UNIT 13 | SESSION 3

ELIJAH CONFRONTED AHAB

1 KINGS 18–19



KEY PASSAGE: 1 Kings 8:60

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: *How many gods are there? There is one true God who alone deserves worship.*

CHRIST CONNECTION: God sent fire down from heaven to prove that He alone is Lord. God sent the Holy Spirit like flames of fire on Jesus' disciples to empower them to tell others that Jesus is God's Son who saves people from sin.

STORY POINT: God proved He is the one true God by answering Elijah's prayers.

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PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION

LEADER Bible Study

What is the boldest request you've ever made to the Lord? Have you ever experienced God answer your prayers in a uniquely powerful way? In this week's Bible story, we see how God answered Elijah's prayers.

King Ahab led the people to worship Baal. The prophet Elijah condemned Ahab for leading the people astray and instructed him to gather all the people and prophets of Baal for an epic showdown. The test was simple: both Elijah and the prophets of Baal would offer sacrifices to see if Baal would respond or if God would respond.

The prophets of Baal cried out, danced, and prayed all day with no response or hint of fire on their altar. When Elijah's turn came, he prepared the bull on the altar but took his trust in the Lord a step further by asking for water to be poured on top, saturating it completely. Elijah prayed, "LORD, let it be known that you are God in Israel, and I am your servant. Answer so that this people will know that you, the LORD, are God."

Immediately, fire fell from heaven and completely consumed the offering along with the wood, the stones, and even the water! After the showdown at the altar, Jezebel sought to kill Elijah, and Elijah fled. This time, Elijah's prayer was one of weariness and desperation. Again, God proved faithful to Elijah and answered his prayer. The Lord spoke to Elijah in a whisper and encouraged him, reminding him that the Lord would save those who remained faithful to Him.

The people of Israel knew that the Lord is the one true God when He answered Elijah's prayer and sent fire down from heaven. In the same way, people would know that Jesus is God's Son when the Holy Spirit came down like a dove when Jesus was baptized. Jesus is the Son of God and gave His life up for us.

Remember that God hears and answers the prayers of those who belong to Him. Thank the Lord for His faithfulness to listen and respond to our prayers. Remind boys and girls that through Jesus, we can boldly take our requests to God!



PREPARE

THE WEEK PRIOR

Prepare your heart to teach; plan the session



WELCOME

10–15 MINUTES

Greet kids and open the session



LEARN

25–30 MINUTES

Teach kids the story of the gospel



LOVE

15–20 MINUTES

Lead kids to love the God of the gospel



LIVE

15–20 MINUTES

Lead kids to live out the mission of the gospel

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WELCOME Kids

Greet each kid as he or she arrives. Use this time to collect the offering, fill out attendance sheets, build relationships, and help new kids connect to your group.

The Large group leader may choose one of the activities below to start the day. Be prepared to Help kids and the leader during the activity.

2 SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: BUILD IT

Form kids into two groups and direct them to line up. Place 10 tissue boxes across the room from each team. Challenge teams to build a tall tower using all the boxes provided without the tower falling over. When you say "Go," challenge the first kid from each team to place a box on the floor, race back to her group, and tag the second kid in line. Each kid may only stack one box per turn. The first team to successfully use all their team's boxes to build a tower, without it falling over, wins.

> **SAY** *"Today, we will see how Elijah challenged the prophets of Baal to see if their god would answer them. Elijah and the prophets of Baal both built an altar to make a sacrifice. Let's see how our Bible story reminds us that God is the only true God."*

OPTION 2: NO ONE ANSWER



Challenge kids to respond to questions when you start the question with the word, "Now." Tell kids if the question does not start with the word "now," they should remain silent. If kids answer when they should not, they are out. Consider asking the following questions, or create your own:

- "Now, what is the name of our planet?" *(Earth)*
- "Now, what color do you get by mixing blue and yellow?" *(green)*
- "What does a dog say?" *(kids don't answer)*
- "Now, who deserves all our worship?" *(God)*
- Where do sharks live? *(kids don't answer)*

> **SAY** *"Great job, everyone! You either answered me or didn't answer based on what you heard. In our Bible story, we will see how the false prophets cried out to their false god, but he didn't answer. However, we'll learn that* **GOD PROVED HE IS THE ONE TRUE GOD BY ANSWERING ELIJAH'S PRAYERS.**"

Transition from **WELCOME** to **LEARN**



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LEARN

THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete "FIND THE WAY" activity page.

