Preschool–Grade 6

Elijah on Mount Carmel

Sunday School Lesson for Kindergarten to 2nd Grade, 45 minutes

Main point: There is one true God. He is real, He hears us, and He answers when we pray.
Bible passage: 1 Kings 18. Read it before class.
Memory verse: "And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The LORD, he is the God; the LORD, he is the God." *1 Kings 18:39 (KJV)*
You need: a Bible, 12 building blocks (or 12 paper "stones" cut from gray paper), 6 paper strips, a marker, tape, crayons, and one take-home sheet for each child.
Before class: write the memory verse on the 6 paper strips (see part 4). Put bookmarks in your Bible at 1 Kings 18:21 and 1 Kings 18:38.

1. Opening game: Answer When I Call (5 minutes)

Call a child's name, in a whisper, in a big voice or in a silly voice. That child jumps up and says, "Here I am!" Call a few names. Then turn to an empty chair and call, "Chair! Chair! Answer me!" Wait. Nothing. Ask: *Why didn't the chair answer?* (It can't hear or talk!) Say: "Today we will hear a true story about a false god that could not answer at all, and the one true God, who heard His prophet Elijah."

2. Bible story: The Fire of the LORD Fell (10 minutes)

Hold up your Bible open to 1 Kings 18, so the kids can see the story comes from God's Word. Tell it in your own words:

Long ago, the people of Israel had a king named **Ahab**. Ahab had turned away from God's commandments and followed **Baal**, a false god (1 Kings 18:18). Many of the people did too. Elijah, God's prophet, had told Ahab there would be no rain (17:1), and for a long time it did not rain. There was very little food in the land (18:2). Then God told Elijah, "Go, shew thyself unto Ahab; and I will send rain upon the earth" (18:1). **Shew thyself** means go and let him see you.

Elijah told Ahab to bring all the people of Israel and the 450 prophets of Baal to **Mount Carmel** (18:19). There Elijah said to the people, "How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him" (18:21). Say: "That means, 'How long will you keep going back and forth? Pick one!'" And the people answered not a word (18:21).

Elijah said, "I, even I only, remain a prophet of the LORD; but Baal's prophets are four hundred and fifty men" (18:22). That means Elijah was the only prophet of the LORD left, and Baal had 450. Here was his plan: each side gets a young bull for an offering and lays it on wood, with no fire under it. "Call ye on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the LORD: and the God that answereth by fire, let him be God." The people said, "It is well spoken," which means, "That's a good plan!" (18:23–24)

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The story continues: The prophets of Baal went first. From morning until noon they cried, "O Baal, hear us." But there was no voice, and nobody answered (18:26). They jumped around their altar (18:26). Elijah mocked them. He told them to cry louder: maybe their god was talking, or busy, or on a trip, or asleep and needed to be woken up (18:27). They cried louder and louder, all afternoon, until evening. But nobody answered, nobody at all (18:29).

Then Elijah said to the people, "Come near unto me." He fixed the altar of the LORD that had been broken down (18:30). He took **twelve stones**, one for each of the twelve tribes of Israel, the families that came from Jacob's twelve sons (18:31). He built an altar and dug a **trench**, a ditch, all around it (18:32). He put the wood in order and laid the offering on the wood (18:33). Then he said, "Fill four barrels with water, and pour it on" the offering and the wood. "Do it the second time." "Do it the third time." The water ran all around the altar and filled the trench (18:33–35). Everything was soaking wet!

Elijah prayed a short prayer: "Hear me, O LORD, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the LORD God" (18:37). **Read 1 Kings 18:38 from your Bible:** "Then the fire of the LORD fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench." Say: "**Consumed** means burned it all up. Even the stones! Even the water!"

When the people saw it, they fell down on their faces and said, "The LORD, he is the God; the LORD, he is the God" (18:39). Then Elijah prayed again (James 5:18). Seven times his servant went to look toward the sea. The seventh time he saw a little cloud, like a man's hand (18:43–44). Soon the sky was black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain (18:45). God kept His promise!

