



UNIT 13 | SESSION 2

ELIJAH SERVED AS A PROPHET

1 KINGS 16-18

KEY PASSAGE:

Deuteronomy 6:4-5

BIG PICTURE QUESTION:

What is idolatry? Idolatry is a sin of the heart in which we love and value something else above God.

CHRIST CONNECTION:

The one true God is not like the false gods. We do not have to work hard to show God we love Him. Instead, He showed His love for us by sending His Son, Jesus. Jesus died to rescue us from sin, and He hears us when we cry out to Him.



PRIOR TO TEACHING THE SESSION



LEADER Bible Study

Even a dim light is visible in the darkness. There’s no denying that the world today can be described as a dark place where sin is endorsed and idolized, mistreatment of others is normalized for personal gain, and some of the most egregious dismissals of God’s standards are championed in many pockets of culture and have taken root at younger and younger ages.

But darkness isn’t new. In fact, the Bible reminds us that darkness has been a reality since the fall of man. And though the darkness often seems the darkest in our current reality, history tends to repeat itself.

First Kings 16 is one of many places in the Bible where the depth of darkness in the world is painted vividly: leaders who sought their own satisfaction at the expense of others, people who sought power and were willing to kill to gain it, pleasure and fulfillment as justifiable reasons for any decision. These were only some of the markers of the culture of the day.

But, as God often does, He enabled and equipped a voice of light to pierce the darkness. Elijah, a prophet sent from God to speak truth, lived with boldness in the midst of a desperate and depraved generation.

In the past, God communicated through the prophets. He sent fire from heaven

and multiplied flour and oil. Today, He commissions His people to proclaim His message in the midst of a dark world.

This is actually part of our purpose in the world: to make visible the power of God, to be a light in the darkness, to shine bright—breaking through the sickness of sin so prominently on display in our culture and offering the hope of a God who never sleeps or slumbers and always finds a way to make Himself known.

It’s easy to grow weary when looking at our world, but take heart, for Christ has overcome the world and given us the ministry of making Him known. In the midst of the darkness, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to God.

PEOPLE TO KNOW

Elijah: prophet from the ninth century BC from Tishbe of Gilead in the Northern Kingdom



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.

SAY “Have you ever been challenged to do something like do 10 push-ups in 30 seconds? Were you able to complete the challenge?”

1 ACTIVITY PAGE (5 minutes)

Invite kids to complete “Drought and Famine” on the activity page.

SAY “Sin leads to consequences. But God can use the consequences of our sin to turn our hearts back to Him. In today’s Bible story, we will learn that God caused a drought in Israel because of the people’s sin.”

2 SESSION STARTER (10 minutes)

OPTION 1: APPLE STACK

Form kids into groups of two and distribute four apples to each group. Challenge the kids to work together to use all four apples to form a structure that can stand on its own for ten seconds without falling.

Explain that they will have one minute to complete the challenge. If the structure falls and there is still time on the clock, kids can keep trying until time runs out. The group who completes the challenge is the winner.

Complete the challenge again by combining two or more groups together. Instruct the larger group to try and stack all eight or more apples without falling.

SAY “Were there times when this challenge seemed impossible? Today, we will learn about how the prophet Elijah set up an incredible challenge to show that God is the only true God.”

OPTION 2: MAKE UP YOUR MIND



Read the following questions and designate a side of the room for each answer:

- “Would you rather eat spinach or ice cream?”
- “Would you rather hold a spider or a puppy?”
- “Would you rather drink vinegar or juice?”
- “Would you rather do homework or go to the movies?”
- “Would you rather be sad or happy?”

SAY “Those questions all had a clear, better answer. But you all had to make up your mind and choose how to answer. In today’s Bible story, Elijah tells the people of Israel to make up their minds.”





THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

INTRODUCE the Bible Story

1 INTRODUCE THE SESSION (3 minutes)

Show the countdown video as you transition to introduce the Bible story. Set it to end as the session begins.