SAY *"Today, we will see how* **GOD PROVED HE IS THE ONE TRUE GOD BY ANSWERING ELIJAH'S PRAYERS.**"

2 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

SAY *"Israel was a troubled and divided kingdom. Last week, we learned about some of the first kings who ruled over the Northern Kingdom of Israel and how these kings led Israel to worship false gods. Today, we learned about another evil king, Ahab. What did Ahab lead the people to do? Look at 1 Kings 18:18.* ***[Ask a volunteer to read 1 Kings 18:18 aloud.]*** *Ahab abandoned the Lord's commands and followed Baal, a false god. God sent the prophet Elijah to Ahab to warn him about his wicked ways. Elijah told Ahab that his evil ways were ruining Israel because the people had turned away from the one true God.*

Elijah challenged Ahab and the prophets of Baal to meet him on top of Mount Carmel to see who is the one true God. Elijah told the people to choose who they would follow and worship: God or Baal. Then the prophets of Baal prepared their sacrifice on an altar and called out to their false god. What happened when they called out to Baal? Look at 1 Kings 18:26. ***[Ask a volunteer to read 1 Kings 18:26 aloud.]*** *There was silence. Baal was no god—he wasn't even alive. Psalm 96:4-5 tells us, 'For the Lord is great and is highly praised; he is feared above all gods. For all the gods of the peoples are worthless idols, but the Lord made the heavens.'*

Then Elijah placed his sacrifice on the altar he repaired. He even drenched the entire altar with water. Elijah prayed to God, and the Lord's fire fell and burned up everything on the altar. What did the people say in response? Look at 1 Kings 18:39. ***[Ask a volunteer to read 1 Kings 18:39 aloud.]*** *The people fell face down and declared that the Lord is God.* **GOD PROVED HE IS THE ONE TRUE GOD BY ANSWERING ELIJAH'S PRAYERS.**"

3 GOSPEL DISCUSSION

SAY *"God proved He is the one true God. When Jesus was on earth, He performed miracles and spoke truth that proved He is God. After Jesus went back to heaven, God sent the Holy Spirit like flames of fire on Jesus' disciples to empower them to tell others that Jesus is God's Son who saves people from sin. When we place our faith in Jesus, we are declaring that He is God and only He can save us from sin.*"

(Tip: Use Scripture and the Gospel Plan Poster to explain how to become a Christian. Create an environment where kids are welcome to ask questions about what it means to follow Jesus.)

4 QUESTIONS FROM KIDS (3 minutes)

Prompt kids to discuss:

1. Why doesn't God always answer our prayers?
2. Why can we still trust God even when He doesn't answer our prayers how we hope?

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6 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Show the Key Passage Poster. Lead kids in reading aloud 1 Kings 8:60 together.

> **SAY** *"Our key passage, like our Bible story, reminds us that there is only one true God. Let's practice memorizing our key passage."*

Provide each kid with a Bible and an index card. Invite kids to look up 1 Kings 8:60 and write the verse on their index card. Encourage kids to take their card home and use it to help them memorize the verse and share it with others.

Lead kids to sing "There Is No Other (1 Kings 8:60)." You may also choose to sing a worship song of your choice.

7 PRAY (2 minutes)

Invite kids to pray before transitioning to Love.

> **SAY** *"Thank You, Lord, that You are the one true God who hears us when we call and responds to our prayers. Help us live to bring You honor and glory. In Jesus' name, amen."*

Transition from **LEARN** to **LOVE**

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LOVE God by Applying the Story

1 REVIEW & BIBLE SKILLS (5 minutes)

Distribute Bibles and Guide kids to open their Bibles to 1 Kings 18. Explain that throughout the books of 1 and 2 Kings we are introduced to several prophets, like Elijah, who God sent to warn people of their sin.

Consider pointing out the location of Mount Carmel (D4) on the Old Testament Kingdoms Map. Choose a volunteer to read aloud 1 Kings 18:37 or ask the kids to follow along as you read the verse aloud.