3. Questions to ask (5 minutes)

1. What did the prophets of Baal cry all morning? *("O Baal, hear us," 1 Kings 18:26)* Did anyone answer? *(No, 18:26, 18:29)*
2. How many stones did Elijah use to build the altar? *(Twelve, 18:31)*
3. How many times did they pour four barrels of water on it? *(Three times, 18:33–34)*
4. What happened when Elijah prayed? *(The fire of the LORD fell and burned it all up, even the water, 18:38)*
5. What did all the people say? *("The LORD, he is the God," 18:39)*

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4. Memory verse: Falling Fire Strips (5 minutes)

Tape the 6 paper strips up in order: *And when all the people saw it, / they fell on their faces: / and they said, / The LORD, he is the God; / the LORD, he is the God. / 1 Kings 18:39.* Explain the words: **fell on their faces** means they bowed down low to the ground, because they knew God was real and great. Read the verse together. On "The LORD, he is the God," everyone points up. Then take down one strip and read it again. Keep taking down one strip each time until the kids can say the verse by themselves.

5. What this means for us (5 minutes)

Say: "The people learned that the LORD is the one true God. The Bible says, 'Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD' (Deuteronomy 6:4, KJV). God loves you very much. But everyone has done wrong things. The Bible calls that sin: 'For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God' (Romans 3:23, KJV). That means none of us is as good as God. Jesus is the one God who came to earth as a man (1 Timothy 3:16). Jesus died for our sins, He was buried, and He rose again (1 Corinthians 15:3–4)! The Bible tells us how to obey the gospel, the good news about Jesus: 'Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.' (Acts 2:38, KJV) To **repent** means we are sorry for our sin and we turn away from it. We are **baptized**, buried all the way under the water, in Jesus' name, so our sins are washed away (Romans 6:4; Acts 22:16). **Remission** means God takes our sins away. And God fills us with the **Holy Ghost**, His own Spirit, and we speak in other tongues, words God gives us, just like the believers did in the Bible (Acts 2:4)."
Pray with the kids, and encourage them to talk with their parents and pastor about being baptized in Jesus' name and filled with the Holy Ghost. Never pressure a child.
This week: every time you pray, remember that the one true God is listening to you, just like He heard Elijah.

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6. Activity (10–15 minutes)

Choose one: the **Elijah on Mount Carmel word search** (vbshq.com/puzzles/elijah-on-mount-carmel-word-search), crossword (vbshq.com/puzzles/elijah-on-mount-carmel-crossword), maze (vbshq.com/puzzles/elijah-on-mount-carmel-maze) or worksheet (vbshq.com/worksheets/elijah-on-mount-carmel-worksheet), the coloring page or craft (vbshq.com/bible-stories/elijah-on-mount-carmel), or **Build the Altar:** kids take turns adding the 12 blocks or paper stones to build an altar, and everyone counts out loud, "One, two, three … twelve!" Then everyone pretends to pour water from a heavy barrel, three times: "One time! Second time! Third time!" Last, everyone wiggles their fingers down from high to low like falling fire and shouts, "The LORD, he is the God!"

7. Prayer

"Dear God, You are the one true God. Thank You that You hear us when we pray. Help us follow You with our whole heart and never go back and forth. Thank You for loving us and coming to save us in Jesus. In Jesus' name, amen."

If a child asks what Baal was: say, "Baal was a false god that people made up. He wasn't real, so he couldn't hear or answer. Only the LORD is God."
Left out on purpose: this lesson does not tell how the prophets of Baal cut themselves (1 Kings 18:28) or what happened to them at the brook Kishon (18:40). It also skips Obadiah and the hidden prophets (18:3–16). Read 1 Kings 18 yourself before class. If a child asks what happened to the prophets of Baal, keep it short: "They were punished for leading God's people away from Him. God's people turned back to the LORD."

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