

Bible Story 21: ELIJAH, THE PROPHET OF GOD

SCRIPTURE: 1 KINGS 16:29-33; 17:1-24; 18:1,17-39,45

MEMORY VERSE: "BUT THE LORD IS THE TRUE GOD; HE IS THE LIVING GOD, THE ETERNAL KING."
JEREMIAH 10:10A NIV

BIBLE STORY:

Ahab became king of Israel and sinned more against God than any other king. Because of his wife Jezebel, he constructed a temple and placed an altar for Baal in Samaria. Instead of worshiping God, the people were worshiping the idol Baal. God was very angry.

Elijah was a prophet of God. He spoke to the Israelites saying that there would be no rain for some years, because they were not worshiping God. Elijah continued obeying God and lived near a small stream, drinking its water. The ravens brought him bread and meat each morning and evening.

Finally the stream dried up, because of the drought. God told him to go to the city of Zarephath, where a widow would take care of him. When Elijah was arriving at the gate of the city, he met the widow. He asked her to bring him some water and she obeyed. Then he asked her for bread. She said that she did not have any, but would willingly prepare a loaf of bread with her last grains of flour and last drops of oil. Elijah told her to do this and to make some for herself and her son. Then he said, "*You will never be without flour or oil until God sends the rain.*" A miracle! God fulfilled his promise. She never lacked flour and oil until the rains came, just as Elijah said. After awhile, the widow's son became sick and Elijah healed him.

After three years of drought, the prophet Elijah went and spoke to King Ahab. He said that because the king and the people of Israel had stopped obeying God's laws and worshiped the idol Baal, God stopped sending rain. Then Elijah asked to have a contest to see who was the most powerful, the idol Baal or God. Two altars were to be built: one to Baal and one to

God. Each were to put the sacrifice of a young bull on the altar. Whichever sacrifice was burned and consumed would show who was the only true God. The king agreed to the contest.

On the morning of the contest there were 450 prophets of Baal present. They cut up a young bull and placed it on top of their altar. Then from morning until afternoon the prophets prayed to Baal. Nothing happened. Elijah said that perhaps Baal was traveling or asleep. The prophets of Baal yelled even louder until evening, but still nothing happened, not one sign from Baal.

Afterwards Elijah repaired his altar to God, because it had been broken up by the prophets of Baal. Elijah placed twelve rocks around the altar, each rock represented one of the twelve Tribes of Israel. Next he dug out a ditch around the rocks. Then he placed wood on top of the altar, placing the cut parts of a young bull on top. Then Elijah told them to pour four large jars of water over the wood and sacrifice. In fact, he demanded that they do this three different times. A total of twelve large jars of water! The wood and sacrifice was drenched with water. In fact, even the ditch around the rocks was full of water! After everything was ready, Elijah prayed. Immediately God sent fire that burned and consumed the sacrifice, wood, rocks and dried the water in the ditch.

When the Israelites saw this happen, they fell on their knees and shouted: "*The Lord - He is God!*" (1 Kings 18:39b NIV). The people saw that God was more powerful! The Israelites destroyed the altar to Baal and returned to worshiping only God.

LIFE-LESSONS:

1. Elijah obeyed God and his commandments. Obey God. How? (Examples: obeying his teachings from the Bible; loving and helping others.)
2. Elijah worshiped God. Worship God. How? (Examples: going to church; reading the Bible.)
3. Elijah stood up for defending God. Stand up for God. How? (Examples: when someone speaks bad things about God, share good things that God does; when someone uses God's name in a bad way, honor and respect God's name.)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What is a drought? Why did God send a drought to King Ahab and the people of Israel?
2. How did God protect Elijah’s life when he was by the stream?
3. How does God protect our lives?
4. How did the widow help Elijah?
5. How did Elijah help the widow and her son?
6. Who are some people who help us around our home, neighborhood and church? How? How can we help people in need (financial needs, people going through a drought, hurricane, tornado, etc.)?
7. Tell about the contest that Elijah wanted to have with the prophets of Baal. Why did Elijah do this?
8. What did the prophets of Baal do in the contest? What happened? What did Elijah do? What happened? Who was the most powerful? What did the people do after the contest?
9. Elijah was defending God. Are there times when you can stand up for God? When?

SUGGESTIONS FOR THIS BIBLE STORY:

Choose activities that may be used in your specific situation. Consider the age and maturity of each person, locality where the story will be told (customs and traditions), and available resources, time and space.

PRESENTATION:

- Be careful with this illustration. Warn any children present that they should only do this experiment with adult supervision.
- Do an experiment with two jars and paper:
 - (1) Put paper in one of the jars. Light a match to the paper and ask: *“What is happening?”*
 - (2) Next put paper in the second jar and pour water on top of the paper, soaking it. Then light a match to the paper and ask, *“What is happening? Why isn’t the scraps of paper burning?”*
- Then say, *“There is a Bible story about God burning wood, even when the wood was soaked in water. Listen as I tell you the Bible story about Elijah.”*
- Immediately after telling the story, make applications of the lessons taken from the Bible story and apply to the lives of the listeners.

4. Give time and go help a family clean up after the tragedy (picking up trash, cleaning walls and windows, replanting flowers and trees, etc.).
5. Along with other project(s) selected, give Bibles to them in their language. Share your testimony of Jesus.

DIFFERENT BELIEFS:

- Explain about different beliefs, especially those in your area. If possible, show pictures. You may invite a guest to come speak. You may even show clips from a video or CD of different beliefs. Afterwards, be sure to allow time for discussion.
- **ATTENTION:** Close the time by explaining why Jesus Christ is Lord and Savior and that we serve the Almighty living God.
- **CAUTION:** Be careful of what is said in front of young children, because of their immaturity and comprehension.

PROJECT:

- Select a project to help those in need, because of a fire, flooding, hurricane, tornado, earthquake, drought, war, etc. Help someone in your church, community, country or overseas. Examples of projects are:
 1. Provide school supplies for one or more families. Add some candy for the families!
 2. Adopt a person or entire family. Buy clothes, shoes, cosmetics, shaving items, etc.
 3. Send gift certificates to a needy person or family. These certificates may be for a grocery store, clothing store, hardware store, restaurant, etc.

VISITOR:

- Invite someone to come and share on how to avoid certain disasters, ways to prepare for disasters, and what to do during and after the disasters. Examples of topics and people who can help:
 - Policeman - kidnapping, thieves, natural disasters;
 - Fireman - fire in home/forest, natural disasters;
 - Doctor/nurse - accidents in home/car, health issues;
 - Pastor/Counselor - spiritual guidance and counseling.
 Natural disasters may include flooding, hurricane, tornado, earthquake, etc.

DAILY BIBLE READING - 1 Kings 16:29-33; 17:1-24; 18:1,17-39,45

1 ST	2 ND	3 RD	4 TH	5 TH	6 TH	7 TH
1 Kings 16:29-33	1 Kings 17:1-7	1 Kings 17:8-16	1 Kings 17:17-24	1 Kings 18:1,17-24	1 Kings 18:25-29	1 Kings 18:30-39,45