SAY “ Hello, kids! I’m so glad you’re here! My name is [your name]. When we meet together, we always read from God’s Word. Does everyone have their Bible with them? [Distribute Bibles to kids who do not have one.]

Today, we will learn an amazing story about the power of God. God uses the stories recorded in His Word to remind us of truths and to teach us more about Himself. Reading God’s Word helps us know how we should live and how we can tell others about Jesus. ”

2 BIG PICTURE QUESTION (1 minute)

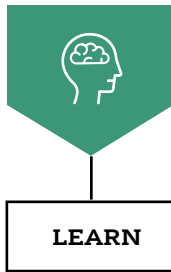
SAY “ Does anyone remember our big picture question that we began thinking about last week? [Allow kids to respond.] Our big picture question is, **What is idolatry?** The answer is, **Idolatry is a sin of the heart in which we love and value something else above God.**

In today’s story, we will see what happens when Elijah challenges idol worshipers to demonstrate the power of their god against the power of the one true God. Let’s say our big picture question and answer together. **What is idolatry? Idolatry is a sin of the heart in which we love and value something else above God.** ”

3 REVIEW THE TIMELINE (1 minute)

Show the giant timeline. Point to individual Bible stories as you review.

SAY “ After King Solomon died, God split the people of Israel into two separate kingdoms. Last week, we learned that King Jeroboam, king of the Northern Kingdom of Israel, disobeyed God by setting up idols for the people to worship. Today, we will see how God’s people continued to practice idolatry. Let’s read our Bible story to learn how God used Elijah to demonstrate that God is the one true God. ”



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

LEARN the Bible Story

1 TELL THE BIBLE STORY: VIDEO OR STORYTELLER (10 minutes)

Open your Bible to 1 Kings 16–18 . Use the Bible storytelling tips to help you tell the story, or show the Bible story video “Elijah Served as a Prophet.” Use the bold text to retell or review the story.

ELIJAH SERVED AS A PROPHET

“ When Ahab became the king of Israel, he was the most evil king of all. Ahab led the Israelites away from God. They worshiped Baal (BAY uhl), a false god, instead. King Ahab’s evil ways made God angry, so God sent a prophet named Elijah to speak to Ahab. Elijah said, “God will send a drought. No rain will fall in Israel for three years unless I say so.”

That is exactly what happened. **God caused a drought. No rain fell in the land of Israel.** Without rain, the lakes and rivers dried up. **People could not grow crops in the fields for food. So in addition to the drought, there was a famine.**

After three years, God was ready to send rain. Elijah went back to King Ahab. He told the king, “Meet me at Mount Carmel. Bring the people of Israel and the prophets who worship false gods.”

King Ahab and the people met Elijah at the mountain. **Elijah said, “Make up your minds! If you believe the LORD is God, follow Him; but if Baal, then follow him.”**

Elijah set up a challenge to show who is the one true God. The prophets of the false god Baal set up an altar first and put a bull on it. **Elijah said, “Call to Baal and ask him to send fire to your altar. I will call on the LORD. The God who answers by sending fire is the one true God.”**

The prophets of Baal worshiped their false god. “Answer us!” they said. But no one answered. The people danced and cried out for hours to show that they loved Baal. “Shout loudly!” Elijah taunted them. “Maybe he is sleeping!” Still, no answer.

Then Elijah set up an altar, dug a trench around it, and put a bull on it. Elijah told the people to pour water on the altar so everything was wet. Then Elijah prayed: “LORD, answer me so that these people will know that You are God.”

Suddenly, God sent fire from the sky. It burned up the bull, the wood, the stones, and the dust! It dried up the water in the trench. **When the people saw this, they fell facedown and said, “The LORD, He is God! The LORD, He is God!”** Soon the sky grew dark with clouds, and God sent rain.

Christ Connection: The one true God is not like the false gods. We do not have to work hard to show God we love Him. Instead, He showed His love for us by sending His Son, Jesus. Jesus died to rescue us from sin, and He hears us when we cry out to Him. ”

STORYTELLING TIPS

Boo and cheer: Lead the kids to boo when the people of Israel sin. Lead the kids to cheer when God demonstrates His power.

