:37. The Lord God.*
- ? What did Elijah want the people to know? *1 Kings 18:37. That God is the Lord God—the one true God!*
- ? And what did the one true God do to the sacrifice? Listen to this again. What did God do? *Re-read 1 Kings 18:38. He sent fire.*
- ? And what did the fire burn? *1 Kings 18:38. The sacrifice, the wood, the stones, the dust, and it even dried up the water.*

God sent down fire and it burned the sacrifice, the wood, the stones, and dried up all the water! Elijah only had to ask God one time and He answered him immediately.

Let's draw a huge flame of fire on top of Elijah's altar to show what the Lord God did. *Add fire to your sheet on the board. Have the students add fire to their altars.*

We serve a mighty, powerful, great God! And He showed the people that He was all those things at Mount Carmel.

What did the people say when they saw God's power and fire come down from heaven? I'll read it again for you. *Read 1 Kings 18:39. The Lord, He is God! The Lord, He is God!*

The people knew when that fire came down that Elijah's God was the one true God. Look at #5 on your notes. What word will complete that sentence? *True.*

Discover the Truth

There is only one true God! And He showed Himself to Elijah, King Ahab, the prophets of Baal, and all the people that day at Mount Carmel. God sent fire down from heaven. Everyone knew that Elijah's God was the one true God. They found out that Baal was nothing. Baal was a false god and would never have the power of the one true God!





Altar Made of Stones

MATERIALS

- 30 paper lunch bags
- Newspaper
- Tape
- Marker
- God Uses Elijah Review Questions

INSTRUCTIONS

Preparation: Fill up 15 paper lunch bags with crumpled newspaper. Slide another bag on top of the open side of the filled bags and tape together to make a "stone." Number the stones 1–15 and stack them so the teams can see the numbers.

Play: Divide the class into two teams and stack the "stones" in one pile in front of the teams. Each team will build an altar with the stones. Team members will choose a stone with a number on it and answer the corresponding review question. If they get the answer correct, they take the stone and begin to build their altar. The other team then takes a turn and play continues until all of the stones are gone. If a team answers incorrectly, give the other team an opportunity to answer and take the stone. Encourage the students to stack the stones on top of each other in a circle formation to make their altars. The team with the most stones wins. If neither team can answer the question, re-read the Scripture listed with the review questions.

Today we heard about Elijah the prophet and his challenge to Ahab, the wicked king

who worshipped Baal. The challenge was to find out who the true God was—the Lord God or Baal. Your challenge is to see which team can collect the most stones by correctly answering review questions about today's lesson. Each team will have a turn to choose a numbered stone, answer a question, and keep the stone. As you earn stones, your team will build an altar to the one true God. At the end of the game, the team with the most stones wins! Play the game.

CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

Elijah watched all day as the false prophets cried out to Baal and jumped around. Their false god never even produced a little spark! But when it was Elijah's turn, he poured water on his altar to prove that the Lord God was the all-powerful, one true God. God's mighty display of power came down as soon as Elijah prayed. God sent a fire that consumed everything—even the water in the trench. After seeing this, all of the people bowed down and worshipped the Lord God.



Applying God's Word

WHAT YOU HEARD IN THE WORD

Elijah was a prophet of God. He knew that his God was the one true God. Because he trusted in God he gave a challenge to King Ahab. Two altars were built to see whose God would send down fire. The prophets of Baal built their altar, and then jumped up and down and cried out to Baal all day long! But there was no response because he was a false god. Elijah stayed calm, built his altar, and poured water all over it. He only had to

pray to the true God one time. And God answered with fire from heaven. God's fire burnt up the sacrifice, the wood, the stones, and the water! After the people witnessed this amazing miracle, they fell on their faces and worshipped God.

GOD'S WORD IN THE REAL WORLD

We serve a mighty and powerful God. He alone is to be worshipped. We must have no idols in our lives and we have to be careful about what we put first. We shouldn't put anything above God. The Bible says we are to love the Lord our God with all our heart, all our soul, and all our mind. That means He should be the most important thing in our lives.

What does this mean for us? How do we make God the very most important one in our lives? If you play soccer, you can play soccer to the glory of God. Thank Him for the opportunity to run and play. If you play piano, play piano to the glory of God. Thank Him for the talent He has given you. If you like to watch TV, watch shows that you know God would watch with you! Thank God for your parents and obey them. If you have brothers or sisters, thank God for them and treat them the way God's Word tells you to treat them—love them as you love yourself!

God wants us to worship Him alone. He wants all of our love and praise. He deserves it because He is our Creator. He deserves it because of the love He has shown to us in Jesus Christ. God sent Jesus to die a horrible death and be raised from the dead so that sinners could be forgiven of their awful sins against God and have eternal life. All people who believe in Jesus and turn from their sins will be forgiven and saved. There is only one God who has a plan like this. And He is the one true God of the Bible. And He deserves ALL of our praise and honor.



➤ Pass out the Student Take Home Sheets and remind the children to practice the memory verse this week.



MEMORY VERSE

1 Chronicles 29:11 Yours, O Lord, is the greatness, the power and the glory, the victory and the majesty; for all that is in heaven and in earth is Yours; Yours is the kingdom, O Lord, and You are exalted as head over all.



GROUP PRAYER TIME

- Praise God because He is omnipotent.
- Thank God because no false god can compare to Him.
- Ask God to help us not to make anything else more important than Him.