> **SAY** *"Elijah had great faith and boldness when he prayed to God. His prayer also revealed a good desire—that the people would know the Lord alone is God. We can pray with boldness and faith as well. While God may not always answer every prayer how we hope, we can pray toward His glory, asking Him to show others that He alone is God. We can ask the Lord to help others turn from their sin and trust in Jesus. God delights in prayers that magnify His greatness."*

2 GROUP DISCUSSION (10 minutes)

Ask the following questions. Lead the group to discuss.

> **SAY** *"Elijah had men pour water on the altar three times. Why do you think he did that?"*

Discuss how confident Elijah was that God would respond to his prayer because his prayer was for God's glory. The water only served to show how great and powerful God is—not even water could keep the altar from burning up. Remind kids that God is all-powerful, all-knowing, and holy. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read Isa. 42:8.)

> **SAY** *"The people wavered between following God and following a false god. Do people do that today? How?"*

Share how people can divide their life into "church stuff" and "other stuff." Discuss how we can think we are following God because we go to church, but then throughout the week, we don't live for God or even think about Him. Encourage kids to remember that God is worthy of every part of our lives. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read 1 Kings 18:21.)

> **SAY** *"Jezebel hated Elijah because he stood against her wicked ways. Why do some people hate Christians? Why is the world against the good news of Jesus?"*

Remind kids that the evil in the world hates Jesus because He is light. Evil loves the darkness because they do not want their wickedness exposed by the light. But Jesus came to rescue people from the darkness and forgive their sin. Anyone who trusts in Jesus is brought into the light and made right with God. Tell kids that just as God came to Elijah and comforted him, God will never leave Christians no matter what they face. The Holy Spirit prays for them, helps them, and strengthens them. (Option: Choose a volunteer to read John 3:17-21.)

Transition from **LOVE** to **LIVE**

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LIVE the Mission

1 ACTIVITY CHOICE (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: FLAMES FROM HEAVEN



Provide each kid with a jumbo craft stick. At the tables, set out yellow, orange, and red crepe paper rolls; glue; and scissors. Lead kids to cut 5 inch strips of crepe paper and glue them to the end of their craft stick to create a fiery flame. Once dry, invite kids to wave their fiery flames in the air.

(Tip: Use these flames as you tell the Bible story by inviting kids to wave them in the air when you share how God sent fire from heaven.)

> **SAY** *"Today, we will see that* **GOD PROVED HE IS THE ONE TRUE GOD BY ANSWERING ELIJAH'S PRAYERS**. *We'll learn how God sent fire from heaven to burn up a sacrifice Elijah placed on an altar."*

OPTION 2: PRAYER PROMPT



Provide kids with an index card. Invite kids to title their card, *Prayer Prompt*. Then invite kids to write the letters P, R, A, and Y along the side of the card. Next to the P kids will write *Praise*. Next to the R kids will write *Repent*. Next to the A kids will write *Ask*. Then next to the Y kids will write *Yield* or *Your Will*.

Tell kids this acronym helps us remember how we can pray to God. Consider inviting kids to write a Bible reference next to each letter to demonstrate each part of the prayer. For example, you might choose to use Psalm 30:4; Isaiah 55:7; 1 Peter 5:7; and Matthew 6:10. Encourage kids to use their card to help them remember ways they can pray to God.

> **SAY** *"God heard and answered Elijah's prayer. God hears and will answer our prayers in His timing and for His purposes. God wants us to talk with Him, and He is happy when we depend on Him through prayer. He is all-powerful and uses prayer to change our hearts and help us live for Him."*

2 JOURNAL AND PRAYER (5 minutes)

Distribute journal pages and pencils. Guide kids to think about and answer the questions listed on the page. As kids journal, invite them to share their ideas.

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does the story teach me about myself?
- Are there any commands in this story to obey? How are they for God's glory and my good?
- Are there promises in this story to remember? How do they help me trust and love God?
- How does this story help me to live on mission better?

Review the gospel and encourage kids to speak with you or another teacher if they have questions. Then pray, praising God for His greatness and power. As time allows, lead kids to complete "True or False" on the activity page.

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