Change your voice: Use a dramatic voice as you tell the story. Use different tones of voices as you read how Elijah mocked the Baal worshipers and how the Baal worshipers cried out.



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

2 REVIEW THE BIBLE STORY

SAY “ The people of Israel were far from God. King Ahab was a bad king who did not encourage the people to follow the one true God. Instead, King Ahab led the people to worship the false god Baal. What did God do because of Ahab’s sin? [Allow responses.] God stopped the rain and caused a drought, which eventually caused a famine. But the people still did not turn back to God.

God then sent Elijah to prove to the people that He is the one true God. Elijah told the false prophets to call out Baal to send fire down from heaven. But no answer came because Baal is no god at all. Then Elijah prayed to God. What did Elijah ask God to do? Look at 1 Kings 18:37. [Choose a volunteer to read aloud 1 Kings 18:37.] Elijah prayed that God would use the demonstration of His power at the altar to turn the hearts of the people back to Him. God answered Elijah’s prayer and sent down fire from heaven. The people believed that God was the one true God.

God send Elijah to demonstrate His power so that the people’s hearts would be turned back to Him. God sent Jesus to turn our hearts back to Him as well. Only through Jesus can we have hearts that are able to love and worship God rightly. ”

3 CHRIST CONNECTION

SAY “ The one true God is not like the false gods. We do not have to work hard to show God we love Him. Instead, He showed His love for us by sending His Son, Jesus. Jesus died to rescue us from sin, and He hears us when we cry out to Him. ”

(Tip: Use Scripture and the Gospel Plan Poster to explain how to become a Christian. Make sure kids know when and where they can ask questions.)

4 QUESTIONS FROM KIDS (3 minutes)

Show the “Unit 13, Session 2” questions from kids video. Prompt kids to discuss:

1. Are there prophets today?
2. Can you think of a time when God spoke to you through His Word?

5 MISSIONS MOMENT (3 minutes)

Display a world map. Point to Bogota, Colombia, as you tell the story.

SAY “ The McNeills are a missionary family living in a 13-story apartment building in Bogota, Colombia. After talking to one of their neighbors, Sarah McNeill realized that many people in her neighborhood were very fearful about the COVID-19 virus. Sarah tried to help her neighbors understand that God is in control of all things, and that even in difficult, scary times, we must trust Him.

Sarah wanted her family to do something to help others not be so afraid and sad during the pandemic. So, Sarah and her three kids made cards for each household in the apartment building.



THE STORY OF THE GOSPEL

Inside the cards, the kids wrote Bible verses that encouraged people to pray to God about their fears. The McNeill family also made 13 flowers in Colombia's national colors with a message of hope. The missionary family was excited when they heard their neighbors' happiness as they saw the flowers and read their cards. Some of the neighbors even wrote messages back to the family. One message read: 'I was sad, and I felt strange all day. But I arrived home and I saw your card. Thank you, neighbors, for this. Thank you for hope and the happiness of my heart.' ”

Pray, thanking God for missionaries who are sharing the hope of Jesus with others around the world.

6 KEY PASSAGE ACTIVITY (5 minutes)

Before meeting together, write the key passage on separate craft sticks, one or two words per stick. Place the sticks in a jar. Be sure to include the Scripture reference on the craft sticks. Make one set for each group. Form kids into groups of three or four and challenge them to take turns pulling out one stick and placing it in the correct order. Direct kids to continue until they have completed the verse.

Show the key passage poster. Lead kids in reading aloud Deuteronomy 6:4-5 together.

SAY “ God loves us and sent Jesus to prove His love for us. Our response to who God is and what He has done for us should be to love Him above all else. ”

Lead kids to sing “The Lord Our God (Deuteronomy 6:4-5).” 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 “ We praise You, Lord, because You are the one true God. No one and nothing compares to You. Thank You for hearing us when we call out to You. Help us to live boldly for You. In Jesus' name, amen. ”

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

